

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 July 1995

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Criminal Law (Undercover Operations),
SGIC (Sale),
Shop Trading Hours (Miscellaneous) Amendment.

INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

The **Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier)**: I move:

That the sitting of the House be continued during the conference with the Legislative Council on the Bill.

Motion carried.

BRAY, Hon. DR J.J., DEATH

The **Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier)**: I move:

That this House expresses its regret at the recent death of the Hon. Dr John Jefferson Bray, AC, QC, former Chief Justice of the State and Administrator *pro tempore*, and that, as a mark of our respect to his memory, the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

In supporting the motion I am sure that all members would appreciate the enormous contribution that Dr John Jefferson Bray has made to South Australia. Born in 1912, he was one of the most distinguished and memorable Chief Justices that this State has seen. There have been only seven Chief Justices in South Australia from the period of 1857 until now. In the same time we have had 41 Premiers. Anyone who wanted to look at a career path would pick that of Chief Justice rather than Premier. All of those Chief Justices have served this State extremely well and, in particular, in the memory of those who knew him personally, Dr John Bray was an outstanding Chief Justice.

He is noted for a range of things, from being a poet, a playwright and a classical scholar. He came from a family that was rich in this State's heritage, dating back to the early days of the colony. One of his ancestors was Sir John Bray, Premier from 1881 to 1884. Dr John Bray was educated at St Peter's College and then at the University of Adelaide. He was admitted to the South Australian Bar in 1933 and became a Queen's Counsel in 1957. In 1967 Dr Bray was appointed Chief Justice following Sir Mellis Napier. He was Chancellor of the University of Adelaide from 1968 to 1983. I had the chance, as a very young member of Parliament, to serve on the Council of the University of Adelaide during the time when he was Chancellor.

Also during that time he carried on a career as lecturer in jurisprudence, Roman law and legal history. He was a man of deep insights, was tolerant and had enormous respect for differences in individuality. He published several volumes of verse and was patron of the Friendly Street School of South Australian Poets. He retired from the Supreme Court bench in 1978, and both leading up to his retirement and subsequent to it he was a familiar sight at times on the Glenelg tram in

the middle of summer with a towel over his shoulders, wearing shorts, heading to the beach for a swim.

Dr Bray believed in the law. He was an ornament to the law in this State and, indeed, throughout Australia. He was an outstanding legal thinker and he had an international reputation. He was admired and respected by all his colleagues. At the function at which we recently commemorated the Hon. Len King on his retirement as Chief Justice of South Australia, I used the following words about Dr John Bray: a most scholarly judge who made a notable contribution to the law during his term. We knew that he was ill then, and it was unfortunate that he could not be present on that historic occasion to see the Hon. Len King step down as Chief Justice, but today we remember Dr John Bray and the enormous contribution that he made to South Australia.

The **Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition)**: On behalf of the South Australian Labor Party and the Opposition, it was with deep regret that we learnt of the death of Dr Bray. As the Premier has made clear to the House, he was an exceptional man, an exceptional jurist, and he had an exceptional record in terms of his revered role as Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, a man of great intellect, a classical scholar, a humanist, a non-conformist, and certainly one of the most distinguished Chief Justices in South Australia's history. It is interesting to note that Dr Bray achieved his honours degree of Bachelor of Laws in a single year. At that time, he was also busy as a newly admitted practitioner, yet he still found time to study and pass examinations which involved a close study of a massive nine volumes of Holdsworth's *History of English Law*. He was only the second person in this State to achieve his honours degree at that time, and one of the very few to earn a doctorate of law from the University of Adelaide soon after.

Dr Bray appeared as counsel in almost every jurisdiction with both distinction and success. He never discriminated in the briefs that were given him, having no inclination to err about their popularity or likelihood of success. He once said of the law:

The law has some resemblance to the game of chess, but, of course, it does not exist for the sake of the game but for the attainment of justice and for the service of the people who perish without justice.

As Chief Justice, Dr Bray's intellectual honesty was described as a virtue. He could not bring himself to give a decision in which he did not believe, based on the facts as he believed them to exist and on the law as he knew it to exist. He was always believed to be patient, tolerant, kind and courteous by all those who knew him: his professional colleagues, students whom he lectured in jurisprudence, Roman law and legal history at the University of Adelaide, and friends both at the university and in literature. He was always known to be readily approachable by the profession and ever willing to be of assistance. It is interesting that one of the few Chief Justices in what some British people would still regard as the colonies was actually quoted at length in the House of Lords in 1975. In fact, it was a dissenting case in respect of which John Bray was quoted by the then Chief Lord Justice in the House of Lords.

Dr Bray's interests were not limited to the law. He was fluent in Greek and Latin, and his literary skills were evident in the volumes of poetry that he published and plays that he wrote. One such play, *Papinian*, was produced by the Company of Players, formed in Adelaide by theatre director Colin Ballantyne, and administered by a young politician of

that time, Don Dunstan. Of course, it was a Dunstan Government that appointed Dr Bray to the position of Chief Justice. He will be remembered as someone of enormous intellect. His failing health in later years never impaired his erudition, and he worked on one project right to the end, only weeks before his death completing a biography of the Roman Emperor Gallianus who reigned from 253 to 268 AD.

The final words of the Chief Justice, as Chief Justice, say a lot about the man. He said:

I leave the law in a period of great difficulty, uncertainty and change. The law has known such periods before. Customs, conventions, mores, modes of thought and areas of legal emphasis change, and the law must change with them, whilst still retaining a firm grasp on these fundamentals of justice.

We will all miss Dr Bray.

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): From 1969 to 1970, I was associate to the Hon. George Walters, judge of the Supreme Court. During that time, I had the pleasure of working also with the then Chief Justice, Dr Bray, as his associate. In fact, after that period, he offered me his associateship but I had had enough of the Supreme Court at that stage and decided to leave—much to my regret because he was a man who had a great influence on the law in this State. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in supporting the Premier's motion. In legal circles Dr Bray was regarded as one of the greatest legal minds this country has ever seen. He is ranked as an equal with the former Chief Justice of the High Court, Justice Dixon.

Dr Bray had a prolific memory and an amazing knowledge of the law. He would walk around his chambers with a dictaphone and he would dictate five judgments. When I was working for him as an associate, he would say, 'R. v so and so. I think it is 1955, State Reports; it is roughly about page so and so, judgment so and so, paragraph 3.' Before the judgment was printed, my job was to go around and find this case. Inevitably, you would open it up and it would be the correct judgment of the Supreme Court, with the correct page and paragraph. He did this off the top of his head, while using a dictating machine. As I said, he would dictate some five or six judgments in an afternoon when another judge—and I worked for all the judges in the Supreme Court when I was there—would take a day or half a day to do a single judgment.

As has been pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Bray was one of the few Supreme Court judges and chief justices of any of the courts to be quoted in the House of Lords. In fact, he was quoted on several occasions. As a lawyer, if you had a unique, difficult or different problem and you went to one of the judgments of the former Chief Justice, you would always find that he dealt with it *in obiter*. If there was a unique matter in one of his judgments in which he was interested—and he was interested in many—he always used to say, 'Well, it is really not necessary to decide this point in this case, but I think really the answer is so and so.' It was in later years, in 1975, as pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, that the various courts around Australia grasped hold of his *obiter*, when the House of Lords followed one of his minority judgments.

He was a man who would not purport to have been a radical in his day, but he was. He was there during the period when there was progressive law reform right through the 1970s. Initially, he was with a conservative Supreme Court. As time went on, the Supreme Court became more progressive and eventually his views were followed. For example, in

relation to the laws of obscenity and indecency, the Supreme Court was very conservative before his coming. His minority judgments were later followed by the court, and the law was changed, as we know.

In an historical sense, he was truly a renaissance man, and they are men who love culture and civilisation. He was certainly that. As has already been said, he was a great classical scholar. He spoke Greek fluently; in fact, he taught himself the language in six months. One of the greatest tragedies to South Australia was that he retired when he did. He was given medical advice that he should retire because of a heart condition, but that turned out to be bad advice. It was a great loss for South Australia that he did not stay on the bench longer than he did. The other loss is that he was never appointed to the High Court, because he would have made an exceptional member to that court. I join in supporting the motion, and I send my condolences to his brother.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.15 to 2.25 p.m.]

EUTHANASIA

Petitions signed by 134 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to maintain the present homicide law, which excludes euthanasia while maintaining the common law right of patients to refuse medical treatment, were presented by the Hon. D.S. Baker and Mrs Penfold.

Petitions received.

Petitions signed by 107 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to oppose any measure to legislate for voluntary euthanasia were presented by Messrs Bass, Blevins, Rann and Venning.

Petitions received.

GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

A petition signed by 950 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to prevent the sale of the Grange Primary School and site and preserve the buildings for community use was presented by Mr Condous.

Petition received.

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

A petition signed by 286 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to recognise the cultural and educational importance of Old Parliament House and support its continuation as a museum for the people of South Australia was presented by the Hon. M.D. Rann.

Petition received.

EDUCATION FUNDING

A petition signed by 4 358 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to stop any further reduction in the public education budget and to provide sufficient funds to restore class sizes and curriculum

choices to previous levels was presented by the Hon. M.D. Rann.

Petition received.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The **SPEAKER** laid on the table the supplementary report of the Auditor-General for the year ending 30 June 1994.

Ordered that report be printed.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that written answers to the following questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 128, 141, 145, 171, 172, 207, 211 to 217 and 222.

REPUBLIC

The **Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier)**: I wish to make a ministerial statement. The Government has taken a number of important decisions about involving the people of South Australia in the process of constitutional change. Consistently, the Liberal Party has expressed the view that the people should be consulted throughout this process—not just at the end of it. This is because of our strong belief that, whatever constitutional arrangements we have, they must be a uniting influence on our State and our nation. Unity is built by involving people in the decisions which affect them, and not by imposing decisions upon them. Empowerment of people is at the very hub of our democracy.

Whatever any one of us in this House may think about our future constitutional arrangements, it is not as important as ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. It was for this reason that the South Australian parliamentary Liberal Party in March 1993 announced its unanimous support for a people's convention to fully examine the issues associated with Australia becoming a republic. At the same time, I announced that whether South Australia should become a republic would be decided by the people, not by the politicians. In Government, we have continued to support a people's convention as a necessary step in the process of consulting the people about our future constitutional arrangements. There are other steps essential to a process of full and effective consultation.

Before a people's convention is held, or any subsequent referendum, national or State, it will be important to encourage wide public debate in South Australia about our future constitutional arrangements because they will affect all of us. Preserving the independence of South Australia in our Federation is one key issue. A task force headed by the Hon. Jamie Irwin has been working to identify the issues which South Australians need to consider if there is to be constitutional change, and how the public can be consulted about them. He has been the South Australian representative on the Centenary of Federation Constitutional Committee as well. I commend Jamie Irwin and his group for their work.

An important recommendation of the group is that the approaching centenary of Federation should be taken as an opportunity to consider a number of issues—not just who should be our head of state, important though this may be. Accordingly, the Government has decided to establish a South Australian Constitutional Advisory Council. The

council will comprise about 10 members and work for the next 12 months on terms of reference as follows:

To investigate and report and make recommendations on:

1. Effective constitutional arrangements of Government structures which will maintain and strengthen the Federal system of Government and sustain national unity and regional diversity into the twenty-first century with particular emphasis on South Australia and its role.

2. If the Commonwealth ceases to be a constitutional monarchy, how should a head of state be appointed; what should be the role of the States in such an appointment; what should be the powers and duties of the head of state; and how should they be provided for?

3(i) The implications for South Australia if the Commonwealth were to cease to be a constitutional monarchy and, in particular:

(a) Would it be realistic and appropriate for South Australia to remain a constitutional monarchy?

(b) Should South Australia still have a head of state?

(c) In those circumstances, how should a head of state be appointed and what should be the powers and duties of the head of state and how should they be provided for?

(ii) What democratic process should be considered for effecting change if any is appropriate or necessary?

4. The adequacy, or otherwise, of the current distribution of power between the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories and local government; what changes, if any, should be made; and what are some practical ways of bringing about desired change?

5(i) What consultation should occur with States and Territories with respect to treaties which the Commonwealth proposes to enter into and which may affect States and Territories?

(ii) The use by the Commonwealth Government of the external affairs power and whether any and, if so, what mechanisms should be put in place to ensure an appropriate balance between State and Federal powers can be maintained and how such balance can be achieved.

6. Ways of ensuring adequate consultation with the people and their participation in decision-making in the above matters.

Members will note that the terms of reference do not require the committee to advise on whether Australia should become a republic. Ultimately, as I have said, that must be a matter for the people of South Australia. What this committee will do is to ensure effective consultation with the people of South Australia about issues associated with becoming a republic and other constitutional arrangements. The result of this work will inform the South Australian Government on the position it should take at any national convention and subsequent Federal and State referenda. The Government proposes that this committee should comprise people reflecting a range of backgrounds and expertise. There will be consultation with the Opposition and the Australian Democrats about the membership of the committee.

To ensure wide consultation with the people of South Australia, the committee will initiate public meetings in metropolitan and regional centres and on Aboriginal lands. It will publish papers following its examination of the various issues within the terms of reference. The Government intends to announce the membership of the committee within the next six weeks. I commend this initiative to the House as one which seeks to ensure that these important issues are fully

explored through balanced, community-wide debate in South Australia.

GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier): I wish to make another ministerial statement. I am making a number of changes to equip the Government and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for the next stage in the Government's reform program. A key feature is a different style of management attuned to the 1990s and beyond to ensure more responsive Government. Mr Mike Schilling has helped to take the Government and the department very successfully through the early stages of the Government's program. For that I thank him. He played an important role in the transition from the election—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: He played an important role in the transition after the election in the establishment of processes to restore the Government's financial position and in reducing the size of Government employment. He has helped to achieve the much needed public sector management legislation.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: And now you'll sack him!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: However, there is now a need for my Government and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to focus on new priorities and a new management style. As a result, I have advised Mr Schilling that I have commenced the process for his contract to be terminated. This morning I advised the department's executives that Mr Ian Kowalick would take over as Acting Chief Executive, pending the appointment of a new CEO. Under a new structure, the department will now focus more on long-term State strategies for economic and social development, linking Cabinet deliberations with long-term strategic issues, capitalising on microeconomic reform opportunities, and coordinating and monitoring the activities of public sector agencies rather than centralising them, and ensuring that high standards of responsibility and accountability apply across the whole of Government. I do not need to remind the House of the terrible financial legacy that my Government inherited, including inadequate accountability and a lack of focus on achieving results.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: So, you have sacked him; you have sacked him.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Necessarily, in the first 18 months, much of the time of Ministers has been devoted to putting our financial house in order. The budget now before the House confirms that this is being achieved. Cabinet has now assessed the progress that we have been able to make since the election and the style of management required to ensure that the Government continues to build on the achievements already made through a world-class public sector applying modern management. In this, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet must play a leadership role, and the changes I am making will ensure that the department has the capacity to fulfil this vital role.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:
By the Deputy Premier (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Summary Offences—Dangerous Area Declarations and Road Block Establishment Authorisations, 1 January to 31 March 1995.

Regulations under the following Acts—
Cooperatives—Abolition of Advisory Council.
Fair Trading—Fee Increase.

Liquor Licensing—Dry areas—City of Noarlunga.
Rules of Court—Magistrates Court—Civil—Forms
Various.

By the Treasurer (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Financial Institutions Duty Act—Regulations—Revocation of Regulation No. 3.

By the Minister for Industrial Affairs (Hon. G.A. Ingerson)—

Construction Industry Long Service Leave Act—
Regulations—General.
Occupational Health and Safety—Code of Practice.

By the Minister for Health (Hon. M.H. Armitage)—

South Australian Health Commission Act—Regulations—
Fees to Medicare Patients.

By the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)—

Housing and Urban Development—Administrative
Arrangements Act—Regulations—
HomeStart Finance
South Australian Urban Projects Authority.

By the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)—

Rules of Racing—Racing Act—Harness Racing Board—
Barrier Positions.

By the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. D.S. Baker)—

South Australian Market Milk Equalisation Agreement.

By the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources (Hon. D.C. Wotton)—

Dog and Cat Management Act—Regulations—
Management of Animals.

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (Hon. R.B. Such)—

Department for Education and Children's Services—
Report, 1993-94.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I lay on the table a ministerial statement relating to the Public Trustee, made earlier today in another place by the Attorney-General.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Health): I wish to make a ministerial statement. I outline to the House details of the next step in the Government's continued reform agenda for disability services with the aim of ensuring improved service delivery to those South Australians who suffer a disability.

Historically, disability service providers have evolved from a diverse range of organisations, individuals, charities and religious organisations that recognised a need and set about trying to meet that need. As a result, the sector is characterised by a wide variety of management styles, philosophies and approaches.

The Government has already introduced Options Coordination, which will help people with a disability to guide the development of services, and today I announce the next step

in the process of reform. The reforms will make standards and quality in the sector more easily understood by clients, more transparent and, importantly, more accessible. This will enhance the accountability of service providers to the Government (which pays for the service) and to the clients (who use them). The reforms focus on three key areas.

First, the reforms will involve the development of common eligibility criteria across all disability groups, including the generation of information regarding support requirements. Secondly, the reforms will involve common assessment and recording of individual needs across all disability groups, allowing comparisons of levels of need, areas of demand and the relative efficiency of providers. This element should significantly enhance the matching of services with needs. Thirdly, the Government will develop maximum prices and benchmarks for all types of funded services. Funding and service agreements will be further developed, particularly to stipulate the outputs required for services in terms of both quality as well as quantity of service.

Once the various services provided to people with disabilities can be classified, a standard costing can then be allocated to them. In developing such a costing model, South Australian disability services will be at the forefront of national and international reform in disability services. I assure the House that a key element in developing these protocols and benchmarks is to focus on standards and quality of service. I consider that the project will do as much to increase the standards and quality of disability services as to increase their efficiency.

The results that we will be looking for at the end of this process will be: limited resources used wisely rather than being dissipated across clients whose disability does not involve significant need; clients receiving their share of resources in accord with their need; individual care plans ensuring that clients receive their supports in an efficient and effective manner; and a clearer picture of demand across the disability sector providing the base for the design and location of new and improved services to meet service gaps. Throughout that process, the role and function of each agency will be assessed and efficiencies and savings will be identified.

The recent budget reaffirmed the Government's commitment to attempt to meet unmet need in the disability area by once again not requiring disability services to contribute to the Government's saving target and by the pursuit of an efficiency dividend. These reforms will release savings from historical arrangements which have perpetuated inefficient practices. The Government considers that, over two financial years, the reform process will yield efficiencies of at least 3.8 per cent which is equal to more than \$5 million. We consider that this target is readily achievable and that as the reforms are fully implemented further efficiencies will be made.

As I meet with disability groups and people with a disability, the focus invariably is on the fact that they need more and better services. For example, while some seek greater independence for disability administration, a much greater concern is that administration should not divert resources away from service delivery.

The Government has recently received the report from the Disability Services Act Review which I now table. I acknowledge the considerable efforts of those associated with the review. The Government will be ensuring that the wide-ranging recommendations of the review which impact on the delivery and monitoring of services are considered in the context of structural reform. However, this Government's

focus is on producing better, more efficient services, not on changing administrative structures unless they directly result in better services. That is why the Government does not see the need to establish a separate Disability Department.

The present Disability Services Office is the policy and funding focus in disability services. It is managed by its own executive. The independence of the Disability Services Office is so well recognised that a common perception is that the Disability Services Office has no formal relationship with the Health Commission.

There are a number of other recommendations which reinforce the direction the Government is taking with the reforms that I have just announced, namely, in terms of standards and accountability. The review will provide a timely input into these developments. As most of the recommendations do not need legislative change to be implemented, the Government will not be introducing legislation at this stage.

I reiterate that the Government is determined to address unmet need in disability services. In particular, we are determined that the efficiency dividend is realised and applied to the areas of greatest need. The reforms outlined today will be another significant step towards the goal of ensuring that people with a disability receive the support they need to be full participants in our community.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I wish to make a ministerial statement. As a result of information I have received from the Chairman of the TAB board concerning the decision to publish a TABForm newspaper, I have written to the Chairman today requesting a response by Thursday morning of this week. My letter to the Chairman, Mr Cousins, expresses my serious concern about conflict in information the Chairman has provided to me about the financial implications of the decision to publish the newspaper.

I have also raised with the Chairman his explanation of the choice of the consultant, John Brennan, to review the management, program performance and future directions of 5AA. I have been alarmed to be advised that the consultant appointed is the father of the current program manager at 5AA, Peter Brennan. The Chairman did not advise me of the obvious potential for a conflict of interest arising from this appointment. I have advised the Chairman that I consider his explanation as totally unacceptable that the father-son relationship is not 'material' to the consultancy. I intend to make a further statement to the House on Thursday after receiving a response from the Chairman.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I bring up the report of the Public Works Committee on the Private Sector Provision of Engineering and Water Supply Department Water Filtration and Structure and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Given that the Premier has just thanked and sacked his head of department, Mr Mike Schilling, and given the comments made about the Chairman of the TAB by the Minister just a few moments ago, do the General Manager and the TAB Board, which unanimously agreed to publish its own form guide, still have the full support of the Premier? The six-member TAB Board which made this decision includes Liberal Government appointees Mr Mark Kelly and Mr Malcolm Fricker as well as Mr Rob Hodge, who represents the SAJC.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Chairman of the TAB Board, Mr Cousins, had a hand-delivered letter sent to me at 6 p.m. last Thursday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As soon as I received that letter just after 6 p.m. I read it. It was in a sealed envelope on my desk. I saw the claim in the letter that, by publishing its own newspaper, the TAB would save \$1 million. I immediately asked the Minister what he knew about this. In particular, I asked him whether the claim of saving \$1 million had been substantiated. He indicated that he had not been given the detailed financial analysis as to how it would achieve the \$1 million saving. I asked the Minister what action he proposed to take. He indicated that he intended to ring Mr Cousins immediately to ask that no action be taken to implement the decision of the TAB Board and that it would be a ministerial instruction to the Chairman of the board.

The Minister rang me back within one hour to indicate that he had spoken to the Chairman of the board, Mr Cousins, who told him that the contract for the publication and production of a private newspaper by the TAB (its own newspaper) had already been signed that afternoon. The Minister then indicated to me that he had some evidence that would suggest that the claim of a saving of \$1 million, as outlined in the Chairman's letter to me, was in fact contradictory to some evidence given to the board. As a result, the Minister met with some staff on Saturday. The Minister prepared a letter which went to the Chairman of the board asking for certain background papers and other substantiation of what led to the decision by the TAB Board to produce its own newspaper.

On Monday that information arrived and, in particular, the papers presented to the board showed that, instead of saving \$1 million in 1995-96, the TAB was likely to lose money on producing its own newspaper in 1995-96 when all factors were taken into consideration. Some of these additional factors included the cost of delivering the newspapers and the anticipated drop in the turnover of the TAB; and, in the background paper put to the board, the anticipated drop amounted to the equivalent of \$15 million a year. As a result, the Minister asked for further information, including the board minutes of the TAB Board. The Minister has been examining those aspects and, as the Minister told the House this afternoon, a subsequent letter has now been sent to the Chair of the TAB Board asking him to clarify further points in relation to what appears to be some very serious conflict between the information put in the letter to me and the

information in a similar letter sent to the Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister.

Here is a TAB Board Chairman who is so keen to disseminate information to everyone that he sent the Leader of the Opposition a copy of a letter that he sent to the Premier and the Minister. Here we have a Chairman who appears to be answerable just as much to the shadow Minister as he is to the Minister, even though the Act makes it quite clear that he is answerable to the Minister. The Minister is following up a series of matters, including the fact that the Minister asked for a complete review of 5AA and its financial position.

I share the Minister's concern about the appointment of the father of the program manager of 5AA to carry out that consultancy. I believe that that is inappropriate. It is another matter in the range of issues that have been put to the Chair of the TAB Board. The Government is waiting for a response from the Chair of the TAB Board. I indicate that, on the information laid before me so far, it appears that I have been misled as Premier of this State by the Chair of the TAB Board.

Mr Foley: The whole TAB Board.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: By the Chair of the TAB Board.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart is out of order.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It would appear that the member for Hart feels that he can speak on behalf of the TAB Board and the Chair of the TAB Board. I find it strange that the member for Hart is defending the Chair of the TAB Board when, quite clearly, the Chair of the TAB Board told me as Premier that there would be a saving of \$1 million, yet his own board minutes and background papers show that it would make a loss in 1995-96. This is the State Bank revisited by the Labor Party of South Australia. I am amazed that the Labor Party in this House is defending a board which is misrepresenting the facts to the Government of the day.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Minister and the Government will make sure that they get to the bottom of this, and they will make sure that the Chairman of the TAB Board is properly accountable to the Minister and the Government.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that honourable members remain a little calm.

MULTIMEDIA INDUSTRY

Ms GREIG (Reynell): Will the Premier advise the House what initiatives the Government is taking to develop a globally-focused multi-media industry for South Australia?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: A multi-media national conference is being held in Adelaide at present with over 500 delegates attending it. Those people who understand what the information technology revolution is about would know that one of its most important components is the multi-media area. It is therefore of some significance that Adelaide has been chosen as the location for the second national multi-media conference. In opening the conference on Sunday evening, I outlined the South Australian Government's strategies to ensure that we establish a substantial multi-media industry in this State. It is part of our IT 2000 vision, under which we

said that we would identify five key component industries or sectors where South Australia had to be a world leader. Multi-media is one of those sectors.

To help build up the multi-media industry in South Australia, I announced three important initiatives, among others. The first is that we will establish here in South Australia a cooperative multi-media centre—a CMC—in conjunction with private industry, and we expect \$4.5 million to be spent in that centre in the first three years. It will be a joint State Government/private industry venture—a very important one. I see enormous support coming from the private sector, because the private sector sees the chance for this State to be a national and regional leader in this field.

Secondly, the Government has decided to set up a multi-media precinct where we bring together all of the parties—the commercial companies and others—who wish to come to the precinct and set up a 'hot bed' for people involved in developing a multi-media industry. This is important in bringing together a cluster of creative people in South Australia, together with technical people because, to develop a multi-media industry, it is important to bring together these two key components.

The third important initiative is that we will establish a direct link into the multi-media industry of Silicon Valley. Over 60 000 people are involved in the multi-media industry in Silicon Valley. We want to tap our multi-media centre into Silicon Valley and into the very substantial companies and large numbers of people involved in that industry there. Out of that we believe that we will achieve a professional exchange, joint content and training programs, joint research into interactive liaison, and interactive multi-media platforms research. I think that these three initiatives will enable South Australia to take a very bold step towards becoming recognised as a crucial centre for the multi-media industry in Australia but, more importantly, it will bring about an international focus within the South-East Asian region.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Why did the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing fail to inform the parliamentary Estimates Committee and the Premier that he had received a TAB Board minute early in June which detailed the proposal to contract a printing company to produce a TAB form guide and why at no stage did the Minister or his officers question its contents? The Opposition has been provided with information that the Minister was given a TAB Board minute early in June (two weeks before the contract was signed) that contained a detailed summary of proposals to develop the TAB's own form guide. The document contained five full pages of discussion and analysis. It included details of the delivery and collection of form guides, market research, statistical information, options for contracting out, and a detailed financial analysis. On 23 June, the Minister told the Estimates Committee and the Premier that he had no knowledge of this information.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I thank the honourable member for his question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: Let us get some facts on the record.

Mr Foley: Yes, we'd like that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: On 7 June, I held my monthly meeting with the Chairman and the General Manager of the TAB. At that meeting, I had a briefing note, which was prepared and presented to me before the meeting and which listed many topics for discussion. Amongst those topics for discussion was a racing information cost rationalisation and a further briefing note dated, I think, 30 May. That briefing note raised more compelling reasons why we should not go down the track of having a newspaper than reasons why we should. The summary of the meeting with me states:

The question is an extremely complex one to address. Attached for your information is a paper presented to the board outlining options and their impact.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart has asked his question. I suggest that he listen to the answer.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: It then goes on to say that the matter was extremely confidential and that they knew that I would keep it to myself. It states further:

The risk factors in alternative strategies to those currently employed need to be carefully considered before adopting another direction.

That was the tenor of the discussion. I then referred to the paper, and I will quote two or three of the warnings that are contained in it.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I don't have to read it out because obviously the honourable member has a copy, but I will read it for the benefit of other members of the House. It states:

The strong support for the quality form guides printed in the *Advertiser* and the home delivery suggests that our customers would not find the transition to having to collect a TAB newspaper form guide easy and would produce a negative impact on turnover. This would also probably require the SA TAB to open staff agencies earlier at an additional cost. The need to have to collect form guides from agencies would have a negative effect on telephone betting. A 2 per cent drop in turnover would wipe out projected savings in providing form guides.

That document was given to me by the Chairman of the board, and the discussion that took place that afternoon was based on the fact that the board had this on its agenda. As everyone knows, it had been on the agenda for about 18 months. It was briefly referred to. The very subjects on the agenda urged caution. The notes that were given to us stated that it was a matter of high risk. That is the document that I was given. The next contact made with me after 7 June was on Wednesday 21 June when the General Manager telephoned me to advise that the TAB was close to finalising arrangements. That is the hiatus. I immediately said to him—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: If you would like to be quiet, you will hear the story. You have been fabricating in the media for the past few days. You will hear the story.

Mr Foley: You are incompetent.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: Well, who is incompetent?

The SPEAKER: Order! This is the first sitting day after a break. I suggest to all members that they take a deep breath and contain themselves. Every member who has his or her name on the list will be given the opportunity to ask their question, and the Ministers are entitled to answer them. If members continue to defy the Chair, the Chair has the discretion to take the names of those members off the question list.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I requested the General Manager to go back to the *Advertiser* for further negotiations. He said that he would do so. I refer members to a letter from the Chairman of the TAB which I received on 27 June. In that letter, he refers to the fact that on 21 June he telephoned me. He states, *inter alia*:

He has further reported that you—
that is me—

inquired as to whether he would be getting back to the *Advertiser*, and he replied that, although they had confirmed that they had quoted their lowest price, he would do so.

So it was confirmed in writing by the Chairman of the TAB that I requested that the TAB go back to the *Advertiser*, and he replied that it would do so. So, in the initial contact, I was given a document that was full of doubt and, in my view, it was not going anywhere. The next contact that I had was the telephone conversation in which I requested that the TAB go back to the *Advertiser*, and it acknowledged that it would do so. The next contact that I had was the letter that all members received about the \$1 million which it was alleged would be saved by the TAB if it took that particular course of action.

I would have thought that, instead of asking this question today, the honourable member should ask why his own Leader was misled by this allegation. All we had was the information in the letter, which stated that there would be a saving of \$1 million, and on 30 May we had a document which insinuated that there could be a possible \$2 million loss to telephone betting and the like. When this letter arrived the following day, I immediately contacted the Chairman of the TAB that evening and asked him to hold any further action so that Cabinet could have an opportunity to look at it. He told me that the contract had, in fact, been signed.

PIPELINES AUTHORITY

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Treasurer inform the House of progress in the sale of the assets of the Pipelines Authority of South Australia and the final details of the settlement with Tenneco Gas?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is with great pleasure that I announced to the House the successful completion of the sale to Tenneco Gas of the Pipelines Authority of South Australia. The contracts were signed last Friday morning, and it was with some delight that moneys to the tune of \$304 million were transferred automatically to the coffers of the Government. In addition, I received a dividend cheque from PASA of \$17.3 million. It is a successful conclusion to what I believe has been a very professionally managed process, and great credit should go to the Asset Management Task Force for the way in which it conducted the sale. It is pleasing from a number of points of view, not only the dollars involved but also the economic development that will flow as a result of Tenneco being the owner of our pipeline, together with opportunities for PASA employees who will be able to work in a more global situation than they have in the past.

There were a number of complications, and a number of resolutions had to be finalised prior to that event. Of course, that included the completion of the new gas haulage contracts with PASA's customers, namely, SAGASCO and the Electricity Trust of South Australia, as well as the negotiation of various contractual arrangements with the Cooper Basin producers, including the major interest holder, Santos. A transitional services agreement has been put in place to

provide a smooth transition of employees from the public to the private sector. Tenneco has placed offers with the employees of PASA: they were placed last Wednesday. Employees have the opportunity to make up their mind over the two weeks.

I put on record my gratitude to the staff and the executive of PASA for their professionalism and their assistance during this whole process. It would not have been possible if the situation had been aggravated by dispute. A great deal of professionalism and hard work was applied to the process by the employees of PASA and the Asset Management Task Force under the able leadership of Mr Roger Sexton. Tenneco is an excellent employer, as we would recognise, already having major employers in South Australia in the automotive area. Munro shock absorbers and Walker mufflers are the two major items that they produce here, and both are of a world class standard.

Congratulations to all those concerned for the contribution they made and in terms of the assistance provided by the Opposition to ensure that the legislation was passed without difficulty. Just as the Moomba to Adelaide pipeline was an important development in the State's history at that time, the sale of this asset should be seen as a vital step in the globalisation of South Australia's economy, particularly our gas industry.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Following the Minister's admission that he was provided with a detailed report on 7 June that caused him concern, and given that the General Manager of the TAB, Mr Edgar, telephoned the Minister on 21 June to advise him of the TAB Board's intentions, why did the Minister fail to direct Mr Edgar and the board not to proceed with the form guide proposal until after the Cabinet, the Premier and he had had the opportunity to consider it?

Mr Edgar, General Manager of the TAB Board, rang the Minister 24 hours before the contract was signed to inform him of the board's intention. We have also now been advised that the Minister had in his possession for some two weeks a report that caused him concern. The Minister made no further contact with the TAB until 24 hours later, after he and the Premier received a letter from the Chairman of the TAB formally advising them of the new arrangements.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: If the honourable member had listened, he would have learned that that document of 30 May involved purely concepts. It raised areas of concern. It was just an idea. There was nothing in it that could be treated as genuine financial information. In fact, we did not get any genuine financial information until the Saturday after the Estimates Committee. As a result of the Estimates Committee, we got a copy of the contract. On Saturday morning, I sat down and prepared a series of questions to the TAB, and that included seeking additional information, when we asked the question, 'What financial advice was available to the board when it made its decision on 17 June?' As a result of that letter, at last we got back some factual information that should have been made available to me right from the start. There is no earthly reason why I should not have been provided with the factual information that the board used on 17 June when it made its decision. This is what we found in that information when we started, by direction—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. H. Allison: Or did you get it first?

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: Well, you might have.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: There is every chance that the Opposition might already have had that document. I certainly had to get, by direction, that document. I will read two paragraphs of the document. This is the information—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD:—that the board members had available to them when they made that decision which was not passed onto me:

We estimate that in the initial stages turnover would be impacted. Research indicates a negative effect of 2.5 per cent. We estimate that this could be approximately 5 per cent or a \$25 million turnover, but this would reduce as customer acceptance of the TAB form guide increases. In the medium to long term, it is considered there will be little, if any, residual effect. Lost revenue in year 1 would most likely exceed the savings in expenditure. If the projection of 5 per cent negative effect is correct, \$3 million revenue would be lost compared to a savings in expenditure of at least \$1.36 million. A 2.5 per cent reduction in turnover would result in us being close to break even in year 1.

That was there: in the meantime, the Premier—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart has had a fair go. The Chair does not want to speak to him again.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I would like briefly to refer to the replies that I received subsequent to that when I wrote back to the Chairman of the TAB, soliciting further answers to questions. It particularly related, because I was trying to ascertain the reasons why the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and others had been misled. In the Chairman's letter of the twenty-sixth to me, they factored in a 2.9 per cent loss of turnover. The letter states:

The board has conservatively factored into calculations for turnover in 1995-96 a possible negative effect of \$15 million or 2.9 per cent.

So, they were starting to plan on a negative effect, although they had written to us the previous week, just before Estimates Committees, and said that they were going to save \$1 million. I then wrote back to the TAB just to get that matter clarified, and the goal post shifted again. A day later, I got another letter back from the TAB, stating:

In consideration of the budget for 1995-96, the board have set the probable scenario at a loss of \$5 million turnover.

So, overnight, the reduction came from \$15 million to \$5 million, or from an \$11.74 million loss down to a \$580 000 loss. The goal post is starting to shift. It makes it very difficult for me as the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, relying on the Chairman to provide you with correct financial information when, every time you write to him, they shift the goal post and we see such a massive disparity in the numbers being presented to the Government.

TOURISM, UNITED STATES

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Will the Minister for Tourism inform the House of progress being made by the South Australian Tourism Commission in promoting South Australia in the United States, and how does any improvement in our position in the United States compare with the number of visitors we are receiving from other parts of world? The Minister knows that the American market has been one that has traditionally been difficult for all parts of

Australia to permeate. I wonder what the Minister can report to the House on this matter.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It is interesting to put some very positive news before the House. I thank the honourable member for his expanding interest in the area of tourism. The latest figures show there has been a 32 per cent increase in tourism numbers from the United States, up to 34 200, compared with a national increase of about 3 per cent. That is quite an amazing increase to come into South Australia. It is due to the fact that, for the first time in the United States, we have spent a lot of time focusing on the rural outback on our ecotourism, and in particular on food and wine. Those sorts of experiences have really become very important to the American visitor.

The commission and its north American representatives have undertaken significant consumer advertising, media publicity and industry marketing programs which have achieved a much greater reach in this hitherto difficult market. The US experience has also been reflected in the fact that South Australia outshone the rest of Australia for the first time in international visitation stakes in the latest visitor survey figures.

The IVS figures show a 22 per cent increase in the number of international visitors to South Australia last year, and that is far in excess of the 12 per cent national increase. These figures represent the first increase South Australia has experienced in five years and the highest growth recorded by any Australian State in 1994. Increases have occurred in terms of visitors from such countries as Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand, France and the United Kingdom, and the increase has been about 20 per cent.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing.

Mr Brindal: Give it a rest.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir, for your protection from the interjections of the member for Unley.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I suggest that the honourable member ask his question.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir; I will not be deterred by these tactics to frustrate me.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY: I shifted the goal post.

The SPEAKER: I suggest that the honourable member ask his question.

Mr FOLEY: Will the Minister confirm that the TAB had been acting with his full support and knowledge for over 12 months in developing plans to produce its own form guide; that he had been provided with constant briefings by the TAB Board and management during that period; and that at a meeting prior to 7 June he was even offered an opportunity to view a mock-up of the TAB's new form guide? The Opposition has also been advised that over six months ago the Minister had approved a five year business plan for the TAB which recommended options to produce its own form guide that would have ended the present arrangements with the *Advertiser*.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I will make this statement only once more: to my knowledge, general discussion has

occurred within the racing industry for at least 18 months, and maybe two or three years, about this whole question of whether—

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD:—as the Deputy Premier says, for about five years—we should or should not have an independent newspaper, such as the one in Western Australia. Anyone associated with racing knows that, but we also know that it has to stack up. The warning bells were in that document of 30 May and spelt out very clearly what could happen if they went down that particular track. As far as I was concerned, there was no evidence to indicate that they were going to make that move and, if they were going to make that move, one would have expected them to come back and give me some hard, financial information on which that move would be based.

The briefing paper of the thirtieth was full of all the problems associated with going down that track, and all the honourable member is trying to do is to muddy the waters and establish the fact that I had a document. It contained ideas and conceptual plans as to where they were going and the warning bells were there that it was high risk stuff. Everyone acknowledged that it was high risk stuff, and it did not raise much interest from me because of that. If they had been responsible as a TAB Board and a TAB administration, they would have come to me when they had that document prepared for the meeting on the seventeenth and said, 'Minister, we have prepared this detailed briefing note for the board on 17 June; here it is', and let me have a look at it. However, I did not get that: the very first contact I had from the TAB administration after it had given me that 30 May document, which was full of the problems, was a telephone call from the Manager of the TAB—

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD:—and the result of that telephone call is on the public record.

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development report to the House on any discussions he might have had with the new Northern Territory Chief Minister, Mr Shane Stone, about the proposed Alice Springs to Darwin railway, and what plans have been put in place in South Australia to try to bring this project closer to reality? The Wran committee recently released a report highlighting the predicted costs and freight needed to make this proposed railway viable.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The South Australian Government, through the Economic Development Authority, and the Department of Industry Development in the Northern Territory are to work together cooperatively to look at the Wran committee report and, in particular, the consultant's reports upon which the recommendations were based to do further work and assessment. Indeed, further work and assessment is required, because it seems clear to me that, whilst the Wran committee has given a tick to the railway line in due course, it has been prepared to discount the fact that on economically viable grounds—that is, with a positive cash flow—it could be built in the short term well before the year 2005.

If you look at the report, you see that it is based on a number of assumptions, one being a discount rate of 8 per

cent, which happens to be the Commonwealth discount rate in assessing projects. The discount rate in South Australia is 7 per cent and in Queensland it is 6 per cent. If you were to use either the Queensland or the South Australian discount rate, you would get a positive cash flow now out of the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link. It is also predicated on the basis of 3 per cent growth in the Northern Territory. However, I refer members to the ABS figures to March of this current financial year, which show that growth in the Northern Territory has been 7.38 per cent. Once again, that is a factor that would tip the line over to being in a positive cash flow situation now, not later.

In addition, this whole project is sensitive to freight movement. If you have a look at the Wran committee report, you see that it has made a judgment based on 1994 figures. Once again, the ABS figures for 1994-95 show a minimum 20 per cent and possibly a 30 per cent increase in freight rates and volumes between Adelaide and Darwin. Another interesting point in the analysis is that the project has been evaluated as a Tarcoola to Darwin line. I do not need to point out to the House that Tarcoola is not a great source of freight running to the Northern Territory. It ought to be assessed as an Adelaide to Darwin line and not a Tarcoola to Darwin line.

Also, we have seen an independent consultant's report prepared by Travers Morgan, and it relates to major developments that could be stimulated by the provision of a railway line. It goes on to note that the South Australian steel project is one such project that would add some \$240 million to the resource cost savings that have been identified already. The Travers Morgan report identifies this potential, yet it steps back from including it in the public interest benefits in the calculations of the assumptions of the viability of the line. Once again, we have another set of circumstances which clearly indicates that this line has the possibility to generate a positive cash flow now rather than waiting until the year 2005.

On the assessment that has been put forward, there is a benefit cost ratio of 78¢; that is, for every dollar invested in the infrastructure, there is a 78¢ return based on the very conservative estimates. It ignores the benefits to which I have referred regarding mineral prospects in the northern part of South Australia; it discounts entirely the opening up to Australia of a new door to the international markets of Asia; and it says that the opening of the line will attract only some 5 per cent of container traffic out of the ports of Melbourne and Sydney. If you cut a minimum of four to five days on a container going from Melbourne to Sydney to Singapore, the world's largest container port, you must be able to attract more than 5 per cent of that traffic to the rail link. So the land bridging component has been discounted in a very conservative way.

We propose to access the further consultant's report upon which this assumption has been made and, as a joint South Australian Government-Northern Territory Government delegation, we intend to approach the Commonwealth and say, 'The Wran committee has identified this project as being important in the long term—that is, 2005: based on the assumptions contained in this report but in reviewing the consultant's report upon which these assumptions have been made, we can demonstrate the viability, that is, a positive cash flow, of that railway line in the short term, not the long term, and therefore there ought to be a commitment to build now, not after the year 2005.'

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):

Given that the Premier today would not give his full support to TAB Board members Fricker, Kelly and Hodge, who voted for the new form guide, does he still have full confidence in the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, given the Minister's role in the introduction of the new TAB Form guide? The Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing told the Estimates Committee that, when he received a letter from the Chairman of the TAB on 22 June advising him of the new contract, he had no knowledge of what was in that contract. On 6 April this year the Minister told Parliament that as a Minister he '[did] not necessarily read every piece of paper that comes across [his] desk'. Did that happen again, and will the Premier thank the Minister in the same way that he has thanked Mr Schilling today?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: To start with, the Leader of the Opposition misquoted what I said earlier. I said I had a lack of confidence in the Chair of the TAB, Mr Cousins. I have confidence in the Minister. I give the House further vital information which has just—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I suggest honourable members listen to this, because some vital information has just come to hand this afternoon, which shows why I lack confidence in the Chair of the TAB Board.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Listen. I related to the House earlier that I opened the letter from the Chair of the TAB Board at 6 o'clock. I left my office at 5.15 that afternoon: the letter had not arrived. When I returned to my desk at 6 o'clock it had just been delivered. I found out this afternoon that a letter containing exactly the same information was faxed to the member for Hart at 4.23 that same afternoon. So, the Chair of the TAB—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Hart.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Speaker, the Chair of the TAB Board apparently thought it was more important to send a fax from the SATAB—as it appears on the letterhead—to the 'Hon. Mr K. Foley, Opposition Minister, Recreation, Sport and Racing', at 4.23 in the afternoon; and that I should receive a copy at 6 p.m. It is quite clear that the member for Hart is now the political wing of the Chair of the TAB Board.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Chair of the TAB Board apparently thinks it is more important to tell the member for Hart what the TAB Board is doing about producing its own newspaper, rather than letting me know as Premier of this State. That is the very problem that South Australia had with the State Bank. I heard what the member for Giles said when this issue was raised a few minutes ago. The member for Giles interjected across the House, 'That's exactly the problem that Bannon was having with the board of the State Bank'—and it is. I will read to the House what the Chair of the board has said in two subsequent letters. On 26 June this year he sent a letter to the Minister stating:

The board has conservatively factored into calculations for turnover—

that is, for the TAB Board—

in 1995-96 a possible negative effect of \$15 million or 2.9 per cent. That is for 1995-96. One day later the Chair of that same board wrote again to the Minister and said:

In considering the budget for 1995-96, the board has set the probable scenario at a loss of \$5 million turnover.

In other words, in just 24 hours the loss went from \$15 million to \$5 million. That is totally unacceptable from any board of any statutory authority of South Australia, and I will not put up with a board Chairman deliberately misrepresenting the facts to me and to his Minister. Furthermore, I find it absolutely shabby that the Chairman of the board, Mr Cousins, should send a copy of his letter to the member for Hart one and a half hours earlier than he bothers to deliver it to me as Premier. I make it quite clear that, like the Minister, I am awaiting the response from the Chair of the TAB Board to the letter that has been sent to him today so that this Government can consider what further action should then be taken.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Can the Minister for Health assure the House that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is continuing to provide high quality service to the people of the western suburbs? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the House, I will fix up the member for Spence. Last Thursday I was contacted by a concerned elderly citizen who said that a leaflet had been distributed to her from the Port Adelaide Community Health Centre—which is set up with robots of the Opposition—stating that Queen Elizabeth Hospital would be closed in a few years and another one would be built at The Levels. Can the Minister expand on this matter?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I thank the member for Lee for his question: he is a continual advocate for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which as we know is very close to his electorate. I am delighted to inform the House that Queen Elizabeth Hospital will continue to provide its high quality services to the people in the western suburbs. It has done so for many years, and it will continue to do so. I was very disturbed to see that quite obviously fallacious flier from the Port Adelaide Community Health Centre. I was also very disturbed to hear about some serious allegations being spread by the member for Elizabeth—that the Queen Elizabeth—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Yes, the member for Elizabeth. The member for Elizabeth was spreading some very serious allegations that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital allegedly was providing services at a standard less than we in South Australia have come to expect. In fact, I was alerted to a situation on 16 June that borders on slapstick worthy of the Keystone Cops (although, given the honourable member's ideological stance, slapstick worthy of the Marx Brothers is more likely). However, it appears that the member for Elizabeth wanted to attack the Government and, hearing that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's three year quality standards accreditation was due to expire on 30 June, the honourable member sought to find something or other—anything would do—to suggest that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's exemplary standards were slipping under this Government.

So, on 15 June an Adelaide television station was contacted and told that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital risked losing its accreditation with the Australian Council on Health Care Standards and that the member for Elizabeth had several horror stories to back this up. This is an example, as we have

seen many times before, of the fact that the member for Elizabeth is the sort of person who believes that the plural of anecdote is data.

The television station, having heard this rumour and having been told by the member for Elizabeth about what was going on, telephoned the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and checked out the story. The station was told that the Australian Council on Health Care Standards had conducted an appraisal of the quality standards at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and had already certified the hospital as meeting in every respect the standards of quality it demanded for accreditation; the hospital had had its accreditation renewed for another three years and had received notice of that late last year. The television station in question dropped the story, but the key is that it forgot to tell the member for Elizabeth.

Further, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was concerned that its deservedly good name might be publicly sledged for doing something it had not done, so the hospital telephoned the member for Elizabeth to see whether it could check the facts about these alleged horror stories. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was told by the member for Elizabeth's press officer that it was none of its business: no, they were not interested in checking out the facts first. The next morning—16 June—the member for Elizabeth called a press conference at the QEHS and promptly told the only reporter who turned up that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital risked losing its accreditation. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital immediately produced its certificate of accreditation, which takes it through to 1998. What about the horror stories?

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As the member for Gordon says, he can provide hundreds of horror stories like this from Mount Gambier that are just as good. To this day, the QEHS has never been given any example of the names, dates or places of any of these so-called horror stories, and the only thing it can say positively is that it has never received anything about these complaints. Perhaps if the member for Elizabeth tells the hospital these details, if they exist, the hospital can check the facts, and if there is any basis of fact in the allegations it can then correct the situation. I encourage the member for Elizabeth to supply those details as soon as possible, and in future, if hospitals telephone and ask her to correct the facts, she will be very wise to do so.

POLICE, ENTERPRISE BARGAINING

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Will the Premier ensure that public safety is not compromised by ruling out the standing down of police officers as a result of work bans on red light cameras, speed cameras and other revenue-related measures?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Industrial negotiations are proceeding with the Police Association and the Department of Industrial Affairs, and, from what I have heard from the Minister for Industrial Affairs, I understand that those matters are proceeding and progressing well. Therefore, I see that it is very unlikely that any such industrial action will even occur.

CHILD ABUSE

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Will the Minister for Family and Community Services say what steps are being taken to try to curb the incidence of child abuse in South Australia? I note recent media reports that quoted an increase in the number of child abuse cases in this State. Could the reason

for this be that our society is becoming more and more tolerant of and conditioned to violence?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I thank the member for Hanson for his question because it provides the opportunity to get right a few of the facts on this subject. Let me say at the outset that I am deeply concerned at any increase in the number of reports of child abuse in this State, and I should like to take the opportunity provided by the honourable member to inform the House of strategies and plans being undertaken for the prevention of such abuse in this State and nationally and in inter-agency cooperation between Government departments, which is extremely important. I, too, have been very concerned about the misinformation that has recently been peddled in this State by the shadow Minister, the member for Elizabeth, in regard to a number of these issues. I would have thought that, with something as important as this subject, the action being taken by the State and Commonwealth Governments would be supported.

A national strategy for the prevention of child abuse and neglect has now been endorsed by all Australian Governments. South Australia fully supports this strategy and is represented on the National Child Protection Council. This strategy aims to create a climate in which the community can see the extent of this problem and also consider positive ways to deal with it. A State response is also being set up to complement this national strategy. The Director of Mission SA (Mr Paul Maddern) has agreed to my request to chair a joint Government and non-Government child protection working group to ensure that prevention programs are coordinated in South Australia, and it is important that that should happen.

In addition, my colleagues in health and education are meeting with me soon to formally endorse the setting up of an interdepartmental committee in this State to make sure that mechanisms are available to address legal policy and service matters relating to the care and protection of children in South Australia. Finally, let me say that child abuse and neglect are problems for all of us to consider, and we must continue to be vigilant to make sure that children in this State are kept safe and free from harm.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MINISTER

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Will the Premier tell the House whether the embattled Minister for Emergency Services still has his confidence given the Premier's personal intervention to relieve the Minister of key responsibilities in relation to the South Australian Police Force? The Opposition has been informed that the Premier expressed his strong disapproval of the Minister's handling of police matters at a meeting last week between himself, the Minister and the Minister for Industrial Affairs, and that he asked that the more capable Minister for Industrial Affairs sort out the matter for his junior colleague.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is very easy for the Opposition to fabricate something in this House and make out that it is fact. There was only one meeting between the Minister for Emergency Services, the Minister for Industrial Affairs and me last week, and it lasted about 1½ minutes. The Treasurer was there, as well, so the Opposition has got that wrong, too. In that very brief meeting, both Ministers outlined how they thought they were making significant headway in negotiations with the Police Association.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That is right. They were making significant headway, and they sought approval to be able to make certain offers to the Police Association. That approval was given.

EYRE PENINSULA

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Primary Industries give the House details of the recommendations of the task force which was established to develop a range of strategies for the reconstruction and revitalisation of Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: I thank the honourable member for her question and continued interest in this matter. It is correct that the task force on Eyre Peninsula has finished its deliberations, and it handed its report to me on Friday night. I pay tribute to the Hon. Caroline Schaefer for her chairing of that committee and to the Hon. Frank Blevins for his involvement in it. Some 500 organisations were written to. The committee received 95 written submissions, there were 59 personal representations and 380 people attended public meetings in the area.

The report states that the district, and the area, is very positive about its future. It wants a range of measures to be implemented under the exceptional circumstances legislation with the Federal Government. The report will now be considered by the Department of Primary Industries, and it will be forwarded to the Hon. Bob Collins, the Federal Minister for Primary Industries, and, of course, it will go to the Cabinet of the South Australian Government.

It is very pleasing to note that everyone on the committee highlighted the fact that, with some minor changes over there, there is a very good and profitable long-term future for the people living in the area and doing business there. They acknowledged that we have probably been through some of the worst four or five years in farming history since the last depression. The recommendations will be considered and there will be discussions with the Federal Primary Industries Department. In due course, after consideration in the South Australian Cabinet, I hope that Senator Bob Collins will make announcements which will be beneficial to the long-term interests of those people.

POLICE RESPONSE TIME

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Will the Minister for Emergency Services confirm that police were called to his home one night during the past week or so, that the call took 13 minutes and that he has complained to the force about that length of time and has sought an inquiry as to why it took so long?

The SPEAKER: Order! Before the Minister replies, I suggest that questions relating to Ministers' or members' private homes are, if not out of order, inappropriate. I therefore leave it to the Minister to answer, but the Chair is less than impressed by the question.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: There was no telephone call for police to come to my house. In addition, my burglar alarm did not go off in the past week. Therefore, police have not been asked to respond to a call either through my burglar alarm, or for assistance. Therefore, there has been no complaint or a request for information, and there has been no request for a report to be prepared.

SCHILLING, MR MICHAEL

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier release details of Mr Michael Schilling's termination package? Given that Mr Schilling's remuneration, as advised to the House on 8 March 1994, comprised a base salary of \$111 000, an allowance of \$64 500, a car, superannuation contributions and special eligibility for a \$20 000 bonus payment, can the Premier advise whether Mr Schilling has ever received that bonus payment? Does his termination package include a confidentiality clause about the real reasons for his sacking?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The termination of his contract does not include a confidentiality clause. I gave the real reason to the House this afternoon, and that is clearly stated in the letter to Mr Schilling. In terms of the basis on which Mr Schilling would receive payment, that is to be negotiated by the Crown Solicitor on behalf of the Government, and that will be done over the next week or so. The conditions that apply are quite specific. They are in the contract and they are quite clear in terms of the basis on which any payment would be made.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): In light of the Premier's statement to the House on 8 March 1994 that Mr Schilling's appointment was made in recognition of his expertise in 'change management' and 'restructuring of large organisations' making him 'the obvious choice for this crucial position', can the Premier now advise in what areas was Mr Schilling's performance in this crucial position inadequate, given that the Premier has made no suggestion of impropriety or incompetence against Mr Schilling?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I indicated that to the House this afternoon. I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition does not do the simple thing and read my ministerial statement. It was all about the style of management. I also pointed out, as the Leader of the Opposition has quite rightly said, that I thought Mr Schilling was the appropriate person to head Government in the public sector on our appointment after the election. In fact, this afternoon I thanked Mr Schilling for what he has done. There is no doubt that we have made enormous headway in the past 18 months with regard to reducing the size of the public sector and in overcoming the Government's financial problems. Mr Schilling has been the driving force in that.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Why has the Premier sacked him?

The SPEAKER: Order! I will name the Leader of the Opposition if he continues.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I point out to the House that the Government now sees a different phase developing for South Australia—a long-term strategic development phase—and it believes that a change in management style of the management for the public sector is now important. That is why the change has been made.

GREENING URBAN SOUTH AUSTRALIA SCHEME

Mrs HALL (Coles): As part of the Government's election commitment to assist unemployed people to obtain work-based training, can the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education provide details of the latest projects approved under the Greening Urban South Australia scheme?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Coles for that question. She is another one of our hardworking mem-

bers. The second phase of Greening Urban South Australia was recently announced. That program will create an extra 100 places in South Australia. It is a training program which leads to employment; it is not a matter of training people for the sake of it. It involves training in horticulture, landscaping and related skills.

The tasks that will be undertaken encompass various areas of the State and involve main street beautification, upgrade of War Memorial areas, restoration of the old gaol at Henley and Grange, and so the list goes on. Areas involved include Renmark, Moonta and Kadina, West Torrens, Munno Para, Burnside, Henley and Grange, Saddleworth and Auburn, Burra, Ceduna, Mannum and one in which you, Mr Speaker, will be very interested at Coober Pedy which will result in the creation of a plant propagation centre as well as extensions to the local golf course and other recreational facilities.

Greening Urban South Australia is a new initiative of this Government. It is now at stage 2 and it represents, in this second stage, a commitment of more than \$1.2 million which is supported by the Commonwealth and by local government authorities. It will benefit the young people involved, the environment and the community at large. It is another example of the Government getting on and training people for real jobs, for permanent positions, and delivering the goods and enhancing the environment at the same time.

FISHING LICENCES

Mr KERIN (Frome): Will the Minister for Primary Industries outline the new commercial fishing licence fees and arrangements which have been made so that there is full cost recovery from the fishing industry?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: I thank the honourable member for his ongoing interest in the Fisheries Department. There have been changes quite recently in the fishing industry, as many members will no doubt have heard. However, nine months ago, the General Manager of Fisheries was taken off line to carry out a complete review of professional fisheries and the way in which they are managed in South Australia. There is no doubt that they had been let go for many years and the management needed to be looked at to bring it properly into the twenty-first century.

After that review, it was decided that we should talk to the South Australian Fishing Industry Council (SAFIC) to ensure that we had discussed with it the range of changes that might be necessary. SAFIC proposed that we should charge the full attributable cost for licence fees. That means that a fishery resource or a fishery will pay only the costs directly attributed to it in surveillance and management as those professional fishermen go about their business.

We also agreed with SAFIC that money should be set aside for exceptional circumstances. Sometimes research has to be carried out across the broad fishery. A recent example of that is the problem in the pilchard fishery. In some areas, especially the marine scale fishery, SAFIC thought that there was a need for reconstruction—everyone would agree with that—and therefore a sum of money was put aside for that. After the matter went through Cabinet last week, I briefed the Opposition, the member for Playford and the shadow Minister and the announcement was made.

I pay tribute to SAFIC. The Government has recognised that there must be a peak body in this area. The whole fishing industry had become fragmented. Organisational structures were put in place which were not going through the peak body, and it was becoming very difficult to manage the

fishery. The Government recognises SAFIC as the peak body. In fact, some of the extension services which are carried out by the Fisheries Department will be contracted out to SAFIC to help with the management of the fishery. This will help South Australian fishing folk and associations to understand that SAFIC is there to help the Government of the day manage the fishery so that there can be long-term sustainability in the fishery. I think that that has been a plus. There have been some changes—some fees have gone up and some have come down. With the cooperation of SAFIC, hopefully we will have a long-term sustainable fishery in South Australia.

NATIONAL PARKS

Mr EVANS (Davenport): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources explain the current state of our national parks? The World Wide Funds for Nature's national report card, which has just been released, gave South Australia and Tasmania a D-plus for their national parks.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I found it rather interesting that Victoria and Western Australia both rated Ds as well. I just wonder where the politics in all this might happen to rest! I get tired of people continually knocking our parks system when our parks have the potential to be one of the greatest promotional tools and conservation assets in this State. No-one should underestimate the magnitude of issues such as the resourcing of our national parks. When one looks at the ratio of parks to people in South Australia, one sees that our 20 million hectares of parks equates to about 20 hectares per man, woman and child.

How we best resource our national parks needs to be looked at systematically and may also need innovation (and I have indicated so on a number of occasions) from other areas, such as assistance from the private sector or increased involvement through other Government agencies, including Correctional Services and Family and Community Services. We should not underestimate the fantastic support that is provided to the parks system in this State by the volunteers—the Friends of Parks groups and the consultative committees. I was interested in this puerile attempt to grade our parks system, particularly when the report offered nothing constructive. It did not take into account the recently announced initiatives which automatically rendered the report out of date and which I suggest shows its embarrassing lack of credibility.

Because Question Time has now come to an end, I will take this opportunity to go through a number of the initiatives that have been introduced recently by this Government. The initiatives include the selection of nine national parks—Flinders Chase, Innes, Deep Creek, Morialta, Belair, Cleland, Coorong, Flinders Ranges and Witjira—as 'priority' to bring them up to world standard. We have made available, through the most recent budget, the sum of \$2.9 million for road improvements, improved signage and interpretation facilities. We are spending \$1 million on protection work and visitor facilities around the Mound Springs and Lake Eyre Basin. There is the commitment, including \$50 000 in funding, to promote Aboriginal involvement in parks management. There will be an acceleration of the biological survey through an increase in funding of \$300 000 to survey the State's fauna and flora. The final initiative is the forthcoming move to appoint a national parks council as part of a program to gain involvement from the corporate sector and to promote and raise the profile of parks in South Australia.

Our parks represent a great challenge. I wish that the people who unaccountably pass judgment had joined us yesterday for the opening of the Seal Bay visitor's centre so that they could see some of the outstanding work that is going on in this State. I very much appreciate the support and commitment that is shown by officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in this State. I think that we can all be proud of that service and of the national parks that we have in South Australia.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: The question before the Chair is that the House note grievances.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): I rise to put on record my support and enthusiasm for a project which has been worked on in my electorate for some time and which, with the support of the Southern Development Board, looks like taking form—that is, the development that might be called the southern region equestrian park. Recently the Southern Development Board, with other members attached to a group, employed Rob Tonge and Associates to look at tourism in the southern area. The report of Rob Tonge and his group indicated that there was huge potential in the southern area which was not being tapped for a range of reasons, including the disunity within tourism groups in the electorate.

I am glad to say that the coming together of a range of groups to work on the southern region equestrian park is an indication that we have heard the message loudly and clearly. The groups are now starting to work very closely together to make sure that this development proceeds. What cannot be stressed enough is the importance of this development in the Aldinga area with regard to tourism potential and employment, as we have some huge pockets of youth unemployment which need attention.

The piece of land that has been set aside at Aldinga by the Southern Development Board is bordered by Main South Road and Little Road. This piece of land currently is owned by the Government through the previous Government's Urban Land Trust purchase. It comprises 35.94 hectares, but at the moment the title is separated because the old Aldinga Road runs through it. The area is closed to access from Main South Road and makes a perfect piece of land for this purpose as it has both hilly areas and flat areas.

It is proposed to set aside areas on the land for a trotting track, race track, stables, an indoor arena, a cross country course and a trail riding course. For those people who own horses and for those who choose to live in the Noarlunga basin area because they own horses, this is an exciting project. The equestrian park will have the potential to host national and international dressage and show jumping events. It will allow a unique opportunity to put in a concerted bid for the transfer of the Gawler Three Day Event to the Aldinga area rather than lose it interstate. Quite frankly, South Australia cannot afford to lose those sorts of events.

With regard to tourism, there would be an increase in the accommodation needs in surrounding areas and for restaurants, guided tours and leisure trail rides. Already motels in McLaren Vale say that they are completely booked out during the Gawler Three Day Event, and that is an indication of the

number of people who come into this area to attend that event. If people book as far away from Gawler as McLaren Vale to attend that event, it is an indication of the increase in tourism and money that will come into our area if we can, first, build the equestrian park and, secondly, procure something as exciting as the Gawler Three Day Event.

The employment that would be generated from this park would be associated with things that need to happen with horses, such as apprentice jockeys and stable hands. It would give the unemployed youth, for whom transport is a problem because they cannot get outside the area to access employment, a chance to work locally. Certainly there is an attraction for veterinary clinics, fodder stores and saddlery, which could be located on the complex and staffed directly from the site. There are a lot of other issues that people have suggested could spin off from this and education is one of them. We could offer TAFE courses from the complex that would provide information on land management and equine veterinary courses. I cannot speak highly enough of the Southern Development Board regarding the way in which it has approached this issue.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I wish to fill in some gaps in the story that the Minister for Health told during Question Time. It is very important that we have the total picture in front of us before we make judgments, decisions and so on. I will outline the rest of the story. Around 12, 13 or 14 June we were contacted by people in the western suburbs in relation to a number of issues of concern about their treatment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I will give details. The first incident occurred with an 87 year old woman who was a private patient at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, who had renal problems and who was placed in a four-bed room with two men, both of whom at various times of the day urinated in full view of that woman and another woman also in the room and then proceeded to wipe themselves down. The same woman, wearing a hospital gown tied at the back (we are all familiar with the standard gown), was exposed to the men when she turned over and was in full view of them when using a commode next to her bed because, when the curtains were pulled across, they were too high up and people could see underneath them.

When staff told the woman's relatives that they should come back at a nominated time to ask the doctor about her condition, they were forced to find him elsewhere in the hospital and he replied that he had not seen her for several days and did not have time to talk to them. Naturally, the patient and her relatives were distressed about the conditions under which she had been left. I was concerned that this had happened in one of our public hospitals. The family of that 87 year old woman took her out of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and admitted her to a private hospital nearby.

We had also received information that a patient wanting to consult an ear, nose and throat specialist at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital made an appointment in September last year and was told that he could not see the specialist until 3 April this year. That was later changed to 8 September this year. This is the sort of thing that is happening at that hospital. The same patient was told in April this year that, if he wanted to change the September appointment, he would not be able to see the specialist until June next year—at that stage 14 months away. I believe those people. In relation to the 87 year old woman, a number of members of her family backed up that concern. We asked her whether she had gone to the hospital and spoken to the staff about the issue and she

said 'No', because she was worried that, if she made a complaint, maybe it would be held against her in relation to her treatment. The Minister needs to understand that a lot of people, particularly elderly people, who are sick feel that, if they make a complaint, it will be taken out on them later.

In relation to the news article, a television station contacted us about any particular issues happening in relation to hospitals, and we told them about those issues. Interestingly, they turned up at the hospital but, more interestingly, we had two hospital staff members out there taking pictures of us talking to the media. I would have thought it was more important that they be inside the hospital looking after patients, which is their responsibility.

Out of all of this, let us draw attention to the things that really matter. First, our complaints are not about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which is doing the best it can under a difficult situation. Our complaints are about a hospital system that is not funded adequately to do the job that it is supposed to do. Secondly, our concern is that we have a Minister who has still not set up the independent complaints unit, as required of him under the Medicare agreement: the Minister sits back and makes fun of the complaints of people—old people in our community—about the hospital system. He sits back, makes fun, but does not set up the unit to deal with them.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I rise to grieve this afternoon after getting a phone call about 9 o'clock last night from one of my constituents, who was rather outraged after a phone call he had had from a small business which, frankly, does not have a long-term future if it continues to carry on the way it did with my constituent. When he answered the phone, the person calling did not introduce the company but introduced themselves by a single name and said, 'Do you realise that you live in a very bad place, that crime is on the increase and that we can do something about this for you?' They continued to try to put the fear of God into my constituent. This is not the way that any small business should be doing business. I have always been a strong supporter, as a small business person myself, of businesses getting out there and trying to increase their sales and profitability.

I believe that this company has decided to take this tack after two unfortunate incidents recently at two of the schools in my electorate. I will not highlight that further, as I do not believe that we need to bring those issues into the public arena again: they were handled well by the principals and staff of the schools and by the students and parents in the community. However, it does disappoint me when someone wants to capitalise on an unfortunate situation in this manner.

The facts are that this security company is way out of line when it says that this area in my electorate is a bad area. I am proud of that part of my electorate and proud of the people and the way they go about their business in improving the amenity of the locality. It was the Morphet Vale area in which the call and these accusations were made. The Morphet Vale area is a lovely part of my electorate. The people are proud of their gardens and are working hard to improve the amenity of their locality.

Interestingly, I have just put out a press release which talks about the southern suburbs being a safe place in which to live. I want recorded in this House this afternoon that, since we came to government, seven additional police detectives have been put into the Christies Beach police station and a new police station has been set up at Aldinga. This year I have had the pleasure of being involved in six

Neighbourhood Watch launch programs. The recent crime trends and statistics released by the Attorney-General were very encouraging for the Morphet Vale area and for the whole of the City of Noarlunga, which now has a crime rate lower than the State average.

Strategies put into place, as I have highlighted over the past 12 months, also include truth in sentencing and the Young Offenders Act. We are also looking at redeployment of 90 officers into policing duties. Police officers are now looking after public transport as fully-fledged police officers and that is making enormous inroads into crime trends throughout South Australia, particularly in the southern area. Crime trends for 1994 showed a significant drop. The figures released for Noarlunga show that in every instance our rate of offending is below the State average.

I am very pleased to see this and all of us in the southern area should be proud of this record. Obviously, more work still needs to be done and we must continue to work as a community and be vigilant in reporting incidents. I encourage my constituents to contact 11444 if they see anything suspicious. We have excellent police officers who are dedicated to their job in serving the law and order arena of the south, and they will do a damn good job in catching these offenders.

To the small business that telephoned, I say, 'Show a bit of responsibility.' If it wants to sell security, let it do so based on the benefits that exist in a general and traditional sense, not by telephoning constituents and putting fear into them by attempting to talk down the area. Imagine what senior citizens would feel if at 9 p.m. they received a telephone call from this company to the effect that their area was a bad place in which to live and crime was on the increase. I do not think that that would give that person a very good sleep; and, in fact, it is an absolute untruth.

We care for the south. We are committed to ensuring that things continue to improve in that area. I have highlighted what the Minister and the Government have done towards policing a safer community in the south, and the figures are on the board. I commend the actions of the police under Superintendent Jock Riach, and I look forward to seeing the release of even better crime figures in future years as we continue to increase policing.

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): I did not notice that the Opposition had nothing to talk about. I thought members opposite were very good fabricators. I think the member for Elizabeth is one of the best lil ol' fabricators in the whole of Texas.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: The member for Hart would run a close second to the best of all fabricators I have met, followed by the New Zealand sheep farmer, but the most interesting fabrication I have ever heard in my whole life is that of the member for Elizabeth. When we attended a meeting on the Flinders Medical Centre and someone gave a supposition about the possibility of problems in the intensive care unit, within the space of one minute and a distance of about 200 yards between the meeting hall and the press gallery the member for Elizabeth turned that possibility into an actual fact. So, the member for Elizabeth would have to be one of the best fabricators I have ever heard.

I wish to speak about the funding of the State Emergency Service and the fact that insurance companies in Australia do not appear to be carrying their weight in that regard. Each year, the State Emergency Service saves most, if not all,

insurance companies hundreds of thousands of dollars by providing a service in times of civil emergency. When a natural disaster occurs, the State Emergency Service comes to the aid of those who are distressed by patching up the damage and making sure that their house or the particular situation is made safe, and it minimises any further damage that may occur. This may be done with the aid of a tarpaulin to cover roof damage in order to minimise the amount of water and impact damage to a property and the saving of homes from erosion in some beach side suburbs.

The State Emergency Service does this at no direct cost to the recipient or the insurance company. It provides immediate savings to insurance companies and recipients. The SES provides the recipient with a letter to forward on to their insurance company requesting a donation for the service that has been provided. Some insurance companies when they receive this letter forward a donation. Alas, in some cases, the cheque is for only \$50. The total amount received by the State Emergency Service from insurance companies in 1993-94 was less than 1 per cent of its total funding. One local State Emergency Service used 2 500 man hours in attending emergencies. Based on \$20 per hour for labour, that amounts to \$50 000 worth of labour. For that particular service, which it provided to local suburbs, it received from insurance companies \$2 754.

The State Emergency Service does not cost out to insurance companies the hire and replacement of tarpaulins. Most tarpaulins supplied in an emergency situation are destroyed and very few can be used later. The SES leaves on site its house jacks for propping up houses suffering from erosion or impact damage. In most instances, the State Emergency Service has to telephone the insurance company to get those things returned. The situation is no different interstate, and the Commonwealth Government has reduced its funding to State emergency services. State and local government funding and fundraising activities in the local community is about all the funding that the State Emergency Service receives. It is about time that insurance companies picked up some of the tab for the State Emergency Service. Accordingly, I have recommended to the Minister for Emergency Services that a levy be placed on insurance companies to assist in the funding of the State Emergency Service if insurance companies continue to fail to meet their financial obligations.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I rise today to speak on the TAB issue. However, I wish to say that there are few times that I concur wholeheartedly with the member for Mitchell, but I do so on this occasion, and I congratulate him on his contribution.

Today in the House we have witnessed one of the turning points of this Government—a Minister who has abrogated his responsibility. Essentially, he has thrown up his hands and said, 'I am not capable of being an effective Minister in this Government.' This Minister should resign his portfolio of racing immediately. If he fails to do so, he should be dismissed by the Premier. What we heard today was an admission by the Minister that for some 12 months he has been aware of the TAB Board's intention to discontinue its arrangement with its present provider of form guides and to contract out to a private printing company. What is worse, the Minister admitted today that on a number of occasions in the past couple of months he had received advice, he was aware and he had been given details.

The Minister made an astonishing claim in the House today which threw me back into my seat: he stated that, on 7 June, two weeks before this important contract was signed, he received from the TAB Board a detailed document containing five pages of analyses, statistical data, financial projections, and the pros and cons (the pluses and possible negatives) of the options. The document, as the Minister said today, could not be dismissed as just an options paper: it was a detailed document that outlined the pros and cons and the risks associated with this measure. What did the Minister do? He did nothing. He did not advise the Premier or his Cabinet colleagues: he sat and did nothing, and he allowed the TAB Board to make its arrangements with the private printing company without being questioned.

What is even more of an indictment on the performance of this Minister is that, on Wednesday 21 June, 24 hours before the contract was signed, on his own admission, the Minister was telephoned by the General Manager of the TAB, who said, 'Minister, we are about to sign a contract with Cadillac Printing and to terminate our arrangements with the *Advertiser*.' Even then, the Minister failed to ring any alarm bells: he failed to contact the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues and, what is more, he failed to direct the TAB Board to proceed no further until he had taken the matter to Cabinet on the following Monday.

What happened? On Thursday, the contract was signed. The Premier and other members were advised to that effect. The Premier was absolutely outraged that the Minister had taken such a decision without consulting him and his colleagues. It was within the Premier's right to telephone the Minister and say, 'Minister, what have you done?' The Minister would have told the Premier what he had done.

An honourable member interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order!

Mr FOLEY: What he was trying to do was to cover his own political backside. He has embarrassed the Premier and the Government. To save his political backside, he is blaming the TAB Board and the Chairman, Mr Bill Cousins. I will make this statement very clear. It was the decision not of Bill Cousins but of a six-member board, which included: Mr Malcolm Fricker, appointed by the Minister; Mr Mark Kelly, appointed by the Minister; and Mr Rob Hodge, Chairman of the SAJC and prominent member of the Liberal Party. I will not cop the Minister or the Premier laying the blame on the Chairman of the TAB Board without laying the blame on the entire board. For this Minister to think that he can worm his way out of this political drama by blaming one person—one man—and not acknowledge that his own appointments, one of whom is a member of his own political Party who also endorses this strategy, is a disgraceful approach, and it is an approach that this Parliament will not accept. The Minister should resign or be sacked.

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

Mr VENNING (Custance): Today I want to bring up a favourite subject of mine, that is, either publicly or privately operated passenger rail services. I refer particularly to the Barossa Valley, where expressions of interest have already been called for by the Minister. I note today the reference to increased tourism, and the Minister for Tourism has mentioned a 22 per cent increase in that area. In the Kapunda region, the railway line has been upgraded for passenger services. I am hopeful that one day we will see the reintroduction of passenger services to Port Pirie, Port Augusta and

Whyalla. I wish to back up these comments by talking about the success of the Melbourne to Warrnambool rail passenger service, which is very similar to this project and which has been operated by the Victorian Railway Company Pty Ltd, trading as West Coast Railway, since 19 September 1993. To operate this service, West Coast Railway has taken over operation of the existing Public Transport Corporation (V/Line) rail passenger service between Melbourne, Geelong and Warrnambool.

This rail service, operating over a total distance of 267km, has been very successful, having taken passenger numbers from 240 000 to a projected 300 000 as at 30 June 1995. In the first 12 months of operation the company broke even, after paying all the costs involved in the changeover and the modifications, and it is forecasting quite a modest profit this year, so it has been very successful. The company runs three services in each direction between Melbourne and Warrnambool on week days; two in each direction on Saturdays; and one in each direction on Sundays.

The current V/Line fare structure and charges continue to apply for all passengers using the train services on this line. Persons entitled to purchase tickets at concession fare are still able to do so, and I understand that the Government still subsidises that. All existing free passes and business cards are also valid for use on the service. Passengers are able to purchase tickets for travel at any station which is staffed, and these tickets can be purchased prior to the day of travel. There are currently four staffed stations.

Passengers are not able to reserve seating on this service, because V/Line currently uses the Qantas computer system in Sydney and the cost was apparently too great. West Coast Railway provides food and drink sales on all train services between Warrnambool and Geelong in both directions seven days a week. The service is also provided to and from Melbourne on week day afternoons, and catering arrangements can be made for group bookings. Bicycles and surf boards may be carried on the train in the brakevan at a charge of \$2.50 for each journey. The Public Transport Corporation (PTC) still owns the land and all railway tracks, signalling systems, platforms, station buildings, etc., between Melbourne and Warrnambool. The Public Transport Corporation continues to operate passenger and freight trains between Melbourne and South Geelong, and freight trains only between South Geelong and Warrnambool. West Coast Railway operates trains using carriages purchased from the Public Transport Corporation, largely comprising the carriages previously operating on that line.

Locomotives may be fully leased from the Public Transport Corporation (V/Line), fully owned by West Coast Railway or a combination of both. Some safe-work signalling duties beyond South Geelong are carried out by West Coast Railway employees, and some by the Public Transport Corporation. Overall safety standards and train control are the same as those applicable to the Public Transport Corporation. All locomotives continue to have direct radio contact with the Public Transport Corporation train control centre in Melbourne.

This has been a very successful operation, and it has married in very well. I cannot see any reason why this cannot be trialled and be a great success in South Australia. I acknowledge and commend the Minister for her initiatives and directives in relation to this program. I hope that we see a passenger service introduced in the Barossa before Christmas this year, and certainly by next year we should have regular services running into the Barossa and also to

Kapunda. We only have to have the will to go ahead with such a project and it will be a great success.

APPROPRIATION BILL 1995

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Gordon): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

Mr BECKER (Peake): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr BECKER: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I move:

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

Mr CLARKE: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I will not lead for the Opposition in this debate, Mr Acting Speaker, but I will nevertheless make a contribution. I found my work on the Estimates Committees—both A and B—somewhat interesting. For my sins, I served on a number of those committees, including those examining housing, recreation and sport, the environment, land and natural resources, primary industries, industrial affairs and, of course (this was the one in which as Opposition lead spokesperson I had the greatest pride), the Office for the Status of Women. I served also on a number of other Committees which I cannot recall at short notice.

The exercise revealed that the Government's rhetoric with respect to its budget comes up well short when it is more thoroughly scrutinised in the Estimates Committee procedures. It showed that a lot of duckshoving is occurring with respect to certain Ministers. Neither the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources nor the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations wants to own the Patawalonga project in so far as the end product of that work is concerned, although each of them is only too happy to claim credit with respect to the restoration of the Patawalonga—in particular, the Minister for Housing and Urban Development, who is quite happy to have his own electorate cleaned up but who is not all that concerned about dumping the sludge and the toxic waste from the bottom of the Patawalonga onto a giant area of FAC land on the corner of Tapleys Hill and West Beach Roads.

Until I went to that area on Saturday, I was unaware of the extent of the works that have occurred there. I note that the member for Peake was there also. It is amazing that a Liberal Government can act with such arrogance and can pump all of the sludge and waste from the Patawalonga almost into the backyards of West Beach residents, of whom I would estimate something like 65 to 70 per cent would have voted Liberal at the last State election. It intrigues me that this Government is so arrogantly confident of its own majority that it does not mind going about trying to poison the very constituents who formed the foundation base of the electoral majority of the member for Colton. That is either arrogance or extreme political stupidity—I think it is probably a mixture of both.

One thing to come out of the Estimates Committees was that when it came to environmental issues involving all things west of Tapleys Hill Road—land, sea and air—the Minister for the Environment was absolutely nowhere to be seen, because he wiped his hands of his responsibilities in that area and said that that is properly the province of the Tsar of all land, sea and air west of Tapleys Hill Road, namely, the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. That is truly staggering when one considers that the most important decisions being made affecting the amenities and lifestyle of those residents of West Beach are clearly within the province of the Minister for the Environment.

Those residents need categorical assurances from the Minister's environmental protection agency concerning the potential for leakage of this toxic waste into the underground water table, the potential for leach-back into the Patawalonga, and the problem of airborne pollution as that sludge finally dries off, whether it be under the world's largest pergola or tarpaulin, or some form of covering which, according to the Minister, should extend over this whole area of land on which this sludge is to be dumped. That area totals some 300 000 cubic metres, which is the size of two Football Park ovals, and that is an enormous area.

It is not 300 or 400 metres, or a half a kilometre or a kilometre away from residential homes, but smack bang on West Beach Road adjacent to residential homes. Of course, the Minister ducked for cover and said, 'It is all the responsibility now of the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations.' When we quizzed the Minister in the Estimates Committee his answers gave us no more comfort than when we began the process, with respect to what we believe will be the eventual outcome of dumping that giant amount of sludge on the back doorstep of these constituents—as I say, 65 to 70 per cent of whom would be Liberal Party supporters under normal circumstances. I thank those two respective Ministers for their campaign help in helping us win the seat of Colton. It will be, with yours, Sir, the twenty-fourth seat that we need to form a Government in 1997. We certainly thank those two Ministers for their undoubted contribution in helping us to achieve that aim.

The other point which emerged during the Estimates Committees concerns the dredging of the Patawalonga. The dredge, which I have seen, is stationary in the Patawalonga at the moment because work cannot proceed; there has been a delay. Its greatest act towards the environment at the moment is to cover a small portion of the Patawalonga, therefore preventing bird droppings falling into the Patawalonga itself. That is about its only use at the moment, notwithstanding the considerable amount of money that has been spent in holding costs on that dredge.

In relation to when the dredge work finally gets under way, around the beginning of August, the Minister has said, 'Look, we do not have to worry about things too much; it will only take 16 to 20 weeks of dredging.' I am sure that the motel owners fronting the Patawalonga, and the owners of the Buffalo Restaurant and the other tourist and hospitality areas with respect to the Patawalonga and Glenelg areas generally, must be overwhelmed at the thought that, at the very beginning of the tourist season and school holidays in December followed by the Christmas break, this dredge will be working flat out.

It will be churning up this polluted sea, dragging up the sludge from the very bottom of the Patawalonga, with all the associated smells and all the dreadful looking colours that it will turn the Patawalonga into, at the very height of the tourist season in Glenelg, because the Minister was unable to get this operation under way early enough in the calendar. I am sure that the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations, in his role as the local member for Morphett, will receive quite a few complaints from constituents and business houses within his electorate. It will undoubtedly be a very torrid time for businesses trying to promote Glenelg as a tourist region in which people can stay and play while this dredge is working flat creating all sorts of odours, unsightly seawater and the like in all their glory for the tourists to see during the height of the season.

That begs the question as to why the Government should go headlong in respect of dumping this sludge on the FAC land. True, we all support the clean-up of the Patawalonga but surely, since we have been waiting for so many years to clean-up the Patawalonga, another few months delay will not matter in so far as ensuring the environmental protection issues and the concerns of those residents of West Beach are properly addressed. Those issues should not only be addressed but the necessary guarantees given to allay the fears of residents, because those people must live in that area for years to come. It affects the property values of their own land and, whilst the Premier and the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources have both said they want to be able to swim in a pristine Patawalonga—taking after Chairman Mao Tse-tung—by the year 2000, I trust that the residents of West Beach will be able to continue to enjoy the current amenities in the year 2000 notwithstanding the location of a huge toxic dump right next door to their backyards.

For all those reasons, I urge the Government to take the concerns of the residents seriously and ensure, first, that there is a full, independent, microbiological study of the sludge to be dumped; secondly, that there is a full environmental impact statement with respect to this whole clean-up issue and where the toxic waste finally will be dumped; and, thirdly, that there is no attempt to cut a channel through the West Beach sandhills, which are 30 metres at their narrowest, to take the rubbish—

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I fail to see the relevance of this to any line in the budget or anything that was undertaken legitimately within the Estimates Committees. I recall being threatened with expulsion from an Estimates Committee for failing to link my remarks to a line in the Bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition did preface his remarks in relation to an Estimates Committee.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for, once again, a very wise ruling from the Chair. The third point is not to have option three, the preferred option of the Minister

for Housing and Urban Development, which is to cut a 30 metre channel through the West Beach sandhills, to simply transfer the pollution problems from the Patawalonga into the Gulf St Vincent direct and, in this instance, into the front yards of the residents of West Beach. When I questioned the Minister for Housing and Urban Development during the Estimates (to make sure I keep my comments relevant) he said, 'As far as the third option is concerned, I am only a Minister, I am only one person, and my views do not count very much. That is my personal preference. Certainly, I am the Minister, but my views do not count. Other people will make that decision, not just me.'

It is a very sad day indeed when a Minister of the Crown, the Minister responsible for housing and urban development—the tsar of all land, sea and air west of Tapleys Hill Road—has to say to the Estimates Committee and this Parliament that his view does not count whatsoever in the final determination. If that is the case, it begs the question why the Minister is a Minister at all. He amply demonstrated that in Question Time today with respect to his handling of the whole TAB race form guide and the like, which also came out in the Estimates Committee. The Estimates Committees, as they should do, have proved quite valuable for the Opposition by ensuring the close scrutiny of the Government's operations.

I was further intrigued during the Estimates Committees in respect of the issue of the EDS contract. The Premier has staked his reputation on the EDS contract. When dealing with the Minister for Industrial Affairs in the Estimates Committee, I found it very informative when the issue of the WorkCover Board and its views on the EDS contract came out. Quite simply, it is the Minister's firm view and that of the WorkCover Board that, unless there is a net gain to WorkCover by outsourcing its information technology work to EDS, it will not sign up with EDS. In other words, the Minister will seek a special exemption from the Premier in relation to the outsourcing of WorkCover's whole computer system. That line was repeated on a number of occasions by Ministers and other Government agencies with respect to the whole of EDS.

We are now starting to see the whole EDS contract crumble. Instead of being the largest contract in the southern hemisphere—and maybe even the northern hemisphere, depending on the rhetoric of the Premier—we are seeing it shrink daily, and we are also hearing of a number of caveats, safeguards and escape holes for Ministers and Government departments, who are saying that they are not all that overjoyed or enamoured at being roped into this whole EDS business. That also came out during the Estimates Committee of the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. He has issued officers of the Housing Trust with a ministerial direction that they cooperate in respect of the outsourcing work. With this whole edifice that has been built around the Premier, which I suspect is a giant mirage with respect to this EDS contract, we will ultimately find that the Premier has feet of clay.

I turn now to industrial affairs, where we witnessed a blatant bit of pork-barrelling by the Government with the employer community, by establishing a \$100 000 consultancy line, up from \$15 000 in the previous year. A total of \$75 000 of that \$100 000 was given surreptitiously to the Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry, allegedly to promote enterprise bargaining. At no time did the Government make any public announcement about that decision. It came out only after questioning in the Estimates Committee, when the

Opposition wanted to know why there had been such a growth in consultancy fees. We found that the Chamber of Commerce has been given a free sling of \$75 000 of taxpayers' money to do work which it is doing any way, and that is encouraging enterprise bargaining agreements and representing its members who pay the Employers Chamber a membership fee to do work for them.

There is no point in the Government's giving \$75 000 to a private sector body, such as the Employers Chamber, for work it is already doing and from which it is receiving income in the form of membership fees. Where special work is undertaken on behalf of members and it is specifically related to just that enterprise, a fee is charged to those companies on a profit basis. I am not saying that it should not be done for a profit; I am simply pointing out that it is receiving fees on a profit basis from private enterprise for doing work it is established to do whilst at the same time this Government has given it \$75 000 at taxpayers' expense.

At the same time, the Attorney-General cannot find \$26 000 in his lines to assist the Kilburn, Enfield & Prospect Community Legal Service to keep its doors open to service the poor in our community. Unfortunately I have quite a number of people in my electorate who need advice on family law, domestic violence, and a whole range of other significant issues. The Attorney-General cannot find that \$26 000 (in real terms they need \$36 000 from the State Government), but he can find \$1 million or more to fight unions in relation to Federal awards. We find the Employers Chamber receiving \$75 000—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr BECKER (Peake): I was very disappointed at the Opposition's behaviour and attention to detail during the budget estimates, for it was I, some 12 to 14 years ago when my Party was in Government, who campaigned very strongly for the introduction of budget estimates. At that stage I felt that the Public Accounts Committee could provide the research backup, if members of Parliament wanted to use that organisation, but the Government of the day felt that was not the role of the Public Accounts Committee, so each member had to undertake his or her own research. As I explained to members of Estimates Committee B, the whole purpose of the exercise was to ask questions in a way that would produce information from the Minister and/or the Minister's advisers.

The whole art of being a good representative of the people is to be able to suss out the information that the people want. I felt that, in Estimates Committee B, the Opposition missed a lot of chances. It seemed to me that too many members were more concerned at knocking off early and getting home than at taking the full time to obtain the information. Of course, some Ministers answered all the questions themselves whereas other Ministers called on the advisers to provide the answers. I think that is quite wise. I would rather see the senior public servants, who prepare decisions and investigate and research policies for Ministers, be answerable to members of Parliament.

I was also disappointed at the aggressive nature adopted by two members of the Opposition on certain occasions. I felt that the Leader of the Opposition completely misrepresented the situation and made a fool of himself by attacking the Minister with snide, cynical comments rather than getting straight to the question in a plausible way. In that way, there is no doubt that members get the information they want. If an honourable member asking questions or seeking information

wants to make a point, there is plenty of opportunity to do that in the preface to the question. As Chairman, I was pretty lax in allowing freedom of expression, to a point, if it led to the question. However, I was very annoyed if I thought the questioner was being abusive or making use of the situation to try to belittle the Minister. Fortunately for the Government, the Ministers were quite capable of handling themselves and they did a very good job. If a member of the Committee was supercritical to the point of insulting a Minister, which really did not happen, the Minister was quite capable of responding and putting down his or her critic. No-one really gains when members go into a budget estimates session trying to score cheap political points by being overcritical of one another.

If members want to go back to the old system, we will be here for just as long and probably longer. We used to start questioning on the budget in Committee at 3.30 of an afternoon and we might go on until 4, 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning to get through a particular line or area. Of course, it is the role of the Opposition to seek out as much information as possible. When ministerial advisers are present, that is the best opportunity to get to the core of any issue an honourable member is interested in because the people are on tap. Even senior officers from the statutory authorities are called in. They are able to assist the Committee and the Minister in providing that information. Members must take a good look at themselves and understand the situation that has been provided to them. If they do not want budget estimates, they must be prepared to go back to the old system, which did not achieve very much at all.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You can send them to the standing committees, which is probably the best way.

Mr BECKER: I do not know. The member for Giles makes a point about the standing committees.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BECKER: Yes, that happens in the Federal Parliament. That, again, can be very informative and even better. I do not want the budget Estimates Committees to turn into a Star Chamber approach to the budget, because that would defeat the whole purpose.

This is the first time that the budget has come in earlier and given us the chance to look at it without the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General has always provided a valuable backup reference point, and that means that there will be some changes. Therefore, when the Auditor-General's Report is brought down, the Parliament will have to allocate some time to receive and debate it and to question the Ministers in Committee. That is why we may have to look at the Federal system.

I believe that both Federal and State budgets should be through before 30 June. That will enable Government departments to get on with the expenditure rather than have this mad rush in late October or early November, as we had in the past, which meant that in the last six months of the financial year there was a helter-skelter to spend the budget allocations. Of course, up to 70 per cent of the budget is for salaries and related costs, so there is not a great deal of room in most budget lines for general day-to-day running expenditure. Capital works, of course, sits on its own.

I felt a little disappointed: I thought that the attitudes could have been better. I feel that some Ministers should not hesitate to allow their advisers to answer questions. I was particularly delighted when the Attorney-General was attended by the new Chief Justice, His Honour Judge Doyle, who had no hesitation in answering or giving explanations to certain questions. That was a wonderful experience. I think

we shall be served extremely well by the new Chief Justice, whose presence in the Legislative Council Chamber was most welcome. I believe that practice was started by the former Chief Justice Len King, a former Attorney-General. Leonard James King, as I often referred to him when he was in this House, was most helpful in giving explanations to any member of Parliament. Politics aside, Len King could not have been more helpful to those who genuinely sought an explanation of the law. I think that is way it should be done; that is really what good government is about. I wish Len King a long and healthy retirement.

The Deputy Leader referred to a meeting last Saturday about the clean-up of the Patawalonga. Everybody knows that the Government has a mandate and that it promised to clean up the Patawalonga. The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has some responsibility in that area, as does the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Reference was made to the controversy surrounding the dumping of the waste from the Patawalonga for the short period during which the works will be undertaken. I attended that meeting and was disgusted to think that it was necessary to call it. I was also disgusted with some of the information that was being peddled by people who seem to be given plenty of free time by the media. The media have done no homework whatsoever, or, if they have, they have done very little.

The issue of the cleaning up or dredging of the Patawalonga, and improving waste water in the State, has been with us for more than 25 years. That is all the time that I have been a member of this House. About four or five years ago, Susan Lenehan introduced the first piece of a series of legislation which she envisaged would handle the matter of run-off (waste) water in the State. Legislation was passed around the time of the 1989 election which placed the onus on local governments. I was interested in that legislation because it involved Glenelg, West Torrens, Henley and Grange and Thebarton councils. It also involved Hindmarsh council, which has become the Hindmarsh and Woodville council in my electorate.

The previous Government and this Government started a process to clean up those major waterways. The water which ran off from the streets into the drains and then into the creeks which serve the Patawalonga and the Torrens River outlet at Henley South would be improved. No-one in this House can be critical of a Government doing anything in that respect.

The Patawalonga is terribly polluted. The Torrens River at Henley South is nowhere near as bad as that or as bad as everyone makes out although, for many years, Henley council complained about the horses using the banks of the river outlet for agistment purposes. I saw no harm in that. One of the daughters of the former environment Minister, the Hon. Glen Broomhill who lives in Henley South, kept horses. She was very critical of the idea that the horses were to be moved from that area. Glen and I agreed that the few horses which were there would not cause any environmental problems and we therefore stopped Henley council from moving the horses.

It is a different ball game along the Patawalonga and the Sturt Creek. There have been many allegations over the years about the waste and pollutants entering the river system and then filtering down into the Sturt Creek. Many tests of the water and the soil have been undertaken and the build-up of silt in the Patawalonga basin and in the lake has been monitored. The tests will produce all sorts of readings, but none of those readings are harmful. For the life of me, I cannot understand how a chap by the name of Hill can be

running around in the western suburbs claiming that he has a skin rash or skin disease because he swam at Glenelg beach when the Patawalonga was flushed out.

That man must be one in 15 million. My neighbours and I swim there every week or at every opportunity in summer. None of us have skin rashes. None of my neighbours has a skin rash. One had an ear infection, but he was never too sure whether that was a result of swimming at the beach or whether he caught it at his work place.

The hue and cry about the dredging of the Patawalonga is absolute political nonsense. The material that is being dumped at West Beach is doing no harm whatsoever, because the clay foundation there will stop any seepage or leakage. If by any chance seepage or leakage occurs, that will occur back towards the Patawalonga. The flow of underground water is equivalent to about a metre and a bit every 12 months.

What no-one has said (and certainly the people at West Beach have not said this) is that 35 years ago when I moved into the area, and 30 years ago when I was a bank manager in the area, the West Beach estate was swampland. It was reclaimed by landfill which would have to be highly suspect. In those days, no-one knew what was being infilled and no-one was really worried about it. However, there was a considerable amount of landfill involving material from old building sites and where roads were being ripped up. Much of that sank and good quality soil was placed on top before the foundations of some of those houses were poured. Some of the foundations are extremely deep while others have all sorts of reinforcement to ensure the stability of those houses.

Unfortunately, people living at West Beach are on pretty dicey soil. They are better protected against the work that is being done there today than ever before. The area that is being used temporarily for the Patawalonga silt is near the West Beach-West Torrens rubbish dump, which was built there over the past 35 to 40 years. There is some leaching from that old rubbish dump. It is full of methane gas. It has taken years for any grass to grow. Even though we have had a drought, the first time I have seen any reasonable grass coverage over that area was in the past 12 months. All these mistakes do not make the thing right either, but there will be temporary use of an area. The airport corporation will, no doubt, get some money out of it. It will lead to the clean-up of the Patawalonga waterway.

I urge all members, all residents and anybody in the western suburbs to drive to Gillman, where the Salisbury freeway is being constructed through to Port Adelaide, and to look at the work the MFP Corporation is doing in relation to the wetlands there: it is absolutely fantastic. It is worth seeing. The MFP has chased the world to obtain expertise in cleaning up polluted waterways and polluted areas. It should be highly commended for what it has done in the Port Adelaide area. It is something that has been going along quietly. The day we were there every old tyre, old car body or any bit of junk had been picked up. Once the area is established and once the water and waste water flow goes into that area, it will be a vast improvement. Anyone who watched *Four Corners* last night would have been horrified to see the Homebush Bay site for the Sydney Olympics.

If the expertise that the MFP in South Australia has gained, together with the knowledge it has and its ability to clean up around Gillman, were transported to Sydney, we could clean up that area. I hope that personnel of the MFP saw that program last night and that they will tender and offer their expertise to the Sydney Olympic Committee and to the New South Wales Government, because I believe they could

clean up that site. They could make vast improvements, because it is not dissimilar: it is ten times more polluted than the Port Adelaide site, but we are proving that in South Australia we have to be the smart State. We have always had to be a little bit smarter than the others because we have had to survive on a lot less. That is what makes this Government different from previous Governments in South Australia: we are trying to survive and do as much as we possibly can on less. We will not increase or bring in any new taxes.

As private enterprise has had to do over the years, we want to prove that in South Australia we work harder, we do it better, we are efficient and we are a creative State. But at the same time we can sell that expertise to the rest of Australia and to the rest of the world. I say to the people of South Australia: be a little patient and have a little bit of faith for a change in those who are elected to represent you. We can make the giant steps now and improve the lifestyle of the people of South Australia.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I rise on a day when we saw a major development—the unprecedented sacking of the Chief Executive Officer of the Premier's department, Mr Mike Schilling. The fact is we were not told the truth in this Parliament today about the real reasons for that sacking. Instead, we heard congratulations and thanks before the key message. The key message in the Premier's statement was not that they had agreed to separate and not that Mr Schilling was going on to better and brighter things—despite his supposedly splendid performance: the fact is that Mr Schilling was terminated—sacked—against his will. He was fired. We know it and members opposite know it but the Premier would not reveal the real reasons why Mr Schilling had been sacked.

It is quite well known throughout the Public Service that Mr Schilling, as CEO of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, has had a long running conflict with Mr Matthew O'Callaghan, the Director of Public Sector Reform and the former head of the Employers Federation. Certainly, I hope that Mr O'Callaghan will not put in his application for the top job, because that would bring ridicule to the State of South Australia. But the fact is—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, he is entitled to put his hat in the ring, just as the member for Unley is entitled to put his hat in the ring for the ministry, but that is not likely to happen, either. The fact is that there has been a long running feud between Mr Schilling and Mr O'Callaghan and, more recently, for the last short time at least, there has been a feud between Mr Schilling and senior members of the Premier's staff, but there is more to be revealed about that.

Of course, we are not given any details about Mr Schilling's termination package. As I revealed today, his remuneration package comprised a base salary of \$111 485 per annum, an allowance of \$64 500, a car, superannuation contributions and special eligibility for a \$20 000 bonus payment if he performed his job well. The interesting thing is—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Premier today did not reveal whether or not Mr Schilling received that bonus payment. It would be odd if he received the bonus payment for doing a good job and then was fired after that. Of course, there has been no suggestion by the Premier of any impropriety or incompetence against Mr Schilling or any inquiry against him. Therefore, it is imperative that the real reasons for the

dismissal of Mr Schilling, who is or was the head of the Premier's Department and who was involved in the critical negotiations to conclude a contract with EDS, are spelt out in this House. Certainly, there is more information to come on this issue.

However, I want to say that in supporting the comments by the Minister for Infrastructure today I shared his disappointment that the Darwin committee has not recommended a more speedy start to the massive Darwin/Alice Springs railway project. Indeed, that is an area in which both the State Government and the State Opposition have joined forces to stress the importance of this project to Australia in terms of our exports to Asia, as well as its significance for job creation for South Australia and the Northern Territory. Of course, the project was first suggested at the time of Federation, 95 years ago, and for some time the Federal Government has been looking for some major infrastructure initiatives to commemorate in 2001 the centenary of Federation.

It is my view, and I am sure it is the view of the Minister for Infrastructure, that there could be no better project than the completion of a national north-south railway link—one nation, to use the Federal Government's term, linked by rail. Of course, it has been acknowledged that private sector investment alone will not see this railway built. The point we have stressed all along is that the Darwin to Alice link would need private sector as well as State, Territory and Federal Government financial backing.

In a bipartisan way both the South Australian and Northern Territory Governments have offered a substantial contribution. Last week I spoke to Shane Stone, the new Chief Minister in the Northern Territory, about the importance of a bipartisan approach in both South Australia and the Northern Territory. It is quite clear that it is now time for the Federal Government to look to the future by giving tangible backing for this project and a firm timetable.

For South Australia, the Federal Government's completion of the east-west standard gauge railway a few weeks ago was vitally important, as was the decision to proceed with the redevelopment of Adelaide Airport. I was pleased to be able to play a role in securing the Federal Government's commitment to extend the runway at Adelaide Airport and, despite a bit of jealousy and acrimony and somewhat childish behaviour by the Premier, which was not, I want to add, mirrored by the Minister for Infrastructure, who behaved most appropriately during the conduct of bipartisan negotiations, we are going to see the airport.

We have the standard gauge, and the north-south rail connection would help the export efforts of our primary and manufacturing producers and give a massive kickstart to South Australia's employment recovery, particularly in Spencer Gulf. Whilst I am pleased that Neville Wran, for whom I have enormous admiration, said that it is not 'if' but 'when', I would like the 'when' to come more quickly.

The member for Unley interjected about today's TAB revelations. It is very interesting indeed that the Premier did not endorse Mr Kelly and other Liberal appointments to the board, including Mr Fricker and Mr Hodge. The fact is that they unanimously supported the position of the Chairman. The real story is that the Minister cannot cut the mustard with the board. He can be pushed around. He does not have the ability to see either the politics or the Government's interest in negotiations, and that is not surprising for someone who admits that he does not read his memorandums. It is not surprising that he has got into trouble and that the Premier

had to intervene. For the moment at least we will see the Premier trying to prop up the rather hapless Minister, who will not be a Minister beyond the next 12 months, and everyone in this House knows it. He was rewarded for services rendered during the long dark years in Opposition, just as were several other Ministers. Basically, they will be stood down in time to bring in some new blood, which is getting very anxious about the performance of a number of people on the front bench.

In my response to the 1995-96 budget, delivered in the House on 6 June, I outlined in some considerable detail the position of the Opposition on the impact of the budget on South Australia's economy and on ordinary South Australians. The first budget last year was one first and foremost of broken promises, but in the second budget no promise has been left unbroken. If the Liberals' first budget was the one that broke the promises that the Premier had never intended to keep, this budget is one that attacks the basics. In so doing, the Government attacks the hopes of ordinary South Australians for a better future as well as their hopes for fairness, equity and a fair go.

With this budget the Government, with a record majority from the South Australian public, signalled that it had decided to turn on the public that had supported it. We only have to look at what happened last night with the police action and the insulting comments of the Minister for Emergency Services. This Government has turned on those whom it needed to get elected. It promised anything to get elected with that record majority, and it is now treating with extraordinary contempt the people whom it said it would support and to whom it made promises and commitments. It involves not only the police: we are also seeing cuts to a range of services, such as to schools and hospitals and an ideological commitment to privatisation. Also, we are seeing the privatisation of the outsourcing and management of our water supply, and that is not being put to a vote of the South Australian people and it will not be put to a vote of the South Australian Parliament because the Government knows that it would not get that vote through the Parliament.

The Opposition said that it feared a Government with the discredited policies of the ideologues and economic rationalists who would shut down our State's economic growth and put an end to our fragile economic recovery. This budget occurs against the backdrop of a shameful economic performance, which has seen us in negative growth for three out of the past four quarters and jobs growth an anaemic fraction of the jobs boom happening nationally. Meanwhile, while Australia recently enjoyed the highest rates of growth in the OECD and is now settling down to a more modest growth. The benefits of a national recovery, as we repeatedly warned, have passed South Australia by.

The net result of all this has been the worst rate of growth in the nation: a deplorable and disgraceful minus 1.5 per cent in the year to March. This Government was sure that it was on the right track, even though it has knocked over Mr Schilling today. If ever there was a sign that the wheels are starting to fall off the cart; if ever there was a sign that the Premier is getting a bit nervous about the publicity and successes of the Minister for Infrastructure and wants to strengthen the Premier's Department as a counterbalance to that of the Minister for Infrastructure, this is it. The Premier blames and attacks everyone without ever analysing his own behaviour. Mr Good News; Mr Photo Opportunity—he goes out and looks for the pretty pictures, applies the makeup, has

the voice lessons and all the rest of it; and he has the minders out there to keep him away from trouble.

Do not mix him up with the privatisation of water or of the hospital system; preserve him for the pretty pictures, because we know that whatever happens in this State is either the fault of the previous Government or the fault of the Federal Government. Now, when a few people around town are saying, 'Hang on, he's in charge now', he seems to be busy competing with the Minister for Infrastructure for attention and seems to be incredibly nervous about making decisions, despite the massive backbench. Who can he now attack? He has blamed the Federal Government; he has blamed the previous Government; he has blamed other States' administrations, so who is he blaming now—the head of his department. He has decided to sack him.

All the Premier's men are starting to fracture. The whole smooth front is starting to break down, because eventually PR, hype and reality will collide. That is starting to happen, because people are starting to see through the fact that the Premier is a rolled gold phoney—and I am sure that the Minister for Infrastructure and the member for Unley next to him would agree. Each of the three consecutive times since last December the ABS has shown what anyone looking for a job, anyone attempting to run a small business or anyone actually trying to make things happen in South Australia knows full well: we have thus far missed the national recovery. What happens when you get the bad news? You blame the ABS.

You actually go out there and say, 'The ABS statistics are all wrong; things are booming. Just look in the paper: can't you see the Premier's photo?' Things are booming, but when the ABS says that the reality is different from the PR hype we see the ABS attacked as well as the poor, hapless Mr Schilling. This second budget signalled that the Government is committed to breaking those few promises it had left to break.

The Treasurer, after months and months of telling us about the grave financial crisis facing South Australia, which would take many years to overcome, suddenly talked about a new dawn following the dark night of debt. South Australia was back on track: within a few months all would be over; everything was fine. But behind all this was the simple truth that ordinary South Australians will bear the brunt of the Government's attack on their living standards from privatisation, from the closure of hospital wards, from the appalling cuts to schools and from selling off the running of Adelaide's water supply to foreign companies.

We need to control and reduce our debt liabilities: that is why the previous Government brought down its 'Meeting the challenge' financial statement, which included the sale of the State Bank and securing Commonwealth compensation for that sale. The Opposition favours a debt reduction strategy that is stepped and strategic. We have talked about the approach of New South Wales, which actually sets down a debt reduction strategy, enshrining it in legislation over 25 or 30 years so that you can see year by year how the debt is being paid off without hitting the fundamentals.

The Opposition favours a debt reduction strategy which is stepped and strategic, one which does not sacrifice fairness to our battlers and one which provides a basis and framework for sustained growth not economic decline. That is the problem: the cuts to the public sector, the number of people being put out onto the grass, cannot be digested by an economy that basically is stagnant. With a stagnant economy, what does the Premier want to do? He wants to change the

stationery. We have a big announcement coming up, and there are changes to the logos. The Premier gets rid of Mr Schilling because he cannot stand up to the power of the Minister for Infrastructure. If ever there was an example or symbol of how phoney it all is, this is it: he changes the stationery. That is the secret weapon for economic progress: when in doubt change the letterhead; when the economy is stationary, turn to the stationery!

The Liberals have mounted a systematic, ideologically driven attack on the basics. We have talked already about cuts in many areas. Let us have a look at those. Approximately \$99.5 million will have been ripped out of the schools budget by the Brown Government by 1996. We have school closures, larger class sizes and reduced subject choice. This year alone, the real level of the cuts amounts to \$15 million. If you make an allowance for inflation, in reality the cut is \$47 million, or the equivalent of closing nine large Adelaide high schools. By the end of 1995-96, the Government will have cut 522 teachers' jobs and 287 school services officers' positions. Benefits to needy students and parents under school card have also been slashed. Our TAFE system, which I was very proud to have as part of my portfolio as the Minister for three years and which was acknowledged as being the best in the country by Ministers of different political persuasions, is about to lose millions and suffer the ringbarking approach.

From the way in which this Government behaves towards vocational training and education, one could be forgiven for thinking that we have the best, not the worst, rate of job growth in the country. This is from the Premier who as Opposition Leader promised increased spending on schools and training. When Lynn Arnold had the temerity to question whether Dean Brown (the then Opposition Leader) would set about cutting schools and education, he was called a liar. Well, who is the liar today? An amount of \$65 million has been ripped out of the health budget, with \$35 million being deducted in the last year alone. While waiting lists are growing and wards are closing the Minister for Health is underspending even his own cut budget: over \$11 million has been cut from the health capital works budget and recycled again.

What do we see from this Government? Let us contrast the growth figures. As at March this year, when Australia had grown by 3.8 per cent, South Australia was the only State or Territory to go backwards. Compare that with the record in even the last year of the Labor Government when the nation was gripped in the recession. The Premier is committed to a constant process of self-congratulation. The rate of job growth under the Liberals between the December 1993 election and May 1995 is less than half that of the nation. The Australian employed work force grew by 5.2 per cent while in South Australia the figure was 2.4 per cent. Dwelling commencements have crashed by 55 per cent since September last year. That is the record.

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

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): I, too, was a member of several Estimates Committees. Some of the statements and questions by the Opposition were interesting, none more so than those regarding the Southern Expressway, regarding which we heard the Opposition grandstanding before the Transport Estimates Committee about a broadsheet put out by the Transport Department. This broadsheet, which was about A3 in size and folded over, contained information for people who live in the southern areas.

It is very interesting to compare this Southern Expressway broadsheet which was put out by the Department of Transport and which the Opposition called a political propaganda issue with the 10 other issues put out by the previous Labor Government in relation to the third arterial road. I wonder whether members opposite sometimes suffer from Alzheimer's disease, given their lack of memory. When I look at the glossy productions they put out on the third arterial road I wonder what the heck they are talking about and whether they have a short memory about the past. The publications are wide and varied, very expensive and tastefully done. If they say our news-sheet was a political propaganda exercise, theirs was a deliberate vote buying exercise in the past, because nothing they put out occurred.

In relation to the Southern Expressway, however, I was heartened to hear the shadow Minister for Transport, the member for Spence, come out and say that he unequivocally supports its development. I hope it will have a bike lane and that I will be able to ride my rollerblades down the highway and follow the member for Ross Smith on his in-line rollerblades. During the Estimates Committee I was heartened that the shadow Minister for Transport, the member for Spence, said that he gave unequivocal support for the Southern Expressway. We should compare this with statements from some of the staff of the Australian Labor Party who helped the Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Carolyn Pickles from another place who with Marion council have come out in total opposition to the Southern Expressway. The member for Spence may be best served by having a word to some of the staff members of the ALP when they are expressing opposition to that development.

There is no doubt that the Southern Expressway will be an extreme advantage to the people of the southern suburbs. The current South Road, which runs from Noarlunga to Darlington, has exceeded the volume to capacity ratio by .85 per cent, so delays and rear collisions on that road have increased dramatically, causing problems for transport to the southern region. The development of the Southern Expressway is therefore a most welcomed and needed development to the south and will provide opportunities for jobs associated with that development in that area.

A number of people have expressed concerns in relation to vehicle emissions that may or may not develop from the Southern Expressway. If one were to look at the figures that are put out in relation to public transport and vehicle emissions, one would see that, if we increased the number of people using public transport in that area by a factor of two, that would result in a reduction of 20 per cent in peak time car usage, which in turn would reduce total vehicle emissions by a factor of only .3 per cent. Therefore, we can do more for vehicle emissions and meeting our obligations under the 1988 Toronto agreement by introducing more fuel efficient cars and following a process that has been followed overseas with regard to zero emission vehicles by introducing reformulated gasoline and also setting up vapour recovery. Australian cars currently use more fuel per kilometre than do cars in the United States. Therefore, we can do more to reduce vehicle emissions to satisfy environmental demands than by holding up the building of the Southern Expressway.

During the Estimates Committee proceedings, the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations advised us of local government reform studies that have been put out for public submission. Two papers deal with the accountability of local government and the conflict of interest and allowances for elected council members. The

time for returns from the general public and from councils concluded on 30 June. I look forward to submissions being received by the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations.

I have also forwarded to the Minister a paper dealing with the accountability of local government and its elected officials and its financial reporting. I have suggested that elected council members would be far more accountable if council proceedings were recorded in a similar manner as in Parliament and the courts. There would be a full transcript of council proceedings.

On financial reporting, I have suggested that councils should be made to table their budgets 30 days prior to approving those budgets to enable full public scrutiny of them. Presently, there is a lack of accountability in respect of council budgets, especially when there are current rate increases, such as in my area, of about 10 per cent. Also, in the past, sections 199 and 200 authorities have been used by some councils to usurp the democratic process and ensure that there is very little accountability of the actions of local government. I have requested that the Minister include sections 199 and 200 authorities in the budget accountability process.

On the conflict of interest, I have forwarded a proposal to the Minister that there be inclusions in the Local Government Act to ensure that the registration of interests of elected members be similar to that of the Parliament of South Australia. I have mentioned and put in writing to the Minister my concerns with regard to sections 62 and 64 of the Local Government Act. It is very hard to enforce. Councillors have released information that was provided to them on a confidential basis. It is impossible to impose a penalty on an elected member of local government who acts in a whistle-blowing capacity in relation to council activities. Accordingly, I have put forward a strong case for the complete cancellation of sections 62 and 64 of the Local Government Act. If a council has a concern about its tendering or about its purchasing of land, that process should be handled by a purchasing committee prior to the matter going to full council for approval.

On councillors' allowances and reimbursement of expenses, until the MAG report on council boundaries and changes to council boundaries is released, council allowances cannot be addressed. However, I have some concern about the reimbursement of councillors' expenses. Some councils have reimbursed councillors for fuel and child care expenses. Unfortunately, information on the reimbursement of elected members' expenses is not available to the general public. That is of concern in respect of local government accountability, and I have asked for that issue to be addressed.

With respect to the areas of education, health and police, although I did not serve on any of those Estimates Committees, I am concerned about the material put out by the Australian Labor Party and by the Leader of the Opposition in a number of the southern electorates, including my own. I was concerned about one pamphlet that was put out by the ALP—the bandits to my right—because of the perception it tried to create. It said that, as a result of the budget, schools would close in my area. I point out to Opposition members that the Labor Party was responsible for closing seven schools in my electorate and neighbouring electorates. Three of those seven schools were in my electorate, and they were closed by the previous Labor Government.

Also for the benefit of members opposite, the Marion Road corridor project is under way, which is an innovative

project of the Minister for Education. The schools, the school principals and the school chairpersons have got together to look at the needs of education in this part of Adelaide. They have held a number of public meetings. The last public meeting was held on 14 June. A number of ideas have been put forward over the period of this consultation process. The results will now go to a planning committee—comprised of representatives of the primary school principals, the high school principals, DECS and SAIT—which will put forward a number of recommendations. I have put forward a number of recommendations, particularly the amalgamation of two primary schools to form a school of the future in Lafater's Triangle, and that has received a warm response from people in the planning group as well as the—

Mr Clarke: Has the Premier thanked you?

Mr CAUDELL: The Premier thanked me immensely. The Minister for Education has taken on board the propositions. As well as that, included in the report was the implication of ward closures in the local hospital as a result of the budget. The interesting thing associated with all these perceptions is the same as that put forward earlier by the member for Elizabeth who had been told that, if a person was to operate in the intensive care area and did not receive sufficient training, a set of circumstances may occur which could cause an emergency. Having been told this, I believe the member for Elizabeth then went out to a press conference only 100 metres away and proceeded to say that an emergency had occurred in the Flinders Medical Centre as a result of staff shortages and that a patient had died. That sort of perception was put out by the member for Elizabeth and has been put out by the Leader of the Opposition in a pamphlet that was released in my electorate.

The Leader of the Opposition did not include in the pamphlet the fact that problems in the health area have been experienced throughout Australia at present and relate to the number of people who are moving out of the private health system and into the public system. In the past financial year, in South Australia an extra 11 000 people were treated in the public health system. As I said, the biggest growth was in the public health system. The number of people coming out of the private health system is adding an extra \$29 million to the health budget and creating great problems in relation to health in South Australia.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: Yes; I will speak about the arts and callisthenics in a moment. Nowhere in the pamphlet did the bandits opposite include the fact that the problems associated with the health system have arisen as a result of the number of people coming out of private health insurance into the public system. Then there is the letter from the Leader of the Opposition in which he talked about the police and the need for tougher action, and I took great delight in reading that letter. Last year I put out a newsletter which related to the reintroduction of a law which allows the police to check a person's *bona fides* during the hours of darkness, for which there was total support in my electorate. I had no sooner released that information when the Leader of the Opposition and his fellow sheep farmers opposite all stood up in this House and criticised me for taking draconian action and for the reintroduction of the loitering law. At the same time, they wrote a letter telling my electorate that the Liberal Government had gone soft on issues such as crime and law and order.

For the benefit of members opposite and of my electorate, I will now go through the activities associated with law and

order which are planned for the electorate of Mitchell. I refer to the building of the new Darlington Police Station on Sturt Road opposite the Saint John Ambulance centre at Mitchell Park. The new Darlington Police Station will be the command base for that district, and the building work will commence in September this year. As well as that, the Attorney-General announced during the Estimates Committees that an allowance has been offered to the Marion council for the setting up of a local crime prevention unit. In conjunction with the Marion council, local business people, the local community and the police will form a committee to devise ideas for crime prevention so that we can get on top of crime in the Marion area.

In addition, I have been successful in negotiating a deal for the provision of facilities for the police to establish a shopfront presence at Westfield Marion, and I have passed that information onto the Minister for Emergency Services so that he can advise the Police Department. I understand that the Police Department is having discussions at present with Westfield Marion with regard to the setting up of a police shop presence at that centre, and I look forward to that announcement in the very near future.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should look at Standing Order 65. The honourable member's time has expired.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (RECORDING OF INTERVIEWS) BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

STAMP DUTIES (MARKETABLE SECURITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

APPROPRIATION BILL 1995

Adjourned debate on the question:

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

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I was speaking with the Deputy Leader today and I pointed out to him that this is a rather historic sitting of Parliament. This is the first time we have ever voted on appropriation without all the matters which were raised in the budget being settled. There have been times in this place when I have not had issues satisfactorily settled, and we have waited for the mythical date when Ministers would bring back answers to hundreds of questions. When we were in Government there were only a handful of questions and whether or not they were satisfactorily answered is one issue, but this time we are not even doing that.

In fact, when I looked at the parliamentary sittings I wondered what would come on this week because I did not think even this lot would be cheeky enough to bring on an Appropriation Bill before those hundreds of questions asked in the Estimates Committees had been answered. The deadline for the answers to those questions is this Friday. I

spoke to the Deputy Leader and pointed out to him that I thought he had been conned; not that it makes a great deal of difference when we have 11 members of the Opposition and 36 members of the Government, but the issue needs to be raised. A procedure and process is in place for this matter.

The idea is that Parliament scrutinises the Government and the budget and has the opportunity to ask Ministers a series of questions. I will come back to that in a moment because the whole thing has become a farce without the Auditor-General's Report. I raised that during the Estimates Committee hearings and I will be speaking about it tonight. The biggest farce in this whole issue is that we receive the answers this Friday to questions that were not answered in the committees, presumably three days after we have voted the Bill through this House and sent it further down the corridor. The Opposition thinks that procedure not only unusual and strange but it is something that ought to stop next year.

I understand that 36 beats 11 every day of the week. I have spent most of my life counting numbers and I do understand that all that is required is an absolute majority and that is that. When it is three to one or better, then you have a comfort zone. I understand that, and the Government has a comfort zone, but we ought to at least have the pretence—

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

Mr QUIRKE: I would have been quite happy for the Minister to get up and answer the questions that he did not have the answers for last week. The point is that we do not even have the pretence here any more that we are properly examining the budget. A moment ago I mentioned the Auditor-General. We received a document today—I do not know why this turned up today: it is from last year's budget. There are a few things in it that are certainly worth looking at. It is a supplementary report on last year's budget. This year's budget has been and gone, or it will be shortly. It is now 7.35 at night and unless there are a few more speakers—and I am not going to go on forever—the budget will be voted on, it will be sent further up the corridor and the rest of it. In Parliaments and budgets in bygone years, including last year under this Government, we had the Auditor-General's Report for 10 days before Estimates. Certainly, we did not receive it this year and we did not receive the supplementary bit this year either. I am told we will be lucky to see the thing in September when this budget is already a quarter of the way through its life.

The issue is a simple one. If parliamentary process and the examination of Ministers and their departments means anything at all, then members of Parliament need a few things going for them so that they can do that job. First, we need the Auditor-General's Report. When I raised this with the Deputy Premier last week, I was quickly reminded by a couple of members opposite that the Auditor-General is a parliamentary officer, not a Government officer. I was told that the Auditor-General reports to Parliament—indeed he does. That is the whole issue. We would like him to report in time so we can use his report to have a look at the budget. The fact is that this Government decided that it was going to have the budget in late May, early June. It decided to bring it forward from the usual time frame of August. Obviously, it did not tell the Auditor-General. It is pretty obvious to me that it did not tell too many people at all.

So, we went into that process last week. In general, the Opposition did a pretty good job of examining a number of the ministerial portfolios. I can comment on some of the examinations at which I was present. I can also say that literally hundreds of questions were taken on notice and I do

not think that it was any different in the other committees at which other members were present. Those examinations are, in no sense, complete and they will not be complete until at least this Friday when we receive the responses to those questions. If we have a look at some of the things we have found out during the course of those examinations, I would simply say that, in large part, the Opposition this year asked more questions about process and policy than it has done in previous years. Because we just did not have the numbers before us to examine in the way that we would have expected. But out of that we have found there are a number of areas in this budget over the next 12 months that we will need to closely scrutinise as the budget unfolds.

In a general macro-economic sense, again we were presented with a budget and we are now presented with an appropriation of funds with a number of parameters that will be difficult for the Government to achieve. It took about three months into the 1994-95 budget before the wages predictions blew out the lid. I do not think we will have to wait that long this time, because today we were told that the Police Force will be satisfied with the current round of pay negotiations by this time next week. I hope that that is the case, because we have a Police Force in South Australia of which we can be proud, but I have my doubts, because it is quite clear that, if a reasonable pay offer is made to the police, it will certainly go into all other areas of public sector activity. Now, this Government is not prepared for that, and that is shown by the budget. In a macro-economic sense, in our opinion the budget has a number of shortcomings in terms of projected wage growth over the next 12 months.

We also think there are a couple of other problems with the South Australian economy about which the Government is either not coming clean or chooses to believe what is obvious to everyone is not really the case. Let me examine that a little further. Two sets of ABS figures have been announced. We had a set in March regarding which the Government said, 'The figures are just plain wrong.' The Premier stated during several Question Times that the ABS got it wrong and that South Australia was doing very well, and that the indices all indicated positive growth.

More ABS figures were announced the other week which indicated that South Australia was not doing nearly as well as was being stated. The Premier and the Deputy Premier then changed tack. They told us that the figures were right, that the ABS was doing something wrong—that the ABS had not got it right, and that they knew from anecdotal evidence that the true story was a different one. In fact, it is not.

One of the first problems with which this Government will have to come to grips during this financial year is the fact that even some of the Deputy Premier's figures—and I will come to this in a moment—indicate that this State, sadly, is going nowhere in terms of growth. I want to emphasise that a zero growth rate in South Australia is not at the point zero but at about 2.75 per cent. I say that because you need to have an economy growing at a rate of between 2.6 and 2.75 per cent a year to employ the school leavers. To keep the same percentage of employment—and I will not take this too far tonight—the economy has to grow by between 2.6 and 2.75 per cent per annum. The latest ABS figures indicate minus 1.5 per cent.

The Government has said that the ABS is wrong. During the examination of the Deputy Premier's portfolios, he even offered to go to the ABS and tell them where they were wrong. He offered to go there with a group of people and look at the way they sample figures and tell them where they

are going wrong. He has some experience in that because, as I understand it, some 25 to 30 years ago that fellow actually worked in that department helping to put those figures together. Generally we have found the ABS figures to be fairly accurate.

The Opposition says the reason why the ABS figures are so low in part is the decline in public sector activity in South Australia. I asked the Deputy Premier by what amount he would discount those figures in terms of the declining public sector and he said, 'About 1 per cent.' I thought that was a reasonably generous figure. In fact, the 1 per cent deduction from these figures indicates that the South Australian economy is hovering at around minus .5 to zero growth in 1994-95.

Last week, the results of another survey conducted by a group of academics from the University of New South Wales came out. They made a prediction that, in the next 12 months, South Australian growth would be 2.3 per cent. They based that figure on information that was supplied and on certain indices, and I will come to them in a moment. That report said that, in the next five years, a 2 per cent growth rate would probably be the average. I remind the House that, unless the State has growth of 2.75 per cent, it will not move ahead at all. In fact, the economy will contract.

If those figures are correct, over a four or five year period, unfortunately, we will have an increasingly smaller economy *vis-a-vis* the national stage. A large number of families will have to move from this State to other States and perhaps even overseas to seek employment. One of the points that I want to make tonight is this: unless we can get the growth in the economy that we need, unless we can achieve the figure of 4 per cent that the Premier promised before the last election, unless we can get close to the national average—right now we are at the very bottom of the scale, even behind Tasmania—in the next 10 to 20 years we will see a brain drain from this State, an exodus of people, and less investment because it will be a declining economy and investment will go elsewhere. We will also see all the problems that are associated with economic difficulty. We will see pools of heavy unemployment in a number of areas, a lack of investment and a lower than desirable level of retooling in many of our manufacturing industries. We will become much more susceptible to the large corporations in South Australia, and heaven forbid if the ground should quake underneath them.

The ABS figures are very serious. The Opposition approached the Government on a few occasions last year and also this year, suggesting that we ought to deal with the problems as a whole community, not only as legislators but also as unions and employers, involving a whole range of people who want to make their home here. So far, those calls have fallen on deaf ears.

I turn now to the specifics of the budget, which is a mixed bag. Some Ministers will oversee exciting programs over the next 12 months, one of which is the Southern Expressway, or the third arterial road. The budget contains a number of other programs that the Opposition will support, in general. I cannot speak entirely for that because there are other shadow portfolios, but in large part the road that is to be constructed to the seat of Reynell by 1997 and the next stage thereafter will be a positive thing for South Australia. Indeed, the Commonwealth moneys which are being provided for the upgrade of the Mount Barker Road and a couple of other projects like that will also be a great boon to the community.

I hope that at some stage the Commonwealth will find the money to boost the State's revenues so that something can be

done about the Main North Road, which carries a great deal of traffic from another main interstate arterial road into the city. I hope that in future the funds will be found, presumably at Federal level because of the amount that is required, to upgrade that road and ensure that it has three lanes of traffic on either side, as I understand the new Mount Barker Road will have. We do not need any tunnels on the Main North Road, but we need a number of intersections to be upgraded and made safer for motorists and pedestrian traffic.

I turn now to emergency services. Last week we had the problem of the Minister and the Police Commissioner giving different accounts of certain events. Whilst it is not the thing tonight to go over those different events and the less than edifying spectacle of the Minister and the Commissioner having what could only be described as a stoush in front of an audience in South Australia, the key issue is that there is unhappiness in the Police Force which stems not only from the present wages campaign but also from the way in which the Minister has treated the police since his election to that job 18 months ago.

I hope that the Premier will see fit to sort out some of these industrial and morale problems which are affecting our Police Force. One of the first things that is needed is a degree of integrity and a round table discussion. We note, for instance, that the Minister for Industrial Affairs has since last week been given the task by the Premier of sorting out some of the problems that the Minister for Emergency Services seems incapable of resolving. We hope that the sorts of scenes that we saw last week between the Minister and the Commissioner, which we believe will ultimately flow through into a Police Force that will not be as good as it could be, will be things of the past and that the intervention by the Minister for Industrial Affairs and the Premier will over the next 12 months see support for the police which, in my view, is essential. In fact, the Police Force in South Australia is probably the best in Australia.

There are a number of concerns among people and members of Parliament about the safety of their communities. We raised those concerns today when we asked the Premier to rule out any suggestion that there would be a stand-down of police officers who are pursuing legitimate industrial activity. Alas, the Premier saw fit not to give that support to the police; he saw fit not to answer that question this afternoon, except to say that his view was that the problems would soon go away. Unfortunately, the problems will not disappear quickly under this Minister. One can only hope that in the ensuing weeks some sanity will return to that area.

I want now to consider the Treasury. When the Treasurer and his department were before us, I was concerned about separation packages. We found that about \$857 million has been spent so far on ensuring that people are not at work. I have always had doubts about that particular policy, and they basically stem from a bit of common sense.

It works out like this: if I am an aged public servant or, for that matter, one who is not all that old, and I am thinking about doing something else in life other than filing or preparing papers (in many instances for people who are not interested in them) and circulating them to people who are not concerned about that problem, why would I want to leave the Public Service and do something else, even if I was 61 or 62 and facing imminent retirement, when I could get up to two years' wages if I were to hang around long enough and someone offered me a package?

The previous Government faced this problem, and its initial response (not its final response) was lacking in a few

instances with regard to this issue. However, it realised that it had to target separation packages. We all know that process as GARG. About 3 500 positions were identified as surplus and packages could be offered to those people. Towards the end of that Government, that was expanded to take in a few thousand more people.

That is where the problem started. This Government came to power 18 months ago and decided that, instead of the careful targeting which at least started the response to the problem, it would go headlong into the problem. We now find that nearly \$1 billion has been spent. As I have said, we will get nothing for that money. There will not be one extra teacher in a school or one extra doctor or nurse in a hospital. No extra schools will open. Instead, we will find that \$1 billion has been spent to pay people not to work.

We have now found that, where packages were given, the jobs have not been abolished. Other people are now doing those jobs. Anecdotal evidence is coming in from everywhere. A guy rang me yesterday from one department to dump on the place where he used to work. He told me that he had got a package and that he was very happy there. When I rang him back, I discovered that he was working in another Government department. I am told that that cannot happen, but I know that it has happened in a number of instances. I can only suggest that one of the most public examples of this is that of the former Lotteries Commissioner. We were quite openly told that he had a package. I have no argument with that particular individual no longer occupying that job. Most honourable members who were here in the last Parliament recall that I, and quite a few honourable members, had quite a lot to say about the role of that individual.

The former Lotteries Commissioner got a package and we met his replacement that night. One really wonders about the effectiveness of such measures. Perhaps one of our standing committees, presumably the Economic and Finance Committee, may want to check down, source out and discover how many other people have taken a package and then walked back into a Government job somewhere else or into a Government consultancy. In other words, the committee could discover not only how much of that \$857 million is not paying for work but also how many more people will take on in future jobs which should have been abolished and from which we have not had the kind of savings that we expected.

It was a clear cut situation in the case of the former Lotteries Commissioner. He was given a package and removed from his job but the job was not abolished. Another person is now acting in that position, and whatever amount of money was paid to that individual unfortunately was wasted, so that we will not see any increase in service in the Government sector. The Opposition is absolutely adamant about the attitude to these cuts in the budget. I have already mentioned the question of the police. Education gets a touch up again in relation to school support officers. I am already receiving mail in my electorate office from some of the schools in my district which, as a result of this Government's actions, will be expected to undertake even more programs with fewer staff.

In the past three years we have had the Education Department's EDSAS program whereby all schools are to be connected to a central databank. However, the number of staff, the people at the coalface responsible for it, is being cut back. We have many other examples of cutbacks in a range of areas. One has been the counselling service in the northern districts, and I have heard of other small budget lines being cut from other community services, because this Government

does not believe in those sorts of things. The Minister waxed lyrical during Question Time today about the Government's commitment to a number of these services, but we find that the money and the rug are being pulled from under those services, involving both his department and the Health Department.

The great savings we were told would be found in the privatisation of such undertakings as Modbury Hospital are illusory: they are a long way into the future. Over the past six months I have asked a number of questions about Modbury Hospital. I clearly recall asking what was the cost of the separation packages there. When I did my own investigation I found that it was about \$11 million, whereas we were told there would be a \$6 million saving. It did not take much mathematics to realise that it would take into the third year for any suitable or substantial savings to occur. We found last week that the up-front cost of privatising Modbury was \$18 million, and I do not believe it stopped at that point. We now know that the deal has to run for at least three years, and if you add interest that takes it well into the fourth year: adding interest at the rate of 10 per cent means that it will be close to four years before there is any benefit from that scheme.

The only good thing about all this is that the rush into privatisation of Modbury Hospital does not appear to have been followed by a rush into privatising other hospitals. There are obviously so many problems out there, not the least of which is that it has been an absolute drain and will continue to be a drain on the budget for at least another three years, that one hopes the Government does not try to save any more money with such schemes or we will go bankrupt.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): The last word uttered by the member for Playford underlines exactly the problem which the honourable member and his colleagues almost visited on South Australia: bankrupt. Why they did not heed our warnings over many years about their profligacy involving public money and the way in which they allowed free reign to continue to prevail with the State Bank in spite of the excessive risk that was being taken with its lending policies still has not come home to the honourable member. He fails to understand that the State's problems, of which he complains about the consequences, have their origins in the inane policies pursued by his Party when it was in government for 11 or 12 years.

What an awful record: what a mess! Yet he presumes to come in here and lecture the current Government and ministry about the necessity for commonsense in fiscal matters. It is a pity that when Labor was in government he did not have the same insight that he professes to have now. If we look objectively at the performance of the Estimates Committees, we find that the Opposition chose to use the Estimates Committees, this year more so than last year, to create, as it were, political blood sports, and they failed abysmally. They did not lay a glove on the Government anywhere.

Anything at all that received publicity was something that had already had its origins in the domain of the press rather than in the Opposition's offices, and most of it was wide of the mark as far as fact goes; for instance, the recent statements we have heard about the likelihood of abandoning the piping shrike as the State's emblem and thereby wasting hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars on existing stationery by crunching up things with a piping shrike on them, such as appears on the cover of the supplementary

report of the Auditor-General which has been tabled in the House today.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Government has no intention whatsoever of abandoning the piping shrike: it will simply use a different logo on the letterhead after current stationery runs out, but the piping shrike remains this State's worthy emblem. We know that most States have their birds, flowers, animals and their gemstones, and South Australia is no exception.

In heraldic terms our bird is called the piping shrike but it is in fact the white backed magpie, so common throughout this State and southern Australia. Trying to make some story out of that indicates the paucity of Opposition members' ideas on what is relevant in political terms. It certainly has not enhanced their standing in the polls, and it certainly has not enhanced their understanding of the process of collecting revenue and spending it in the public interest as Governments, particularly State Governments, must do to meet their reasonable obligations economically and socially.

Mr Speaker, you and I know—right from the former Premier, the Hon. David Tonkin's introduction of Estimates Committees as an alternative means by which we scrutinise the Government's budget—that they were intended to provide the Parliament, through the House of Assembly, with the opportunity of asking questions, not only of Ministers but also their senior public servant advisers, about the finer detail of the programs on which they are spending public funds. Estimates Committees were never intended to be political blood sport.

I noticed during the course of this year's Estimates Committees a further deterioration in the focus of attention by members on the information provided in the Program Estimates and the budget lines themselves. They strayed wide of the mark with many of their questions, and I refer particularly to the Leader. He strolled into the Estimates Committees and shot from the lip on many occasions, only to discover that he was outgunned by the Minister. He was ill prepared and had badly researched the subject matter he used as the basis of attack on that Minister, rather than basing his questions on what the Minister's department was doing, and the Leader would then walk off, bloodied, cowed and beaten.

If that is the kind of approach which the Opposition continues to use, I wonder at the necessity of retaining the Estimates Committees. It is an important part of the total process of the Parliament, but if Opposition members cannot use it better, perhaps they ought to put me in one of their places. I know that I could do a better job than most of them did during the course of this year's scrutiny, and not for the sake of scoring points off anybody but, rather, in order to discover exactly what the Government is proposing to do with the funds it is appropriating, not that the Government intends to be secretive about it, but without the opportunity of asking those questions a better understanding of those programs cannot be achieved.

In the process of asking those questions the opportunity is provided to all members of the Parliament to put before those senior public servants some of the views and factual information they have that is relevant to the implementation—the execution, if you like—of policy decisions made by the Ministers and the Government collectively. That is where the Opposition ought to be heading, especially at this point in the Parliament. Here we are, about 18 months into a Parliament. The Opposition ought to be building a clear understanding of what the Government, through the direction given to it by the Ministers, is aiming to do with the State.

Having understood that, instead of crying wolf all the time, closer to the election it should offer what it regards as a philosophical alternative bunch of policies to the South Australian people, with good arguments to back them up, based on factual information obtained from that kind of scrutiny throughout the four-year term of each of the Parliaments which we now have.

These Estimates Committees are not a blood sport in politics, and any attempt to use them in this way will result in the reporting of the proceedings to the general public and the general public's attitude being further lowered in regard to not only the institution but each of us as members of it. To my mind that is not only sad but distressing because without a Parliament we do not have democracy. The methods of policy making which are otherwise used—that I have seen taking place in other societies—are nowhere near as satisfactory as the methods we have in our democracy in ventilating the tensions that otherwise build up. When those from other parts of the world see how our democracy works, they can see we are very much better off. They envy what we have, yet we do not seem to value it and we certainly do not use it in the fashion in which it was intended to be used.

By doing what they did, members opposite reminded me of the way in which I was treated by Chairmen in past years of Estimates Committees when I was a member participating in the questioning. Had I attempted to ask questions anything like some of the questions that were put from time to time by the member for Ross Smith, the Leader and others, I would have been chucked out, in the 1980s and early 1990s. Yet, these members opposite not only saw it as being appropriate to do that but they took advantage of the generous, considerate nature of the people in the Chair to keep the business flowing. I guess that that in itself was a good strategy on the part of the honourable members chairing the committees (the members for Gordon and Peake), in that it enabled the Opposition to expose the inanity that it had—

Mr Scalzi: In the year of tolerance.

Mr LEWIS: Yes, in the year of tolerance, as the member for Hartley points out—in the way in which it set about its work. It did not expose anything of great public moment during the course of those Estimates Committees, nor did it contribute anything to a better understanding of the kind of direction we should take, recognising that we are in financial difficulty.

That brings me to my next point. Some inane—and that is a word that I use very deliberately and do not use unnecessarily in describing some people who are or have been practitioners in politics—people such as the former Premier, Donald Dunstan, say that debt is not a problem. How many times do they have to bring out this puppet, dust him off, stand him up as a character and get him to tell the world how important it was for the history of this State and this nation that he was Premier. He laid the foundation stones for the debacle that we have suffered in the late 1980s and early 1990s: where people in positions of responsibility accept no responsibility for the decisions they make to spend more money than they have and, indeed, see it as virtuous, in many respects, when they can neither give good reason nor account finally for where the money has gone, other than that it certainly helped them and their political fellow travellers in the process of its being collected from the public and spent in the way it was.

That is all that fellow did. There may be people who get a warm inner glow from it but, at the end of the day, if you have not generated an increase in the ways you can create

wealth, you cannot increase the general level of welfare. Yet, that was never understood by the honourable gentleman whilst he was Premier or since, and his most recent utterances about it clearly indicate the truth of what I am saying. All the money that was expended on those programs and the developing programs that flowed from them has been a millstone around our neck. We now have to make the culture shift in outlook and attitude if we are to survive as a sovereign State in control of our own destiny, collecting from those who generate some prosperity and from those who earn a share of it in the course of their work and then distributing to those who do not have sufficient. Furthermore, through that process of redistribution, we educate the next generation and keep the current population of children, adults and old folk healthy and safe.

That is the charter, and you have to make sure, in my judgment, that the policies you pursue and the funds you will use go towards ensuring that tomorrow is a better day than was yesterday, through an increase in prosperity that can then be shared by all. Incidentally, the mechanisms for sharing are not only through taxation. Our social mores should encourage us as citizens to do more for others than that for which they are able to pay, but not require us to do those things that some fanatically philosophical Left wing person believes will be in their best interests and tells us so through the nanny State.

More of us need to be encouraged to think for ourselves, to accept responsibility for our actions and our personal welfare, as well as encouraging those of us who are capable of generating prosperity to do so; to identify the opportunities through which greater service can be provided and by which goods can be manufactured to satisfy customers (whether they be local, interstate or overseas) and thereby provide jobs for others. This will thereby create sufficient to share a little with others who can do neither. That brings me to my next point.

Basically, in our society we enjoy the benefits of the primary industries, that is, mining and agriculture in all its forms, including aquaculture.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: As the member for Mawson says, the dairy industry is an important part of the entire process, as is the sheep industry, horticulture, floriculture or any other form of primary industry where you use the resources at your disposal—the sun, the seasons and the soil—in a sustainable way to produce something that will be saleable in the marketplace. The people who have been doing that have been doing so for a very small reward, most of them during the past 15 years having often been near to or on a negative income, certainly below what has been regarded as the poverty line—and we have had that debate.

In this instance, my point is that, in consequence of the debt levels that we have run up nationally through irresponsible policy, we now find that we are not able to generate sufficient income to fix our balance of payment problems, let alone return us to the level of prosperity that would enable us to care for everyone. So, we cannot finance the necessary research and extension to do so. It is, no doubt, that area of the economy from which we get greatest value in return for our dollar. I can produce tables that show that the benefit: cost effect from money spent on research is 40:1—in many instances, 60:1—and the member for Hart well knows that to be the case.

Institutions such as SARDI, in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries, need to be provided with more resources than they have been able to get this year in

order to continue to do that research and provide extension information to the would-be producers to enhance their level of productivity and the efficiency with which they go about it. This is vital if we are to get the prosperity upon which we depend for the money to pay the police, for health care and public schools, and for everything else which the Government must provide. We have to reduce the debt level—and someone must tell Dunstan that. The sooner he shuts up if he cannot understand that, the better off we will all be. He contributes nothing to the debate other than humour, but people do not laugh with him, they laugh at him.

So I say to the member for Playford, who regards himself as the alternative Treasurer, that it is not good enough to complain about people in the Public Service who took a package and then allege that they have come back to become a consultant and get additional income on contract, because that is simply not the truth: it is not so, it is not on, it is not part of the policy, and it cannot happen. This Government has made it plain that no-one who has taken a targeted or a voluntary separation package will be permitted to become a contractor to the Government in the area of service in which they were employed prior to their departure. So let us put that little fib to rest once and for all. I think I have said sufficient to illustrate my concern—indeed, it would not be too serious of me to say 'contempt'—for the indifferent way in which the Opposition set about abusing (not using) the process of the Estimates Committees this year. I am saddened by that, and I trust that the Opposition will lift its game next year.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I will begin with a few comments following on the comments of the member for Ridley, the member for Peake and the member for Playford about whether or not Estimates Committees are worthwhile. I think that Estimates Committees have long passed any use that they may have had. The idea of the Tonkin Government to introduce them was a good one, but the only purpose that they serve now is to allow Ministers to have the best part of a fortnight off, only having to work on one day. That is something that Ministers, at least, think is worthwhile—they do not have to attend to the Parliament. It gives the opportunity for a few press releases to be sent out, but very little more because, as the member for Playford stated quite correctly, the information that is sought is not given until the debate is finished, and that seems to make the whole exercise pointless.

I believe that Estimates Committees ought to be abolished and that the budget should be referred to the standing committees. I think that that would be more efficient and that there would be fewer parish pump questions—not that parish pump questions are necessarily wrong, but I think the standing committees of the Parliament could handle the budget quite adequately, and I do not believe that it would mean any more work for Ministers. In fact, in a smaller committee it is probable that the Ministers may have to do only half a day. The whole exercise could probably be conducted over a full week, and that would be the end of it. Certainly, more of a big picture would be taken by the standing committees rather than by the present format of the Estimates Committees. If Cabinet looks at that, it may well see some merit in it. There will certainly be no more work for Ministers, and I know that is the principal reason we still have them long after they have outlived their usefulness.

A couple of interesting things came out of the Committees, all the same, but certainly not enough to warrant the Estimates Committees sitting for two weeks. I do not think

there was two weeks of interest, but there was the odd moment. One of the highlights for me was the appearance before the Attorney-General's Committee of Professor Richard Blandy. This surprised me because, although I had seen a vague reference to Professor Blandy's assisting the Government in some way, I was surprised at the depth of this assistance and the commitment from Professor Blandy. For those who do not know—and I presume that no-one in this Parliament would not know, but for those who read *Hansard*—Professor Blandy has always been the most extreme right economist in South Australia, along with Professor Cliff Walsh. The two of them have always been the driest of the dry, worshipping the marketplace and spouting first year economics at every opportunity. Neither of them seems to have developed since he read his first rather primitive text book. The rest of the world has passed them by.

Professor Blandy is a very likeable chap; you could not dislike him at all, but when he appeared before the Committee as an adviser to the Premier I was quite shocked. I did not realise the depth of change that had taken place in this person. He was rather flushed, so I do not know how comfortable he was at being with the Government, but he seemed to cope reasonably well. He had obviously taken the socialist dollar and was on the taxpayers' payroll—very significantly, I understand. I do not have the details of his contract, but they will eventually be provided to the House. Nevertheless, Dick Blandy has gone on the taxpayers' payroll and has joined all the other 100 000 he has railed against over the past two decades, to my knowledge, and seems to be wallowing in it, if the figures I have heard are anything to go by.

I thought, 'That is fair enough; a man has to eat, and I suppose the socialist dollar is as good as any other dollar. If you can sleep, who am I to argue?' I questioned Professor Blandy about his commitment to this Government and the quite enormous amount of intervention in the marketplace, and whether he supported all this Government intervention distorting the marketplace, with all the inefficiencies that come into play when the market is distorted, according to at least two and probably three decades of Professor Blandy's propaganda. That is all I have ever read from Professor Blandy: do not distort the marketplace and do not intervene; it is wrong.

When asked about this Government's significant intervention in the marketplace in buying Westpac or Motorola or whatever, he was a little flushed; nevertheless, he said that now it is a good idea to distort the market. He said it was a good idea for governments to intervene in the market place; it was a good idea for governments to buy jobs. He disowned Professor Cliff Walsh, who was his blood-brother for many years. I thought that that was a bit sad, especially as Professor Cliff Walsh has maintained the faith. He has said that he has strong reservations about buying those jobs and about intervention. But not Professor Blandy. Once Professor Blandy picks up your dollar, you know you have got him. You know that he will parrot your line.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I think that that is a sign of integrity. Once a person is bought, he stays bought. That is the sign of an honest man, and I was pleased to see it.

As I have said, I do not necessarily disagree with the Government's policy on buying those jobs. I am not necessarily arguing against the Government, but I was absolutely astonished to see Professor Blandy, however red-faced—we had to drag it out of him—supporting the socialist line. There seems to me to be a bit of a trend lately when we look at the

conservative forces in Australia. Only over the past six months I have been reading how the Liberals are now saying that the Vietnam war was a mistake and that they were wrong. I do not think that they apologised, but, in article after article, they are saying how wrong they were about the Vietnam war. They now applaud the overthrow of apartheid in South Africa. For 30 years the Liberals trooped to South Africa and came back and said that we did not understand their problems; that we should leave them alone; and that it was all okay and none of our business. Now they applaud Nelson Mandela and say, 'How wonderful.' Times change.

I also noticed, in the past couple of weeks, the reaction to the French nuclear tests. I can remember in a previous life, as a humble seaman on the tugs, sticking up any French ship that came anywhere near Whyalla more than 20 years ago, and protesting against the French and their nuclear testing down here. Of course, then I was accused of being a trouble-maker, communist ratbag and so on. All the Tories thought that the French right were quite right to do what they wanted, to have their own bomb and to make sure that bolshevism did not rise in the east and overrun them, and all that nonsense.

Now I see John Howard and all the rest standing shoulder to shoulder with us—shoulder to shoulder with Greenpeace, the Seamen's Union and so on—saying, 'No tests.' Just yesterday, tariffs came up. I heard John Moore, the Federal Opposition spokesman, saying, 'Well, hang on, all this reducing of tariffs is not necessarily right.' I was staggered. Can one believe in anything any more? Can one believe any of those people? I have listened to them and fought against them for decades, and now I am uncomfortable because they all seem to be on my side. I am rethinking my position now that all those people are on my side. Nevertheless, I welcome them all to the left. They have been a long time coming, but all converts are welcome.

A couple of local issues that arose are worthy of mention. All members will be pleased to know that I raised with the Chief Justice the issue of resident magistrates in country areas. There was no point in raising it with the Attorney-General; we know the Attorney-General's view. However, to recap for the benefit of the House, the former Chief Justice removed resident magistrates from Whyalla, Port Augusta and Mount Gambier, and the Attorney-General went along with that. At the time I do not think he realised what he was doing.

I attempted to accommodate the Attorney-General's argument. The Attorney-General's argument was that that was entirely a matter for the Chief Justice; it was nothing whatsoever to do with the Government; it would be quite contrary to the Act for the Attorney-General to intervene. I am a very patient person, as you, Mr Speaker, would know, and I waited until the new Chief Justice was at the table. I asked him about this. I asked, 'Would it be a great violation of any constitutional principle if the Government decided that it wanted, for whatever reason, to put a magistrate on every corner of every street in South Australia? Would that be a proper policy for the Government to have? Regardless of the wisdom of it, was it something that the Government was entitled to determine, and would the Chief Justice have any difficulty with that if the Government put up such a proposal?'

I refer to Estimates Committees B (*Hansard*, page 104), where the Chief Justice said that he would not have any difficulty at all. His final word on the matter was:

That is Rolls Royce treatment for the people of the State, but if the Government wants to do it we would be happy to assist.

Earlier on in the proceedings, I asked:

Is there anything in the Courts Administration Act or any other Act that would create a huge constitutional crisis?

This is in relation to a government directing where resident magistrates went. I asked:

Would it be a proper decision of Government and not cause the Chief Justice any grief?

The Chief Justice quite clearly said:

As I see it, the Government has a responsibility to decide what it will do with public money. If the Government said that the critical issue is having a Magistrates Court on every street corner, I do not think it would be for me to say that it could not do that.

That was always the position. All I want the Attorney-General to say is, 'The Government has decided no more resident magistrates. End of story. If you don't like it, tough; that's why we have elections. See you in four years' time.' That is a perfectly legitimate thing for an Attorney-General to say. I would disagree with the Attorney-General but I would agree with the legitimacy of the statement. But now, to accommodate the Attorney-General, the Liberal majority in this Parliament decided to send my Bill to a committee of the Parliament, and the committee came back with an absolute non-report, which was of no benefit to anybody. Suffice to say, all of them missed the point, and the point was this: what the Government did was allow another professional, or three more professionals, to leave country areas. That is what I objected to. The fact that the lists have not increased and all that, misses the point completely. Again what this Government has done is taken people out of country areas—and professional people at that. It is difficult enough for us to get them and keep them.

What particularly disappointed me was the behaviour of the member for Chaffey who, as a country member, I would have thought would have more sense. The member for Chaffey stood up in this Parliament and in effect killed the private member's Bill which I put in to rectify this problem and which would have made clear it was the Attorney-General's and not the Chief Justice's decision. For the member for Chaffey to do that for the Government was traitorous to all country members in this Parliament. The member for Chaffey is now in the position where the Cadell Training Centre is likely to close. I have already told the member for Chaffey that he will have the support of every member on this side to keep it open, for what that is worth. He will have the support from one or two other country members. I had the support of the member for Eyre in the resident magistrate issue—nobody else.

To coin a phrase, the chicken is now coming home to roost for the member for Chaffey, who did the Government's dirty work in relation to the issue of resident magistrates, as the Government has come now for him. This Government is not singling out the electorate of Giles and it is not singling out Whyalla or anywhere else: any Government employee in any country area is a target, and they are given no consideration whatsoever. The member for Chaffey will very soon indeed have the opportunity to demonstrate that he does have some commitment to employment and to maintaining population in country towns and provincial cities, and I hope that, although belatedly, the member for Chaffey will now get the point.

The question of the North-West Health Education Unit was raised in the Estimates Committee, and that unit provides education services and continuing education services to nurses in the north-west region of this State. The Minister for

Health has made clear that he will kill this unit. The intention is to take the nurse educators out of the unit and, if you do that, it means that in effect you have no unit. I want to tell the House of the reaction to that from a great many places right across rural north-west South Australia. The objections from nurses, hospitals, the RDNS and so on has been extreme. They do not support nurse education being supplied from Adelaide: they want a country unit and they want to maintain the one they have.

I have received correspondence about this issue, as I am sure have the members for Eyre and Flinders and various legislative councillors. I have received letters from Woomera, Kimba, Cowell—all in my electorate—as well as Cleve, Ceduna, Marree, Leigh Creek, Oodnadatta, the RDNS, Andamooka and Cummins, and I believe that is only the start of it, because there will be a fight to keep nurse education based in rural areas. The Government thinks that it can base it all in Adelaide and do some outposting, but it is not going to be allowed to do that without a fight. I want every rural member in this Parliament to support me in that fight because, if they do not stop this Government from depopulating country areas, it will be their electorate next, as the member for Chaffey has found out.

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

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I move:

That the remainder of the Bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 1 June. Page 2495.)

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I am not the lead speaker, but I have a few words to say about this Bill, which I hope the Treasurer will take on board, as they say, and pass on my remarks to the Attorney-General, because it is a serious issue for everyone in South Australia. I have no objection to what is in the Bill. I believe it is pretty sound but I do have some strong reservations about the actions of the Public Trustee in certain areas. I am most concerned when I go into a shopping centre and see a display by the Public Trustee advertising that it will make up a will for nothing.

What the advertising does not say is that, if a person went to his or her ordinary suburban solicitor they would receive exactly the same quality of service for a small up-front fee, but it would be considerably cheaper for the estate to have the local suburban solicitor acting for that estate rather than the Public Trustee. I am not saying there is not a significant role for the Public Trustee, but I do not believe that that is one of them without all the facts being put before the people. To suggest that something is being given away when in effect what is on offer is of much less value than the alternative and that to go down that track will cost much more in the long run is wrong.

I do not think the Public Trustee charges any more than the other trustee companies, and I am not suggesting the Public Trustee is acting any differently in comparison with the other trustee companies. I do not know much about the other trustee companies but I think their charges are much of a muchness, but I do ask the Government, in the interests of consumer protection, to ensure that the Public Trustee gives

out all the information when it is doing its advertising. I am really surprised that the Attorney-General, who is in charge of this area and who is also the Minister for Consumer Affairs, has not said to the Public Trustee, 'What you are doing is possibly misleading people by not telling all of the truth', because in my view that is what is occurring. I can tell you, Sir, I do not hold any particular brief for our suburban solicitors, because they are not necessarily—

Mr Cummins interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: —yes—any friends of mine but, in this instance, I believe they are correct. I believe that, when solicitors state that they are offering this service at a much cheaper cost than the trustee companies, they are absolutely right.

Mr Cummins: They do not charge a percentage.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Exactly. They are absolutely right. The rich go to their solicitors: they do not go to the Public Trustee. I suppose they have more sense. It is mainly workers who are being sucked in by this suggestion that the Public Trustee is giving something away. If, when all the facts are known and laid on the table, people still want to go to the Public Trustee, that is fine. I do not understand something else and I would like a small intervention in the debate by, for instance, the member for Norwood.

I am not quite sure why solicitors and the Law Society—I do not know whether there is a separate society for solicitors—have not challenged these kinds of road shows that the Public Trustee goes on and explained, whether by advertisement or by news story, that the quality of their service is as good as (it may be even better, I do not know; but it is certainly as good as) and cheaper, in the long run, for administering estates than that of the Public Trustee. It would be quite a legitimate thing for the solicitors to do. When the Public Trustee road show has appeared in my electorate and the advertisements have appeared in the local paper stating that the road show is coming—'Come to your shopping centre and sign up'—I have often thought of going to the local paper and advising people not to do so. I may even have failed in my duty as a member of Parliament in not doing so, because there is an element of con in it. I do not like it and I do not believe that the public sector ought to be involved in it.

I make one thing perfectly clear: I am not criticising the competence or the integrity of the Public Trustee at all. I am sure that every scrap of work it does is above reproach. I have never heard any queries or any complaints and all my dealings with it have been absolutely first class. But, sucking people in by offering this service with the implication that it is free when it is more expensive than the solicitor on the corner, who in provincial cities and country towns needs that business, is wrong. I would welcome some legal eagle from the Government to explain to me why there has not been a reaction from the Law Society.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I do not know why the member for Whyalla comes in here now to make this complaint about what the Public Trustee is doing. The Public Trustee was doing that during the term of office of the Government of which he was Treasurer—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: And I always complained about it in Cabinet—always.

Mr LEWIS: You are noted for your ability as a numbers' man. The member for Whyalla is well known, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am surprised that he was not able to convince his

colleagues that they should require the Public Trustee to desist.

An honourable member interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member would know that the correct way to debate is not by way of diatribe across the floor of the House. The member for Ridley has the floor.

Mr LEWIS: Given the concern that the honourable member has expressed, I am surprised that he did not express it in the previous Parliament, for instance, because I am quite sure we could have organised the numbers then. What we have to do right now is accept the fact that Public Trustee, in advertising the services in the way it does, in a fashion which might not bear too much scrutiny from the Trade Practices Commission—in the same way as the Casino advertises in a deceitful fashion—nonetheless creates an asset that any good law firm would bid for, that is, the execution of all the wills that have been entrusted to it than are presently on offer. Whilst those wills are continuing to be lodged with Public Trustee, ultimately it will be possible for us to sell them off to the private sector either as a lump or in separate parcels so that they can be executed at a much more efficient cost to the estate, providing a benefit to the public purse as well as something for the private sector to do when the time comes.

Naturally enough, if the member for Giles had been half awake (I nearly said 'half a Whip,' but I must not say that, as I think he might misunderstand me, Sir. I would not want him to take offence at any of the remarks I am making) during the time he was in office in the previous Parliament I am sure that we could have addressed that problem then. I trust that in due time we will be able to do so because, like him, I share a concern about the consequences of accepting what appears to be a free service. It may be that for those who take it, but it certainly will not be for those whose benefit it will be exercised to protect.

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): It is very rare for me to take up an invitation from the member for Giles, but I am tempted to on this occasion, having practised law for 25 years. I must say that the member for Giles has a point. The honourable member is talking about clause 45 of the Public Trustee Bill 1995. As we all know, clause 45(1)(a) of that Bill provides that the Public Trustee has a right to charge rates at an amount fixed by regulation. Generally speaking, those rates amount to approximately 4 per cent.

To some extent the member for Giles has an argument because, as I understand the practice of the Public Trustee—and it was certainly the case when I was in practice—it advertises that it provides free wills. In reality, that is not the case. Although it does not charge for the will, when one has the misfortune to die, the estate cops a 4 per cent charge. If we are talking about an estate of \$200 000, to say the least, that is a substantial amount. In addition, the same legal fees are paid. The Public Trustee does not do the legal work itself but refers the work out to firms of solicitors, so the full legal costs are paid, plus a percentage on the estate (which goes to the Public Trustee and is part and parcel of its profit). I should have thought one could argue that that was misleading and deceptive conduct under the Trade Practices Act.

When I was in the profession, it always annoyed me that it did this because I thought it gave an unfair advantage to the Public Trustee as against general practice. When I was in practice, I never charged for wills because hopefully, if the person who wanted the will prepared was not too old, one would get some sort of business for goodwill and, generally

speaking, I did. I always thought it was a good way of building up the practice.

It hurts me to say that I agree with the thrust of the arguments advanced by the member for Giles. The Government should look at the way in which the Public Trustee advertises its services because I think it is grossly unfair for it to advertise on the basis that it does free wills whereas, in reality, it does not. If one worked it out on an average estate of \$150 000, it would be charging about five times what the average solicitor would charge for the same service. I must say that I join with the member for Giles in some questioning of the Public Trustee in the way it advertises.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): The Opposition has considered the Public Trustee Bill most carefully. The Bill plucks the Public Trustee from the obscurity of Part 4 of the Administration and Probate Act and gives it its own Act. The Government wants the Public Trustee to be fully competitive with private trustee companies. For this purpose, it proposes to change the law to allow the Public Trustee to be more commercial and entrepreneurial.

In particular, the Government wants the Public Trustee to operate a common fund open for investment from all trustees, especially charitable trusts. Common funds consolidate monies from several estates or trusts that would not by themselves attract the higher interest rates that a bigger fund earns or the security in diversity that a bigger fund can obtain.

The Minister in his second reading explanation said that the Government does not want the Public Trustee to emulate the trustee companies by accepting investments from the public generally. However, this may be done later by regulation. Clause 29(1)(b) allows the Minister to permit investments by other classes of person. I shall be asking the Deputy Premier in Committee what the Government intends by that clause. It could be that the Government increases the classes of person entitled to invest in the common fund until such time as almost everybody can invest.

The same clause provides that the investments of the common fund must be of a class determined by the Public Trustee. This sounds rather like the legal list of investments that Parliament has just abolished for trustees. Can the Deputy Premier reconcile the Trustee (Investment Powers) Amendment Bill with this clause?

A pall has been cast over our deliberations on the Bill by the arrest last Friday of a Public Trustee employee on a charge of manipulating documents to defraud trusts of \$1 million. It is alleged that accounts were falsified during the administration of estates. In a statement tabled in the House this afternoon, the Attorney-General said:

These offences are in no way related to the investment of funds or the increased commercial activity of the Public Trustee Office. The proposed changes to the legislation relating to the Public Trustee will not increase the risk to funds under administration in future. The Public Trustee has a detailed system of checking and an active internal audit unit. The breakdown in control appears to involve human factors. However, as a result of the incident, all relevant internal controls will be reviewed. No estate will be affected by this incident and all funds managed by the Public Trustee are secure and guaranteed. Public Trustee holds significant reserves that can be used to make good any losses and is insured for this purpose.

I am worried about further commercialising the Public Trustee in the same week that arrests in connection with alleged fraud have occurred, but I welcome the Attorney-General's statement to Parliament. He is one of the Ministers in this Government in whom I repose confidence.

The Bill preserves the Public Trustee's community service obligations such as executor of small estates and trustee of last resort. The Bill also allows the Public Trustee to charge a management fee on investments in common funds and to charge an administration fee on perpetual trusts. Clause 31 requires the Public Trustee to send an annual report to every investor in the common fund. What is the use of this provision? How many investors are there? What will it cost?

My friend the late George Klein was asked by the then Premier, the Hon. Lynn Arnold, to investigate the design, publishing and circulation of annual reports of State departments and quangos with a view to cutting the gloss, colour, expense and print run of these things. I am sure that we could well live without receiving most of these annual reports, which I think very few recipients read. I do not understand why this cost-conscious Government is creating a new mailing list for annual reports. In confident expectation of answers to this question by the Deputy Premier, the Opposition supports the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I thank members for their contribution and support for the Bill. Basically, the Bill widens the scope of the Public Trustee. In a sense, the Public Trustee is limited on a number of fronts, as members well recognise. It performs an essential function that would not be performed by any private agency, and its operation has remained in place. Reports have been produced as to the appropriateness of the Public Trustee's operation remaining a public undertaking.

As we all appreciate, the Public Trustee establishment has a unique position within this State because it does not necessarily seek trusts on its behalf, although the member for Giles suggested otherwise. It does not seek estates on its own behalf in all circumstances, and that is different from the role played by private trustee companies, whose role is set down in statute. It is a role which encourages people to place their estate moneys with those companies to be managed, to free up those people who would normally be responsible for the investment and control of such funds. It is a safeguard for recipients or beneficiaries of estates without the managerial responsibility. Many accounts are forced upon the Public Trustee because there is nowhere else to go.

The community service obligations of the Public Trustee include a number of areas of which members would be aware. There is the appointment by the Supreme Court of the Public Trustee to act on behalf of a particular person. It acts as the protector of the interests of those who cannot look after their own affairs: for example, minors or intellectually impaired persons who have been awarded court settlements. In cases of large damages as a result of road accidents or civil liability, it is not uncommon for the court to appoint the Public Trustee as the agent responsible for the management of those estates and the awards that have been provided. It has a responsibility forced upon it by the State. Another area of community service obligation is the examination of financial statements and the monitoring of the decisions of managers of protected estates and administrators of deceased estates. The Public Trustee acts in the public interest.

Other areas of community service obligation include the holding of estates until administration is granted or for any period in which there is no trustee or personal representative, and also the administration of deceased estates in a number of special circumstances by order of the Supreme Court. Basically the Public Trustee acts as the trustee of last resort where no other mechanism is available to a body responsible

for guardianship, or for the rights and protection of people less fortunate than ourselves, to ensure that their interests are taken into account. In fact, it is foremost in the administration of estates. The Public Trustee has this role forced upon it. As the member for Giles said, in the normal course of business as a trustee company, the Public Trustee manages funds.

Over a period the Public Trustee has accumulated a significant amount of capital. The assets held in trust amounted to \$366 million at the last count, and the total equity was \$15.1 million. In relation to the statement made by the Attorney-General as to what happens to the Public Trustee when a fraud is visited upon it, funds of \$7.4 million are available to meet losses, so it is particularly well provisioned for any such misadventure. There are three levels of reserves: deficit and other losses reserve, \$3.3 million; common fund reserve for estate losses, \$2 million; and retained earnings reserve, \$3.9 million. In total, the Public Trustee has \$7.4 million in reserve should it have to face some unfortunate circumstance. Indemnity insurance of \$2.5 million is taken out to protect the public interest. The total insurance cover for losses, involving equity plus insurance, amounts to \$17.6 million. The proportion of equity plus insurance to total trust is 4.8 per cent.

That level of cover for liabilities compares quite favourably with public sector trustee companies. For example, the recent paper on the uniform trustee company legislation puts forward several proposals relating to prudential standards and these include that there should be minimum capital net tangible assets of \$5 million for a licensed trustee company; the Public Trustee certainly conforms on that issue. In addition, the trustee company should have a maximum gearing ratio of 1:1. The Public Trustee has borrowings of \$158 000 for the building at 25 Franklin Street and a gearing ratio of .01:1.

The report also proposes indemnity insurance specifically targeted to recognise the role of trustee companies as trustees and State administrators are required. The Public Trustee has such insurance. Therefore, to all intents and purposes, the Public Trustee acts as a responsible body, not only in the sense of being a responsible public body, but also in terms of the general levels of prudence required for all trustee companies.

The Public Trustee also pays a dividend to Government. It paid a dividend of \$1.5 million and tax equivalents of \$686 000 in 1994-95. The dividend represents 77.6 per cent of the after taxation operating profit. The total payment to the Government represents 83.5 per cent of the operating profit before taxation. The public has reason to take comfort from the fact that the Public Trustee has proper protection to ensure that the taxpayer does not have to pay the bills, as has occurred on other occasions, should there be a default of some small nature.

The Bill reconstitutes the Public Trustee organisation and it lays down a number of requirements. The major change, as part of the reconstitution and taken from the Administration and Probate Act 1919, is that the new Public Trustee Bill of 1995 includes a provision for certain organisations to invest their moneys with the Public Trustee.

In his second reading explanation, the Attorney-General made the point that, in Victoria, the public is allowed to invest in the common funds and this is the only State Government where that applies. However, a number of other organisations previously did not have the capacity to place their funds within a trustee company and earn the rate of

return from those trust funds without having to administer the matter themselves in a hands-on manner.

The Bill has identified a number of areas. It states that the Public Trustee should not be precluded from inviting organisations such as charities, trustees of scholarship and trustees of minor estates from investing in the Public Trustee's common funds. We are not talking about large sums of money. We are talking about sums of money for which people are made responsible, but in respect of which it is not necessarily in their best interests for them to handle that money on a day-to-day basis because they are not equipped to do that. Those trustees quite often face a dilemma as to how they can obtain a safe investment which gives them a reasonable return to ensure that the capital is maintained for the use set down, whether that is for scholarships or for charities which wish to ensure that their investments are in safe hands.

As the member for Spence quite rightly pointed out, that is as far as the Bill takes us. He wondered whether the Bill would take us much further than that because there is a function allowed by regulation to extend the range of organisations which can invest in the Public Trustee common funds. As the member for Spence would recognise, it is certainly not the Government's intention to take it further than what is laid down in the second reading explanation.

A number of comments were made by the member for Giles and the member for Norwood about the role of public trustee: whether it should be active in the marketplace and whether its advertising is appropriate. As a trustee company it takes moneys from those estates to administer those estates. As the member for Giles pointed out, the service may well not be free; in fact quite the opposite because of the costs associated with operating and managing those estates. Many people have now sought help from private solicitors to set up trust funds of their own or to get a competent relative to manage their funds. So, the role of trustee companies is changing. By that small change we are attempting to allow a certain amount of greater flexibility that will not corrupt the intention of the Public Trustee Bill, which is basically the trustee of last resort. It allows greater flexibility and a wider capacity to invest than exists at the moment, which will strengthen the role of the public trustee.

In terms of the incident given recent publicity, I have no special knowledge of the circumstances. I do not know whether the reported \$1 million loss occurred over a long period of time which should have been investigated and the person apprehended earlier, or whether it was a more recent event which no-one could have foreseen. I am sure the case itself will highlight the fragility of any arrangement of trust if measures are not put in place to stop fraudulent activity. I will be interested to see what the outcome of this case is, because the case study itself will be food for thought for operators of public trustee. More importantly, it has ramifications for solicitors' funds, land agents' funds and a whole range of activities which had problem areas in the past. It also has application to other trustee companies.

I will be interested in the final outcome of this case. There may have to be a new system of internal audit or a better means of detecting such activity earlier; that is what we all wish. We do not know the circumstances. Until it goes to court and until all the material matters are brought before the court it is inappropriate to judge the circumstances under which this happened. It is regrettable: it casts a shadow. It will be sorted out by our legal system, and I trust that we will learn from the experience. The Bill does not affect that

position. The Bill merely has the public trustee sitting under its own Act, and it creates further capacity for other forms of investment than previously prevailed but not in a competitive situation where it becomes a major manager of trust funds, unit trusts or whatever mechanism may be the order of the day in financial markets. I thank the member for Spence for his support and the other members who contributed to the debate.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 28 passed.

Clause 29—'Common funds.'

Mr ATKINSON: In my second reading contribution I drew attention to the Trustee (Investment Powers) Act which passed Parliament earlier this year. That amendment Bill abolished the legal list. The legal list was a list of authorised investments in which trustees could invest. If trustees invested outside the legal list, they were breaching their legal obligations. There was quite a debate about that in the parliamentary Labor Party. It came to pass that we acquiesced in the abolition of the legal list, and it was replaced by a duty of prudence on a trustee. Subclause (2) provides:

The Public Trustee must determine the classes of investments in which a common fund may be invested and may vary the classes from time to time.

The Deputy Premier has told trustees that they no longer have to invest in the legal list. Indeed, the legal list no longer exists, primarily because the Government does not want to go to the expense of investigating investments to see whether they measure up to the legal list, so trustees can invest in pretty much anything, provided they fulfil their duty of prudence. However, in subclause (2), so far as the Public Trustee's common funds are concerned, there seems to be the equivalent of a legal list, namely, investments which the Public Trustee has determined to be suitable for the common funds. Why not have a duty of prudence on the Public Trustee in the same terms as the Trustee (Investment Powers) Act placed a duty on private trustees?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I will certainly refer the matter to the Attorney-General, who can explain the situation in greater detail. Principally, I expect that the Attorney will liaise with the Public Trustee on the range and classes of investment that can be operated by the Public Trustee. I would suggest that far greater responsibility is placed on the Government in those circumstances than is placed on private trustee companies. The same situation exists with the public superannuation funds and the public insurance funds where there is a capacity for decision making on behalf of the administrators of those funds. Indeed, for those under my control I insist that they provide me with a very comprehensive outline of their investment policies and why those investment policies are being pursued.

It is no secret that the mix of investments changes significantly depending on what happens with the securities, property and equity markets. I will not reflect on all the fund managers, but they made a hell of a lot of mistakes over the past 10 years because as soon as one area proved to be less than appropriate for investment—for example, the equities market in 1987—there was a flood of money into the property market which destroyed the market and we saw massive overbuilding. Then there was a flood of money into the securities market and we saw rates fall quite dramatically. There is no magic answer to what the honourable member suggests. However, I expect that the Attorney would receive regular reports from the Public Trustee on the range and class

of investments. I also expect that the regulator would have responsibility in this area and would have something to say about the classes of investment and the way in which those investments are managed. I suspect that the controls that will apply to the Public Trustee are far tighter than prevail under the present legislation. From that viewpoint, it may be that they do not maximise their potential return but perhaps minimise their losses more than some other trustees under the circumstances.

Mr ATKINSON: I thank the Deputy Premier for that answer and accept that I may have been drawing a long bow in making a comparison between the two Bills. The clause notes say that the Public Trustee may charge against each common fund a management fee fixed by the Public Trustee in respect of each month of the Public Trustee's management of the fund. Will the Deputy Premier explain to the Committee how the Public Trustee coped without a management fee, what are the advantages of the management fee, and what will be the consequences in future of not having a management fee?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is common practice for all trustee companies to allocate the administration costs for accounts and some overheads into each of the funds. It is a common practice and a matter of the extent to which those charges are made against the funds. There has been and will be some debate about the extent to which costs are incurred by those common funds as a result of the administrator (in this case the Public Trustee) applying either a quantum or a percentage to the earnings of the fund for the responsibility it has in administering the fund. It is common practice, whether it be in superannuation, trustee companies or whatever. I cannot inform the honourable member how much is likely to be charged against the common fund. However, I can say that the percentage represented by the quantum of fee is likely to be lower under a common fund investment than under the individual administration and placement of particular accounts. The larger the common fund the more flexibility and the lower the unit cost of running those funds. It is what most organisations will do naturally.

Mr ATKINSON: Would the Deputy Premier say that it was churlish of me to suggest that this is a new tax?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The member for Spence would be correct in his assumption only if excessive charges were being applied to those accounts. It is a common practice and I am sure that, if the member for Spence wishes to ring up superannuation, assurance or trustees companies, he will find a common practice of fees being allocated against those common funds, because those common funds are taxable, so there must be some recognition of the costs of operating those funds. The proceeds of those common funds (I cannot inform the honourable member of the form that is applied) certainly are taxable. In normal circumstances, if they are being taxed, one would expect the relevant costs to be allocated against the funds.

Clause passed.

Clause 30 passed.

Clause 31—'Information for investors or prospective investors in common fund.'

Mr ATKINSON: The notes to clause 31 read that the Public Trustee must, within four months after the end of each financial year, send to each investor (other than an estate) in a common fund a copy of the Public Trustee's annual report to the Minister for that financial year. It seems to me that members of Parliament know better than most how wasteful the circulation of annual reports can be. We receive annual

reports of State Government departments and quangos nearly every day in our parliamentary mailboxes, and I expect that not one in a thousand of those reports is read by members of Parliament; they go straight into the waste paper basket.

Mr Venning: I read mine.

Mr ATKINSON: The member for Custance says that he reads each of the annual reports put in his parliamentary mailbox. That should be of deep concern to his constituents in Clare and Kapunda because, obviously, if he is reading each of them, that would consume at least 38 hours a week. But we have the member for Custance's word that he reads the annual reports that are put in his parliamentary mailbox. I, for one, do not. It was a worry to the former Premier (Hon. Lynn Arnold) that some of these reports going in our mailboxes were quite expensively produced. Many of the pictures were quite beautiful and intricate; the paper was glossy; quite expensive public relations firms were producing them.

Mr Ashenden interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: As the member for Wright interjects, it is a waste of money, and on that we agree. I suppose these departments and quangos send their annual reports to members of Parliament as a courtesy. That is nice, but it is also costly. What worries me is that this cost conscious Government, by this clause, creates a legal obligation to send to everyone who invests in a common fund with the Public Trustee a copy of the Public Trustee's annual report. Most of that annual report will not relate to the common funds. I wager that the Public Trustee's annual report, like most State Government instrumentalities, will be expensively produced, glossy, containing many photographs and will be produced by a public relations firm. Why create a legal obligation to send the annual report to every investor?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is required to inform investors exactly how well the common fund in which they are investing performs, a common requirement for trustees. They are not required to send the whole report; they are required to send the extract relating to the area of investment, which is the common fund. If the Public Trustee should get excited and decide that he will look at the best way of doing this, will put it all in the annual report and post out 5 000 instead of 1 000 annual reports, I am not aware of how he would manage that, but the requirement is actually to demonstrate to the investor how that common fund has performed, and clause 30(3) details the information that is required to be provided to the investor. One assumes that it could get down to one page.

Mr ATKINSON: The Deputy Premier is right: although the clause notes are as I read them, reference to clause 31 in the Bill shows that only an extract is required to be sent.

Clause passed.

Clauses 32 to 42 passed.

Clause 43—'Expenditure of money on land.'

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 21, line 3—Insert clause 43 as follows:

PART 7

FINANCIAL AND OTHER PROVISIONS

43. Expenditure of money on land

- (1) The Public Trustee may, with the consent of the Minister
 - (a) acquire an interest in land (either improved or unimproved) for use in carrying out the Public Trustee's operations; and
 - (b) erect a building on the land or alter an existing building; and
 - (c) provide plant, fixtures, fittings or furniture in connection with any such building.

- (2) The Public Trustee may
 - (a) lease, or grant rights of occupation in relation to, part of any land or building acquired or built under this section; or
 - (b) otherwise deal with any such land or building in a manner approved by the Minister.
- (3) The Public Trustee may apply money from a common fund for the purposes of subsection (1).
- (4) Subject to subsection (5), the interest to be paid on money so applied and the terms on which it is to be repaid to a common fund are to be as determined by the Minister.
- (5) The rate of interest to be paid on the principal from time to time outstanding is to be not less than the long-term bond rate.
- (6) In this section

'the long-term bond rate' means a rate of interest payable in respect of a Commonwealth public loan having a currency exceeding five years being raised in Australia at the time the money is applied from the particular common fund, or if no such loan is then being raised, in respect of the Commonwealth public loan having a currency exceeding five years last raised in Australia prior to the application of money from the particular common fund.

Clause inserted.

Clause 44 passed.

Clause 45—'General provision relating to Public Trustee's charges.'

Mr ATKINSON: Why does subclause (1)(b) provide:

at rates or in amounts determined by the Public Trustee in particular cases subject to maxima or minima rates or amounts fixed by the regulations?

That seems to be unnecessarily latinate. Those words could be replaced by the words 'maximum' or 'minimum' which are English and therefore would be understood by most readers of the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I accept the point of the member for Spence. The next time that we are tidying up the Bill I will ask the Attorney to have a further look at that provision. I suspect that the honourable member is right and that the matter can be tidied up easily the next time around.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair is of the opinion that the words 'minima' and 'maxima' are not singular and, as the clause refers to 'rates' or 'amounts' which are plural, I assume that 'maxima' is the Latin plural to go with 'rates', which is also plural.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The point made by the member for Spence is that these words are used in an adjectival sense. It may well be that the honourable member is correct, but I think we should leave it alone because it could cause a further set of amendments to come down from the other House.

Clause passed.

Clause 46—'Banks accounts, investment and overdraft.'

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 22, line 29—Insert clause 46 as follows:

46. Bank accounts, investment and overdraft
 - (1) The Public Trustee may establish and maintain bank accounts.
 - (2) The Public Trustee may
 - (a) pay into the accounts money deducted or raised by way of commission, fees, costs or expenses and any other income of the Public Trustee; and
 - (b) apply the money towards the Public Trustee's operating costs and expenses and in making any other payments required or authorised to be made by the Public Trustee; and
 - (c) invest any of the money that is not immediately required for those purposes in a manner approved by the Treasurer.

- (3) The Public Trustee may, with the approval of the Minister
- (a) borrow money on overdraft from a bank; and
 - (b) deposit with a bank as security for the overdraft any securities representing money invested in a common fund.
- (4) An approval under subsection (3) may be given subject to such conditions as the Minister thinks fit.

Mr De LAINE: Will the Minister explain why subclause (3)(a), which enables the Public Trustee to borrow money on an overdraft from a bank, is required to be in the Bill?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: When you have funds invested and there is a call on those funds, it is far cheaper to borrow the money temporarily and to replace it when the investment has run its full course. The honourable member would recognise that, for example, if you have a five year term investment and you have a short term liquidity problem, you do not cash in your five year investment, which has considerable advantages. You might take out an overdraft for a particular period of time to ensure that your investment was maximised. It is the same issue that quite often affects these funds. Often their investments are tied up for a particular period of time and they have a sudden need for cash. To break that investment is costly; therefore, they may wish to take out an overdraft at the time to ensure there is enough cash to pay out the claim without disturbing the quality of the investment.

Clause inserted.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 22, line 30—Leave out ‘bank accounts’ and insert ‘accounts at a bank, building society or credit union’.

Page 23—

Line 4—Leave out ‘from a bank’.

Line 5—Leave out ‘with a bank’.

Clause 46 provides that the Public Trustee may establish and maintain bank accounts. It should provide that the Public Trustee may maintain accounts with various financial institutions, including a bank, building society or credit union. These tidying up amendments ensure that the Public Trustee is not limited to establishing a bank account: this provision covers an account at another financial institutions as well.

Amendments carried; clause 46 as amended carried.

Clause 47—‘Tax and other liabilities of Public Trustee.’

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 23, line 9—Insert clause 47 as follows:

Tax and other liabilities of Public Trustee

- (1) Except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer, the Public Trustee is liable to all such rates (other than rates that would be payable to a council), duties, taxes and imposts and has all such other liabilities and duties as would apply under the law of the State if the Public Trustee were not an instrumentality of the Crown.
- (2) Except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer, the Public Trustee is liable to pay to the Treasurer, for the credit of the Consolidated Account, such amounts as the Treasurer from time to time determines to be equivalent to
 - (a) income tax and any other taxes or imposts that the Public Trustee does not pay to the Commonwealth but would be liable to pay under the law of the Commonwealth if it were constituted and organised in such manner as the Treasurer determines to be appropriate for the purposes of this subsection as a public company or group of public companies carrying on the business carried on by the Public Trustee; and
 - (b) rates that the Public Trustee would be liable to pay to a council if the Public Trustee were not an instrumentality of the Crown.

- (3) Amounts determined by the Treasurer to be payable under subsection (2) must be paid by the Public Trustee at the times and in the manner determined by the Treasurer.
- (4) This section does not affect any liability that the Public Trustee would have apart from this section to pay rates to a council.

This is the last of the money clauses.

Clause inserted.

Remaining clauses (48 to 55), schedules and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr BASS (Florey): I should like to raise an issue that I have previously raised in relation to the use of cannabis. Over the past few months, people have called for the liberalisation of cannabis laws. I should like to put a few facts on the record. The National Campaign Against Drug Abuse has linked cannabis with cancer, respiratory diseases and psychiatric disorders, and with birth defects in children of users. Those who smoke cannabis in their early years are at greater risk of progressing to harder drugs such as heroin and cocaine. Lately, there have been many comments by prominent people. New South Wales MLC Ann Symonds, a member of the Australian Parliamentary Group for Drug Law Reform asserts that:

Criminal sanctions for the personal use of cannabis are not only a futile exercise in behaviour modification but a waste of court and police resources.

At the annual conference of the Australian Crime Prevention Council in September, Associate Professor Bill Saunders, head of the Addiction Studies Unit at Curtin University, said:

The decision to ban certain forms of drug use is philosophically unwarranted and logically inept.

At a rally in Sydney in October, solicitor John Marsden, a member of the New South Wales Police Board and Chairman of the Council for Civil Liberties, said:

The only people who benefit from cannabis laws are those involved in organised crime. Decriminalisation would eliminate the black market in the drug and send dealers out of business.

What a load of codswallop! Let me give a few truths.

Myth No. 1: resources are wasted on chasing and convicting users. That is untrue. In fact, the majority of possess-and-use offences come to police notice as a result of other inquiries—for example, theft. In New South Wales courts in 1993, the number of people convicted of cannabis possession as the main offence represented less than 5 per cent of the case load.

Myth No. 2: money saved from chasing users could finance treatment and education programs. Decriminalisers claim that that would do more good than spending hundreds of thousands of dollars but, as Herschel Baker, President of the lobby group Australian Parents for Drug-Free Youth, points out:

How can you tell a teenager, ‘The government has taken the soft option on cannabis, but you mustn’t try it’?

Milton Luger, former program executive of the Odyssey House/McGrath Foundation, who has worked with drug addicts for over 40 years, says:

Even if more money were directed towards treatment—and I doubt that it would be—

it is unrealistic to suggest this would miraculously solve the problem of addiction.

I have heard it said that decriminalisation will take the profit out of cannabis. That is wrong. Trafficking offences in South Australia have doubled since cannabis was decriminalised in April 1987. The temptation is for people to grow 10 plants and sell what they do not use. Organised crime, now making millions from cannabis nationwide, is unlikely to retire gracefully from the scene should the rest of the country decriminalise.

I have heard it said that other countries have safely decriminalised cannabis. None of the 150 or so nations that is party to the United Nations 1988 Convention Against Illicit Drugs and Psychotropic Substances may decriminalise cannabis. Since 1976, Dutch authorities have turned a blind eye to coffee houses where they sell cannabis; since 1976, they have increased from 200 to around 10 000. Ten American States decriminalised cannabis use between 1973 and 1978. In Oregon, cultivation offences rose by 130 per cent and possession offences by 44 per cent. The Californian study found a 71 per cent increase in the number of juveniles driving under the influence of cannabis.

Decriminalisation does not work for a simple reason: it encourages heavy cannabis users to avoid their problem. Even if they want to go clean, the law makes it all too easy to continue using the drug.

Myth No. 5: decriminalising cannabis will keep recreational drug users away from harder drugs. Of course, this is wrong. Users of cannabis always find that they get a lift from it, and then they think that it does not hurt them so they progress on to more serious drugs. There is a new form of cannabis that is anything but soft, and this is a drug called skunk. It is gaining popularity and, while cannabis contains about 5 per cent of tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient of the drug, skunk has up to 30 per cent. Within minutes of smoking skunk last year, a 23 year old Sydney hairdresser was hallucinating so badly that he had to go to hospital. He said, 'Of all the drugs I tried, this was the most frightening.'

People say, 'Decriminalisation will not encourage use.' Since the ACT decriminalised in 1992, the Centre for Drug Rehabilitation has recorded a 40 per cent increase in problematic cannabis abuse. People say that cannabis is no more harmful than alcohol or tobacco. Alcohol is quickly expelled from the body, but THC can lodge in fatty tissues for several weeks or even months. There is four times more tar in a cannabis joint than in a cigarette. So all the cancerous side effects of smoking are multiplied.

Myth No. 8: drugs users harm only themselves. Again, what a lot of codswallop! A 34 year old former addict from Queensland said:

I got to the stage where I lost all sense of morality and responsibility. I had a family to support but kept wasting money on grass [marijuana] and coming home in a violent mood.

He finally stopped only when his wife said that she would leave him. Drug users can also harm their offspring. It is now known that drugs can pass from mother to baby in the womb.

In the end, the most compelling argument against decriminalisation is the moral one. Before we start liberalising cannabis laws we must ask ourselves: should we not be doing everything we possibly can to keep illicit drugs away from our children? We have found in South Australia that decriminalising cannabis has created a bigger trade in Indian hemp: it has not stopped organised crime being involved, and I speak against it strongly and warn anyone who intends to

legalise or decriminalise Indian hemp to think very carefully about what we are going to turn loose on our children and our grandchildren in the future.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): On behalf of the people who live in Belair, I rise to protest the decision of the Minister for Transport to close the pedestrian path from Sheoak Road to Belair Railway Station through the midst of St Johns Grammar School. If the Minister will not reopen the path, I ask that she ensure that the alternative path at the eastern end of the station is paved and lit as soon as possible. If Minister Laidlaw had studied maps of Belair station with a view to sealing it against the travelling public, she could not have done a better job than TransAdelaide has already done. The closure of the pedestrian path there ensures as little patronage for Belair station as is possible.

It may be that TransAdelaide has acted unlawfully in closing what is a public right of way. The Brown Government has certainly not gone through the procedures of the Roads (Opening and Closing) Act which are necessary to close a public right of way. The Belair station lies on a slope down to National Park from the crest of Old Belair Road. The one platform that now serves TransAdelaide passengers is between two rails. These rails run west-east, and most of the local dwellings, including units for the aged, are on the northern or city side of the line along Sheoak Road, which runs parallel with the railway but at a considerable elevation from the tracks. Most of the dwellings are at the western end of Sheoak Road.

Upper Sturt Road winds up the slope from the south, passes through a cutting at the western end of the station and rises over the railway line on a bridge to its junction with Sheoak Road and to Old Belair Road, which is its continuation to the north and to the city below. Convenient access to the Belair platform was obtained by a path descending from Sheoak Road through St Johns Grammar School, and steps were inserted in that descent. At a point in line with the platform's middle but before the tracks, the path turned right to the west and then, when it was opposite the platform's western end, turned left and crossed the tracks to the platform. This path was used by the great majority of TransAdelaide passengers coming to and leaving Belair station.

On 3 February 1995, without warning, workers acting under TransAdelaide's instructions blocked access to the path and went to the extraordinary lengths of digging out the steps, making impassable the section of path nearest the platform. Passengers must now use one of two different paths to the platform, both of them putting users at risk. The first is at the far eastern end of the station off Sheoak Road. This requires people living in the units for the aged to walk from the west, past the station for its entire length, past the eastern end and, for some distance beyond, descending the unmade path which is shared by motor vehicles and pedestrians, crossing the railway track, mounting the platform and then walking back to the western end of the platform from which the trains for Adelaide depart. This path is not lit.

The second alternative is to cross the Upper Sturt Road bridge and then try to cross that road at its junction with Lindsay Terrace to get to the southern or National Park side of the station. At that crossing point, cars travelling south are accelerating off the bridge, visibility is poor and cars using Lindsay Terrace have to be reckoned with. It is a dangerous crossing to make, especially for old people. Once one has accomplished this one finds the pedestrian crossing over the

standard gauge track taped over by TransAdelaide workers and a message, 'Crossing to the Adelaide-bound platform here is prohibited'. One must then traipse back the way one has come and use the unmade path on the other side of the station at the opposite end.

The people of Belair have voted for the Liberal Party's candidates for generations. Their Party is now in government with a 26-seat majority.

The Hon. M.H. Armitage interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: The Minister for Health may gloat about that majority but his sister-in-law the Hon. Diana

Laidlaw is certainly ignoring the interests of the people of Belair. Although the Premier and the Minister for Transport know that they do not have to respond to the Belair community's protest about this closure in order to retain the local seat at the next election, I would hope that out of courtesy the Brown Liberal Government would respond to the Labor Party's plea on behalf of the people of Belair.
Motion carried.

At 10.1 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 5 July at 2 p.m.