

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 11 October 1995

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

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

State Electoral Department—Report, 1994-95.

By the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development (Hon. J.W. Olsen), on behalf of the Minister for Transport—

Department of Transport—Report, 1994-95.

Passenger Transport Board—Report, 1994-95.

Passenger Transport Board—Service Charter.

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

West Beach Trust—Report, 1994-95.

Corporation of Elizabeth—By-laws—

No. 1—Permits and Penalties.

No. 2—Moveable Signs.

No. 3—Council Land.

No. 4—Inflammable Undergrowth.

No. 5—Animals and Birds.

No. 6—Bees.

No. 7—Dogs.

No. 8—Cats.

Corporation of Mount Gambier—By-laws—

No. 6—Creatures.

District Council of Ridley-Truro—By-laws—

No. 1—Permits and Penalties.

No. 2—Street Hawkers and Traders.

No. 3—Bees.

No. 4—Animals and Birds.

No. 5—Garbage Removal.

No. 6—Dogs.

No. 7—Petrol Pumps.

No. 8—Height of Fences, Hedges, Trees, Shrubs and Hoardings.

No. 9—Water on Public Roadways.

No. 10—Loading and Unloading of Goods on Public Roadways.

No. 11—Prevention and Suppression of Nuisances Relating to Public Roadways.

No. 12—Repeal of By-Laws.

HUS EPIDEMIC DOCUMENTS

The **Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Health)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE**: Following the recent handing down by the Coroner of his findings into the HUS epidemic, the Opposition has persisted with its line that the Government has held back documents. I wish to lay that allegation to rest once and for all. Yesterday, further questions were raised in relation to matters covered in my chronology of events, specifically 23 and 24 January, and also in relation to the meeting held on 4 February.

First, to address the issue whether the Coroner was provided with complete documentation relating to 23 and 24 January, I can advise the House that following further investigations this morning I have been reassured that the Health Commission did not withhold from the Coroner any of its documents relating to the HUS epidemic. In addition,

the Coroner's constable was given *carte blanche* to go through Health Commission files in relation to the matter. Therefore, every document that the Coroner considered relevant is now on the public record. I do not see how there could be any greater openness than that.

Secondly, in relation to the meeting on 4 February, which discussed a strategy to assure South Australians that they could be confident of the quality of smallgoods and reviewed action taken to identify the source of the infection causing the outbreak, no minutes of the meeting were made as it was intended to make an immediate public statement. A public statement regarding the outcome of the meeting was issued shortly after the meeting. The Premier also gave details of the outcome of the meeting to Parliament on 7 February. Therefore, there was no attempt to hide the fact that a meeting had been held, nor what the purpose or the outcome of the meeting had been. It is important to note that the Coroner did not request any further information in relation to that meeting.

The Government is aware that the Opposition has been attempting to spread allegations that the Government sought to protect Garibaldi in this matter and to deny information to the inquest. That is what is behind the questions asked yesterday. Both allegations are outrageous and untrue.

RABBITS

The **Hon. D.S. BAKER (Minister for Primary Industries)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. D.S. BAKER**: The Animal and Plant Control Commission and Primary Industries South Australia have been assisting the CSIRO with technical support in trials on Wardang Island in an attempt to control Australia's growing rabbit population. Rabbits are regarded as one of Australia's worst pests. They arrived in Australia—

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order!

The **Hon. D.S. BAKER**: I will come to the Opposition later, Mr Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! The Minister for Mines and Energy is not one to disrupt proceedings, and I ask that he be not disrupted.

The **Hon. D.S. BAKER**: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rabbits are regarded as one of Australia's worst pests. They arrived in Australia with the First Fleet and had reached plague proportions by the 1940s, prior to the introduction of the myxomatosis virus which unfortunately has not had long-term effects on the rabbit population. In fact, the latest economic estimates show that rabbits cause more than \$100 million per year in lost primary production. They consume more seedlings in a year than would be planted in a decade. In South Australia it is estimated that primary production would benefit by \$62 million if rabbits were under control. The estimated ongoing damage to the State by rabbits is \$30 million, including \$22 million in the pastoral areas.

Control of rabbits has therefore become an urgent priority for both environmental and agricultural reasons. Wardang Island, an uninhabited island nine kilometres from Port Victoria in South Australia's Spencer Gulf, was chosen as the site for trials using rabbit calicivirus disease, a naturally occurring disease of European rabbits. In fact, a 90 acre patch on this island was used during the late 1930s when CSIRO carried out early research on the introduction to Australia of the myxomatosis virus.

Rabbit calicivirus disease is present in 40 countries, where it has never been shown to infect any animals other than European rabbits. Extensive testing at CSIRO's animal health laboratory in Geelong has shown that the virus does not harm any other animals. Scientists have tested the virus on horses, cattle, sheep, deer, goats, pigs, dogs, cats and domestic fowls. It has also been shown to have no ill effects on foxes, ferrets, rats and mice or hares. Most importantly, the virus has also been tested without ill effect on bush rats, hopping mice, the plains rat, dunnarts, bettongs, bandicoots, the brush tail possum, the blue tongue lizard and the tammar wallaby.

Scientists have also tested the disease on corellas, pigeons, gulls, falcon and emu. On Wardang Island, the virus was being tested on rabbits in fenced pens within a quarantine area to determine the impact and persistence of the virus in Australian conditions. The virus was introduced to a series of warrens enclosed by four levels of rabbit-proof fencing. In fact, in early trials, spread of the virus was poor within the quarantine areas, perhaps due to high temperatures and low humidity. Security restrictions ensured that the disease could not spread by human contact.

I am advised by CSIRO that rabbits in two warrens on the island outside the quarantine pens became infected with the virus. Scientists believe that the spread to these warrens could have been due to birds or insects. Rabbits in those areas where the disease has been found outside the quarantine area have been destroyed. The last dead rabbit was sighted on 6 October. A contingency plan is also in place to minimise any risk of spread in the unlikely event that the virus is detected on mainland Australia. Scientists are monitoring rabbit populations in the region and stocks of vaccine are ready for use should they be needed to protect domestic rabbits.

South Australia's chief veterinary officer will take part in a telephone hookup to monitor the situation this afternoon. It is regrettable that when the rabbit calicivirus disease was detected outside the quarantine area on Wardang Island, the experiment had to be discontinued. There is simply no doubt that control of rabbits in Australia remains one of our highest priorities. I will be writing to the Federal Minister for Science (Senator Peter Cook) assuring him of our continuing support for CSIRO's research to control rabbits, and offering this Government's assistance in continuing to provide technical support to the project.

QUESTION TIME

HUS EPIDEMIC DOCUMENTS

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Did the Minister for Health tender all his ministerial files and documents on the HUS epidemic to the Coroner?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Documents tendered to the Coroner show that between 18 January and 7 February the Minister received eight ministerial briefings from the Director of Public Health. There appears to be no record of any document submitted to the Coroner by the Minister recording his actions, his decisions and his instructions. Perhaps there were not any.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I repeat from my ministerial statement of not five minutes ago: I have been reassured that the Health Commission did not withhold from the

Coroner any of its documents relating to the HUS epidemic. In addition, the Coroner's constable was given *carte blanche* to go through Health Commission files in relation to this matter. Therefore, every document that the Coroner considered relevant is on the public record.

STATE ASSETS

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): My question is directed to the Premier. What is the estimated cost of buying back all the assets sold by the Government and the services contracted out by the Government?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I was astounded to read in the *Advertiser* yesterday about the upcoming Labor Party convention this weekend and what the Labor Party is proposing to do at that convention. Before I start, I make an offer to all South Australians: they are selling box seats at the convention—\$500 a seat—for the chance to have access to the South Australian Labor Leader, Mike Rann. That is \$500 a box seat.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections on my right.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Incidentally, when they talk about a box seat, they are talking about a box sitting in the corner, together with the other dunces of the Labor Party. But this is a very serious matter, because there is a formal acknowledgment by the Labor Party in this letter that it has had no formal links with the business community whatsoever, and that this is a chance to become part of the soon to be launched business-Labor liaison service between the business community of South Australia and the Labor Party. Despite all the learned comments that have come across the House over the past two years, about Labor members knowing how to fix up the economy, in this letter they say that they will set up direct lines of communication between the business community and the ALP. Does that mean to say that for the past two years there has been no direct communication between the business community and the ALP? That is clearly what the letter implies.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I come to the matter of the Labor Party convention, and ask all members to listen carefully to some of the resolutions that are being put up. The first is to force Labor MPs to support the legalisation of cannabis. I suggest that they had a bit of cannabis before they went on and worked out the following motions, because the next motion is 'union pressure to be applied to the Labor Government to buy back all assets sold or privatised by the State Government.'

The Hon. S.J. Baker: Does that include the State Bank, I wonder?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Everything. Under this proposal they will buy back the State Bank, the Pipelines Authority, Remm—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Over an 11 year period this Party doubled the State debt to almost \$9 billion—with which we are struggling to deal now—and it wants to buy it all back. We have done some quick sums as to what this will cost: and it will cost South Australian taxpayers at least \$4 000 million to follow this motion through. That will add

to the interest bill of South Australian taxpayers every year a further \$400 million.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: This is amazing! In their last term in office, they more than doubled the size of the State debt. They are now bringing up a policy whereby they can consider increasing it by a further 50 per cent, imposing a further \$400 million of interest payments each year on South Australian taxpayers. The effect of that would be to double the rate of taxation imposed on petrol, alcohol and tobacco in South Australia or, as a further choice, we could double the payroll tax in South Australia. Just imagine how companies in South Australia would embrace such a policy when this State already has twice the level of payroll tax of any other State of Australia.

One can see that this particular motion is really just a sick joke. It is even sicker when they formally ask people to pay \$500 to come along and hear these sick jokes being talked about at the Labor Party convention. Heaven help South Australians if the Labor Party in this State, these people who lost us thousands of millions of dollars, again get their hands on the cash registers of the South Australian Government and once again inflict the same sort of damage and penalty on this State.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: When the House comes to order, we will continue.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I suggest to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that, if he wants his Leader to ask his question, he cease chattering. The Leader of the Opposition.

GARIBALDI SMALLGOODS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Was the Hon. Julian Stefani at the meeting between the Premier and directors of Garibaldi held on 4 February; if so, what was his role at the meeting; and why did Mr Stefani arrange for Dr Kerry Kirke, the Director of Public Health, to meet Mr Mead, the financial controller for Garibaldi, and the company's provisional liquidator on 5 February? A ministerial briefing dated 6 February from Dr Kirke to the Minister for Health records details of a meeting held with Garibaldi representatives on 5 February at which the implications of the provisional liquidation of the company were discussed. In that ministerial briefing, Dr Kerry Kirke, the Director of Public Health, said:

At the request of Julian Stefani, MLC, I attended the Garibaldi factory in Royal Park.

This was not at the request of the Minister for Health but at the request of Julian Stefani.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: If the honourable member looked at *Hansard* of 7 February, he would find that I gave a fairly full account of exactly what occurred at the meeting on 4 February this year.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Just wait.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Instead of trying to fabricate events in his own small mind, the Leader of the Opposition should simply wait and look at the facts. And the facts are these: the directors of Garibaldi rang my office and asked for the opportunity to meet with a number of key people, including those people from the Health Commission, involved in the epidemic, because they wanted to clarify the position exactly in a number of areas. At my instigation I met with the Minister for Health, the Minister for Primary Industries and all their relevant authorities appropriate in this dispute on the Saturday morning, 4 February. I specifically came in to make sure—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: If the Leader of the Opposition will just sit there and hold his tongue for one moment instead of breaching Standing Orders, he will hear the facts. I specifically asked to hear all the facts from all the authorities involved in front of their Ministers to make sure that everything possible that could be done was being done. For about 2½ hours we went through all those details: the Health Commission authorities and people from the Department of Primary Industries in front of their Ministers specifically gave detail of what they were working through in terms of solving the epidemic.

I had asked the Hon. Julian Stefani from another place, because of the specific request of Garibaldi directors and management to meet with these authorities, to arrange to meet these people outside the State Administration Building and, when the other meeting had finished, to show them into that meeting. It was entirely proper and appropriate that I made sure that someone was there who could host those people into the meeting I had arranged, because the meeting was already under way and I was engaged in it.

As a result of that, for about half an hour the same Health Commission and Department of Primary Industries people were able to give direct to Garibaldi—again, in front of me and the two Ministers so that no-one had any misunderstanding as to exactly what was being said—all the facts in relation to the epidemic. We were able to sit there and hear any question that Garibaldi directors wanted to put to the Health Commission and the answers given. That is the sort of appropriate course that any responsible Minister and Premier would take.

At that meeting certain aspects in relation to the ongoing activities of Garibaldi were discussed, including whether it was likely to go into receivership. I think it was requested initially by Garibaldi and agreed to by the Health Commission people that there should be a further meeting to discuss the implications if the company went into receivership. In the meantime, the company had to seek its own accounting advice. Therefore, I understand that the company obtained that accounting advice and met very late on the afternoon of the Sunday with Government officials to discuss the advice it had been given. Again, that was very appropriate, because the directors of Garibaldi had indicated that they were facing a situation (this is on the Saturday morning of 4 February) where there was a possibility, in fact perhaps a probability, that the company would have to go into receivership. All the 10 or 15 people involved in that meeting heard the evidence from Garibaldi and, therefore, what restrictions that may place upon the actions that the company would take.

Members need to appreciate that that effectively would mean the transfer of the management of the company away from the existing directors to a receiver manager for the company if the company were put into receivership. There

was also a possibility that it might be put into liquidation, in which case it would go across to a liquidator. It was very important, therefore, to make sure that any transfer of powers took place with the full knowledge and understanding of the South Australian Government. Again, Mr Stefani, who was there at the meeting when all this was arranged, was asked to help organise that meeting on the Sunday afternoon when it was finally put together.

NORTHERN ADELAIDE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Has the Government considered the special report by the Auditor-General on the Northern Adelaide Development Board and, if so, what action does it intend to take?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the member for Unley not only for his diligence but for his understanding of some of the more important issues facing the Government. A special report on the Northern Adelaide Development Board was undertaken by the Auditor-General. That report is good reading because it once again exposes the Leader of the Opposition's incapacity to deal with public moneys entrusted to his care. In his 1994 report to the House, the Auditor-General made special mention of the Business Asia Convention. The cost of that convention—which was a political stunt at the time of the election—as reported by the Auditor-General was \$765 000, or \$415 000—more than double—over the original estimated budget. The Auditor-General concluded that in the financial management of this event:

Insufficient regard was given to prudent principles of budgetary control and project accounting and reporting arrangements.

The Leader's reputation fares no better regarding the report on the Northern Adelaide Development Board. I suggest that the Leader read the report, because it makes very good reading. It states:

This report deals with the agreement that the Leader signed in July of 1990 while he was Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education.

The agreement was worth \$1.3 million for employment programs, many of which just happened to be in the Leader's own electorate.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The Auditor-General described the agreement as 'a political compact', and he made the following comments:

The agreement and schedule between the parties was inadequately prepared. The project was handicapped by the failure to establish clear lines of accountability and responsibility.

The Auditor-General said that records obtained in relation to the project were 'inadequate'. We have seen this situation occur with Ros Kelly at the Federal level. I can just imagine the Leader, with his little white board, calculating how much he can dollop out to his own electorate to shore up his own support. For anyone who wishes to read the report it is further evidence of the Leader of the Opposition's incapacity and lack of credibility.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Standing Order 137 will deal with continued interjections. The Leader has been warned once. I have spoken to the member for Mawson. I do not want to have to refer continually to members. The honourable member for Elizabeth.

GARIBALDI SMALLGOODS

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Given the Minister's instruction to the Health Commission on 10 February to 'prepare the way for every possible prosecution', what did the Minister do to prevent Garibaldi liquidating to limit damages? On 6 February the Minister was informed by Dr Kerry Kirke that he had attended a meeting on 5 February with the financial controller of Garibaldi and the company's provisional liquidator at the request of the Hon. Julian Stefani—this was the day after the Premier met with Garibaldi representatives. The minute reveals that at the meeting Dr Kirke was told that provisional liquidation was necessary to limit damages to Garibaldi. Dr Kirke told the company at that meeting that the evidence implicating Garibaldi mettwurst was 'very solid'.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The matter of corporate finances and how that is handled is a matter of corporate law, not for the Minister for Health.

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, indeed; as the member for Elizabeth says, it is simply not my jurisdiction. However, I wish to identify to the House a number of matters that are under my jurisdiction, that is, where prosecutions could be launched against Garibaldi for labelling breaches of the Food Act. This was a matter which I identified to the House I would pursue, unlike—as identified in the Coroner's report—what occurred in 1991 and 1992 under the previous Government. Garibaldi was apparently in breach of the labelling requirements of the Food Standards Code in relation to both identification of the lot and the ingredients that were present in the actual products.

Unfortunately, my legal advice is that Garibaldi is beyond the limitation period of the Summary Procedures Act, section 52 of which provides that action must be commenced within six months of the cause of the action arising. There is no discretion in the court and a prosecution cannot proceed. Unfortunately, that is the case. Section 20 of the Food Act provides that food must be labelled in accordance with the regulation. The penalty for breach of that regulation is \$2 500, or a Division 7 expiation fine. As I say, there were two potential breaches: the identification of lot and the actual ingredients.

The dilemma is that because of the Coroner's ongoing inquiry, legal advice is that if we had instituted a prosecution—which I was keen to do—the directors of Garibaldi would have had every opportunity to stop the proceedings of the Coroner's inquiry. I believe that was completely against the best interests and, accordingly, the statutory limitation time has now been exceeded. However, I intend to speak with the Attorney-General about this matter and see whether there may not be some amendment to the Food Act to allow for an extension of time for prosecution to occur, particularly where extenuating circumstances exist, such as a Coroner's inquest.

GLENELG SHOOTING

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Did yesterday's shooting at Glenelg reflect a failure of community mental health services as alleged by the Opposition? On radio this morning, the member for Elizabeth suggested the shooting at Glenelg was as a result of this Government's 'funding cut-backs'.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I reject the Opposition's assertions completely, and I thank the member for Mitchell

for his question. Let us be clear what the member for Elizabeth asserts.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: This time.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As the Minister says, 'This time', because the honourable member is building up an unfortunate record in these matters.

Ms Stevens: Not as unfortunate as yours.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Just hang on, baby. Like a hearse chaser, the honourable member has heard of the shooting at Glenelg and assumed that the perpetrator was a client of the mental health services. If one is talking about violent crime, a mental patient must be involved. It is one short step to say that all mental health clients are violent and prone to crime. The honourable member should be condemned either for her prejudice or for her recklessness with the facts. The facts are that a vast majority of mental health patients—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: —are not violent. The incidence of violence among people with a mental health illness is lower than in the general population. More than 20 per cent of the adult population will suffer from a mental health problem or an illness during their lifetime. Most people will be touched by some form of mental illness and most are single episodes; 10 to 15 per cent of young people will be affected by mental health issues in any one year; and a small number of people—less than 0.01 per cent of the population—need isolation and confinement.

Mr Bone, the most unfortunate perpetrator of yesterday's violence, is a good example of all these things. Indeed, he was a client of the South Australian mental health services, as they were then known, between June 1984 and December 1985. His last contact was in 1985, and when last seen by a social worker in August 1985 he was not psychotic and was not willing to discuss his future plans.

The Guardianship Board revoked its orders in December 1985. The board clearly believed that Mr Bone was able to function effectively in the community. After 10 years in the community without any problems that brought him to the attention of mental health authorities, surely he had earned the right not to have his actions interpreted as being due to his mental illness. Let us be absolutely clear about this situation. Mr Bone had lived completely peaceably within the community for more than a decade and had not been, nor had he needed to be, a client of the South Australian Mental Health Service or of any mental institution in that time.

There are those in the community, such as the member for Elizabeth and the Mayor of Glenelg, who, for their own interests, are prepared to play on the fears that many people quite wrongly have about mental illness. Whenever something goes wrong, some misinformed person says that it must be because of the deinstitutionalisation process—a process which clients and professionals in the area, including Australia's leading advocate in mental health, Mr Brian Burdekin, say we must embrace, and which the previous Government did embrace in a pathetically administrative way, but it embraced it.

The alternative to such a policy is that as soon as people have a mental illness they must be locked up in an institution for the rest of the lives. That is what we would have had to do for Mr Bone who, until yesterday, had lived within the community completely peaceably for 10 years without incident. All the good work of the Federal and State Governments in trying to take away the stigma of mental illness can

be blown apart by allegations such as those made by the member for Elizabeth who, frankly, did not bother to check the facts and did not care. Mental illness equals headlines! It is disgusting.

The stigmatisation of people with a mental illness is one of the most crippling burdens that our community places on such people. The Mental Health Service is working hard to address this stigma. In fact, a key element of the joint Commonwealth-State national mental health strategy is a campaign to reduce the stigma of mental health. A pamphlet produced as part of the strategy specifically on stigmatisation states:

Discrimination and community misconceptions remain among the most significant barriers to people with a mental illness being able to participate actively in the community and gaining access to the services that they need.

Further on it poses the question: are people with a mental illness usually dangerous? The response is 'No'. In fact, this false perception underlies some of the most damaging stereotypes. People with a mental illness are seldom dangerous. Even people with the most severe mental illness are rarely dangerous when receiving appropriate treatment.

I reiterate the facts. Mr Bone, last having had contact with the Mental Health Service in 1985, deserved the right to be treated as a normal member of the community. It does the member for Elizabeth no credit whatsoever to carry on the stigma and shibboleths of the 1900s.

GARIBALDI SMALLGOODS

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Given the Minister for Health's instruction to the Health Commission on 10 February to 'prepare the way for every prosecution possible', why has the Government not prosecuted Mr Neville Mead of Garibaldi for failing to notify health authorities and the public of test results conveyed to him on 26 January that showed that salami as well as mettwurst had proved positive for the presence of organisms associated with the HUS epidemic?

The Coroner's report states that, although Mr Mead was informed on 26 January that salami had tested positive, he failed to act on advice that he should advise the Health Commission of these results and allowed a notice to be published on 27 January which stated that only mettwurst was affected. On 1 February, six days later, the Director of Public Health wrote a minute to the Minister and informed him that only mettwurst was involved.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: This is one of the dilemmas. Unfortunately, the test was the result of a private agreement between the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science and Mr Mead. That is one of the problems that we are looking to fix in the rewrite of the Food Act.

TOURISM CAMPAIGN

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Can the Minister for Tourism provide details of the South Australian Tourism Commission's new national television campaign and explain how it fits in with the successful 'Come to your senses—Come to South Australia' campaign launched last year? I understand that this campaign focuses on Adelaide and that it is four years since South Australia's capital was promoted in this way.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: This morning, as part of a continuing campaign of promoting tourism in this State, we launched a special advertising campaign on the City of

Adelaide. As the member for Hartley almost tragically points out, it is four years since anybody has attempted to promote the City of Adelaide. We have promoted it as part of a two-year program. In the two years prior to that the previous Government did nothing. As the community well knows, last year was the first time in the whole period of the Grand Prix that there was any mention that it was held in Adelaide.

Research has shown that unless we promote the capital city of our State nobody internationally will know where it is. We had an excellent presentation this morning. I thank all the media who came along, particularly the television stations, because we are looking forward to their support in promoting South Australia through this new 'Come to your senses' program. Tourism in this State is now starting to show the economic activity that it should be showing, and at long last we are beginning to see a significant increase in tourism numbers. This advertisement, together with all the other regional promotion which has been done, will be excellent for the economic growth of South Australia.

EDUCATION, SHARED FACILITIES

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education representing the Minister for Education and Children's Services. How much has the Department of Education failed to collect from non-government agencies sharing facilities with the Education Department? The Auditor-General, in his report, says that the lack of management control of major projects involving shared facilities has resulted in non-government agencies not paying capital contributions, recurrent costs not being recovered and a lack of direction to the parties involved in managing the relevant financial provisions.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Taylor for her first question to me in her new capacity following her meteoric rise. I will obtain a detailed response from the Minister for Education and Children's Services and get back to the honourable member.

PRISONER TRANSPORTATION

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Can the Minister for Correctional Services explain to the House the effect to the State of contracting out functions currently undertaken by four Government agencies for prisoner and young offender transportation? I have noted that registrations of interest have been called for prisoner and young offender transportation and their management and production at courts and that these registrations close on 20 October.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Hanson for his question and ongoing interest in correctional service matters. This is another one of those things the ALP conference might like to add to its agenda for buying back should it ever win office again in South Australia. On 9 October an advertisement appeared in the *Advertiser*, and advertisements have appeared in other papers around the country this week, calling for registration of interest from organisations suitably qualified and experienced in the management of prisoner and young offender transportation and their production at courts. These organisations must have the demonstrated management experience or demonstrated capability to provide this service, and an innovative and flexible approach to the management of prisoner and young

offender transportation and their production at courts will be particularly encouraged for this process.

At present the movement of prisoners and young offenders is provided by four Government agencies: the Department of Correctional Services, the South Australian Police Department, the Department for Family and Community Services and the Courts Administration Authority. The current cost to South Australian taxpayers for providing this service has been somewhat difficult to determine in the interim because no statistical data has been kept in the past. It has been estimated that it is well in excess of \$2.5 million, and that is as precise as I wish to be at this time. We do not wish to advise the various competitors of the exact amount, but well in excess of \$2.5 million is expended on the movement and production at court of some 30 000 prisoners and young offenders moved annually in both the metropolitan and country areas.

It is expected that the cost of this exercise will be reduced by up to 20 per cent after contracting out. We know that at least 58 people a day commit most of their working day to the security of prisoners from prisons to the courtroom. The objective in relation to contracting out these services is essentially three-fold. First, the whole process must generate the savings I have mentioned to contribute to the debt reduction strategy of the State and at the same time must provide enhanced qualitative services that are cost effective. Secondly, it must involve the implementation of innovative and flexible management strategies in the management of prisoner and young offender transport and their management and production at courts and, thirdly, it must create a dual system whereby ideas and technology can be exchanged between the Government and private sectors to further add to the generation of competition and best practice.

It is expected that the services will be contracted out by mid-December this year, subject to tenders satisfying their financial and qualitative criteria to the satisfaction of both the Government and the Courts Administration Authority. Through this process South Australia will become only the second Australian State to contract out prisoner transport operations. In Victoria such contracting out has already occurred and has been particularly successful. Similarly, contracting out these services has been particularly successful in the United States and the United Kingdom.

It is worth mentioning in closing that the whole contracting out process will be administered by the same team from the Department of Correctional Services, acting on behalf of all four agencies, who oversaw the successful contracting out of the Mount Gambier prison.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Will the Premier confirm that the Government has adopted a policy of tying funds for the construction of new schools to the sale of existing schools and have projects been cancelled or delayed because sales have not met targets? Last year the Education Department received \$3.3 million from the sale of land, a shortfall of \$14.7 million against the budget. The Auditor-General reported that, as a result of this shortfall, elements of the capital works program could not be undertaken. The Auditor-General also pointed out that last year the education capital program of \$90.2 million was underspent by \$27.8 million.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As the Auditor-General has clearly spelt out in his report, that is the case; namely, that there is an opportunity in the Education Department for schools to sell off some land or assets and to spend that

money at that school. There is also a program within the broader Education Department whereby any land sold by the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) can be reused for capital works programs. The Auditor-General has clearly outlined that. There has been a delay in some of those sales because the price has not come up to the reserve put down, therefore the capital works side of the program has not been able to proceed until the land is sold.

SENIOR PEDESTRIANS

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Will the Minister for the Ageing provide details of the percentage of senior pedestrians involved in fatalities and casualties in South Australia? Public concern has been expressed about the need to review road safety in light of South Australia's ageing population.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The issue of senior pedestrians in road accidents is a serious one in this State and will form part of the planning process on the needs of the aged in South Australia. Percentages obtained from the Office of Road Safety show that over the past eight years seniors have comprised an average of 39 per cent of pedestrian fatalities and 18.5 per cent of pedestrian casualties. In 1994, 38 per cent (or more than one in three) of all pedestrian fatalities were aged 60 years or over.

Pedestrian accident statistics indicate that crossing roads without signal control is a major road safety concern. Whilst these figures are open-ended and not totally conclusive, they certainly present us with an issue that needs sound investigation. Suggestions throughout the State have ranged from the provision of more crossings for older people, a greater enforcement of speed limits (particularly around aged care homes, retirement villages and other facilities) and the possibility of 25 kilometre per hour zones in some areas where there are likely to be large volumes of older people crossing the road.

We need to realise that with an ageing population there will be restricted mobility, slower response times, deteriorating eyesight or hearing and the onset of other disabilities that may compromise safety on the road. It is a major issue and one into which the Government is carrying out a number of investigations, looking at some of the answers to the many problems presented in this case.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, who I see has left the Chamber, so I will direct my question to the Premier. What action has the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education taken as a result of his department's failure to correct concerns raised by the Auditor-General in 1994 over the management of major plant and equipment controlled by the fixed assets system? In June 1994 the department undertook to carry out stocktakes in all institutes and ensure that these were regularly updated, and to report quarterly to the chief executive officer. The Auditor-General this year reported that these tasks had not been carried out.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I only caught the tail end of the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The Minister for Tourism and the member for Spence will cease interjecting.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson is warned.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I assure the House that I was not out making an early booking for next weekend's ALP conference. Unfortunately, I am suffering from a virus and it is taking its toll. In respect of the question asked, the Auditor-General has raised several matters, all of which are being addressed. I have instructed my department that all his requests will be complied with and that I will not tolerate any delay in responding to and fully complying with his requests.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Ms GREIG (Reynell): In light of statements yesterday by Mr Rupert Murdoch about unemployment in Australia, and specifically youth unemployment in South Australia, does the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education share Mr Murdoch's concerns, and what is being done to address this important issue?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Reynell for this question; it is an important one. I applaud Mr Murdoch for raising this issue. He was particularly focusing on—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition needs a little training in the Standing Orders.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: —the serious situation of the Australian economy overall. One could only concur in that, because we have had a Federal Labor Government that has done very little over 13 years other than to damage the economy. In respect of South Australia, Mr Murdoch made a comment regarding the level of youth unemployment. The Government acknowledges that youth unemployment here is far too high. We inherited 42 per cent unemployment amongst 15 to 19 year olds. We now have that down to 34 per cent—still far too high—and we are committed to getting it down even lower. Members must understand that the Commonwealth Government is the main player with respect to economic matters. Whilst the State Government can do a lot, it cannot tackle the issue by itself.

The main focus is to bring in investment. The Premier and Minister Olsen, along with other members of Cabinet, have been working hard to bring in new investment from, for example, Motorola and Australis, to create permanent jobs. That is the way to tackle youth unemployment in the long term. In my portfolio I have initiated many innovative schemes, acknowledged as some of the most innovative in the world. I will outline some of them and some other schemes that this Government has introduced. Under the WorkCover Rebate Scheme, to the end of July 1995, 1 700 new jobs have been created for school leavers. That incentive program also encompasses long-term unemployed.

For several years we have had our Kickstart program targeting principally adults but also young people. Since January 1994, employment outcomes from that program total 2 246. In addition, I have instituted a program that began last month, Kickstart for Youth. That is specifically to target disadvantaged unemployed youth and to get them into a position where they are employable. The young people who have suffered most in our State and throughout Australia have been the traditional supporters of the Labor Party. The Federal Labor Government has sold out those people just as the previous Labor Government here sold them out.

If you look at the suburbs to the north (in Elizabeth and Salisbury), to the south (Christies and Noarlunga) and to the west, you will see that what the previous State Labor Government did and what the present Federal Labor Government has done and is doing to those people is nothing short of a crime. It has taken away all opportunity for those young people. It has denied them a future, jobs and opportunities. With our limited resources, we have committed over \$1 million, have taken on 14 officers and are targeting 15 to 19 year olds to get them to a point where they can be employed. We are also targeting 13 to 15 year olds who are at risk of dropping out at school or who have dropped out and are likely to become long-term unemployed. They will be targeted in conjunction with agencies such as DECS and other Government agencies. We want to give young people a future.

Up until June 1995, we have taken on 741 trainees under the Youth Training Scheme. The Employment Brokers Scheme, which is an initiative of this Government, is innovative and world leading. The most current figures indicate that about 300 jobs have been created in a scheme that turns part-time work into full-time work, marrying up part-time positions into a full-time position. In Greening Urban SA, which leads to employment in local government, 117 positions were created. Since we have come into government, 1 448 trainees have been taken on under the Group Training Scheme. Under the Group Training Rebate Scheme, 342 trainees have been taken on. Under the State Government Entry Level Training Scheme, 146 trainees have been taken on, and we have acted as brokers in the LEAP program for 500 young people.

That is not the end of the story. I have my department working to see whether we can introduce even more innovative programs to tackle what is a serious cancer in our society. This Government is determined to give young people a future, to give them hope. As I said, the main emphasis is to attract investment here to create permanent, long-term jobs but, in the meantime, we will not sit back, even with our limited resources, and allow our young people to be lost. It is our commitment to do that. I commend Mr Murdoch, because he cares about Australia, about his home town and about the young people, as does this Government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the Deputy Leader and other members that they contain themselves. I caution them that their behaviour is unacceptable.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Ms HURLEY (Napier): Will the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations restore the level of assistance to people in need of help in moving into private rental accommodation? The South Australian Housing Trust has recently cut funds under the private rental support scheme, which gave needy people assistance with bonds for essential services and furniture removal.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: The provision of support by the Housing Trust really is not the core business of the Housing Trust. In fact, in my discussions with my colleague, the Minister for Family and Community Services, it was agreed that that service would be picked up by that department. Because of its administration and getting it up and running, the service did not commence this financial year. However, to ensure that families are not disadvantaged, particularly anyone involved in a domestic violence situation,

I have arranged for officers of both departments to meet and for an appropriate sum of money to be transferred from the Housing Trust across to Family and Community Services. So that service will commence this year and will be maintained during the year.

BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr BUCKBY (Light): Following the sale of BankSA, what arrangements have been made to replace the wholesale funding previously provided by the South Australian Asset Management Corporation? When the Bank of South Australia was established last year the Government, through the Asset Management Corporation, provided a significant part of BankSA's funding requirements.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I am pleased to report that the facility has been repaid. The House would be well aware that, with the sale of the bank, a facility of some \$1.2 billion was made available to Advance Bank, with an agreement to repay that, basically, by the end of 1995. It is pleasing to report to the House that the \$1.2 billion has been repaid to the South Australian Asset Management Corporation much earlier than expected, and it was warmly received.

THOMPSON, MR S.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Can the Premier confirm that the Steven Murray Thompson whom he has appointed Executive Officer of the bipartisan South Australian Constitutional Advisory Council is the same Steven Thompson who was the Liberal Party's candidate for the State district of Ross Smith in December 1993 and who described himself as a law student and researcher for the Liberal Party? Was the Executive Officer position advertised? What was the process of choosing the Executive Officer?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Steven Thompson came to this position from the Supreme Court, where he was an assistant to one of the Supreme Court judges. I would have thought it a very appropriate appointment. There was someone who had sufficient standing to be recognised by a judge of the Supreme Court. After all, it is a position that requires legal training at that secretarial level, and I could not have thought of a more appropriate person, so he was appointed.

FLOOD AWARE

Mr KERIN (Frome): Will the Minister for Emergency Services provide the House with details of the Flood Aware campaign recently launched by the State Emergency Service and Emergency Management Australia?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Frome for his ongoing interest in emergency service matters. As members should be aware, while South Australia is the driest State in the driest continent, this does not mean that we do not suffer from major flooding, which has the potential to cost lives and cause significant damage. The State's last major flood was in 1992, when more than \$2.5 million worth of damage was sustained around our State and two people died. More recently, flooding occurred in the Port Adelaide area. Fortunately, this caused only minor damage as the king tide peaked lower than expected in the Port River.

It is with these events in mind that Emergency Management Australia (formerly the Natural Disasters Organisation) and the State Emergency Service have embarked upon a

hazard awareness campaign. This campaign is aimed at reducing the damage caused by flooding in the State and increasing awareness and preventive action by South Australians and Australians. So far, the State Emergency Service has reported an excellent response to its campaign. I am further advised by the SES that, following excellent rains in July and August, water catchment areas are reporting high levels and, if high rain levels continue during this month—and we have had considerable rain today—the potential is there for serious concern in flood prone areas.

While most floods tend to be short-lived, lasting for only a day or two, that is all that is needed to cause significant damage. As a result, the State Emergency Service has been promoting to the public its flood action guide and fold-out leaflet which details flood preparation and safety procedures, emergency flood proofing measures, and flood damage clean-up and repair methods so that South Australians can be better prepared should flooding occur.

HOUSING TRUST URBAN RENEWAL

Mr De LAINE (Price): Will the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations give an assurance that no Housing Trust tenant in The Parks urban renewal project area will be evicted from their home without their consent?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Price has the call.

Mr De LAINE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your protection. On Monday of this week, the *Advertiser* reported that a draft relocation policy for The Parks urban renewal project has been approved by the Housing Trust giving dramatically increased powers to the trust to force people from their home despite a promise last year that no-one would be forced to leave their home.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I have been wondering how long it would take this week for this question to come up. I say at the outset that the trust relocation policy that is in place at the moment is exactly the same as the relocation policy that was implemented by the Australian Labor Party when it was in government—absolutely nothing has changed. We talk about relocation and that, in fact, is what it is. There are several reasons why a person could be either temporarily relocated or relocated into a totally new property, and I would like to quote to the House those reasons. First, the property could be in need of major repairs and no longer economical to maintain to an acceptable standard; it might pose a health or safety risk; it might be required for redevelopment; and it might no longer meet the needs of tenants according to their tenancy agreement.

In The Parks redevelopment, which has the capacity to be one of the great urban renewal projects in this State, we have the situation where people can be temporarily relocated while their property is refurbished. If a property is beyond repair, it could be necessary to relocate the tenants into a new property of their choice, and this will be done by negotiation. When the time for relocation comes—and we could be talking about relocations that are 10 or 15 years away—a consulting period begins, and that is no different from what has happened in the past; the tenants are offered alternative premises; we talk to them about compensation—if they have made any additions to the property, they are compensated; the electricity, gas and telephone connection fees are paid for them when they move; mail relocation and removal costs are

paid; and, as I said, anything that they have spent on the property is compensated for.

We can take the Mitchell Park redevelopment as an example. When a proposal has been put to a tenant to move into a brand new property with all the compensation that goes with it, we have never found anyone who was not happy to take up the offer. I could quote to the House many letters that we have received where tenants have been pleased with the process. The same thing will apply to The Parks redevelopment. We have set up a liaison officer in a double unit dwelling at The Parks who will liaise and communicate with local residents. Newsletters are circulating, and we are communicating with the tenants at public meetings so that everyone knows exactly what is going on.

When a decision is eventually made with the developer as to which properties are beyond repair and must be demolished, we will sit down with the tenants concerned and make them an offer which, at the end of the day, I believe they will all take up. At Mitchell Park and Rosefield, the residents have taken up the offer because—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: —as the honourable member says—it is so good they cannot refuse. What we are on about regarding The Parks redevelopment is providing a standard of living for people in public housing which they will be pleased to move into. We are about upgrading the standard of housing, and by being able to sell properties we can then reinvest the money in the public housing sector. It is a win-win situation for everyone who is involved in public housing, and it is all about getting people into a better lifestyle.

I think members will find, at the end of this 15-year redevelopment at The Parks, a development with a mix of public and private with people living in brand new homes. We will build around those who are currently in a home which is in excellent condition and in which they have invested money. We are not about forcing people out but, where people must be relocated because the property is beyond repair, compensation and assistance will be provided, and there will be plenty of consultation leading up to that time.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): I bring up the fourth report of the committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr CUMMINS: I bring up the report of the committee being discussion paper No. 1 on the scrutiny of national scheme legislation and the desirability of uniform scrutiny principles and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I bring up the fourteenth report of the committee on the Aldinga waste water treatment plant and re-use scheme 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.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr BASS (Florey): I would like to refer to something of which I became aware quite recently and which I think needs to be raised in this House. As we all know, the Adelaide Children's Hospital has now been amalgamated with the Queen Victoria Hospital, and this has created a problem in relation to parking. Recently, a young couple who attended my office had some weeks previously had a nine week premature baby. The baby was kept in the hospital and the parents were allowed to go home and then come in and visit it, but the mother had to express milk every day to take it into the baby. On a warm day some weeks ago they drove to the hospital and, as usual, could not find a park. They drove around the area for about 20 minutes while the mother nursed the mother's milk she had expressed some time earlier. In the end, because of the concern about the milk, they found a loading zone, parked their vehicle and took the milk up to the ward for the baby to drink. They were in the ward for some 20 minutes. When they came back they found that a parking ticket had been issued against their vehicle.

Under normal circumstances I would agree that anybody who parks in a no parking area or who is there longer than the time limit and has not paid for such parking should pay the fine. But in these circumstances one must understand that with a premature baby every day is an emergency for those people. I can speak with a little bit of authority. My young brother's wife recently had a 17 week premature baby which weighed 475 grams. I can assure members that babies do not come much smaller than that. At the moment, Angela is 11 months old. She is still only 11 pounds but, even now, every day in my brother's house is a potential emergency because Angela is so tiny.

Let me refer back to the hospital. These people returned to their vehicle after going in to see their premature baby and after having delivered the milk to find a parking ticket issued against their vehicle. They came to see me as they were very concerned about having to find the extra money along with the cost of having to go backwards and forwards to see their baby and to take the milk. I wrote to the Adelaide City Council and explained the situation. I thought that the council would understand the situation and, of course, waive the fee. The council wrote back to me and said that it had been in touch with the hospital but, because there was no emergency, the fine would stand. The council even sent me a map showing lots of parking spaces.

I inform the gentleman in the Adelaide City Council who sits in his nice chair that, if he got off his backside and drove around the hospital, he would find those parking spaces are always full—not half full but completely full. You can never get a park around the Adelaide Women's and Children's Hospital. To issue this young couple with a \$30 fine simply because they were concerned about getting milk to their premature baby is absolutely disgusting.

In its letter the council told me about two other parking fines that this couple had received as if to say, 'If they have two, they can pay three.' This couple did not come to me about the other two fines: they had obviously parked in the wrong place somewhere and deserved them. But on this occasion they had reason to get to the hospital reasonably quickly. It is not good that any milk be left in a car. They were in the hospital for only 20 minutes—it was not as if they stayed there for an hour—but they received a fine. I raise this matter and hope that the Adelaide City Council will realise what it has done and show a little bit of compassion in this case.

Ms HURLEY (Napier): In February 1994, local government and the State Government signed a memorandum of understanding between the Premier and the President of the Local Government Association.

Mr Caudell interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: I do not think the current Minister has found out yet. Among other things the memorandum stated:

That the State Government... and the Local Government Association of South Australia... desire to further develop and implement a relationship reflecting a cooperative approach to the development of the State... that... the parties agree to continue with the process of negotiation based on open, respectful and cooperative interaction and the exchange of information.

Further, one of the points highlighted stated:

... the desire to achieve a recognition of local government's capacity for increasing self management.

Subsequent events have shown that the State Government at least has an apparent disregard for this memorandum of understanding, because it has not cooperated with the Local Government Association or, indeed, the rest of the local government community. More importantly, the Government has not recognised local government's capacity for self management. The Government is basically trying to implement a scheme in which it will tell local government how to operate.

This was demonstrated in the draft Bill which was put forward in which local government was not consulted prior and has had only a very short period of time in which to comment on the draft Bill where, among other things, a poll of 50 per cent of ratepayers is required if amalgamations proposed by the Government are not to proceed. This proposal was dealt with by Des Ryan, the Editor of Messenger Newspapers. He says:

Thanks to a fiendishly clever strategy by Local Government Relations Minister John Oswald, the local government reform process is back on track. At Mr Oswald's urging, a meeting of the Parliamentary Liberal Party at Murray Bridge last week endorsed a new approach that will require a turnout of 50 per cent of eligible voters in ratepayer polls on council amalgamations. Since a 20 per cent vote in council elections is regarded as a fairly good result, the chances of a 50 per cent turnout must be well nigh impossible. This means council amalgamations, when or if they are recommended by the new Local Government Reform Board, will almost certainly proceed. This is a remarkable victory for Mr Oswald. Only two months ago, local government reform, as outlined in the disputed MAG report, looked to be a dead issue when the same Party room balked at making amalgamations compulsory.

This is the attitude that characterises this State Government. The Government is attempting to treat members of the local government community as fools and as unable to see past what Des Ryan erroneously calls a 'fiendishly clever strategy'. I think that must have been written after a long lunch. It is a strategy that everyone in the local government community can see through, and they are outraged by it. In

fact, I have just received a letter from residents of Tumbay Bay with enclosed copies of a number of letters. One such letter was to their local member, the member for Flinders. The letter states:

Enclosed copies of letters to the Minister for Local Government. We still protest at the forced amalgamation of our Tumbay Bay council with one or two other councils. After watching GTS4 on the evening of 10 October 1995 your Government is hell bent on forcing this amalgamation no matter what means available even to the point of foul means. As I said to your Minister and civil/public servants that there will be an election one day, we now not vote Liberal, but after this many more will vote the same as us, Labor 1.

In this major area of local government reform neither the Local Government Association nor councils have been consulted. We are left with a draft Bill which does not have the support of any of the councils that I have been able to detect except a number of councils which the proposed reform Bill will not affect—the so-called 'G5' councils. The point is, regardless of the final shape of the Bill, that the Government has not consulted.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): I wish to put on record some of the positive issues that have come out of the levy that is being raised for recreational boat owners in South Australia. People would understand that in the past the Labor Government went through a process of reducing yearly the amount of money being spent on recreational facilities for boat owners in South Australia to the extent that, prior to the 1993 election, the sum spent by the Labor Government was nil. As part of Liberal policy we determined that we would start with a sum that would be put towards recreational facilities in South Australia, and that that amount would gladly be increased to a value of \$500 000. I would like to place on the record a letter received by the Hon. Dean Brown, prior to the election, from the South Coast Boating Association, signed by S.J. Tupper. The letter, in part, states:

The needs of the boating fraternity in this State have been savagely ignored in recent years. It is hoped that your Government will inject a new and positive direction into this most popular of pastimes and indeed a major industry in this State.

I am very pleased to say that, through the efforts of the Boat Facilities Advisory Committee, which committee I chair on behalf of the Minister for Transport, Diana Laidlaw, we have done just that. We have made some very important decisions and the money is now being spent in the community. I am quite disappointed that the press release issued by the Minister and published in the *Sunday Mail* covered no more than what I would consider to be the area of a postage stamp. Messenger newspapers, the *Advertiser* and the *Sunday Mail* were happy to spend pages criticising the fact that the levy would be put in place but mentioned little about the positive aspects of it. So, I will take the next three minutes to highlight those positive aspects.

The facilities fund is raised as two separate funds, one involving recreational boat facilities and the other, commercial boat facilities. To this end the Minister has appointed a joint committee comprising Malcolm Davis, representing local government; Stan Quin and Kevin Copley, representing the recreational boat people; Mrs Johnnie Gurr, representing the Renmark area; and Graham Gribble and Ken Lyons, representing the commercial fisheries. A considerable amount of time and effort has been spent by all of those members and I appreciate their assistance.

Those members have worked voluntarily to ensure that the proposed levy is affordable by the community. A lot of time has also been spent in considering how to spend that money

fairly. I make it quite clear that that money will be raised and kept in a separate fund outside of a Treasury fund; it will be audited separately, and it will be seen as being totally accountable in terms of its sale in the community. It is important for recreational and commercial boating people to see the expenditure of the money raised through this levy and, indeed, through the representatives on that committee, they can have some input in terms of how that money will be spent.

The Minister, Diana Laidlaw, has—as does the Government—a strong commitment to improving the standard of boating facilities right across the State. That is highlighted by the fact that funding has been approved for the first five projects, as recommended to the Minister by the committee. The projects that have already been approved include: additional lanes to the boat ramp and improved parking facilities at Port Wakefield, within the area of the District Council of Wakefield Plains; additional landing abutments to the Cape Jervis boat ramp; additional landing for a boat ramp at Goolwa and also at the local yacht club; removal of an old decaying wharf and the reinstatement of banks with grassy areas at Swan Reach; and a boating jetty and landing in front of the Waikerie town centre. Some work has also been carried out on the O'Sullivan Beach boat ramp, as well as similar work being undertaken at Outer Harbor.

It is important to put on the record that that amount of money has currently been allocated to country areas, because one of the fears expressed by people in the Riverland was that this money would be wholly and solely spent on the coast, and that certainly is not the case.

Mr De LAINE (Price): In Question Time today I asked the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations about The Parks urban renewal project, seeking an assurance that no Housing Trust tenants would be evicted from their homes without their consent. Despite the fact that the Minister gave a fairly lengthy answer, he did not give that assurance. He said that the Housing Trust was working under the old policy, which came into effect under the former Labor Government. On Monday this week an article in the *Advertiser* stated that a new draft relocation policy (a copy of which the *Advertiser* had been able to obtain) had been approved by the Housing Trust, and that the eviction provisions for this renewal program had dramatically increased. The article indicated that Housing Trust tenants were fearful that they would be evicted against their will.

In my view, the Government went off half-cocked last year when it announced this refurbishment plan for The Parks without disclosing full details and aspects of this complex operation. It is a complex operation when one has to move families around, demolish and rebuild houses and make necessary temporary adjustments and provisions for the continuation of services both to existing Housing Trust dwellings and also to private dwellings interspersed with trust houses in this area.

Many questions need to be asked, and I believe it is quite unfair of this Government to subject many long-term Housing Trust tenants to this situation, causing people to become suspicious and fearful of the unknown. It is a trait from which we all suffer. When something is announced without the full details it is understandable that people will become fearful of what happens to them. Many of these people have lived in these areas for 30 and sometimes 40 years. Their families have grown up in the area, which they love; they know their

neighbours; they are familiar with all the services, schools and clubs located there and they just do not want to shift. They are fearful they will be shifted out of their homes to other suburbs, whether it be on a temporary or permanent basis.

The main problem is that they do not trust the Brown Liberal Government and they are fearful that worse will happen. Late last year and again early this year I asked the Minister questions about this whole matter involving the renewals project and was told each time that all would be revealed in June 1995. That has not happened. We have been waiting for the details of this magic plan but they have not been forthcoming. As I said, on Monday this week an article appeared in the *Advertiser* stating that this new draft policy had been approved by the Housing Trust and was likely to become policy next month, giving dramatic new powers to the trust to relocate people.

This article has sparked further fears. The shadow Minister and I were present at a very well-attended public meeting last year when this program was first announced. Widespread fears were expressed at that meeting and I have taken up those matters, as has the shadow Minister. We have asked questions and tried to obtain the information but it has not been forthcoming. As a result, several community groups representing Housing Trust tenants in The Parks area have been set up to monitor the situation and to try to obtain information about this whole project. Having attended quite a few of their meetings, I know that their concerns are real.

They get snippets of information but not enough to satisfy them. I cannot answer their questions. All I can do is ask questions in this place, as I have done in Question Time and

in the Estimates Committees earlier this year—all to no avail. We still cannot get a handle on what is happening. Today I asked the Minister for an assurance that no-one would be evicted against their will in this relocation project. Despite the Minister's long explanation, he still did not give that assurance. I intend to follow up this matter for the sake of these people who are very concerned about their future.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): Yesterday I had something to say about tourism in this State, the fact that we have the last Grand Prix virtually upon us and what that has meant in the development of tourism infrastructure and an understanding of what we expect to derive from it because we undertake it to standards which equal the world's best. Certainly that is what we are illustrating. Today I want to go on from there and draw attention to other interesting aspects of business development between this State and places overseas which further secure jobs for us generated through the development not only of the tourism industry but of other export enterprises. Tourism is an export enterprise.

Mr Acting Speaker, with your leave and that of the House I should like to have incorporated in *Hansard* a purely statistical table which sets out the numbers of international visitors who came to Australia 10 years ago compared with last year. It also shows not only those who came in 1985, but those who came from other countries in 1988 and 1991; it incorporates ratios of the numbers who visited in 1985 compared with those in 1994 as well as those who visited in 1991 compared with those who visited in 1994; and it reflects the growth that has occurred over those 10 years as well as for the most recent three years, 1991 to 1994.

Leave granted.

1. International visitors to Australia:

Population	1985	1988	1991	1994	Ratio 85:94	Ratio 91:94
UK	153 400	260 300	263 800	335 300	1:2.2	1:1.3
Germany	37 300	65 900	77 700	122 700	1:3.3	1:1.6
India	6 900	10 700	9 800	12 100	1:1.8	1:1.8
Malaysia	32 900	52 100	48 000	95 100	1:2.9	1:2.0
Singapore	35 300	63 500	87 500	187 600	1:5.3	1:2.1
Indonesia	15 300	29 600	37 000	105 700	1:6.9	1:2.9
Japan	107 600	352 300	528 500	721 100	1:6.7	1:1.4
Korea	3 700	9 200	23 600	110 800	1:30.0	1:4.7
Philippines	9 300	13 400	15 700	21 700	1:2.3	1:1.4
USA	196 500	322 300	271 800	289 700	1:1.4	1:1.1
NZ	245 300	534 300	480 600	480 400	1:2.0	1:1
Canada	40 900	66 700	53 400	54 300	1:1.3	1:1

Source: ABS overseas arrivals and departures, Australia.

Mr LEWIS: The table shows that in 1985 the most important source of visitors to this country was New Zealand followed by the USA, the UK and Japan. In 1994 we find there has been a change in that No. 1 is Japan where the ratio has increased from 1 to 6.7. For every one who came 10 years ago, 6.7 came last year. No. 2 in order of importance is New Zealand, No. 3 is the UK and No. 4 is the USA. In those instances we see that New Zealand has increased from one visitor to two visitors; from the UK the increase was from one visitor to 2.2; and from the USA the increase was from one visitor to 1.4.

A surprising fact which emerges is that there were only 3 700 visitors to this country from Korea 10 years ago, yet last year there were 110 800; that is, for every one who came

10 years ago 30 came last year. If we look at the short run comparisons from 1991 to 1994 we find that the best ratio of 1:4.7, which is a rapid increase, is from Korea, and the nearest we get to that is 1:2.9 coming out of Indonesia. Not included in this table is a factual figure showing that to some time early in September we had well and truly exceeded the 200 000 visitors mark, and next year we will exceed 300 000 visitors from Korea.

I have two other tables that I would like to incorporate in *Hansard*. One is the percentage of international visitors to Australia who visit South Australia, and the other is average total expenditure in Australia. From that we can see that we are missing out badly on this rapid growth market. I seek leave to have those tables, which are purely statistical,

inserted in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

2. Percentage of international visitors to Australia who visit South Australia:

	1985	1988	1991	1994
UK/Ireland	15	18	23	16
Germany	26	33	30	29
India	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Malaysia	7	9	10	8
Singapore	6	5	5	6
Indonesia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4
Japan	4	3	3	1
Korea	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1
Philippines	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
USA	13	14	11	13
NZ	6	7	6	6
Canada	21	20	18	16

Source: BTR, international visitor survey.

3. Average Total Expenditure in Australia, 1994:

	\$ Aust.
UK/Ireland	1 952
Germany	2 606
India	na
Malaysia	2 682
Singapore	1 937
Indonesia	3 378
Japan	1 644
Korea	2 208
Philippines	na
USA	1 960
NZ	1 027
Canada	1 824
Average	2 121.8

Source BTR, International Visitor Survey 1994

Mr LEWIS: It is important to note that we have only 1 per cent of those people coming from Korea to South Australia.

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

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): The Minister for Mines and Energy and for Primary Industries has raised an interesting point.

The Hon. D.S. Baker interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: No, I shall not be talking about fishing today. I wish to refer to the Premier's dorothy dix answer to a question that was put to him about the Labor Party's forthcoming convention and the motions which are being put forward for consideration. All political Parties have their annual general meetings and all the various affiliates or sub-branches of those political Parties are free, within the rules of those organisations, to put forward motions for debate. The fact that they appear on the agenda paper does not necessarily indicate that those motions will be carried either in whole or in part, as the Premier knows only too well.

With respect to the operations of the two major political Parties, the Labor Party comes up trumps on all counts regarding openness and accountability. We in the Labor Party are not afraid of having our policy debates open to full public glare with the print and electronic media present to record all the debating sessions within the forums of the Party. Unlike the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, because of its natural secretiveness, has been the subject of trenchant criticism by the Auditor-General with respect to this Government's way of handling outsourcing and entering into various contracts the terms of which even this Parliament is not allowed to see. The Labor Party is not afraid of openness and having its policies debated in full view of the public eye. The only way that the media knows what is going on at a Liberal Party State

Council meeting is when various members of the Liberal Party go outside and leak the information. Because they are riven with personality disputes—

Members interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: You know that to be true. The Liberal Party is so riven by personality disputes that no sooner is some controversial issue debated at the State Council meeting than one of its parliamentary members in particular is very swift to come outside and talk to the local media. Usually one from each faction, the wets and the moderates, or whatever they are, the dries and the conservatives—they are all the same—goes outside and talks to the local media. They put one another down and are generally disruptive and disloyal not only to their own Party but to their Premier and Cabinet Ministers. If there is a major controversy within the Government's ranks at State Council meetings, the press is excluded from attending those debates. That also applies to the Liberal Party's preselection panels where candidates present themselves for preselection. That is done without any public scrutiny.

We in the Labor Party are not afraid of public scrutiny; we are used to it. What always amazes me is that at times the media allow the Liberal Party to get away with so much secrecy, yet we in the Labor Party are condemned by some elements of the media because of our openness and accountability. We have operated in that way for at least three decades within the forums of the Labor Party. As a matter of fact—

The Hon. D.S. Baker interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: The Minister interjects about George Apap. The expulsion of George Apap was done in full view of the public at an open special State Council meeting. Indeed, I spoke on that particular occasion.

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

LIBERAL PARTY MEETINGS

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr LEWIS: During his remarks the Deputy Leader of the Opposition alleged that the Liberal Party excludes the press from its annual, general and other State council meetings. That is simply grossly untrue.

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

A quorum having been formed:

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

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

That for the remainder of the session, Standing Orders be so far suspended in relation to private members' business as to provide that—

- (a) unless otherwise ordered, the House meets on each Thursday at 10.30 a.m.
- (b) on Thursdays, private members' business takes precedence in the following manner:
 - (i) 10.30 a.m.-12 noon—Bills, motions for disallowance of regulations and motions with respect to committees;
 - (ii) 12 noon-1 p.m.—Other motions, provided that—

- (A) Notices of motion will take priority over orders of the day in (i) and unless otherwise ordered, for the first 30 minutes in (ii);
- (B) if all business in (i) is completed before the allotted time the House proceeds to (ii);
- (C) if all business in (ii) is completed before 1 p.m. on Thursdays the sitting of the House is suspended until 2 p.m.
- (c) the following time limits will apply—
 Mover, 15 minutes;
 One member opposing the question, as deputed by the Speaker, 15 minutes;
 Other members, 10 minutes;
 Mover in reply, 5 minutes;
 provided that—
 (i) an extension of 15 minutes may be granted, by leave, to a member moving the second reading of a Bill;
 (ii) leave to continue remarks may not be sought by any member, but a member speaking when the allotted time for that category of business is completed has the right to be heard first when the debate is next called on.
- (d) Notices of questions ordinarily handed in by 9 a.m. on Thursdays must be handed in to the Clerk Assistant by the adjournment of the House on the preceding day.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): We have had to do this on a number of occasions now. That seems to indicate that there is something wrong in Standing Orders and maybe we should address that. Furthermore, the Deputy Premier gave me and other members of this place an assurance that, during private members' time, the amount of time available to respond to private members' Bills would be increased in those instances where the matters debated were conscience issues, since it is not possible on Party lines for the Government or the Opposition to identify on matters of conscience anyone who could act as a spokesperson on those matters. I find that in this instance, however, the proposition contains no such consideration and I am disappointed.

Motion carried.

WAR TERMS REGULATION ACT REPEAL BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The purpose of this Bill is to repeal the *War Terms Regulation Act 1920*.

The *War Terms Regulation Act 1920 (SA)* was enacted to protect certain words synonymous with Australian fighting forces, namely the words 'Anzac', 'Aussie', 'returned soldier', 'returned sailor', 'repatriation', 'Australian Imperial Force' and 'A.I.F.' or any word or expression associated with World War I. The Act prohibits the use of these words in the name of a trade, business, profession, private residence, boat, vehicle or any charitable institution unless the person first obtains the authority of the Attorney-General.

Tasmania was the only other State to enact similar legislation, the *War Terms Act 1921 (Tas)*, and this was repealed in 1987.

The Returned Soldiers League of Australia and the South Australian Branch of the League were consulted in relation to the proposed repeal of the South Australian Act. The League maintains the view that the only word for which it wishes to retain protection is the word 'Anzac'. This term is protected by the *Protection of Word 'Anzac' Regulations 1921 (Cth)* made under the *War Precautions Act Repeal Act 1920 (Cth)*. The League confirms that the protection afforded by these Regulations is sufficient.

The word 'Aussie' is the subject of numerous applications for authority to use in relation to a trade or business. Currently there are 124 business names registered with the State Business and Corporate Affairs Office.

I now commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Repeal

This clause repeals the *War Terms Regulation Act 1920*.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS (LICENSING) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an act to amend the Tobacco Products (Licensing Act) 1986. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill seeks to amend the *Tobacco Products (Licensing) Act* in respect of a number of issues.

The proposed amendments will combat the loss of revenue due to 'price wars' in the market place and modify the investigation, inspectorial, seizure and penalty powers to help combat the illicit trading of tobacco products.

Tobacco licence fees in 1994-95 fell short of budget estimates by \$21.8 million, of which a major contributor was cigarette 'discounting wars' waged by tobacco manufacturers in an effort to increase respective market share. The Government announced at the time that it would take action to ensure that South Australian taxpayers were not effectively subsidising the discounting war of the major tobacco companies.

Certain non-legislative action has already been taken and in order to further protect the revenue base, the Bill proposes to strengthen the Act in a number of ways to ensure that licence fees are paid where wholesalers provide stock to retailers other than by way of sale.

Firstly, the definitions of 'tobacco merchandising' and 'tobacco merchant' are to be widened to include all dealing in tobacco products.

Secondly, the Bill proposes to amend the definition of 'sale' and the corresponding definition of 'purchase' to include, but not be limited to, the exchange or supply of tobacco product whether or not for valuable consideration.

Additionally, a significant number of technical or minor amendments are proposed to upgrade the inspectorial, seizure and penalty powers to ensure those who seek to avoid their obligations by illicit trading in tobacco products can be made accountable.

For example, it is proposed to amend the Act so that an unlicensed tobacco merchant proposing to commence a business within the State, or proposing to continue a business in the State, shall be required to notify the Commissioner of Stamps. The provisions will require prescribed information to be provided to the Commissioner. It is the Government's intention for regulations to be made requiring an unlicensed merchant to advise the Commissioner of the address of any place of business within the State, residence, and registered business office. The date from which any business is or is proposed to be carried on will also be required to be provided to the Commissioner.

Finally, the Bill proposes a provision that will more adequately deal with the situation where tobacco product is seized because the inspector reasonably suspects that an offence has been committed. Under the provisions being proposed in this Bill, tobacco products may be forfeited to the Crown where the Commissioner is satisfied that the product should be sold in order to avoid loss due to the deterioration of the products, or where a court convicts a person of an offence against a provision of the Act. Any forfeited product would be sold by public tender.

The Government is continuing in its efforts to ensure our revenue regimes are efficient and effective and in this instance is taking action so that the community can have confidence that the tobacco licensing system will provide that legitimate tobacco merchants are not disadvantaged by the illegal activities of those few who seek to avoid their liabilities.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title**Clause 2: Commencement*

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation

This clause makes a number of amendments to the definitions contained in section 4 of the principal Act.

A 'purchase of tobacco products' would, under this measure, be defined to include any receipt of tobacco products in the course of a business and 'sale of tobacco products' would be correspondingly defined to include any supply of tobacco products in the course of a business.

The definition of 'tobacco merchandising' is amended to include the possession or storage of tobacco products for or prior to sale.

The definition of 'tobacco product' is amended to include any packet, carton, shipper or other device in which tobacco products are contained.

New subsection (2) will ensure that the return of tobacco products is not caught by the new definitions of 'sale' and 'purchase'.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 9—Consumption licences

Section 9 of the principal Act is amended to provide that a person must be 18 years old (rather than the current age limit of 16) to obtain a consumption licence.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 11—Classes and terms of licences

This clause makes two minor amendments to section 11 of the principal Act to clarify the intent of the section.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 13—Licence fees

Section 13 of the principal Act is amended to allow the Commissioner to grant an extension of time for payment of a licence fee, or allow payment to be made by instalments.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 15—Declarations to be obtained from purchasers

This clause does not make any substantive change to section 15 of the principal Act but merely provides for the offence created by that section to be stated in a clearer way.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 16—Notice to be displayed for the information of prospective purchasers

This clause does not make any substantive change to section 16 of the principal Act but merely provides for the offence created by that section to be stated in a clearer way.

Clause 9: Substitution of s. 17

This clause replaces section 17 of the principal Act. New section 17 provides that an unlicensed tobacco merchant operating within the State must give notice to the Commissioner (complying with the regulations) no more than two months before commencing to so operate and at two monthly intervals while continuing to so operate. The maximum penalty for breach of this requirement is a fine of \$20 000.

Clause 10: Substitution of Division

This clause substitutes a new division III in Part IV of the principal Act as follows:

DIVISION III—INSPECTORS

22. *Identification of inspectors*

Inspectors (other than police), must be issued with an identity document and must, on request, produce the document for the inspection.

22a. *Powers of inspectors*

This provision outlines the powers of inspectors and the circumstances in which those powers may be exercised. The powers include the power to enter premises, to break into or open premises, to require a person to produce a record of information, to examine, copy or take extracts from a record of information, to seize and retain tobacco products or records of information, require a person to state their name and address and produce evidence of identity, to require a person to answer questions, to require a person to produce their licence for inspection, and to give directions in connection with the exercise of a power or in connection with the administration and enforcement of the Act.

22b. *Offence to hinder, etc., inspectors*

This provision provides for the offence of hindering or obstructing an inspector. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$20 000.

22c. *Self-incrimination*

This clause overrides the privilege against self-incrimination for the purposes of proceedings under the Act (but not in respect of any other proceedings).

22d. *Powers in relation to seized tobacco products*

This provision sets out what will happen after tobacco products have been seized.

If the products are going to deteriorate, the Commissioner may determine that the products are forfeited. Products will, in any case, be forfeited if a person is convicted of an offence in relation to the products (unless the court declares that the circumstances of the offence were trifling). When products are forfeited the Commissioner may sell the products by public tender.

The owner of seized products will, however, be entitled to recover them or, if they have been sold by the Commissioner, be paid compensation in respect of them—

- if a prosecution for an offence against this Act in relation to the products has been commenced but the defendant is acquitted, the prosecution is withdrawn or lapses or the court hearing the proceedings determines that the circumstances of the offence were trifling; or

- if a prosecution for an offence against this Act in relation to the products has not been commenced within three months and the District Court determines that the justice of the case requires that the products be returned or that compensation be paid;

After three years, if the products have not been forfeited or returned to the owner, they are automatically forfeited to the Crown and the owner will not have any right to recover the products or be paid compensation in respect of the products (other than a right that has already arisen or been determined).

Compensation payable in respect of products will be in an amount equal to the amount paid by the owner of the products when he or she purchased them or, if the owner is the manufacturer, their value determined on the basis provided under section 14 for the purpose of assessing licence fees.

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 24—Secrecy

Section 24 of the principal Act is amended by adding to the list of persons to whom disclosure of information may be made the Comptroller-General of the Australian Customs Service.

Clause 12: Insertion of s. 24aa

This clause inserts a new section 24aa in Part V of the principal Act providing for the Commissioner to keep a public register of licensees under the Act.

Clause 13: Amendment of s. 27—Keeping of records

This clause substitutes new subsection (1) and (1a) in section 27 of the principal Act providing for the keeping of records in relation to tobacco merchandising and the transportation of tobacco products prior to sale. The penalty for breach of the record keeping requirements is a maximum fine of \$10 000.

Clause 14: Insertion of s. 29a

This clause inserts a new section 29a in the principal Act providing that a tobacco products wholesaler must give purchasers an invoice containing prescribed particulars. Failure to do so will attract a maximum fine of \$10 000.

Clause 15: Insertion of s. 31a

This clause inserts a new section 31a in the principal Act providing that the Commissioner may recover amounts payable under the Act. The new clause also provides an aid to proving the amount payable by certificate of the Commissioner.

Clause 16: Amendment of s. 32—Evidentiary provisions

A new subsection (3) is inserted in section 32 of the principal Act providing an aid to proving that a person purchased or was in possession of the tobacco products for the purposes of sale.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

**CRIMINAL LAW (SENTENCING)
(MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill makes miscellaneous amendments to the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act, 1988*. Some practical difficulties are being encountered in the operation of the Act and while those are being attended to the opportunity has been taken to make other amendments which will improve the operation of the Act.

Section 18A was put in the Act in 1992. It allows a court to impose a single sentence for more than one count in an information. The section is amended to allow a single sentence to be imposed for more than one count in the information, but not necessarily for all of the counts in the information for which a defendant is convicted. Sometimes there will be good reason for a cumulative sentence to be imposed on one count whereas there should be concurrent sentences on the other counts.

Section 19 of the Act sets out the limits on the sentencing power of Magistrates Courts. The section has been re-cast and substantially changed.

Section 19(1) currently provides that a court of summary jurisdiction cannot impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term exceeding 7 days unless the court is constituted of a Magistrate. The ALRC in its Report on Aboriginal Customary Law recommended that Justices of the Peace should no longer have the power to imprison. In practice Justices of the Peace do not impose sentences of imprisonment in South Australia. The Chief Magistrate ensures that Justices of the Peace only hear matters where there is no penalty of imprisonment. The new section 19(1) reflects this reality and provides that a Magistrates Court does not have the power to imprison unless it is constituted of a Magistrate.

Section 19(3) now provides that a court of summary jurisdiction, in sentencing a defendant convicted of a minor indictable offence, does not have the power to impose a sentence of imprisonment or a fine that exceeds Division 5, that is, imprisonment for 2 years or a fine of \$8 000. This creates anomalies. The limitation on sentencing only applies to minor indictable offences and a Magistrates Court when imposing a sentence for a summary offence has unlimited sentencing power. For example, a Magistrates Court when imposing a sentence for a forgery which is a summary offence could impose a sentence of life imprisonment. Further, under section 5 of the *Summary Procedure Act, 1921* offences for which the maximum fine does not exceed twice a Division 1 fine, that is, \$120 000, are classified as summary offences. Thus it is anomalous that a Magistrates Court cannot impose a fine of more than \$8 000 when the offence is a minor indictable offence. New section 19(3) accordingly provides that the Magistrates Court does not have the power to impose a sentence of imprisonment that exceeds Division 5 or a fine that exceeds twice the amount of a Division 1 fine. These limits apply regardless of whether the offence is a summary offence or a minor indictable offence and reflect the level of sentence that Parliament considered appropriate for Magistrates Courts when the classification of offences was rationalised in the *Summary Procedure Act* in 1991.

As under the old section 19, if the court considers that a sentence should be imposed which exceeds the limits prescribed, it may remand the defendant to appear for sentence before the District Court. Equally, if the court constituted by Justices of the Peace is of the opinion that a sentence of imprisonment should be imposed, the court can remand the defendant to appear before a Magistrate for sentencing.

Prior to the enactment of the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act, 1988* courts could release an offender under a common law bond. The power to impose a bond at common law did not authorise the imposition of a condition to come up for sentence at some future time. Common law bonds were done away with by the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act* and section 39(1) of the Act provides that it is a condition of every bond that the defendant appear before the court for sentence, or conviction and sentence, if the defendant fails during the term of the bond to comply with a condition of the bond.

The Supreme Court Judges, in their 1993 Annual Report, recommended that section 39(1) be amended to make the condition to appear for sentence, or conviction and sentence, optional. A person who entered into a bond which did not contain this condition would be liable to forfeit the whole or part of the sum specified in the bond in the event of non-compliance with a condition of the bond. Such an amendment would, in effect, authorise the imposition of 'a suspended fine' and thereby increase the sentencing options available. Amendments to section 42 make it clear that a Court can only impose a bond without any condition that the defendant appear for sentence, or conviction if the Court does not impose any other conditions under section 42 of the Act and a consequential amendment is made to section 58.

The Supreme Court Judges, in their 1993 Annual Report, also recommended that section 42(3) be repealed. Section 42(3) provides that a court must not include a condition in a bond requiring performance of community service except where the bond is entered

into as a pre-condition of the suspension of a sentence of imprisonment.

The Judges consider that in some circumstances it is appropriate to impose a community service order when releasing an offender on a bond. In the event of the offender breaching a condition of the bond the court, in sentencing the offender, could take into account the community service order and the extent of compliance with the order.

Section 42(3) was included in the Act for resource reasons. It was not clear how much demand there would be for community service and this was one way of limiting the demand. Any increase in community service hours that will eventuate if section 42(3) is repealed can be handled by the Department for Correctional Services now.

Section 45 of the Act provides that a court must not sentence a defendant to community service, or include community service as a condition of a bond, unless the court is satisfied, on a report of an employee in the Department of Correctional Services, that there is, or will be within a reasonable time, a placement for the defendant at a community service centre reasonably accessible to the defendant.

In two recent judgments the Supreme Court has held that a Magistrate was in error in imposing an order for community service without first obtaining a report on the availability of a placement at a community service centre.

For many years magistrates have been informed by the Department for Correctional Services that placements are available for any persons sentenced in the metropolitan area and there is no need to obtain a report in each case. If a report is to be obtained the matter needs to be adjourned and the defendant, the court and the department are put to significant expense even though the result of the report is known before it is asked for. The practice remains in remote country regions of magistrates obtaining information from the department as to the availability of service projects which are accessible to the defendant.

Given the way community service operates in practice section 45 can be repealed. The practice of magistrates obtaining information from the department as to the availability of community service projects in the country will continue and the Chief Magistrate has agreed that a reminder to magistrates to check on the availability of community service work in country areas should be included in the Magistrates Bench Book.

Currently some 300 'special needs' category community service workers are placed in suitable work catering for a wide range of disabilities, however the occasion does arise where a person cannot be accommodated. Accordingly new section 45 provides that if the Chief Executive Officer of the Department for Correctional Services notifies the court that suitable community service work cannot be found for a defendant because of his or her physical or mental infirmity the matter can be brought back before the court for further sentencing.

The operation of section 57(4) has caused problems. Section 57(4) originally provided that, where a person on a bond entered into pursuant to an order of a superior court is convicted of an offence in an inferior court, the inferior court must remand the offender to the superior court for sentence for the offence where any breach of the bond could be dealt with in conjunction with imposing a penalty for the offence found proven in the inferior court.

The effect of this provision was that even though a magistrate had had, for example, a three day trial he or she could not sentence the offender for the offence. There was also the problem that a magistrate may not have been aware of the bond and sentenced an offender who should have been remanded to the superior court.

The section was amended in 1992 and section 57(4) now deals only with superior courts dealing with breaches of bonds entered into pursuant to an order of an inferior court. Where a person on a bond entered into pursuant to an order of a superior court is found guilty of an offence by an inferior court separate proceedings for the estreatment of bonds must now be instituted in the superior court. The efficiency of an offender being remanded to the superior court to be dealt with for the breach of the bond has been lost.

New section 57(4) provides a solution which preserves the advantages and overcomes the difficulties of the original section 57(4). It provides that the inferior court can either sentence for the offence before it and remand the offender to the superior court to be dealt with for breach of a condition of the bond or it can remand the offender to the superior court for sentencing and to be dealt with for the breach of the bond. The amendments also recognise that the Environment, Resources and Development Court has a criminal jurisdiction. The matter of the criminal jurisdiction of that Court is

under review, but this amendment is necessary for so long as it does have such a jurisdiction.

The Bill also seeks to clarify the way in which payment of a levy imposed under the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978* is enforced. At the moment, if a number of warrants of commitment are issued against a person for unpaid fines and criminal injuries compensation levies, although the Act provides that the imprisonment under the warrants is to be served cumulatively, it is not clear as to the order in which they are to be so served. The amendment to section 61 makes it clear that the imprisonment under a warrant for an unpaid levy is to be served after all other terms have been served, thus maximising the opportunity to recover the levy from the prisoner's earnings while in prison.

Section 67 is amended to provide that community service is not an available option for 'working off' an unpaid levy.

The Schedule to the Bill contains statute law revision amendments.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

This clause provides for commencement of the Act by proclamation.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 18A—Sentencing for multiple offences

This clause allows for the imposition of one sentence for all, or some, of the offences for which a defendant is convicted on the one complaint or information.

Clause 4: Substitution of s. 19

This clause re-casts section 19 of the Act which sets limitations on the sentences that can be imposed by the Magistrates Court. Only a Magistrate will be able to impose a sentence of imprisonment. The Court (however constituted) will not be able to impose a sentence of imprisonment that is greater than Division 5 (2 years) or a fine of more than \$120 000 (twice a division 1 fine). If greater sentences are warranted (and available) for any particular summary offence or minor indictable offence the matter will be referred to the District Court.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 39—Discharge without sentence upon defendant entering into a bond

This clause provides that a defendant who enters into a bond in lieu of being sentenced will only have to appear before the court for sentencing for the original offence (in the event of breaching the bond) if the terms of the bond imposed by the court so stipulate.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 42—Conditions of bond

This clause provides that further conditions (other than the condition to be of good behaviour) cannot be included in a bond where the defendant is not required to appear before the Court for sentencing for the original offence in the event of breaching the bond. The current restriction in subsection (3) that a community service condition cannot be included in a bond, except a bond imposed in connection with the suspension of a sentence of imprisonment, is removed.

Clause 7: Substitution of s. 45

This clause substitutes section 45. The old section required a court to find out whether a community service placement was available for a defendant before he or she could be required to perform community service. The new section simply obliges the CEO of the Department of Correctional Services to notify the sentencing court if a placement is not available because of the defendant's infirmity, in which case the court may require the defendant to appear before it for further sentencing.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 57—Non-compliance with bond

This clause provides that where a probationer is found guilty of an offence by a court that is of an inferior jurisdiction to that of the probative court, the court of inferior jurisdiction has two options. Either it must sentence the defendant for the offence and remand him or her to the probative court to be dealt with for breach of bond, or it must remand the defendant to the probative to be both sentenced and dealt with for breach of bond. 'Court of an inferior jurisdiction' is defined. Both definitions in this section now recognise that the Environment, Resources and Development Court has a criminal jurisdiction.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 58—Orders that court may make on breach of bond

This clause is a consequential amendment (see clause 5).

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 61—Imprisonment or detention in default of payment

This clause provides that the imprisonment to be served under a warrant issued for an unpaid levy under the *Criminal Injuries*

Compensation Act 1978 is to be served after all other terms of imprisonment to which the person is liable have been served.

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 67—Application to work off pecuniary sums by community service

This clause provides that section 67 does not apply to a levy payable under the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978*.

Clause 12: Statute law revision amendments

This clause refers to the further amendments contained in the schedule.

Schedule

The schedule contains sundry amendments of a statute revision nature that bring the language of the Act into line with modern drafting standards and remove or replace obsolete references. None of them effects substantive changes.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 10 October. Page 156.)

Mr De LAINE (Price): Last night I had just thanked the Clerk of the House, Mr Geof Mitchell, for his support and assistance as South Australian Regional Secretary of the CPA at last month's conference at Raratonga in the Cook Islands, when I got the wind-up from the Government Whip to adjourn, so I will continue from that point.

The conference was well attended and was an enjoyable function. It is the third conference that I have attended over the 10 years and it reinforced my thoughts on a few matters. Where I come from, one tends to become insular. We have our own State's problems and I have my concerns in my own electorate. We wonder sometimes whether we are on the right track and whether our concerns are as they should be.

When I go to these sorts of conferences and hear the problems of other States and countries, especially those of some of these smaller Pacific Island nations (which have the same sorts of problems), and hear that those members of Parliament have the same sorts of concerns, it gives me confidence that I am on the right track with many of my concerns and thoughts. It gives me confidence to come back and pursue some of those concerns for the benefit not only of my own electorate but of the people of South Australia. In that respect, these conferences are valuable for members because they can get that overall view and obtain the confidence to continue with their concerns.

The conference was very well chaired by one of the senior Ministers from the Cook Islands, whom I have known for many years. He rightly ruled that, constitutionally, because of its importance, one item could not be debated within the forums of the conference, and that was nuclear testing in the South Pacific, which was very close to Raratonga. We decided collectively that, as members from different States and countries of the Australia-South Pacific region, we would have an informal meeting outside the forums of the conference and pass a resolution. That was supported unanimously, signed by all members of Parliament who attended and sent to Chirac and other people involved in the policy making of this nuclear testing. The resolution, headed 'Nuclear testing', states:

We, parliamentarians of the Australia Pacific region, express our deep concern at the continued testing of nuclear weapons by France and China and call on them to cease testing immediately. We parliamentarians endorse the declaration by South Pacific Environment Ministers at their meeting in Brisbane on 17 August 1995 and their call for:

1. An immediate end to testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific and the closing of associated facilities, except those required for future environmental monitoring.

2. France to accept full and exclusive responsibility for any adverse impacts from French testing on the South Pacific environment and people; and

3. France to provide access to the international community to all French scientific data and to the testing sites themselves to enable an independent and comprehensive assessment of the effects of testing.

It goes on:

We further express our firm support for New Zealand's action to reopen its 1973 International Court of Justice case against French nuclear testing and for the action of regional countries intervening in the proceedings in support of New Zealand's application. Finally, we call on France to sign and ratify the protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty.

That was the substance of the resolution passed, albeit informally, by delegates attending that twenty-third Australia-Pacific Regional Conference of the CPA in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

The Government Whip, in some detail, went through the items that were debated at that conference. I will not do that, but I would like to touch on two or three of them that were of particular interest. The first item was headed, 'The various duties and responsibilities performed by members of Parliament and expectations constituents and others have of members.' This was a very interesting topic and provoked some fairly good debate. We found that the problems that we in South Australia experience are experienced in virtually the same way by members of other Parliaments, whether they be in other States or countries around the Pacific region. Constituents have expectations of members and think that we have powers that we do not have, and they find out that we do not have anywhere near those sorts of powers. However, we represent them and do our best for them. It was a very interesting debate and raised issues that were common to us all.

The next item was headed, 'The various aspects of the debate on and passage of the rights of the terminally ill Bill 1995' from the Northern Territory branch. There was some debate on the Voluntary Euthanasia Bill, as it was called in South Australia. The Northern Territory delegates endeavoured to explain the reasons why the Bill was introduced in the Northern Territory and what happened in that place. One of the delegates was a doctor from Nauru, who was a member of Parliament. He got up and challenged the members from the Northern Territory as to the motives they had for the introduction of this legislation. It was rather an attack intimating that there was some sort of sinister political agenda behind the introduction.

I had not intended to speak on this matter, but I did. I got up, and I answered it for them. I noted the fact that I supported the Bill strongly in South Australia. I said that my motives for supporting the Bill were the same as those of the member for Playford, who actually moved the private member's Bill in this House. Those reasons, as I and the member for Playford perceived them, were: the Bill was about giving people a choice; giving protection to terminally-ill patients; giving protection to terminally ill patients' families; and, very importantly, giving protection to doctors in the discharge of their duties in this very complex and difficult area. After giving the reasons why I personally had supported the Bill, I was surprised that the good doctor from Nauru accepted that explanation in very good faith. He was satisfied and quite pleased.

The third item I will touch on was the role of committees, such as the Public Accounts Committee, in the oversight of Government administration and expenditure. This item was raised by the Commonwealth of Australia branch. It was a surprise to me that the former Premier of New South Wales (Hon. John Fahey), who was a New South Wales delegate to the conference, attacked the system of parliamentary committees and said that they were nothing more than a junket for committee members to go overseas and around the country. He felt they were of little, if any, value. I was incensed by this, and I wanted to get up and speak against John Fahey.

Unfortunately, the time allocated for that debate expired and I was unable to do so. Obviously, in New South Wales the committee system does not work as well as it does in South Australia. It works well in South Australia. Certainly, no junkets are undertaken by committee members here, and I have been on several committees over the years. They are exercised in a responsible way. The whole of the parliamentary system and the electorate of South Australia benefit immensely from the committees we have in this State. They do a very good job. They are bipartisan and sometimes tripartite. So, the criticisms levelled at committees by some members of that conference certainly were not applicable to South Australia.

I turn now to the Governor's speech at the opening of this Third Session of the Forty-Eighth Parliament. I refer to item 7 of the Governor's speech, in relation to allowing for the sale of the bulk loading facilities of the Ports Corporation at Outer Harbor. In my view, this is a typical example of something that is absolutely unnecessary. My attitude is, 'If it works, don't fix it.' The bulk loading facility at Outer Harbor, which was set up by the previous Labor Government, has been one of the most outstanding success stories of the State. They have been able to gain enormous efficiencies to attract more shipping here. If that is the case, I do not see any reason at all why this excellent facility should be sold. However, that is the philosophy of this Brown Liberal Government: it intends to sell everything for whatever it can get, and I think that will be a backward step for this State.

As I said, this facility was set up under the previous Labor Government. An enormous amount of work was done by that Government and senior staff of the former Department of Marine and Harbors in cooperation with the maritime unions to bring about the efficiencies and restructuring that was necessary to make this industry a viable one. I pay tribute to those people and, in particular, the former Labor Government and the trade union movement (in this case, the maritime unions), which cooperated to an enormous degree to bring about the restructuring, revitalisation and efficient operation of this very necessary activity in this State.

I am sure that this would not have been possible under a Liberal Government because, when Liberal Governments deal with unions and working class people, they adopt a confrontationalist attitude, so nothing would have happened, but the Labor Government was able to talk to the unions and come up with some excellent compromises and the restructuring of areas to make the industry what it is now. These changes in practices have enabled the State (or the Ports Corporation as it is called now) to attract shipping from Asia, some of the European cartels and Japan to call at the Port of Adelaide more often to discharge their cargo. This was brought about mainly by injecting capital into Outer Harbor for a major extension of the wharf and the purchase of a second container crane. This enabled South Australia to

compete and provide predictable turnaround times for shipping, and those turnaround times were instrumental in getting these cartels to come into the port of Adelaide to discharge their cargo and reload.

The fact of the matter is that, today, there is more cargo coming into and going out of South Australia than ever before in the State's history despite the fact that back in the heady days of the 1940s and 1950s there were about 30 shipping companies in Port Adelaide, about 3 000 waterside workers and many ships coming in. Now, today, with less than 100 waterside workers and only a few shipping companies, this marvellous world-class terminal at Outer Harbor is able to compete and achieve record trade. The Government has been able to capitalise on the extensive reforms which were commenced by the previous Government in 1990 and turn around this facility to make it the success that it is.

The development of a new pricing policy and an associated charging structure has resulted in price reductions of up to 48 per cent in container wharfage rates as at 1 July 1992. Further reductions took place in September 1992 and during 1993, and in January 1994, as a result of decisions announced by the previous Government in November prior to the election in December 1993, these initiatives and others undertaken by that Government led to record breaking shipping performances in South Australia. As I have said: if it works, don't fix it. I cannot see any reason why this excellent facility should be sold, but this is the way in which this Government is heading, as it is in many other areas.

The next item on which I would like to touch is the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Under this Government, the QEH seems to be going down the same path as has the Modbury Hospital, the services of which have been privatised. The Government is doing the same in respect of the QEH. It has been softening up the QEH for some time with major cuts, trying to get it to the stage where its services can be privatised. In fact, the Government has called for expressions of interest in this area. Quality of care at the hospital has been suffering for some time. That is not intended as a criticism of the staff, but it would be worse if the staff obeyed the policy directions of this Government. The hospital is operating successfully only because the dedicated staff (which includes doctors, nurses and others) are ignoring many of those policy directions and getting on with the job, doing it to the best of their ability.

During the past 18 months of this Government beds and wards have closed. Over 140 VSPs have been given to staff with no replacements. With reduced staff they have been battling on despite the fact that admissions have increased by 14 per cent. Until recently, the hospital has operated at 94 per cent efficiency, which is 15 to 20 per cent higher than similar hospitals in Victoria and other States. The only way in which the hospital is able to continue to operate despite the drastic cuts that have been imposed by this Government is by cutting elective surgery cases in order to deal with accident and emergency cases. We have been told that many accident cases have been diverted from Modbury Hospital to the Royal Adelaide Hospital and, in particular, the QEH, thus increasing the load on that hospital. The average stay of a maternity patient has been cut to 2.6 days compared with a private hospital average of five days.

I believe that this is part of the softening up of the QEH to get it ready for privatisation. As a principle, I have nothing against privatisation provided it is done in a proper way, whether it be in respect of health in our hospitals or correctional services in our gaols, which the Government is undertaking. I have no problem with the private sector

building, equipping, staffing and running hospitals, and the same applies to gaols—if they build, equip, staff and run them, I have no problem—but they are parasites on the taxpayers of the State. The State has to build the facilities, equip and staff them, and then the private sector takes the cream. That is not good enough. If the private sector can run these organisations efficiently, so can the Government. If there is enough wherewithal, a strong enough Government, Ministers and administration, they can be run just as efficiently if not more so, because the profit factor is taken out of the situation.

I cannot see why these institutions cannot be run efficiently in the same way as the Ports Corporation has become a very efficient operation, and they should be kept in the hands of the public. The way in which this State is going it will be at the mercy of the private sector with the private sector running everything including our water service, hospitals, gaols, schools—you name it. Sir Thomas Playford, a former Liberal Premier of this State for so long, always said that some things were best done by the public sector: things that involved public health and safety were best done by a Government where the profit margin was not a factor and therefore there was no continual incentive for the private sector to cut corners in the way of profit. Sir Thomas Playford was ahead of his time in many ways. He took over many things including the supply of electricity, public transport and others, and set up bodies which adequately provided excellent services for the people of South Australia. Now, this Brown Government is turning back the clock to pre-Playford days, the 1920s, by privatising many facilities. It will never learn. It continually tries to re-invent the wheel, and the State will be all the poorer for it.

Another area of concern which I have raised before in this House but which I will briefly touch on is the outsourcing of services at The Parks Community Centre, which is a major facility in my electorate. This Government is in the process of handing over The Parks Community Centre to the Enfield council, but that has been held up for some time, so it has embarked on a process of outsourcing or privatising cleaning, security, maintenance and the grounds staff. It has pushed aside the local people who have carried out these jobs in a dedicated way for many years and not given them a chance to consult or negotiate. It has come in over the top of these people and more or less kicked them out of their job and installed private companies on a contract basis to do these important maintenance and cleaning jobs at The Parks Community Centre.

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

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I commend Her Excellency the Governor for the conduct of her duties and for the dignity with which she opened this session of Parliament. This was the first time I had witnessed the opening of a session of Parliament as I was elected part way through the last session. I was interested to hear the Governor's speech because I had hoped it would inspire South Australians with a motivating vision for the future of our State. But that pronouncement of the Government's legislative program—its plan for the whole of the forthcoming session—was disappointingly lacking. Reflected in that speech was the reality that after 18 months in power this Government continues to fumble its way. It is not just fumbling its way: it is fumbling at a frenzied pace.

What are the consequences for South Australia? In his report the Auditor-General—that independent judge of the

financial management of the Government—had the answer to that one. The Auditor-General revealed that in just one year this Government has cost the State \$440 million because it got its debt management strategy wrong. The Government and its frontbenchers who fancy themselves as star performers or as slick business operators got it wrong. The Government's agenda, as outlined in its legislative agenda, is clear—to privatise. Clearly, the Liberals are driven to privatise everything. The Liberal Party believes that whatever Government does can be done better and more efficiently by the private sector. Labor does not hold that view. There are some things that we in the Labor Party do believe are best put in private hands, but—and here is the key difference—there are certain fundamentals such as water that must be run and controlled by the public sector. They must, in turn, be made accountable to the people of South Australia.

Again, a fundamental criticism and concern raised by the Auditor-General is that the Government be made accountable. But what we have seen instead is a Government which has moved to quash public debate and parliamentary scrutiny. What is not in evidence anywhere is a clear, thorough analysis of the impact of the Government's decisions on the community's standard of living and future well being. We hear instead Government Ministers say that they hang their reputations on the success of outsourcing contracts in the important areas of information technology, water and the like. It is as if they imply that the only negative consequence of the possibility that these massive contracts could land this State up the creek without a paddle would be the future embarrassment of the Premier and his Infrastructure Minister. It is as if that is the only consequence: but, of course, we know that the consequences are far worse.

This Government has removed from South Australians the fundamental mechanism for ensuring that decisions made by government are in the best interests of the people of this State. It has removed effective parliamentary scrutiny. The Auditor-General stresses over and over in his report his concern for this lack of Government accountability. The only response from Government Ministers—who hang their reputations on these contracts—to calls from the Opposition and the community for accountability is similar to that of the Liberal backbench at this time which scoffs at such suggestions by saying, 'Trust me.' The stakes are much higher than the reputations of Government politicians.

The stakes are high for the Government's plan to privatise the management of South Australia's water under a contract that will commit us for the next 20 years to the Liberals' current course of action. How can we be sure that the decisions being made by the Government under the convenient cloak of commercial confidentiality without the scrutiny of Parliament are in the best interests of South Australians? The fact that the responsible Minister hangs his reputation on this contract is not enough to convince the people of this State that they should permit the Government's gamble—and it is a gamble—with our most precious resource, a fundamental public utility. Why are we doing this? This is a \$1.5 billion contract. It is an enormous contract by world standards. The risks are huge. Yet there is not the legislative scrutiny or the accountability which the public of South Australia has a right to expect.

Over recent years the Liberals have talked much about open and accountable government. What hypocrites! They expect us to believe that a foreign company will come here, make a profit for its shareholders, pay a bigger dividend to the Government than it is already getting from SA Water and,

at the same time, do a better job at delivering a better service to customers while committing us to privatisation in the longer term without proper parliamentary scrutiny. For all this we have to trust the Minister—the same Minister who tried to sell us the ridiculous line that the reason we have to hand over water management to an overseas contractor is so that they can bid for World Bank projects in the Asia-Pacific region. The reasoning is that, by handing over water management to an overseas company, we will attract massive numbers of jobs to this State and increase our commitment to water quality research and development. What utter rot!

Logic suggests that, if overseas led companies win our local contracts, the only role that will be left for us in overseas projects will be as a demonstration site for the overseas lot to prove their expertise so that they can bid for the big contracts. The Minister is quick to promote the abilities of overseas bidders at the expense of local expertise. Indeed, the Minister claims that a local water consortium would not have enough experience to do the job. In fact, he has stated publicly and loudly that he is not about to put Adelaide consumers at risk by choosing a local, Australian controlled operator. While the Minister is busy running down Australian water expertise, it just so happens that we already export our own expertise, particularly our technology and project management skills, to many countries. We have already proved our capability to oversee projects of a scale like this one.

The Minister puts on a confident public performance, but when he is alone at night I bet he bites his finger nails wondering what he has committed this State to. It is just like the Premier with his Holy Grail—the EDS contract. His strategy: what strategy? There was the announcement in 1993 of a big deal with IBM to take the whole of the Government's information technology work. The Premier announced first and thought about the implications later. Then, of course, what happened? Suddenly, the sure thing deal with IBM became a maybe deal with EDS. Eighteen months went by and the Government was still unsure how to proceed. But proceed the Premier will, regardless, because this Premier is a Premier of folly, a Premier of glamorous announcements, a Premier who, when the dust settles, will be shown to have been more interested in his own PR and his mad scramble for photo opportunities with any company that he can remotely categorise as being hi-tech industry than in solving the very real unemployment and training problems which exist in South Australia.

I want to draw attention to those problems, because we constantly hear the Government boasting about how well it thinks it is doing in this area. It constantly boasts about all these high-tech jobs coming to South Australia. Apart from the inaccuracy of the Premier's description of 200 people answering telephones for a pay TV operator as a high-tech job, the fact is that this State continues to have one of the worst unemployment rates in the country, and the so-called 'high-tech' jobs the Premier chases will not be a scrap of use if we cannot provide the skilled work force to take up opportunities that are created. Already companies in South Australia are importing skilled labour to meet their current demands.

We have the work forces—our unemployment figures show us that—but we do not have the skilled work forces. While this Government continues to sabotage our education and TAFE system through continual budget cuts and by allowing us to fall behind the rest of the nation, we will continue to have those companies looking elsewhere for their

labour and their skilled work forces, and eventually we risk losing even those established companies altogether. Quite a bit has appeared in the print media recently about educators in our universities despairing at the quality of science and mathematics in our high schools today. It is not good enough to allow entry into university courses that would train them in the very jobs the Premier is chasing.

In fact, one prominent university in this State is soon to drop entry requirements into its engineering and information technology courses, and will teach secondary mathematics to all new students as a bridging course in their first year of university. There is something fundamentally wrong when a Government cuts into an education system in need. A fundamental foundation for any successful economy is a high quality education system, yet this Government only pays lip service to the goal of a first-rate education for our future generations and work forces. We hear it constantly in the language used by the Minister for Education and Children's Services.

Let me give members one example: when explaining away the chop of 10 per cent of all support staff in our public schools, the Minister's defence does not include anything about the quality of education: he merely retorts that South Australia will not be the worst off across the nation under the down-sized model. The Liberal Government obviously does not regard the education of our children as being of prime importance, and it certainly has not got training right in this State. Why is it that South Australia is the only State in our whole nation that has not lived up to its growth commitment in the TAFE sector? Under the Commonwealth/State TAFE commitment this Government has an obligation to provide training for our work forces and to commit funds to that end.

The Government has not met its commitment. It has cut the current funding by \$5 million and, as a result, risks losing millions of dollars of Commonwealth growth funding—funding that would translate into not only opportunities for our younger people but also better skilled work forces. As a member representing an electorate of high unemployment I protest the degradation of our education and training system. It compromises our children's future, and it compromises our future.

The great Australian dream—the thing I love and value most about this country—is the notion that it does not matter where one starts in life: whether one is rich or poor; in the best of health or not; or whether one belongs to a majority race—no matter the starting point, anyone can become the Prime Minister of Australia. Anyone can achieve the best of jobs. Education and training are the hope of the underprivileged; they are the great differentiator; they are the very thing that will make the difference between achieving economic security in this world and falling behind. To be a successful nation economically and socially we must protect, value and invest in our intellectual infrastructure. So often in my electorate I come across young people who despair about their future and about their future opportunities in the work force. They are worried they will never get a job and are consigned to an acceptance that work is beyond their reach in this State.

Young people say to me, 'Why should I train? Why should I finish school? Why should I bother? I won't get a job anyway.' It is, of course, an overly disturbing and pessimistic view. We cannot afford to have children dropping out of education and training. We cannot accept, as many in our community seem to be willing to accept, that some of our citizens will be destined to unfulfilled lives and lives without

employment. That just is not good enough. To undervalue the role of education and training and the future well-being of this State is to waste the potential contributions of thousands of South Australians, and to prevent this State from achieving that to which we can aspire.

We hear much from the Government about promises and more jobs. We want to believe the Premier when he makes each promotional announcement that jobs are on their way, but it is not happening and it is not happening fast enough. The Government throws its figures around, but the sad fact is that while the rest of the nation grows strongly South Australia has been performing abysmally since the Brown Government came to office. We have been missing out on the national recovery. It is time this Government stopped running around trying to do what it is clearly incapable of doing; it is time it stopped its frantic race for privatisation, got back to solving the fundamental problems and started to focus on the critical education, training and employment needs of South Australians.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I rise to contribute to the Opposition's Address in Reply speech. I was on the list of speakers at this time simply because the member for Elizabeth had to go upstairs briefly. Can I defer to the member for Elizabeth?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Unfortunately, I would like to agree to the honourable member's request, but I cannot. I call on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr CLARKE: After little more than 20 months of the Brown Liberal Government not a single pre-election promise of significance has survived: not the promises on jobs, on economic growth or on exports; not the promises to increase resources for schools and hospitals, to increase police numbers on the beat or to keep to the previous Government's public sector jobs reduction target of 3 900; not the promises to maintain access to previously existing superannuation entitlements; not the promise to keep existing taxes and charges with the consumer price index, and the ruling out of the introduction of new taxes and charges; most certainly not the promise to introduce higher standards of propriety and accountability in Parliament and Government; and especially not the promises on higher standards in Government.

This Government is one the like of which I hope I will never again see in South Australia. It is a Government of secrecy, a Government afraid of public scrutiny and parliamentary debate. In spite of the call of the Auditor-General, the Opposition and the people of South Australia for Parliament to have a say on whether their water and sewerage systems should be sold off, the Premier has told the Parliament that nothing will come before it on this issue.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: You wouldn't understand.

Mr CLARKE: The Minister interjects that we would not understand the issue: he knows that we understand it only too well. That is why the Government consistently rejects calls from significant sections of the community and the Opposition to put this legislation or contracts before the Parliament for a vote. He and the Government know that the legislation would fail, because that is the will of the majority of the community.

The latest report by the Auditor-General is a damning indictment on the efforts of this Liberal Government to avoid the disciplines of open government and accountability. He raised a series of damning criticisms which give the lie to the Premier's and Treasurer's claims to superiority in economic policy and management. On page after page, the Auditor-

General seems to be saying to the Premier and to the Treasurer, in prose that is erudite and learned, 'Are you really sure that you know what you are doing?'

Finally, he has supported the Opposition's concerns about the Government's attempts to limit Parliament's opportunity for scrutiny of Ministers through the Auditor-General's Report. I am not surprised that the Treasurer and the Premier have reneged on undertakings made with respect to asking questions of Ministers in the light of the Auditor-General's Report. These undertakings, now being so cynically broken, were made before the Government became aware of the contents of the report. As I said, the report is a damning indictment, and there is nothing surprising in the fact that a Government which has spent the past 20 months avoiding public scrutiny is now running for cover.

I now turn to the Government's deplorable economic performance. The living standards of ordinary South Australians have been eaten away by this Government's policy of social neglect, primarily towards hospitals and education, but it is also a fact that this Government's economic mismanagement is silently eating away at our living standards and destroying hope. There was no mention in the Governor's speech of South Australia's lamentable performance on economic growth, jobs and other key economic indicators.

Let us remember what the Liberals said they would deliver at the time of the last election: 4 per cent annual growth in gross State product; an average of 20 000 new jobs per annum over 10 years to 2004; and 15 per cent per annum export growth. To date the Government has failed miserably to achieve these targets. Moreover, it is its singular achievement to have done so during the highest national growth rates in over a decade. In the year to December 1994, covering the first full year of office of the Brown Government, South Australia fell short of this target by a massive 4 000 per cent. Instead of 4 per cent growth, we achieved a pitiful growth of just .1 per cent. This was while Australia was surging ahead with 5.5 per cent GDP growth. Over the first 12 months of this Liberal Government South Australia had the lowest growth rate of any jurisdiction in Australia, and even the second lowest growing State or Territory—Tasmania—sped past us at 3 per cent.

The latest release from the ABS shows that our economic position has worsened to become a disaster. In the year to March 1995, when the Australian economy grew at a healthy 3.8 per cent, South Australia was the only State or Territory to go backwards. Our growth rate was a negative 1.5 per cent seasonally adjusted. In all of the last four quarters South Australia has recorded negative growth. This compares to a growth rate in South Australia of 3.8 per cent in the last year of the Labor Government in 1993, well in touch with national growth rates, when, according to the then Opposition Leader, now Premier, nothing could happen in South Australia because the Labor Government being in office would supposedly sap business confidence.

Between the December 1993 election and August 1995, the rate of job growth, on the figures most favourable to the Government, has been little more than half that of the nation. The Australian employed work force grew by 5.9 per cent while in South Australia it was 3.4 per cent. For much of the Brown Government's period South Australia's rate of job growth was typically one-tenth that of the nation. On the basis of population share, South Australia needed to create about 38 000 extra jobs to keep pace with the national jobs recovery, not the 22 000 that have eventuated.

On top of this there is the approximately two percentage points difference in the labour force participation rate between Australia and South Australia, with Australia on an increasing trend going towards 64 per cent while South Australia appears basically flat at 62.3 per cent. The South Australian Centre for Economic Studies has recently estimated that, if South Australia had the same participation rate as Australia, our official unemployment would be three or so percentage points higher than the current measures.

For the first eight months of 1994-95 there was a 1.9 per cent decline from the same period in 1993-94. In the eight years from 1985-86 to 1993-94 exports grew at an annual average of 9 per cent. Nor can all of this be attributed to the effects of recession. For example, exports of motor vehicles, parts and accessories were down 17.4 per cent for this period.

Dealing with building activity, in the year to June, South Australia suffered the biggest decline in the number of new dwelling units commenced of nearly 40 per cent compared with just over 24 per cent for Australia.

Mr Condous: Over the whole of Australia.

Mr CLARKE: If only the member for Colton would listen, it is 40 per cent down in South Australia compared with 24 per cent for Australia. The Government has lauded the upturn in our retail sales, but these figures were misleadingly inflated by the advent of pokies. The ABS has pointed out:

Strong South Australian trend estimates are due mainly to annual growth of 32.5 per cent for the hospitality and services group. Poker machines were introduced in late July 1994.

The Premier has claimed great success in promoting increased private capital investment. The reality is that in the first year of this Liberal Government South Australia succeeded in capturing less than 6 per cent of the total value of capital investment occurring nationally. Our share of national investment needs to be over 8 per cent for us to maintain our share of economic activity. More fundamentally, as the Centre for Economic Studies has recently pointed out, the quality of this investment growth is suspect. Cliff Walsh—and I would have thought that the Government would want to listen to what Cliff Walsh has written given that he was its economic guru for the Audit Commission report last year—wrote:

In fact, ABS data suggests that by far the biggest part of the recent investment growth occurred not in manufacturing or mining, but in the catch-all category 'other', which would include the purchase interstate of the poker machines that poured into our pubs and clubs in the second half of 1994.

That is hardly the basis for sustained economic growth. The Opposition's fears of a South Australian economic recovery stalled by economic mismanagement have to this point been realised. So, too, has our fear that the arrogance of this Government would prevent the Premier and Treasurer from taking the action required. The Opposition has long feared that, so sure was the Government that it was on the right track and simply knew better, it would prove stubborn and intractable in the face of the facts and the truth. Unfortunately, it has proved to be just so. Look at the times when this Government has encountered difficulties of its own making. It has ritually blamed everyone and everything but itself for any difficulty: the Federal Government, the previous State Government, the just claims of the Aborigines for rights to native title—anyone but the Premier and his Treasurer.

Every time objective economic data is released that belies the Premier's and Treasurer's rhetoric, the Government goes into denial, yet the data has merely shown what anyone

looking for a job or running a small business knows full well: we have thus far missed the national recovery. The Premier is apparently not one to let a few facts get in the way of a good story. He showed us this very point in his recent addresses in Sydney. Let there be no misunderstanding: the Opposition supports efforts to encourage worthwhile investment in South Australia from interstate and overseas, but the advocacy and the salesmanship of the Premier leave much to be desired. Instead of soberly describing South Australia's opportunities and outlining a credible strategy—

Members interjecting:

Mr CLARKE:—I understand the difficulty the member for Mitchell has; he hates hearing the truth—for dealing with our problems, the Premier went straight into the most superficial of PR modes. He made use of any figures on the State's economic performance, unsupported by the objective analysis of the ABS. He lauded South Australia's low cost advantages.

Mr Condous interjecting:

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

Mr CLARKE: If any proof were needed of the fact that sustainable and worthwhile economic development requires evidence of a credible and realistic strategy in which business people can have confidence, that proof came in the *Financial Review* of the 20th. Peter Roberts in his article entitled—

Mr Condous interjecting:

Mr CLARKE:—and I invite the member for Colton to listen for a moment—'Cargo cult alive in Adelaide' hit the nail on the head when he wrote:

The type of companies being attracted by low costs, contracts and subsidies are, almost by definition, likely to be footloose and lack a long-term commitment to South Australia. Sophisticated economies compete on skills, design, quality, management, networking and operational excellence and there is precious little of this flavour in Dean Brown's vision for South Australia. What we have in South Australia is a modern cargo cult. What is still missing is a strategy for becoming a high wage, sophisticated and technologically advanced economy and a plan to develop the institutions to support it.

Again, the Opposition supports the objectives of the Premier's recent overseas trip to increase overseas investment in our information technology industry, even if the deal with EDS continues to elude us.

Mr Condous interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Ross Smith to take his seat. I have warned the member for Colton. If he wants to have a conversation with the member for Hart, I suggest they leave; if not, sit there in silence. The member for Ross Smith.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you for your protection and wise ruling, Mr Acting Speaker. You were obviously listening to my speech, taking it in, digesting it and agreeing with it. The Premier's visit to the US led to headlines suggesting that the Government had achieved deals that would lead to around 6 500 jobs over the next four or five years. Announcements that were long on hyperbole and short on detail poured out of one US city after another.

When we look back in two years time, how many of these promised jobs will have materialised? I remind the House of some of those headlines, courtesy of the *Advertiser*. 'Microsoft Coup for South Australia' appeared as a headline on 2 August 1995, stating that it could mean hundreds of new jobs. Another headline, 'Deal set to create 1 000 jobs' appeared on 30 August. 'US talks wipe out hurdles to EDS deal' appeared on 1 September, stating that 'South Australia

is on the brink of signing the multi-million dollar computer deal, which will create up to 1 300 new jobs' and the like. We are still waiting for that deal to be signed. '5 000 new jobs, promises Brown' appeared in that magnificent and authoritative newspaper, the *Sunday Mail*, on 3 September 1995.

The headline 'Telephone firms may bring 2 000 jobs to South Australia' appeared in the *Advertiser* on 4 September. 'Hooking the big one' appeared as a headline in the *Advertiser* of 4 September. I wondered whether Stormy Summers had opened up a new business in South Australia. Another article on 6 September under the headline, '\$30 million deal for Public Service computers' stated that it expected to lead to hundreds of new jobs. 'Deal to create 400 jobs' appeared in the *Advertiser* of 7 September.

Meanwhile, just what is being done to stem the loss of the high value-adding manufacturing jobs from South Australia in the midst of a national economic boom? We have seen 30 jobs go from Gerard Industries; the closure of Morris and Knudsen in Whyalla; 110 workers retrenched from Email's cooker division in September, following 30 retrenchments from the laundry division in June; the shutdown of Bradford Insulation in September; the retrenchment of 35 employers from James Hardie's Pipelines; the loss of 10 jobs from Mason and Cox; the loss of 30 jobs from the Submarine Corporation; the shutdown of Visyboard in the Riverland with the loss of at least 50 jobs; and the shutdown of Texas Instruments with the loss of at least 60 jobs.

More than ever South Australia needs jobs and not promises. But the Government has no strategy. The Auditor-General poses the question of whether the Government knows what it is doing. Unfortunately, I think that the answer is 'No.'

Mr Caudell interjecting:

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

Mr CLARKE: The *Financial Review* was right in saying that the Brown Liberal Government lacks any strategy other than low wages, and in the modern world that is tantamount to no strategy at all. On the issue of low wages, Mr Speaker, you would be familiar with the handling of the police pay dispute.

This Government also attempted an act of betrayal last year with its efforts to dismantle WorkCover. Only the determination of the Opposition and the trade union movement prevented this outrage. Much of the rationale for those changes was supposedly the need for South Australia to be cost competitive with other States in Australia. Data published by the ABS labour costs survey recently put paid to that notion. It shows that in the South Australian private sector in 1993-94, when the previous Government had supposedly left the State with an uncompetitive cost structure, national total labour costs were 10.6 per cent higher than in South Australia; earnings were 10.2 per cent higher nationally; superannuation and payroll tax costs per employee were 20 per cent higher nationally; and FBT costs per employee were 47.3 per cent higher nationally than here in South Australia.

It is also true that in the area of workers compensation we were nearly 23 per cent above the national average. The Liberal mind, which wants to reduce everything to the lowest common denominator, sees that as a terrible thing, hobbling private business. The same logic did not come into play when the whole level of oncosts was considered. The State's WorkCover premiums were above the national average, but let us look at the major total labour cost advantages. This is

where I get really angry, not only with this Government but also with the Employers Chamber on this issue. One should look at total labour costs and not just one component in isolation.

The reality is that the difference in South Australia's workers compensation premiums and the national average amounted to just 0.6 per cent of total labour costs in the South Australian private sector. We must speak in the past tense in making comparisons of South Australia with other States, as several have or are about to increase their premiums to more realistic and sustainable levels. The gaps between us and other States in workers compensation costs will surely have come down.

I point out that in New South Wales, with appalling levels of benefits, the Government recently increased workers

compensation premiums from less than 2 per cent to around 2.5 per cent and, on the admission of its own Minister, the new Minister for Labour, and the Workers Compensation Board, the average premiums should have gone up to around 2.8 per cent, with a benefit level far inferior to that which we enjoy in South Australia.

It is also of note that data on average weekly ordinary time earnings has been published recently by the ABS. It shows that, in the year to May 1995, South Australia's ordinary time earnings grew by just 2 per cent. The figure for Australia was 4.8 per cent, and I seek leave to have included in *Hansard* statistical materials illustrating this point. I assure you, Mr Speaker, that it is purely statistical.

Leave granted.

Average Earnings, South Australia and Australia
Growth Over Year to May 1995 (per cent)

	South Australia			Australia		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Adult Full Time Employees:						
Ordinary Time Earnings	2.0	2.3	2.0	5.2	4.2	4.8
Total Earnings	3.1	1.9	2.7	5.3	4.1	4.8
All Employees, Total Earnings	0.9	2.8	1.7	4.4	1.7	3.1

Source: ABS Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia (6302.0)

Mr CLARKE: The Brown Government's low wage strategy appears to be working at least in so far as it is delivering low wages. However, because this is no strategy at all, it is not delivering the promised economic benefits, as we have seen.

Mr Brindal: Do you know what you are talking about?

Mr CLARKE: Absolutely! The difficulty we have with the Government, and in particular with the rather noisy backbenchers we have to put up with from time to time, such as the member for Unley, more accurately described by the member for Playford last night as the member for Baldrick—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I believe it is customary in this House to address members by their title or their seat not by other well-meant nicknames.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is correct.

Mr CLARKE: The member for Unley, quite rightly, draws my attention to Standing Orders with respect to that matter. However, I want to make quite clear that the Government's economics have failed by its own tests. The Government made a series of promises before the last election and during it—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

6 **Mr CLARKE:** The member for Unley should have been here earlier when I commenced my speech, because I clearly set down the promises that his Government made when it was in opposition. Clearly, this Government has failed by its own tests with respect to this matter. The problem we have with low wages quite simply is this: this Government says that it is committed to high, value-added industries coming to this State. We want to upskill our work force and to encourage students to stay at TAFE or universities and to undergo constant re-evaluation of their skills and to upgrade them further. That is all very laudable, and we support that. However, the difficulty you have with that is that, if you pay those people lousy rates, it will not be an encouragement for people to acquire skills. It will not encourage people to go to

TAFE. It will not attract the types of people we need in our community to accept the challenge and to invest their time and efforts into coming to this State and wanting to work for those types of industries.

As I pointed out in a speech I gave not long after I came into Parliament, with respect to a Secretary of Labour in a previous American Administration, the United States followed that low wage outcome in many of its southern States—not only in its southern States but a number of its northern States, because the United States does not have in place our award safety net structure. American industry followed a low wage outcome, and it achieved it. But the United States is losing the battle with respect to exports against many other growing economies, simply because it has not invested in new capital and equipment but, more particularly, has not invested in the intellectual properties of its people and their training.

The way you encourage people to undertake training and to acquire those skills is by saying that that will lead to a better paid career. If we pursue the low wage option, we will attract only those sorts of industries that will always be able to find some other place on this earth in which to set up a low cost manufacturing plant. Unfortunately, there will always be societies where poverty is the norm, where there is not a free and organised labour movement, and where the low wage outcome becomes the norm.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: There would be no show without Punch. I am always pleased to be on my feet when the member for Unley traipses into this House to give us the benefit of the few grey cells that happen to be between his ears. Without wanting to delay other speakers, I will close my Address in Reply contribution by saying that I commend our Governor for the way in which she has carried out her functions and discharged her official duties. This may be one of the last occasions on which I can pay tribute to Her Excellency while

she is still Governor of this State. She has been an outstanding person, not only as the Governor in this State but more particularly she has had a distinguished career as the first woman judge in the Supreme Court of South Australia and a very distinguished lawyer before that.

She has been a role model for many people. I thank the House for allowing me the opportunity to speak. I am surrounded by intellectual pygmies, such as the member for Unley—and I exclude those on the Labor side. The member for Unley is the chief intellectual pygmy of this House, followed very closely by the member for Mitchell. The trouble is that, when they enter this House, the IQ of this Chamber drops fourfold. It can drop further only when they rise to their feet to make a speech. When they rise to their feet to give a speech, the IQ of this House drops tenfold. I look forward to the contribution from the member for Mitchell, because I am sure that he will not be able to give sufficient amperage to light up a TocH lamp from his contribution. On that note, I conclude my remarks.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Elizabeth.

Mr Brindal: Now we will hear something sensible.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): You certainly will. I would like to commence my contribution to this debate by commending Her Excellency, Dame Roma Mitchell, again for the grace and diligence with which she undertakes her role in our community and in our State. She has been exemplary in every aspect. Last weekend, people lined up to look at Government House, as she held open house. She is so open in her role that I believe she has done us proud. I turn now to the speech that the Governor gave on behalf of the Government in the other place some weeks ago. When we sat there, we could all be forgiven—and I certainly felt this way—for wondering what relevance her words had to what was happening in our community. I listened to many things that I did not think related much to what is happening in our community.

We have been subjected to promises and more promises, many of which were made before the election and have fallen by the wayside in droves. We have been subjected to promises about economic development and jobs, about great strides forward in efficiency and productivity and better services, but what do we have instead? We have pain and more pain and little evidence of these things coming to fruition. The question must be asked: are we really on the right track?

Mr Brindal: Yes.

Ms STEVENS: The member for Unley says, 'Yes', but I think many people would disagree. I want to refer briefly to things that relate particularly to my electorate in Elizabeth. The Deputy Leader mentioned jobs that have not come to fruition. I want to speak specifically about Texas Instruments, which is situated in Elizabeth. This company is closing down and moving off shore. It will mean the loss of 100 jobs for people in my electorate. We are disappointed with the response by the Minister for Infrastructure, who simply said that this company did not warrant a lot of concern, that it was using the wrong technology, that it had a high labour content, and that it was not something of great concern to the Government. It may not be of great concern to the Government but it certainly is of great concern to people in Elizabeth. We are sorry that Texas Instruments is leaving, and we are sorry that that is the attitude of the State Government towards this company. I refer now to education.

Mr Brindal: Don't bother.

Ms STEVENS: I will bother, because if we want to become the smart State in the clever country, which is what we are told all the time by the Government—

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: And the Federal Government. But let us talk about education as being primarily a State responsibility. It takes the highest proportion of our State budget, so let us talk about education as a State responsibility, because that is what it is. I am talking about school education in this instance. What this Government is doing to education in this State is horrendous. Over the past year and a half there has been a reduction of 790 teachers and, because the formula ties school services officers to teachers, we are also losing 276 school services officers, and over the next six months we will see a further reduction of 250 school services officers. And this Government has the nerve to talk about what it is doing for education—a hi-tech State, a State of the future, a State that is going ahead, 'going all the way'—but what is it doing to the education system? It is cutting it off at the knees.

Mr Brindal: Did Clare write this for you?

Ms STEVENS: No, Clare didn't write this for me. We are seeing a complete wind-down of the public education system. You will be okay if you go to a private school. If you want the extras, then go to a private school and pay for them, but you can never expect them from the public sector.

I want to talk particularly about schools in my electorate. I have visited a number of schools to look particularly at the issue in relation to school services officers, and I imagine that most members of this House would have done so. I would be surprised if there was one member of this House who could honestly stand up and say that they believe that the cutting of a further 250 school services officers would not have a detrimental effect on our children's education. I challenge any member of this House to do so.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I visited a number of schools in my electorate to see and hear again at first hand from school services officers. Those people who have not done that need to think clearly about what this means. School services officers hold schools together. Often they are part-time workers who work far longer hours than they are paid for. They are involved in every aspect of a school: administration, the front desk, the handling of calls from parents and all manner of calls that come into schools. They do the books; they manage budgets of about \$500 000 or more in large secondary schools; and they do computer databases for schools.

Mr Evans: EDSAS.

Ms STEVENS: Exactly. You seem to know about EDSAS. They do a lot of work for SSABSA recording courses and student results.

Mr Brindal: What do the teachers do?

Ms STEVENS: The teachers are there to teach the students, not to record databases. Let us look at the other areas of work of school services officers. They work with students in classes; they work in primary schools with kids who are not coping; they sit with teachers in the classroom working with small groups of students, particularly those who require extra help, extra reading, extra attention, the speech therapy which the Government is not—

Mr Evans interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: And it's nowhere near enough. When I have visited my schools I have seen school services officers handling speech therapy with students. During the week before last, I visited a school in Elizabeth, and I sat in a small

group with a school services officer who was working with kids who had speech problems. I saw what that person was doing, and that school is to lose significant hours which will probably impact upon that program.

School services officers are working in classrooms with kids at primary school level, they are working in secondary schools in computing, laboratories and libraries, which are so important these days when we are teaching kids to use the Internet and other information. They need school services officers working with them in libraries. School services officers also help in other areas of the curriculum, such as home economics, physical education and first aid, etc. If members have not been told these things by the people in their schools, I suggest that they go out and listen to them. That is something that members opposite are not too good at doing: they are not too good at listening but they are very good at telling people what they think they want. I suggest to members opposite that they go into the schools and the communities and listen to people.

Mr Condous interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I am not unbelievable, but you are, the member for Colton. Go out and listen to what people are saying about what effect this step alone—the reduction in schools services officers—will have on the education and future of kids in this State, the supposedly smart State in the clever country. A few years ago, the Education Department had a motto, ‘Never less than excellent’; perhaps we should change it to ‘Never more than average’, because that is where we are at. With the challenges that are now facing us in this State, we need to be much more than average.

I would now like to refer to some other aspects of education. As well as the reduction in the number of school services officers, we have experienced cuts in the number of teachers in particular areas of the curriculum that require special help. I refer to teachers involved with Aboriginal education and special interest schools such as music, one of which is situated in my electorate.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I hope that the honourable member will speak to the Minister about what this means for the school in his electorate, because it means a lot. If we talk about excellence and about challenging our young people, we need to put the human resources into the schools to enable that to happen. I refer to social justice, which is the concept that we do not like to talk about any more since this Government came to power. The Department for Education and Children’s Services has a funding allocation to schools in relation to social justice at tier 2 staffing allocations. Surprise, surprise: even though times are tougher, the social justice allocations have gone down.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: The member for Unley might be interested to know that the allocations under tier 2 staffing at schools in Elizabeth have gone down. In Unley you do not have the same problem as we have in Elizabeth in that regard. Again, there is polarisation within our community. The haves will be fine because, if they go to the State schools at all, they can pay for the extras. Preferably, they will go to a private school and will not be a burden on us anyway. But the ordinary people, the people who require the State system to deliver the goods for them, are the losers in this. They are the people I represent in Elizabeth. It is not on: it is not fair.

I refer to the much touted intervention in terms of literacy and numeracy—the single most important issue in terms of education. This Government has touted the fact that it has an

early intervention strategy. It has talked about that and it has given some small amount of money towards it. The Government has given money for a training and development program for teachers, which has had a range of results. Some people speak highly of it while others do not.

I refer to literacy and to the Government’s seriousness in respect of tackling it. The Government has talked about its basic skills test and has spent between \$300 000 and \$500 000 per year on the basic skills test. If you talk to educators, they generally say that the basic skills test tells you virtually nothing in terms of a student’s educational achievement. We should have accountability and we should have measures and outcomes, but let us get a system that works. Secondly, and even more importantly, when we have decided and discerned who is doing well and who is not doing well according to these outcomes, let us then put money and resources into doing something about the issue. This is where it completely falls down. We have a basic skills test but, when we get the results, we do not do anything about them; we just have the test. That is all we do. End of story: it is not our responsibility.

The Minister in the other House is probably saying that it is not his job, as does the Minister for Health in this House every time we talk to him about health. Literacy is absolutely crucial: it needs funding and a serious attempt to address it. Literacy does not need a basic skills test undertaken for political reasons with no intention to follow up with programs to make changes for the children involved.

I now refer to negotiated curriculum plans. I wonder what the Minister is doing about the unprecedented blow-out now occurring across our schools in respect of the number of students who pass all the criteria and who qualify to have negotiated curriculum plans designed for them? I wonder what the Minister’s response will be? For those members who do not know, a negotiated curriculum plan is a particular learning plan for students who have been identified as having special needs. There is an unprecedented blow-out at this very moment across our schools in the number of students who have reached that level. I want to see what is being done in relation to addressing this issue.

I suggest that the Minister will say, ‘We have an early intervention strategy. We have a particular budget that has been handed down by Treasury. That is the end of the story. It is not my job; I am doing all I can do.’ That is not good enough. We are talking about education and about the future of this State. If you address literacy and early years of schooling, you should do it seriously. You should not play with it and put the lives of our children and our future citizens at risk. I now refer to health.

Mr Brindal: I hope you know more about health than about education.

Ms STEVENS: I would have liked to spend more time on education but unfortunately I do not have the time. In the first 18 months of the Brown Liberal Government there has been unprecedented change in our public health system. There have been massive cuts to our health services. I do not need to say that too much more, because it is quite obvious that in our community there is real concern about what is happening and what is not happening in our hospitals. Let us remember the promises that I referred to at the beginning of this speech. I will refresh members’ memories if they have forgotten.

The first promise was that a Liberal Government would encourage management efficiencies within the public hospital system which, according to union representatives and hospital administrators, would create savings of between \$40 million

and \$50 million a year, which would then be returned to the health system to improve patient services.

The second promise was that a Liberal Government would allocate an additional \$6 million annually to public hospitals to allow 2 700 additional operations to be performed—tell that to the hospitals that are all undergoing a 1.5 to 2 per cent activity level cut this year. That represents 1 500 operations for the Women's and Children's Hospital alone.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I am glad that the member for Unley mentioned Modbury, because Modbury was the only hospital which could not reach its target and which came in below its projected level of activity and below what we were paying for. So much for a good contract with the private sector. The third promise was that a Liberal Government would undertake a comprehensive capital works program to address the deficiencies presently being identified in the system. The fourth promise was that the Liberal Government's new approach to health administration in South Australia would increase funding for direct patient care and give public hospital managers the incentive to manage more efficiency, which would produce an increased need for qualified nurses. We have seen large cuts in the number of nurses. We have seen managers of hospitals throwing up their hands in horror. If you do not believe me, go and talk to them and see for yourself.

These were just some of the promises. Those were the undertakings given by this dishonest Government, because we know that precisely the opposite has occurred. In its first budget the Brown Government cut \$35 million from the health sector and this year we will see a further \$32 million cut. It is the first time in decades that the health system has been cut so savagely. In respect of our major hospitals, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's budget will be cut by \$13.9 million; the Royal Adelaide Hospital by \$12 million; the Women's and Children's Hospital by \$6.9 million; the Flinders Medical Centre by \$10 million; and the Noarlunga Hospital, a much smaller hospital with a budget of between \$10 and \$12 million, by 10 per cent, or \$1 million.

All these cuts have occurred under this Government. We are seeing that, despite additional Commonwealth payments under the Medicare agreement of over \$25 million in 1994-95, and an extra \$75 million in 1995-96, the Minister refuses to believe that these problems have been caused by his cuts. Not only do we have cuts in actual services but capital spending allocations to the health system, announced in the last Labor budget, have been frozen; plans for new buildings at Port Augusta Hospital have been scrapped; and work on the much needed upgrade to the accident and emergency service at the Flinders Medical Centre was delayed.

The new Mount Gambier Hospital, which was supposed to have been built last year from budget allocations two years ago, has been delayed; and the promise to upgrade Queen Elizabeth Hospital has not yet eventuated. The Brown Government is not committed to a public health system. In fact, we have a Minister and a Chief Executive Officer who say that we are not even in the business of running health units and hospitals; that we will contract out and it will no longer be our responsibility. Through all of this we have a Minister who continuously looks for someone else to blame.

We have a Minister who is quite obsessed by blame. Every time he is asked to comment now he is immediately in defence mode, wondering whom to blame and pointing to people as a result. Over the past year and a half, on innumer-

able occasions, he has blamed the collapse of the State Bank (he is still trotting that out), the Federal Government, the hospital administrators and the unions. Just recently he has blamed the doctors, and he is now even hinting that the patients are to blame for overusing the health system. It is time the Government took a good, hard look at what it is doing. It is selling our education system down the tube and throwing away our health system, so that when we have finished with the economics we will have to rebuild all these services. Surely, that is not commonsense.

I would like to turn briefly to family and community services. I want to talk about—

Mr Condous interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: Because I am looking after my shadow portfolio responsibilities.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms STEVENS: They say that we are not too good at handling money. Let us talk about the fact that we need a balanced approach to what we are doing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms STEVENS: We should be looking at economic and social issues together, because that is not happening and that is why our community is suffering hardship and pain at the moment. I want to talk about family and community services, and the issues of domestic violence and women's shelters. Earlier this year I mentioned particular issues relating to women's shelters in rural areas. Two shelters, one in the Riverland and one at Port Lincoln, have particular funding issues. They are country shelters and therefore need to run their service slightly differently from women's shelters located in the city. The women's shelter at Port Lincoln—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley will come to order.

Ms STEVENS: Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker. Until recently the women's shelter at Port Lincoln operated 24 hours a day, but that situation has changed. The shelter has been informed that it can no longer be staffed 24 hours a day. Port Lincoln was the only women's shelter in the State to be staffed 24 hours a day, but there were good reasons for that. Everyone in Port Lincoln knows where that shelter is located. That is an unusual situation, because in most places shelters are not well known—they are reasonably anonymous. At times that shelter is assailed by violent partners of women. Dangerous and risky situations arise—

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I will give members an example about the police because they do not have the numbers any more—surprise, surprise!—to handle these situations. I have received many letters from Port Lincoln residents about its women's shelter. A letter I received from a former resident and now worker at the Port Lincoln shelter states:

As I worked there I was made aware of how essential it was to have staff in attendance 24 hours a day. Not only did I see the need for a person for the tenants to talk to and feel comfortable with, but perhaps the greater need for someone to be there to shield the tenants from visiting abusive partners.

This situation is real. The letter continues:

I saw in my time working there men come calling armed with knives—

Mr Evans interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: It is not funny. The letter continues:

How would this look to the public if there were no staff and a tenant opened the door to a partner armed and ready to hurt them? It would ruin everything the shelter stands for.

The author goes on to talk about the need to provide support to people fleeing from real danger. I spoke with people from the shelter after I received that letter and I was given some information about a situation that occurred over the recent long weekend. The funding system has now changed: the shelter is funded for two call-outs per night but staff are not in attendance all the time. Everything seemed to be going well over this weekend and it was reasonably quiet. At 2 a.m. on Sunday a badly beaten woman went to the shelter. No-one was there but a notice on the door referred her to the police station. The woman, badly beaten, walked to the police station at 2 a.m. When she reached the police station the police rang the on-call person and sent the woman back to the women's shelter. The on-call person rang the shelter coordinator who went to the shelter only to find that the woman had gone. They do not know what happened to that woman. She apparently did not wait around at the shelter after she had walked back from the police station. I am saying that shelters in the country—

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

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): I support the adoption of the Address in Reply. It is a pity the member for Elizabeth did not have more time to make her points because they were very important points to make. This weekend, at the ALP State convention, two attempts will be made to restrict the conscience vote. If the two motions were carried Labor members of Parliament and all Party members would be compelled to support the full legalisation of cannabis and the full decriminalisation of the prostitution trade, including street prostitution, which is the official policy of the United Trades and Labor Council, and therefore the left faction.

The Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union covers workers at Bridgestone Australia, SA Water and public hospitals, plus cleaners, brewery and winery workers, Casino and hotel staff. The union's motion reads:

Convention considers the decriminalisation of prostitution is an issue of social justice and not one of moral conscience. Convention therefore calls on the ALP Parliamentarians to support legislative proposals to further that objective.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: I hear the member for Unley calling 'Hear, hear!' to the abolition of the ALP's conscience vote. The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union covers timber and pulp workers in the South-East, glaziers, furniture assemblers, bricklayers, stonemasons and builders' labourers, to name just a few callings. The union's motion reads:

Convention does not consider the laws relating to the use of marijuana to be one of conscience. Convention calls upon all State Parliamentarians to agitate for and to support the implementation of the select committee's recommendation for legalisation of cannabis.

I can assure the House that not one worker in any of the callings that I mentioned was consulted about those motions. Currently the ALP's SA Branch rules provide:

Matters which are ruled by the Presiding Officer as social questions may be freely debated within the South Australian Labor Party, but any decisions taken shall not be binding on members of the Party.

The Federal rules provide:

The matter of abortion can be freely debated in any State or Federal forum of the Australian Labor Party, but any decision reached is not binding on any member of the Party.

Matters that have been deemed matters of conscience include gambling (such as poker machines), sexuality (such as pornography and prostitution), drugs (such as marijuana and liquor) and issues of life and death (such as abortion and euthanasia but not, quite properly, capital punishment, which the Labor Party opposes in all cases). The conscience vote is as old as the South Australian Labor Party. Our Party is different from most other Australian political Parties in that we seek to win more than 50 per cent of the total vote and to govern in our own right; that is, without the constraints of having coalition partners.

Mr Brindal: Where are ours?

Mr ATKINSON: In most States the Liberal Party needs the National Party to govern.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ATKINSON: I am aware, as the Minister for Emergency Services and the member for Unley interject, that on this occasion the Liberal Party does not need another Party to govern. So bad was the experience of Tasmania's Field Labor Government in trying to govern with the consent of the Green Party that it is now against the rules of the Tasmanian ALP to govern in coalition. The passage of these two motions and the Left's aim of abolishing the conscience vote outright would reduce the State Labor Party to a minor sectarian Party capable of attracting no more than 30 per cent of the primary vote.

Members interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: It does sound a bit like the last election result. For the benefit of the Minister for Emergency Services, I was hoping that my Party would improve its primary vote on the December 1993 result. If the conscience vote were abolished, our only chance of governing would be in coalition—a fate that has already befallen the New Zealand Labor Party, sitting as it is on 25 per cent in the polls.

To govern in its own right, the Labor Party has needed an outright majority in the Lower House, and to do that we need to be a broad church appealing to more than just one class of people and to people of many faiths and ethnic origins. We need it to be an inclusive Party, not a politically correct Party.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

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

Mr ATKINSON: When the South Australian Labor Party was founded in 1891, we were a gathering of English and Cornish Methodists, Irish Catholics and people of no religious faith. Labor's strongest support and some of its parliamentary leaders were from the Wallaroo and Moonta area where Cornish miners had migrated to win copper from the earth. These people were Primitive Methodists (as distinct from Wesleyan Methodists) who rejected alcohol and believed it ought to be banned in the interests of family and society. These people also believed that gambling was a great evil and ought to be against the law: a man ought to earn his bread honestly. By contrast, some Catholics loved to drink and gamble, but they believed divorce was wrong, and many decades later their Church would frown on the permissive sexuality of the day and the attendant loss of respect for human life.

The third stream in the Labor Party were strict socialists, who had no religious belief but humanism and rationalism. They did not want to be compelled by a Methodist majority to vote for six o'clock closing of hotels in the 1915 referendum or to have the State Government suspend horse racing, as Tom Playford did during the Second World War. If these

people wanted to believe in free love, as it was called during those days, why should they be persecuted by a Catholic majority in the Party? Their successors have proved to be less tolerant.

These rules moulded a highly successful Party that overcame the sectarianism of old Australia and won an absolute majority of the vote under the leadership of the Methodist, John Verran, the Catholic, Mick O'Halloran, and the Anglican turned agnostic, Don Dunstan, alike. This coalition worked because on controversial social issues MPs could vote as they wished and keep all or most of their local constituency. Don Dunstan's social reforms would not have been as well accepted as they were except by the device of the conscience vote. The conscience vote kept Dunstan's changes in step with public opinion and lent them legitimacy—a legitimacy social changes will not have if the member for Unley, cheer leader for the Left in abolishing the conscience vote, gets his prostitution Bill through by compelling members of Parliament who do not want to vote for it to vote for it on pain of expulsion.

The conscience vote is now more important than ever. We are a multicultural society. The Australian Labor Party has members who are Greek Orthodox, Afghan Muslims and Vietnamese Buddhists. The conscience vote is important not just for members of Parliament: it is important for the ordinary citizen who wants to participate in a political Party. Why should a person who worships at St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, Croydon Park, or St George's Orthodox Church, Thebarton, and attends meetings of the Spence ALP sub-branch be forced not merely to acquiesce in but, to use the verb in the CFMEU motion, to agitate for street prostitution, legalised dope, infanticide, unlimited embryo experimentation, poker machines or anything else that might catch the fancy of the Left or the member for Unley? The abolition of the conscience vote seeks to prohibit not just the expression of belief but the belief itself. We will be much poorer as a Party for this.

I can always leave Parliament and try one of my old vocations, such as journalism or the law. Perhaps I could mind my four children, tend the garden and send my wife, Joan, out to work. I would very much miss being the member for Spence, because I have enjoyed representing the people of the Hindmarsh, Croydon, Woodville and Findon areas, doing my electorate rounds on my bicycle and arguing with Bob Francis on Radio 5AA. However, what of the 270 members of the Spence ALP sub-branch, most of whom would no longer be able to participate in politics or civil society through the Australian Labor Party? What of Jim Tantalos, a Greek Christian, who would be expelled or discouraged from renewing his membership because he did not join the Labor Party to agitate for street prostitution? What of Councillor Tung Ngo, a Vietnamese Christian and South Australia's first Vietnamese-Australian member of local government, who would be expelled or discouraged from renewing his membership because he did not join the Labor Party to agitate for abortion on demand or infanticide?

The two motions to be moved at the weekend are the first two steps in the implementation of the Left faction's policy to abolish the conscience vote altogether. The Left faction last attempted to abolish the conscience vote outright in 1987, but failed. At this convention the Left will have an absolute majority of delegates for the first time since 1985, all of them bound to this policy.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

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

Mr ATKINSON: No doubt one of the objectives of the two motions is to force me to conform to the canons of political correctness on euthanasia, poker machines and drugs, or risk expulsion from the Party for which I have worked since 1972. Another of the objectives is to turn away from the Party Greek Orthodox and Vietnamese members who have not been voting for the Left in internal ballots.

If the conscience vote were abolished by the Left faction, Her Excellency the Governor, should she wish to join a political Party after her term in office, would be ineligible for membership of the ALP. Among the people that the Left would have expelled from the Party under its policy would have been Premier John Verran, Premier Bob Richards, Prime Minister Ben Chifley, Leader Mick O'Halloran, Premier Des Corcoran and Attorney-General Len King.

Mr Brindal: Why?

Mr ATKINSON: The member for Unley asks why: because, for one reason or another, they availed themselves of the conscience vote to vote and believe in a way different from a majority of the Party in their time. If the conscience vote were to be abolished no Catholic, Orthodox Christian, Lutheran or Muslim who took his or her faith and religious obligations seriously could be a member of the Australian Labor Party or run for office as an ALP nominee. In that event, the Labor Party would be saying to about one third of the population, 'By all means vote ALP, but do not apply to join or participate because we do not take your kind'.

Some members of the Labor Party may ask why I have raised this matter today and not waited until Sunday's session of the ALP's State Convention to speak against the proposal.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley has gone far enough.

Mr ATKINSON: The reason is that the move to abolish the conscience vote is not widely known, and it affects thousands of Labor voters and hundreds of Labor Party members. This is my only opportunity to alert them to this move before Sunday, when a majority of convention delegates, bound by the strictest of factional discipline, will vote for this change—a change that is contrary to the known preferences and values of the great majority of Labor voters and members of ALP-affiliated unions. The paradox is that the changes to the laws on drugs and prostitution that the movers of the motions seek will not come to pass one minute earlier because of their intolerance.

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply debate and acknowledge my support for the Governor and for the excellent work she has done so far. We have stood in this Parliament over the past couple of weeks and have seen it, heard it and obviously some of us cannot believe it, but it is occurring. We have the Opposition pretending that the past never occurred and that the debt facing this State never really happened prior to the Brown Government's coming in in December 1993.

We have been told by the member for Elizabeth that she does not worry about money, does not worry about the finances and that her job is to have a balanced approach to spending it and doling it out; that we should not concern ourselves with the fact that in December 1993, when we came into government, we were facing overexpenditure on recurrent expenditure of \$400 million per year; we were facing a debt of close to \$9 billion; and we were facing an

interest cost of close to \$1 billion per annum. We were told not to worry about this.

The member for Elizabeth said that she has a balanced approach. She said that she is not worried about the financials as they do not concern her. When you listen to her, you wonder what sort of Opposition we have here. It is obvious that we have a much better Opposition within the back bench of the Liberal Party than we have in the Australian Labor Party because, when we look at some of the people who have been given the responsibility by the Leader of the Opposition to shadow the various Ministers, we have to wonder about the quality of the Opposition.

We do not have to look any further than the member for Napier, who spoke on local government reform in her Address in Reply contribution. I quote from that speech as follows:

I understand it a lot better than the Minister, I think.

This lady has come before this Parliament and is supposed to be putting forward the views of the Opposition in relation to local government reform. She has said that she has consulted with councils. The Opposition has conducted its 'Labor Listens' program, to which it had 100 CEOs and mayors turn up and say to them that they were in favour of the amalgamation of councils. When the mayors of these councils said to the Labor Party, 'What is your position with regard to local government reform?' the only thing the Labor Party said to those CEOs and mayors was that it felt that the consultation period should be a little later than 17 August, when we were due to make our decisions.

As a result of our passing in the Party room the proposal and consideration of the draft Bill, we said that the consultation period was to go until March of next year. We now hear from the member for Napier that that consultation process is not long enough and that we need it to be still longer. We have only to go as far as a good friend of mine—a Marion councillor—who stated in the Messenger press, under the headline 'ALP policy group chairman hits at his Party's line on amalgamations':

An ALP policy group chairman has launched a stinging attack on his own Party over council amalgamations, calling it a 'policy free zone'.

He called the member for Napier, the shadow spokesperson for local government reform, a 'policy free zone'. He obviously knows the member for Napier very well. He said that the local government policy network deserved better from the ALP with regard to its policy on local government, and stated:

I guess it's indicative of the lack of focus of the Labor Party on local government.

He further states:

The amalgamation question was super important for the State, and there has not been enough active discussion by the ALP.

He further stated:

Judging from media reports the State Government's proposed draft Bill on local government reform could be a step in the right direction.

What comments do we have from the member for Napier, the spokesperson for the Opposition on local government? She comes out generally speaking in favour of councils determining their own directions. Councils need guidelines and financial assistance. Like the member for Elizabeth, the member for Napier is quite happy to hand out the money but has no clue about where it is to come from. The member for

Napier went on about discussions of competitive tendering and stated:

Because those services are to be run on a much cheaper, shoddier, more ineffective basis. . .

That is her description of competitive tendering. It is obvious that the member for Napier is lacking expertise and does not live in the real world. She should be aware of what competitive tendering is all about: the public sector competing against the private sector for those jobs and services. The party who came up with the best tender—not necessarily the cheapest tender—and offered the best services associated with that job usually ended up with the business. The member for Napier further stated:

We have examples of private companies keen to win the tender putting in low tender prices and then finding that, contrary to their expectations, the regular council employees were doing a good job in their limited budgets. Standards have slipped.

The member for Napier in her speech gave no examples of companies in South Australia or Australia involved in competitive tendering that were, as a result of the tender process, handing out shoddy jobs. She gave no example of where standards had slipped. From reading the speech of the member for Napier, and from her level of questioning in this place, it is obvious that she has no idea of what competitive tendering is all about. It is obvious from the statements of the members for Napier, Elizabeth and Taylor that they have an ideological problem with the word 'contracting' and have a problem with saying the word 'contractor'. It is like a swearword—a word that they have a problem using.

At some stage the Labor Party and the member for Napier have to address the issue of competitive tendering and contracting out of goods and services. Unfortunately, the member for Napier has her head in the sand and is not doing a good job as shadow spokesperson in the area of local government reform.

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

Mr CAUDELL: Before the break I was speaking about the magnificent contribution—or lack of—from the member for Napier.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: Obviously, none of them will come here and listen to a few home truths. The member for Napier, in one of her pearls of wisdom in her speech on the South Australian Housing Trust, said that one in five tenants was not happy with the standard of maintenance provided. I am not surprised by that statement because, if you looked at the Housing Trust homes in my electorate prior to the 1993 election, you would see that most of those homes were third-world homes and had had no maintenance done on them for in excess of 10 years. If the member for Napier had done some sums—

The Hon. D.S. Baker interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: That's asking a heck of a lot, but I am sure, with the aid of a calculator, her feet and her hands, etc., and the member for Elizabeth, who is not too happy with regard to worrying about where the money is coming from, they would have been able to do a few divisions of the number of Housing Trust homes versus the extra debt that they had created from the State Bank. By simple division, they could work out that \$50 000 per home would have been available for maintenance. So, it is not surprising that no money had been spent on maintenance in the past few years by the previous Government. Since the December elections,

the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations has been responsible for the upgrade of homes in the Mitchell Park area. Contrary to the statements and the carryings-on of the members for Napier and Price, the people of Mitchell Park are quite happy that this Government has at last spent some money on Housing Trust properties.

Members interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: We'll get on to the Labor initiatives in the Housing Trust a little more with regard to a few other figures, if you would like to hang around. But the people of Mitchell Park are quite happy with the development in that area: they did not come out with statements such as those of the member for Napier. I refer to the proud record of the South Australian Housing Trust under the previous Government. Under the previous Government, there was a 400 per cent increase in the rental debt between 1986 and 1993, yet the member for Napier stood here and was upset about the fact that we had started to evict people who were no longer paying their rent. Let us look at some of the people in South Australian Housing Trust homes who had not paid their rent and who the member for Napier thinks we should hang on to.

Some Housing Trust tenants had had 13 homes in 12 months, had incurred a debt in each of those homes and had not paid the rent. They then went to the Catholic Mission at Port Adelaide and got a home, and at the end of a month of paying no rent they pinched all the furniture out of that home and sold it. They saw the member for Napier, who thought that the Government should put its hand in its pocket for another \$400 or \$500 so that they can blow that as well. That is the type of economics that the member for Napier prefers. That is why, under the previous Government, we had a 400 per cent increase in rental debtors between 1986 and 1993. That is why the Housing Trust debt was \$1.2 billion at the time of the 1993 election.

The honourable member talked about capital replacement and maintenance. The previous Government did little with regard to capital replacement projects. The member for Playford and I have had this discussion before, because the majority of people in Mitchell Park are looking for responsible Housing Trust tenants who are prepared to pay their way. It was also the previous Government that would not support the deduction of rental from a person's pension, because it believed that it violated privacy provisions. It would prefer to increase the debt by 400 per cent in that seven-year period than to make people pay rent. It would prefer to stand by abusers of the system than to encourage people to be responsible.

The members for Napier and Elizabeth then discussed education in their speeches. Obviously, the member for Napier is keen to set up a class dispute, a them-and-us attitude, because in her speech she mentioned people who send their children to private schools. She said that private schools—and I assume she refers to Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church and other non-denominational private schools—are turning their backs on other people. She said that public education is deteriorating, but she failed to mention that the teacher to student ratio in private schools is much higher than it is in the public system. Class sizes are much smaller in public schools than they are in private schools.

The SSO to students ratio in private schools is much higher than it is in public schools. There are fewer SSOs in the private system than there are in the public system. The member for Napier prefers to ignore that: rather, she tries to inflame a them-and-us dispute. The member for Elizabeth

thought that that was a good idea, so she decided that she would get on this bandwagon of funding to public versus private schools. Obviously, the Catholic constituents in a few of the electorates are keen to know that the members for Elizabeth and Napier are against their children being sent to Catholic schools because that is turning their back on the rest of the community. I am sure that the member for Spence also would be keen to let his electorate know that the members for Napier and Elizabeth are against people sending their children to Catholic schools.

The members for Napier and Elizabeth are keen to promote a them-versus-us attitude. I note that the member for Spence is leaving this debate. The member for Spence obviously agrees with me and does not wish to embarrass others in this Chamber. The member for Elizabeth went on to discuss the level of education spending. She said that this Government had spent less on the early intervention program. She seems to have forgotten that this Government has allocated \$10 million towards an early intervention program. The Government is committed to the early detection of speech and learning disorders. The member for Elizabeth was really keen to run down the basic skills test before it had been put in place. The honourable member and her ilk were quite happy to say to principals that they could detect speech and learning disorders, that it was a waste of money to spend \$500 000 a year on the detection of learning disorders. Now, when the parents of those primary school children say that they think it is a good idea, that they would like to know how their children are going, the Opposition now says that the Government has no money to follow up. You are not wrong: we have no money to follow up, because we will never forget who created the \$350 million—

Mr FOLEY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the Standing Order that requires a member to speak through the Chair and not to address members directly.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is correct. I suggest that the member for Mitchell direct his comments through the Chair. I hope that the member for Hart also complies with that Standing Order later this evening. The member for Mitchell.

Mr CAUDELL: Mr Speaker, I am sure that you would be quite happy to remind the member for Elizabeth of the situation in December 1993 when this Government inherited a \$350 million recurrent expenditure deficit with regard to the budget as well as a \$9 billion debt and a \$1 billion interest payment per annum. It is no wonder that we have very little money to carry out the programs that we would like to conduct, but by scrimping and saving and other efficiencies we will get there. With good management, we will reduce the recurrent expenditure debt and the interest rate. I am sure, Mr Speaker, that you will be able to pass that on to the member for Elizabeth, who seems to forget where the money comes from and that you need to create wealth in the first instance before you can spend it.

Mr Andrew interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: As the member for Chaffey said, with extremely frugal management we will deliver a quality education system in South Australia. In his Address in Reply speech, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the selling off of the management and control of South Australia's water. The Leader of the Opposition has been advised a number of times that we are not privatising our water, selling it off or selling the assets: we are only contracting out. Those words seem to be dirty words amongst the Opposition—and I am

not surprised that they think so, because the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, a former trade union official, has in his particular book that 'contracting' is a word that shall never be used within the union movement. We will never forget the mess that the then Labor Government made of the oil industry when it implemented the Laidley agreement to ensure that contracting would never take effect in that area. We will never forget the involvement of the trade union movement at that time.

However, for the Leader of the Opposition's own record I will read out the answers given by the Minister for Infrastructure to the first question which deals with the Leader of the Opposition's speech, because most of his speech, which went for an hour, dealt with the privatisation of water. The Minister for Infrastructure gave the answer:

This question exhibits a total ignorance of the proposed contract.

Mr QUIRKE: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I think you will find that the member for Mitchell is quoting from the *Hansard* record for this session, and he ought to know better by now.

The SPEAKER: Will the member for Playford advise the Chair what the honourable member is quoting from *Hansard*?

Mr QUIRKE: The honourable member is quoting from an answer given by the Minister for Infrastructure during a ministerial statement that he made yesterday. He has the documents in front of him, and he has read a couple of sentences. For the edification of the House, I thought I should raise this point.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member should not quote directly from *Hansard*. He may discuss the matter. I therefore suggest to him that he not continue to quote but to discuss the matter in another manner. The member for Mitchell.

Mr CAUDELL: I was not quoting directly from it; I was giving my understanding of what I believed the answer to be.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member knows that he must comply with Standing Orders.

Mr CAUDELL: My understanding is that the Minister for Infrastructure made a statement similar to this in that he said that 'the question exhibits a total ignorance of the proposed contract'. I also believe that he said—

The SPEAKER: Order! I take it that the honourable member is referring only to copious notes. I suggest that he continue.

Mr CAUDELL: The Minister said, 'The contractor will perform work for us and for that we will pay less than it would cost us to run the system ourselves.' I understand that the Minister for Infrastructure said yesterday that it is a fee-for-service contract, and on numerous occasions he has provided that advice to the Leader of the Opposition. Unfortunately, our mickey mouse, slick Mick, who slithers and slides through the mud on his way to the Gold Coast, crosses the sidelines far too many times and comments on an issue without allowing the truth to get in the way of a good story. Comments on the issue of contracting out the management of water services and various other innuendo and snide remarks appear all through the Leader of the Opposition's speech.

As I said previously, the Opposition has a problem with the words 'contracting out'. In their speeches, they say that the whole issue is one of secrecy despite the fact that numerous documents have been provided by the Minister for Infrastructure in relation to the process of contracting out our water supply. As well as that there has been an ongoing

publicity program on radio stations where information has been provided to the general public, and the CEO of SA Water has been available to provide answers to questions from the general public. However, that will not stop the Leader of the Opposition from continuing on in this vein, because in his own words he says, 'I note that one or two journalists apparently believe that the Opposition is guilty of something like fearmongering about this deal.' He was exactly correct when he made that statement: his speech is full of innuendo and scaremongering regarding the issue of the contracting out of water maintenance.

In the final stages of his ministerial statement, the Minister for Infrastructure's point could not have been much more appropriate when he invited the Leader to stand up and state where the Opposition stands. He asked, 'Why is the Opposition opposed to the delivery of efficiencies and cost savings for consumers, why does it reject economic development in this State, why does it prefer to assign young people to a life of unemployment instead of supporting every effort to create jobs, and why would the Opposition rather play politics than engage in telling the truth associated with this project?'

In his speech the Leader of the Opposition had a shot at those companies which sponsor the arts. The Leader of the Opposition knows that the arts relies on funding from private and business beneficiaries, big and small, local and overseas. To denigrate those beneficiaries in the way he did was unacceptable and typical of some of the Leader of the Opposition's speeches.

The Leader of the Opposition has been critical of changes to and shifts in education spending in South Australia. He stated that South Australia cannot afford an education formula based on failure. The Leader of the Opposition is correct, because we were faced with the failure of the South Australian economy and the failure of the former Government in relation to its handling of the economic situation, failures that resulted in the State having to face a recurrent expenditure of \$350 million, a debt of \$9 billion and interest costs of \$1 billion per annum. Those failures meant that there had to be change to the education formula of this State.

The Leader of the Opposition has never uttered a truer word when he said that South Australia could not afford an education formula based on failure. The Leader of the Opposition failed to mention that the failure of the economy of South Australia was generated by the previous Government. We have had to go to the Federal Government for our yearly pay-outs. When the Federal Government looked at the South Australian budget, it said that our expenditure on education is well above the Australian average and that, if we want to continue with that level, we will have to accept a lower level of funds.

The member for Taylor, who also has a problem with the word 'contracting', said that the Government has an agenda to privatise everything. South Australian Governments have no place being involved in business enterprises such as shopping centres, pipelines, gas industries or the insurance industry. The future has been set with regard to the Federal Government in that the Hilmer report dictates that public utilities need to be much more efficient and, as a result, we have made changes to water services and we will make changes to ETSA.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition touched on economic mismanagement. He is right: there has been economic mismanagement in the past. I am sure I have mentioned plenty of times the economic mismanagement of the previous Government that resulted in the \$350 million recurrent

expenditure deficit, the \$9 billion debt and the \$1 billion interest bill. The South Australian economy has been in intensive care. It was handed to us in intensive care: it is now in critical care.

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

Motion carried.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

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

That the report of the Auditor-General 1994-95 be noted.

I commend the report to the House.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): The Auditor-General has exposed this Government for what it is: a Government of stealth and a Government that governs in the interests of a number of sectional interests. The Government is not too happy about having that whole process exposed. The clock in the House tells us that it is 7.55 p.m. Of course, there are no television cameras here and, hence, no public exposure for the Auditor-General's Report. It also means that, except for one Minister who is a long way removed from the economic portfolios, no Ministers are here. We were told that, when the Auditor-General's Report came down, we could have a full investigation of it. We were told, when the budget was shifted back to May and June, that the Auditor-General would bring down his report at the usual time and that we would be able to ask Ministers about certain points of the budget and about irregularities exposed by this document.

We have a process in this House that has taken place since the early 1980s—the Estimate Committees. Until this year, members of the Opposition have relied on the Auditor-General's Report to provide much of the material to quiz departments on estimates of expenditure and receipts. What do we have now? The reality is that we have had the Estimates Committees, we had no report from the Auditor-General and now we find that we can have a debate. But we cannot scrutinise the document because there are no Ministers here tonight to answer any questions. We were told that there would be an opportunity to scrutinise this document. We now know why we cannot scrutinise this document—because the Government is a Government that governs by stealth, doing things in the dead of night. This debate could have been held during the day but, no, this Government would never want to have the gaze of the public on some of the things in this document.

The document represents the worst report card that any Government in this State has ever received. The Auditor-General makes clear and precise statements and criticisms about where this Government is going, where money has been lost—and I will come to that in a moment—and where a number of rather questionable practices have been going on and ought to be stopped. The Auditor-General is not an officer of the Government: he is an officer of this Parliament. The Auditor-General has a close working relationship with at least one of the committees of this Parliament—the Economic and Finance Committee. The Auditor-General understands the role of Parliament—it is in his report—and he reminds the Government of it. He says that parliamentary scrutiny is absolutely essential: he does not say that parliamentary debate in the middle of the night when there is only one Minister in this House is what he had in mind.

The Auditor-General realises that Executive Government and some of those agencies out there need the scrutiny of this place. It needs to be made quite clear that some members are jibing at members of my persuasion by saying that, in the 1980s, had there been proper scrutiny, we would not have had some of the problems of the State Bank, SGIC, the various timber corporation disasters and others. I believe they are right. I listened to some of the speeches made by the Minister who is present tonight, when he was the Leader and afterwards, and some of the points he made in 1991 and 1992 were absolutely correct. At that time I sat on the other side of this Chamber and I listened to some of the speeches made by members of the then Opposition. I remember some of the very good wisecracks made by the Minister. He was very good at it and he endeared himself to me. However, the points he made were quickly forgotten in December 1993. A couple of things have happened since that time: first, the budget has been shifted so that the Auditor-General does not provide information for the Estimates Committees and, if anyone wants to say that we did not raise that matter earlier this year, we did.

I know that the Leader of the Opposition and I both raised the matter during the Estimates procedure. We made it clear that we believed the Auditor-General had shifted away from Parliament, and that we would not be able to cast light on some of the dealings of this Government. We were proven correct when the report was received, and we have been proven correct tonight. Also, this Government has ensured that the other agency to which the Auditor-General reports is not well equipped for the task. I refer to the Economic and Finance Committee. I make it quite clear—and I do not want to go on at great length about this—that the Economic and Finance Committee no longer has anywhere near the level of staffing it had pre-1993.

The Hon. D.S. Baker: Nor the Chairman.

Mr QUIRKE: It has a new Chairman, and that Chairman—and I cast no aspersions on him—is now in the position of chairing a committee that does not have anywhere near the level of adequate staff to deal with the issues raised before it. At the end of the day, that is another tool of scrutiny that has been removed from this Parliament. What we are seeing tonight is an absolute disgrace. Tonight we are seeing a very arrogant Government that has sent in a couple of backbench members and one Minister, and we are going through the charade of a debate so that it can say, 'We had a debate on the Auditor-General's Report.'

The reality is, of course, that those Government members present are as interested in the debate as are the nine missing Ministers tonight, perhaps out to dinner, in their offices or doing other jobs. Whatever they are doing they obviously see the priority of the Auditor-General's Report for what it is. The one Minister in this place tonight is on Chamber duty, and that is it. It is the barest minimum expected under the Westminster system to enable Parliament to continue sitting. I believe the Auditor-General's Report raises a number of crucial questions. First, it raises the truth about South Australia's debt. One main point contained in that report is that the State's debt has not decreased since these people have taken over: it has increased.

Mr Leggett interjecting:

Mr QUIRKE: The member for Hanson wants to make light of this because he is doing his best to save his skin. He knows that his hide will be nailed to the wall when the truth about this Government is revealed. He knows better than anyone else that he will have a real problem selling the

message of this Government in his electorate unless he does something I am sure he is not all that happy about doing, and that is publishing a large number of lies, probably with the assistance of the Catch Tims or Gerard Industries of this world, or whoever paid for the last lot of pamphlets and who will probably pay for the next lot.

It is quite clear that this Government is now further in debt by \$1 billion. Despite the nonsense we read in the newspapers about debt reduction strategies, they have failed. We also find that, despite all the warnings in the world, the Treasurer has this ideological bent to have all loan portfolios locked into long-term interest rates, irrespective of which way the market is going. That has cost this State a great deal of money, as pointed out by the Auditor-General. I have never seen an Auditor-General go to such lengths to explain what has happened. That is the most bald criticism of this Government in the entire document.

At the very least, just the change in policy made by this Treasurer has cost the State \$160 million. That, as I understand it, is more than double the pain inflicted on the community in cut-backs to education and health. But, there is more. Had Treasury and the Treasurer pursued a different policy, the losses would not have been \$160 million: we could have turned a profit of nearly \$400 million because of the way interest rates were moving.

I must say that I never had a lot of time for the last Under Treasurer, Mr Emery, but I am now reviewing that opinion because, obviously, he and the former Treasurer had policies in place that saw our borrowing requirements not costing the sort of money that has now been locked in by this Treasurer. The Auditor-General's Report makes it crystal clear that that is one of the major deficiencies of the first two years of this Government. I am sure that other criticisms in this report of various ministerial portfolios will be dealt with tonight when other speakers on this side of the House go through it.

One interesting aspect of the Auditor-General's Report highlights the large number of ministerial directions made to various boards. We find Executive Government making decisions, some of which are not necessarily in the same spirit as the processes that were set up for them. We find that boards set up for these agencies have been totally ignored. We have the Auditor-General saying to the Parliament, 'You'd better have a close look at some of these areas, because some of these decisions need closer scrutiny.' What do we get? We get a debate in the dead of night; we get a debate where the Government believes that it can absolutely minimise exposure of any of these shortcomings highlighted by the Auditor-General in his report.

It was stated earlier that we could use Question Time. Indeed, we can, but everyone knows that on most days Question Time in this place is extended so that the Opposition can ask 10 questions. Question Time is not about the Auditor-General's Report, but we have had to put that on the list for Question Time. Question Time covers other issues concerning our community and issues about which we, as a political Party, are expected to question the Government.

In fact, if we had 20 or 30 questions every day, there would still be issues that we would not be able to examine. The Estimates Committee procedure was deliberately set up for this Parliament once a year to investigate and examine the books to see whether they are cooked, whether they expose irregularities and whether they truly reflect the position about which the Government has broadly and boldly told us. What we find is that we can get the Auditor-General's Report, have a look at it, and fight against issues such as Garibaldi and the

public cover up of the HUS disaster and other issues that are going around. In that way we can get a few questions in about the Auditor-General.

I should like to explore a few other issues. I mentioned one yesterday where an enormous amount of money was paid to an official whom this Government did not want in one of the departments. It paid out in excess of \$300 000 to get rid of him. There are procedures for getting rid of officers who do not meet the criteria. We have debated them here. In fact, the Deputy Leader led the debate on the GME Act earlier this year. I understand that if people are not fulfilling their contract they can be dismissed with four months notice.

Mr Clarke: Three months.

Mr QUIRKE: The Deputy Leader corrects me: it is three months notice and pay. There is another way now. We can toss \$300 000-plus at someone and remove him. Yesterday, the Treasurer had the audacity to tell me that that was a separation package. Of course, subsequently someone else took the job. Some separation package! I wonder about the savings that this Government is making in so many areas when money is being thrown around to people who, in reality, could have been dealt with under the disciplinary provisions of the old and new GME Acts.

The multifunction polis is an organisation about which I have had a lot to say in this House, and over the next few years I will have more to say. Many of my colleagues do not agree with me on this matter. During the past five years South Australia has spent a great deal of money on the MFP. Recently I went to look at what had been achieved with all that money. I was picked up half an hour late: I was picked up at quarter to 10 and was back in the city by 11 o'clock the same morning. There is no doubt about seeing what the MFP had done; it has done very little. There are now 13 executives whereas there were only three before.

There is no longer only one in the \$300 000-plus club: there are two of them. There is another making more than \$320 000 a year as an MFP executive. There is also another one—the person in charge of media, communications and so on, but we do not see much of the MFP about the place—who is paid \$250 000, which is a lot of money. I make no comment on the man's work, except that he used to work for the State Bank, and that was almost invisible until it was exposed in this place.

I was told by officials of the multifunction polis that it had spent only \$60 million so far. They also told me that it had spent only \$21 million of the \$34 million allocated in the last budget. However, I am told by the Minister, by way of a Government backbench question, that that is not true; in fact, \$34 million has been spent. I should like to know the answers to these questions.

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

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I am astonished that the member for Playford should berate us and bellow about the incompetence of this Government. He has the hide to say that he knows where he is going and what he is doing and what he would otherwise do if he were in office. The way in which he has attacked the MFP makes me believe that he has fewer of the marbles required for this kind of work than I thought he had. If he has concerns about the MFP, he ought to have raised them with his Federal colleague, Senator Chris Schacht, because, as I understood it, the MFP was a bipartisan commitment of not only members of the Parliament of South Australia but also, and more particularly perhaps in this

context, the Federal ALP Government—his Federal colleagues.

Since coming to office, we have put the people who are responsible for getting the job done and bringing the MFP to fruition on performance contracts. If they cannot get it done, we get rid of them: it is as simple as that. For the member for Playford to bleat about the fact that they are on that kind of arrangement and retainer is amazing. I really worry that, when he finally takes over the reins as Leader or Deputy Leader in the near future, he will not be up to the mark—and God help us if he ever aspires to the rank of Treasurer. Thanks to his colleagues, we are in a bad enough mess now.

This afternoon the Treasurer drew our attention to the fact that we have received a special report from the Auditor-General on the Northern Adelaide Development Board. That report exposes yet again how the Leader of the Opposition cannot be trusted with public money. He is suffering from a condition that defies my understanding. Put simply as an objective analysis of his performance, the Leader is a financial dunce. He does not even understand the elementary principles of financial management or accountability.

We learnt this afternoon that in the 1994 report to this House the Auditor-General made special mention of the Business Asia Convention arranged by the Leader to be held during 1993. In the election campaign at that time he was the Minister of Business and Regional Development, so it was the sort of thing in which we would have expected him to be interested. The cost of that event was to have been \$415 000. As it turned out, it was \$765 000—almost double the approved budget. The Auditor-General, referring to the financial management of this event, concluded:

Insufficient regard was given to prudent principles of budgetary control and project accounting and reporting arrangements.

The Leader's reputation, based on that, fares no better in the Auditor-General's report on the Northern Adelaide Development Board. The report deals with an agreement signed by the Leader in July 1990 while he was Minister of Education, Employment and Training. This is another deal in which he was involved. The agreement was worth \$1.3 million and it was said to be for employment programs. Many of those employment programs just happened to be in the Minister's electorate, as the Treasurer pointed out to us this afternoon. The Auditor-General described the agreement in what I consider to be generous and conciliatory terms, not in the least bit strong language, by calling it a political compact. He made the following findings about the agreement:

The agreement and schedule between the parties was inadequately prepared. The project was handicapped by the failure to establish clear lines of accountability and responsibility.

He went on to say:

The records maintained in relation to the project were inadequate. I do not know what is wrong with Opposition members if they cannot learn from that in the kinds of decisions they make about whom they want as Leader, unless they see him as a temporary Jehovah to fill the slot after knocking off Lynn Arnold and before going for somebody whom they think has a future, such as the member for Hart, perhaps, the member for Ross Smith, if he would get his parliamentary manners in order, or indeed the member for Playford. I do not know from where they get the team, but they were unkind to their present Leader.

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: The member for Napier. That is a possibility: quite an exciting prospect! I look forward to that one! I

would be quite interested to see how that would go. At least it is an improvement on the previous member. The agreement that I spoke about and the one to which the Auditor-General addressed his attention was for a three-year period and required an annual reporting process to the Minister to be established. The Auditor-General found that this process was inadequately implemented. That is a kind way of saying that he did not do it in the first year of the project, and it was not even observed in the second year. That is a fairly polite way—not even strong language in the context of the deficiency.

From there we see that the need for proper lines of accountability to be established was compounded by the fact that this taxpayers' money was to be allocated through a board over which the State Government had no effective control. It was a bit like the State Bank: they did not have the guts to pull them into line, even when it was obvious to Blind Freddy that we were going down the gurgler. The Auditor-General found that there was no record of this matter having been analysed before the agreement was entered into. Obviously, the Minister was interested only in how he could buy favours in his electorate with taxpayers' money, rather than ensuring full accountability for the spending of that money. That Minister is the current Leader. That is the gentleman about whom we are talking, and I remind the Deputy Leader of that fact. I do not know how long he will take to move, but I have heard that he has the numbers already.

Mr Clarke: Who?

Mr LEWIS: Well, the Leader certainly has not got the numbers. I am not sure who has them, because I do not know where the factions are any more—it is too difficult to work out.

Mr Clarke: You are in a faction of one.

Mr LEWIS: And I am proud of it, because my electors know that I am accountable to them for everything I say and do here on their behalf. They are proud of the fact, too, because they know that I will do what they need. I will tell them what they need to know and not what they would like to hear. That is more than the honourable member can say about himself. Every utterance he has ever made in here has been for the sake of political gain. His last contribution, on the prudence of the conduct of the Liberal Party, was wide of the mark and showed that he had absolutely no understanding of the Constitution of that Party.

I can picture the Leader with his white board in this project—as Ros Kelly did it—listing all the organisations in his own electorate that should have received some funds. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition has no credentials at all for criticising the financial performance of the Liberal Government. That is not surprising. It was this Leader who said, on his elevation to the ministry after the 1989 election, that he had learned prudence, strategy and management from no less a tutor than John Bannon, who was ably advised on occasion, I am told, by the member for Hart. The Leader boasting the way he did about taking lessons from John Bannon is like someone saying that they took lessons from O.J. Simpson on how to avoid domestic violence.

How can the Opposition maintain such a person as its Leader when we continue to receive evidence of his many failures as a Minister, such failures being well documented in the Auditor-General's Report. The Leader is a man who presided over record unemployment rates as Minister of Employment, and who saw the State's teenage unemployment more than double to over 40 per cent while he was Minister

of Youth Affairs—a great record, that. As Minister responsible, he lost the Grand Prix. He led the campaign within the Labor Party against the Roxby Downs development. What a great achievement that was! And it goes on. This man you have as Leader, I say to the member for Hart, was Parliament's most prominent and vocal supporter of Tim Marcus Clark. I remember the speech: I was sitting just behind where the member for Hart now sits.

He expressed his vocal support for Tim Marcus Clark and the State Bank, despite clear warning signs that the bank was failing. No matter what we said or did or how we tried to focus the attention of the Government on the stupidity of allowing the bank to continue down the pathway that it was being taken along by Tim Marcus Clark and the way he was hoodwinking the board, in this Leader's opinion he was very competent. He referred to the 'brilliance' of Marcus Clark, and in regard to his appointment in South Australia I quote the Leader of the Opposition—and I remember him saying it—calling it 'a major coup that stunned the Australian banking world'. I can tell members this much: it certainly stunned South Australia, and it will take years for us to recover, and it was not in the framework of the use of that verb in the way in which the Leader intended it to be understood at the time.

We are very lucky to have had an election when we did to enable us to recover and to bring about the recovery that we have now had to institute. What the people of South Australia need to be told from time to time—as the Auditor-General tells them and as I report in general terms to this House now—the medicine had to be taken. Just winning the election for the Liberal Party did not solve the problem. The important work will take years. It will take years to restructure the State's finances in a way that will enable us to encourage prospective investors to come back here, to invest here, to develop enterprises here and thereby to create the jobs here that we need for all our children, ourselves, our brothers, sisters, cousins—indeed, for any South Australians who are still leaving in considerable numbers because they cannot find a future they regard as being as good as they might find elsewhere.

We have a major job ahead of us to patch up the problem created by the ineptitude of the previous Labor Government in the way in which it mismanaged the finances, well detailed by the Auditor-General in his report, and mismanaged the Government agencies over which they had some control, if not total control, and for which they had total responsibility. I do not think that I need say any more. What the Auditor-General has had to say about the Leader of the Opposition and what it therefore implies about the competence of the members of the Opposition who have elected him to the leadership role stands in judgment of their abilities and aptitude. It will be a long time before they find themselves in a position where they can even contemplate returning to this side of the Chamber, to the benches of Government.

I will say no more about the Leader's right to judge the financial capabilities of others: the record speaks for itself.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased that the Minister for Primary Industries is in the Chamber. Earlier today in Question Time he assured us that many species were immune to the brain damaging effects of myxomatosis. He did not mention the member for Ridley. I rise to speak in this debate on the report of the Auditor-General.

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: On a point of order, Sir; reflection on other members of this place can go so far, but there must be a time when decency is shown.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has had experience of being outside the Chamber. If he continues he will get an early minute. The Leader of the Opposition was unwise in the turn of phrase that he used in relation to the member for Ridley, and I suggest that he rephrase his comments and withdraw them so that he can get on with his speech.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Sir. Pigeons apparently are not affected—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair is trying to accommodate the Leader of the Opposition. I request that he now withdraw the comment.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I absolutely withdraw, Sir, and am delighted to do so. I rise to speak in this debate on the report of the Auditor-General. Is it not interesting: a few weeks ago we had the Auditor-General of this State criticise this Government on page after page for a lack of accountability of Executive Government to this Parliament. And where is the Premier? Where is the Treasurer? What extraordinary contempt for the Auditor-General of this State who, we have already been told by the Treasurer, does not understand. Tonight we have one Minister: the Premier does not have the guts to show, and neither does the Treasurer. That is extraordinary contempt for this Parliament and for the Auditor-General, an independent officer of this Parliament, not of the Executive arm of Government. They have not shown tonight.

Tomorrow, I will be writing to the Auditor-General of this State, Mr MacPherson, and I will be asking him to come before committees of this Parliament not to talk about the running of his department, as he does in the Estimates Committees, but to answer questions about, explain and elaborate on his report, because tonight's debate is a farce. The Premier, who told us the day after the Auditor-General's Report that he took on board his criticism, his considerations about transparency, being open and accountable to Parliament, has not bothered to show, and neither has the Treasurer. Who do they wheel out? They wheel out the member for Ridley. What extraordinary contempt of the Auditor-General of this State, his report and his criticisms of this Government.

I will be writing to Ken MacPherson tomorrow, telling him about the contempt that he was shown in this Parliament. I will be telling the Auditor-General that I, as Leader of the Opposition, would like to see him come before parliamentary committees and talk to us and to the Government about what is needed to improve openness, honesty, accountability and transparency in Treasury matters in this State.

I want to congratulate the Auditor-General on the production of a rigorous and detailed report, which raises fundamental and critical issues about the lack of propriety and the incompetence with which this State is being governed. This debate is of critical importance to South Australia, because the Auditor-General's Report has shone a light on the dealings of this Government that it hoped would never be brought into the open. On just one page of this report the Auditor-General repeatedly refers to 'certain inconsistencies', to an 'absence of detailed explanation', to the 'absence of adequate aggregate data', to 'insufficient explanation', to 'inadequate data and analysis' and to 'omissions'. That is on one page alone: page 9 of part A. That report is an indictment of the unaccountable practices of this Government, just as it is an indictment of the unaccountable

practices to this Parliament that the Premier and the Treasurer of this State do not have the decency to attend this debate tonight.

Just as remarkable as the Auditor-General's damning findings has been the reaction of the Liberal Government to those findings and the attempts of the Premier and Treasurer to head off questioning, debate and public scrutiny. Before he was aware of what was actually in the Auditor-General's Report, the Premier told the Estimates Committee that discussion with the Opposition was about to occur. I quote as follows:

... in terms of allowing a one-day discussion on the Auditor-General's Report, we agree there needs now to be special provision for some discussion of the Auditor-General's Report, and the Deputy Premier will be in touch with the Opposition to discuss that matter.

He said so grandly in the House of Assembly on 20 June 1995. He had to say that, because that was the first Estimates Committee in the history of this State when the Opposition came into an estimates committee without the Auditor-General's Report as the basis for its scrutiny. And what the Premier told the Estimates Committee was totally untrue. The Deputy Premier said the same to the Estimates Committee just one day later—again untrue. The Deputy Premier was not in touch with the Opposition. After two letters from the Opposition on this issue, the Treasurer finally responded on 5 October. The result is this debate at 8 o'clock on a Wednesday night, intended, no doubt, to be safe from television cameras and radio microphones. Let us wheel out the member for Ridley: he is a joke. He talks about pigeons, while the Premier is upstairs and while the Treasurer—

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I know it takes one to find one, but I take exception to that remark, because I do not regard myself as a joke and, therefore, do not regard the Leader of the Opposition as a joke. I ask that he withdraw that remark.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Kotz): Order! The point of order is taken. The member for Ridley will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition knows better than to reflect on other members. I suggest that the Leader withdraw.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Madam Acting Speaker, this year I have been referred to by the Premier of the State as 'a squealing little rat'.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I have the right to answer that.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I have already given a ruling. I have asked you to withdraw. The member for Ridley has asked his honourable colleague to withdraw the comment.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is not unparliamentary under the rules, Madam Acting Speaker, if you would like to confer with the Clerk.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I realise that it is not unparliamentary. You are asked to withdraw. It is entirely up to you.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: No, I will not withdraw, because I believe it is an accurate reflection of tonight's debate.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Then proceed with the debate.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. As we know, tonight was designed as a con, to keep the matter out of the way of the cameras. All these things were said before the Estimates Committee, and they were not delivered—just as the Auditor-General's Report has found that the budget was a con and was not delivered. After two letters from the Opposition on this issue, the Treasurer finally responded on 5 October. The result is this debate, as I have

said, at night on Wednesday. The Auditor-General has himself said that Parliament has lacked the opportunity for decent scrutiny of his report. With the change of timing of the budget, his report could not be available to the Estimates Committees and, with that new situation, the opportunity for adequate scrutiny of the report depended more than ever on the goodwill of the Government. It depended more than ever on the Government committing itself to principles of open Government—principles which it does not believe. Let us remember what the Treasurer—who is not here tonight—said on 5AN radio, on 13 September:

Mr Baker says the Brown Government is the most open South Australia has ever had.

Then the Treasurer treated listeners to some of his inimitable prose. I quote him as follows:

In relation to their capacity to question the Government, it's all been there. The debates have been very public. The information's been provided. If [the Opposition is] too lazy to actually do their homework, then it's them that should be condemned.

The Auditor-General disagrees. Moreover, he has pointed out that, given the enormous risks in the Brown Government's policies, there is a greater need than ever before for accountability of Executive Government to Parliament. Just look at what the Auditor-General has said. He has called for parliamentary scrutiny of all significant asset sales, and that euphemism for privatisation, 'outsourcing'. He has criticised the Government's use of the budget papers to make untrue or misleading claims about its financial mismanagement. He has complained about inadequate and one-sided data on the financial position of the State, particularly the Treasurer's repeated failure to provide a comprehensive balance sheet of assets and liabilities. He has pointed out the high cost of the Government's financial policies, and shows that we paid out \$160 million more in interest than we needed to while our schools and hospitals are haemorrhaging.

He has raised concerns about his Government's rush to off balance sheet transactions with the private sector to hide the way it is racking up public liabilities. He has supported the Opposition's and the community's concerns about the levels and unaccountable nature of many of this Government's arrangements for executive remuneration. And, for the second year running, he has criticised the Premier's approach to the outsourcing of public information technology. He makes clear that the Premier's approach maximises risk to the South Australian public, because the Government had not even established the basics about the value of assets in Government ownership and the understanding of in-house costs and service delivery information. The Auditor-General has found serious instances of the failure by senior Ministers and bureaucrats to comply with the standards of accountability set out by this very Parliament and within the rule of law. He has found that Ministers have failed to understand the limits of their authority. He has found that statutory agencies have acted outside what they are lawfully permitted to do. He has found that at least one Minister has failed to comply with statutory obligations.

This is not a Government of accountability; it is not the open Government that we have been told about; it is a Government of secrecy and deceit. In the light of the Auditor-General's Report, I am not surprised that the Treasurer and Premier have reneged on undertakings made earlier to allow the Opposition to have a day put aside for the scrutiny of the Auditor-General's Report. I am not surprised that the Premier and Treasurer have not fronted here tonight: such is their arrogance, their contempt for this Parliament and their

contempt for the Auditor-General to whom I will be writing tomorrow.

Those undertakings, now being so cynically broken, were made, of course, before the Premier or the Treasurer became aware of the contents of this damning report about lack of accountability and extraordinary incompetence. As I have said, this report is a damning indictment, and there is nothing surprising in the fact that a Government that has spent the last 20 months avoiding public scrutiny is now running for cover. At nearly every turn, the Auditor-General has found this Government, and particularly this Treasurer, wanting. I turn to the exposure of our true financial position by the Auditor-General. Remember what the Treasurer said when he brought down the last budget:

We are entering the home straight.

There had been a new dawn following the dark night of debt. Only the Liberals could fix our financial problems. Well, the Auditor-General has laid that claim to rest. His report clearly shows that the fall in debt projected for the period June 1993 to June 1999 is overwhelmingly the result of asset sales and the effect of economic growth and inflation: it is not the result of the supposed superiority of the Liberals as financial managers, and it is not about greater efficiency in the public sector and making do with fewer resources.

Rather, the report indicates precisely what the Labor Government said at the time of the Meeting the Challenge statement on debt reduction and economic development. The Labor Government said that, rather than this Government's slash and burn policies, with a combination of expenditure restraint and with the sale of some State assets, such as the State Bank, and by encouraging economic growth rather than driving the economy into the ground, as the Liberals have done, it could bring our debt down to manageable and sustainable levels. A Labor Government would have achieved this without regressive cuts to schools and hospitals and without selling off the control and management of our water supply. As I have indicated before, Labor has a long-term stepped and strategic approach to debt reduction that allows us to rein in our liabilities without sacrificing economic growth and social justice.

The Auditor-General's Report confirms not only that this Premier and this Treasurer have lowered the standards of disclosure of the affairs of Government to the people and the Parliament but that they have also been shown to be extraordinarily incompetent. Following the Auditor-General's Report, the public of South Australia now have proof of just what the Opposition has been saying for the past year. Before this report, there were doubtless many South Australians who believed the Premier and the Treasurer when they explained the breaking of every single significant election promise with the claim that it was needed to bring our finances under control.

Let us remember the last election. We were told that the State was in financial crisis, that the State was broke, but the Premier, who made those claims hour after hour, day after day, was on a spending spree of promises that he knew he would have to break. Every attempt by this Government to turn back the clock has been sold on that basis. From the cuts to hospitals, to Minister Lucas's strange quest to drive down standards of South Australian education to the national average, to the savage cuts to TAFE, to the cutting of public sector jobs by more than three times the Premier's pre-election promise, to the increase in a raft of taxes and charges that hits the battlers—no single promise of significance has

actually survived the first 21 months of this Liberal Government.

I accept that many of those same battlers believed for a time that their sacrifices were necessary to restore the State's finances, but no-one could believe that today, because the Auditor-General has shown that the Treasurer's management of our debt and liabilities is once again wanting. The Auditor-General makes clear that the net of the effect of asset sales there will be a rise in South Australia's public liabilities in the three years to June 1996 of \$1.085 billion (Part A, page 21, for the benefit of the member for Ridley). Even after the nearly \$2 billion worth of assets sales are considered, the Auditor-General shows that by 30 June 1997 the net public debt will be over \$7.9 billion. Many South Australians will be incredulous at this news. This is the same Liberal Party that promised to reduce debt faster than Labor to \$6 billion by 1997. We all remember that boast. It is the same Liberal Party, and it is just another of its broken promises.

The Auditor-General shows that debt would have fallen by just \$407 million in the six years to June 1997. We should all be sorry for our kids in larger classes with reduced subject options as well as for the teachers and SSOs who have been targeted to go. We should be sorry for the young people who are being excluded from training opportunities because of this Government's cut-backs to TAFE. We should be sorry for the people who need urgent medical attention but cannot get it under this Government and for the medical staff who work in a public hospital system that is in crisis, and the member for Ridley should be sorry for South Australia's battlers who are paying for more basic services such as water and transport.

In the 18 months to June 1995, as a result of decisions taken by this Government and this Treasurer, an extra \$160 million in interest charges has been incurred than would have been the case if there had been no policy change from the stance of the previous Government. This is more than the savings achieved by all the cuts to essential services, hospitals and schools over the same period. When questioned about this on 27 September, the Treasurer was again in denial. Once again, he was at odds with the Auditor-General. He said that the Auditor-General simply did not understand. Furthermore, the Auditor-General shows that, even when adjusted for interest savings from asset sales, the real underlying current expenditure is actually greater in every year of the Brown Liberal Government than it was in 1993-94.

Using 1993-94 as the base year, these outlays rose from a 100 index number to 102.5 in 1994-95, to 103.5 in 1995-96, and by 1998-99, these outlays are projected to be at 101. How can that be after all this Government's massive cuts to schools and hospitals? The answer says a lot about the priorities of this Government. It is because of poor management of our debt with too large a proportion of outlays going to interest, as we have seen. It is because of the large increase in the pay and perks for senior executive staff in the public sector. It is because of the cost blow-outs in the Premier's and Treasurer's own departments, amongst others. Many of the senior executive staff in these departments are members of the old superannuation scheme who will qualify for pensions worth up to two-thirds of their final salary. In such cases, as a result of increases in pay for senior executives brought in by this Government, these people will qualify for retirement incomes sometimes exceeding \$100 000 per annum. This Government has topped the charts for paying expensive consultants while saying that it cannot afford nurses, teachers

and SSOs. Last year, this Government spent \$50 million on consultants.

The Auditor-General points to the growth in our financial liabilities under the Brown Liberal Government. This is just as I pointed out in my budget speech earlier this year. I pointed out that, exclusive of asset sales, the Brown Government's financial policy results in increased financial liabilities. The Treasurer, who is not here tonight, disagreed with that. After all, was not this the Government that would put us back in the black? Yet again, the Auditor-General disagrees with the Treasurer.

The Auditor-General has estimated a growth in financial liabilities exclusive of asset sales of about \$1.1 billion in the three years to June 1996. This is very much as I said on 6 June, which was totally disputed by this Government and by some of the commentators it has in its pockets. The Liberal Government claims great success in bringing down the deficit of the non-commercial sector. The reality, as pointed out in my speech to this House on 6 June, is that this supposed reduction in the non-commercial sector deficit was the result of a massive transfer of funds from a commercial Government enterprise. This from the Premier who as Leader of the Opposition had the temerity to say:

A Liberal Government will stop using ETSA as a branch of the State tax office.

That was the Premier's comment as Leader of the Opposition in response to the 1992 budget. Even the Minister for Primary Industries when he was Leader of the Opposition would not have had the gall to say that. As the Auditor-General said in relation to ETSA:

In the absence of these unusual transfer payments between the two sectors, the estimated non-commercial sector deficit would have been \$214 million rather than \$49 million.

Members opposite disagreed with what I said during the budget debate and were proven wrong by the Auditor-General. This is the Government that said it would not use ETSA as a branch of the tax office. That is exactly what I said and predicted in this House. On 6 June I said that the reduction in outlays is an illusion. Plugging a deficit in the non-commercial sector by creating one in the commercial sector merely transfers a problem from one sector to another and does not solve it. I concur in the Auditor-General's view, because I believe he does understand that the presentation of information on the relationships between the commercial and non-commercial sectors in the budget was quite inadequate.

I refer to the famous outlays graph. We all remember the graph and the cartoons which were wheeled out before the television cameras and which were given to the journalists. The Auditor-General has shown us that this Treasurer is not to be believed. As I said in this place on 6 June, graphs—and one graph in particular—included in budget paper No. 1 were simply not credible. I described them as 'cartoons for the gullible'. The Auditor-General was of the same view. It now transpires that, after repeated requests for information from Treasury on the claimed reduction in non-commercial sector spending, the Auditor-General was met with obfuscation, obstruction and the eventual admission that the presentation of graphs in the budget papers was, indeed, 'cartoons for the gullible'.

The Auditor-General said that he was met with inadequate explanations. Information was found to be not sustainable and the Auditor-General had to undertake persistent and searching inquiries. He had to make no fewer than half a dozen requests for information to get to the bottom of the matter. This is the

Auditor-General of this State. It was revealed that 'the initial derivation of the graph was not based on verifiable data'. It was wheeled out to the journalists and to the business community as an example of this Government's getting its act together.

The Treasurer claimed at one point to have lost the work sheets upon which the graph had supposedly been based. The Treasurer probably filed them in the rubbish bin as soon as the Auditor-General started asking questions. It then transpired that the graph which purported to show how much faster expenditure was falling under this Brown Government compared with the policy of the previous Labor Government was not only not based on any verifiable data whatsoever but also did not take account of increased expenditure by this Government worth at least \$130 million in 1995-96 and did not acknowledge certain savings that were already part of the Labor Government's Meeting the Challenge policy.

I keep mentioning the graph not just because the Auditor-General was not told the truth and not just because the budget papers did not contain the truth but because the Deputy Premier of this State took that graph into the debate that night and held it under his wing. It was obviously drawn up to try to explain his budget to him; but it was a shonky graph and the Auditor-General has found that out. As the Auditor-General categorically stated:

The effect of the material published... was to convey an incorrect view of the matter it represented; that is the actual relationship between the alternatives.

The alternatives were this Government's policy and that of the previous Labor Government. Well might the Auditor-General want to improve training of Treasury officers, but the inescapable conclusion is that the graph was a political concoction by the Treasurer and certain officers of the Treasury who intended deliberately to mislead the South Australian public, the journalists, the Parliament and the people of this State. The Treasurer has politicised the Treasury by getting rid of good officers and putting Party hacks into senior positions so that Party political concerns and partisan advantage predominate in budget presentations. There are now people in Treasury who are prepared to fix the figures to make the Treasurer look good rather than exercise their fundamental statutory responsibilities as officers of the Treasury. In doing so, the Treasurer and his chosen few are compromising the integrity of the Treasury of South Australia, and that, quite frankly, is an outrage.

It is pleasing to see that the Auditor-General, an independent officer of this Parliament, has found that the graph and other materials were dodgy, bodgie, a sham, made up or contained fixed figures. Of course, we should not feel surprised about that. During the so-called 'budget crisis' before the new dawn last year we saw officers of the Treasurer's own staff—instead of wondering about and worrying about the finances of the State—harassing service station attendants to provide bogus information about MPs who might somehow be rorting petrol rationing. The trouble is that they picked me but I do not drive and do not have a car. That is an example of what the Treasurer has done to his own office without credibility.

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, we know which officer it was: the officer who gets her information from the car park of the Unley on Clyde Hotel. That is not restoring accountability to Government: it is political disinformation by this Treasurer and this Government. The Auditor-General has drawn attention to the way this Government has been racking

up off-balance sheet liabilities in an attempt to gain private sector funding for public infrastructure. All well and good, many will say. But, the fact of the matter is that this Government has failed to spend anything like its own capital budget for 1994-95, and the latest budget makes substantial cuts to the forward estimates. The Premier and Treasurer have lauded their Building a Better Future program, aimed at \$300 million of privately-owned infrastructure expenditure, but there are many pitfalls.

It may be attractive to a Treasurer attempting to con people into believing he has solved our financial problems with the wave of a wand but, as the Auditor-General has pointed out, the fact that these liabilities do not appear on the books as debt does not change the fact that 'such transactions carry with them ongoing recurrent obligations of one kind or another in the same way that debt carries ongoing interest obligations'. The reality is that these schemes often do not improve the public balance sheet. They can be more costly to the public sector than direct debt financing by the Government.

The Treasurer has reneged on his promises to construct the Mount Gambier Hospital on grounds of seeking private investment, while the Minister for Infrastructure is planning several water filtration plants using private sector finance. After the Auditor-General's Report it is time for the Treasurer to answer some questions about this type of transaction. So, here are the questions:

What are the costs compared with direct Government financing? What real risks will the private sector financiers actually bear? What happens at the end of the lease period? What are the real costs and benefits to the Government in the use of private finance? How are the economics of these transactions affected by changeable factors, such as taxation arrangements?

We know full well that such arrangements often carry a cost premium for the Government. The Opposition will not allow the people of South Australia to be sold short by slick accounting that attempts to hide the real costs of Government policy from them, but it does not stop there. The Auditor-General was forced to criticise this Treasurer's attempt to use funds intended for interest payments only for some other purposes. Again, the Auditor-General finds the Treasurer's actions wanting. He states:

Such an approach could in my view have brought into question the integrity of the appropriation process and the accountability to Parliament which that process is intended to secure.

It is a pity the Auditor-General cannot see this Chamber tonight. He wants to see the accountability to Parliament which that process is intended to secure, but where is the Treasurer and where is the Premier? I will be writing tomorrow to Mr MacPherson. I will ask him what he believes. I will ask him to give us some guidelines as to how he believes his report next year should be given proper public scrutiny through this Parliament. I want to discover Mr MacPherson's views on how the Government can be made accountable and how the Auditor-General's Report can be subjected to proper debate and scrutiny with the Premier and the Treasurer present, without showing this extraordinary contempt.

I will be asking the Auditor-General himself to consider appearing before the Estimates Committee next year for a full day, so that we, the public, and hopefully the Government can learn first hand about his accountability. Of course, it does not stop here. The question, of course, must be asked: can we have confidence in the ability of the Treasurer to sell assets,

paid for by the people of South Australia, in our best interests? It is to this question that I now turn. The Auditor-General has damned this Government's arrogant overriding of Parliament on the issue of privatisation and outsourcing of public assets.

Like the Opposition, the Auditor-General believes in the urgent need for accountability measures in this area, which he regards 'as the most important issues facing Parliament at this time'. Let us remember that. They are so important that the Premier and Treasurer have not turned up. Like the Opposition, the Auditor-General believes the Parliament has been deprived of information and excluded from having a meaningful say as to whether what the Government plans to do with its assets is actually in our interests. The Auditor-General supports before the event scrutiny of all major cases of privatisation and outsourcing, and so does the Opposition.

The Treasurer's faith, hope and lack of clarity are not enough for the Auditor-General, the Opposition or the people of this State. When the Opposition raised the need for parliamentary scrutiny of the sale of the Pipelines Authority of South Australia, what did the Treasurer say? In February 1995 he said, 'We do not need extra players.' The Auditor-General disagrees once again with the Treasurer. To regard Parliament as a mere player on the issue of major asset sales and outsourcing—and an unnecessary one at that—is totally unacceptable to the Opposition, to the people of the State and obviously to the Auditor-General, yet the Government persists in its arrogant stance.

The privatisation of the management and operations of Adelaide's water and sewerage systems under UK French dominated conglomerates was never mentioned before the election. Day after day the Minister for Infrastructure and the Premier fail to answer the basic questions the public want on the dangerous path the Government is pursuing. There is no legislation before this House. The fundamental question is: why is there no legislation? The public is asking the fundamental question: why can we not see the contract and its details tabled before it is signed and not after? The Minister will not and cannot answer, and has no intention of answering, those questions.

Day after day South Australia's control of its water and sewerage system is being negotiated away by this Government to foreign multinationals. Still, the Minister and his Premier are too scared to bring into Parliament a copy of the contract, or even to answer questions about that contract, or to show us the details before judgment day. Of course, the Premier's statement, following tabling of the Auditor-General's Report, made it clear that no contracts currently being negotiated will be opened up for scrutiny, but the Cabinet will be advised by a group of senior executives to consider future arrangements.

That is cold comfort to the South Australians who will never be asked if they want a foreign company to run and control their water supply; and it is cold comfort to the people who have never been asked if they want to see management of their hospitals privatised. Then, there is the question of the EDS contract. We all remember that famous day, the big slogan about IBM and the big IBM deal signed in Opposition. The deal was concluded; it would be in place within three months. We said it was not true: the Premier said we were lying. He said it would be a great thing for South Australia. The IBM deal was signed with a flourish of an Opposition pen by this Liberal Leader.

Of course, he did not go to court at that stage. Not only does the Auditor-General say that the Government makes

dishonest claims in its budget but we have a Supreme Court judge in this State who regards the Premier as an unreliable witness. The Auditor-General makes it clear that South Australians have every good reason to be worried about the successor to the IBM deal—the EDS contract. Let us look at what he said about the Premier's and Treasurer's handling of the information technology outsourcing deal with EDS. For the second year running he has found it necessary to point out the huge risks in the IT outsourcing policy of the Premier and Treasurer.

This year he said that the contracting out was characterised by a lack of knowledge of in-house costs; a lack of knowledge of areas of likely cost savings expected of the contractor; and a lack of appreciation and knowledge of the assets involved. To quote the Auditor-General:

That firm basis was not a characteristic of this particular contracting out process. This is no way to use public assets; it is to gamble with the assets of South Australians.

South Australians owe a debt of gratitude to this Auditor-General whom the Treasurer says does not understand Government finances. Nor can we see how much is at stake in the mean high risk policies of the Brown Government which have shown how much it has failed the people of South Australia.

The Auditor-General has called for parliamentary scrutiny of all significant privatisation and outsourcing. He has been critical of this Government's casual attitude to the public interest in having a say in and access to information about public assets; he has revealed a litany of unaccountable practices by this Government; he has revealed the falsity of many of the Government's claims to be a competent economic manager; and he has criticised its attempts to use the budget papers to make false and misleading claims. He has also criticised the use of one-sided information on the State's financial position that prevents the public from knowing whether the Government's claims are true or false. The Government is revealed by the Auditor-General as a Government of secrecy, arrogantly refusing to account to the Parliament. What better symbol do we have tonight in the special time that the Premier and Treasurer have made available—not a full day, not questions—when they do not have the guts to front this Parliament? They have contempt for the Parliament and for the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General will soon know about tonight's proceedings.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): We have witnessed an absolutely pathetic performance by the Leader of the Opposition. He is not staying for the debate either; he is walking out, too. The Leader of the Opposition does not have the guts to stay here and listen to counter arguments in rebuttal of what he has said. He is a hopeless Leader in every sense of the word. The Government gave the Opposition the opportunity to debate the Auditor-General's Report. But what happened when the debate started? The Leader of the Opposition was not here. In fact, the debate was close to being chopped because your Leader was not here. Full thanks have to go to the member for Playford who, although not on the speaking order—

Mr ATKINSON: Madam Acting Speaker, I rise to make two points of order. The first is the reference by the member for Goyder to us as 'your', and the second is that he is addressing the Opposition, not the Chair.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Kotz): Because of the interjections which were coming from both sides of the Chamber, I was unable clearly to hear what the member for Goyder was saying, so I cannot rule on part of that point of

order. However, all members should understand that to reflect on any other member is not proper, and not to use the proper title is also incorrect. The member for Goyder.

Mr MEIER: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. It was pathetic that the Leader of the Opposition could not be here for the start of the debate, and members opposite should thank the member for Playford for having the courage to stand up and start the debate.

What did we find when the Leader finally arrived and had an opportunity to make a contribution? He made a last desperate attempt to rally his troops—the Opposition—and he failed. He stooped to attacking Government back-benchers. In fact, I should not be surprised if it were the last night that we will see him stand here as Leader of the Opposition. One only had to look at members of the Opposition during the Leader's speech to see the embarrassment on their faces. They did not know which way to look because they were embarrassed at the way he was tackling, or, more correctly, not tackling, the subject. They were ashamed of his performance. I think it is now only a matter of time, because there is no doubt that the Leader has lost control of the various factions in the Labor Party. No previous Leader has ever lost control. Former Premiers Arnold, Bannon, Corcoran and Dunstan had control of the factions, but this Leader has lost control. Time does not permit me to go into the faction distractions from which the Labor Party is suffering, but there is no doubt that the Opposition is in total turmoil, thanks in no small part to its Leader.

It was incredible that when the Minister was speaking, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition could resort only to continual interjections: they did not like what the Government had to say on this issue. The Leader kept saying, 'Where is the Treasurer? Where is the Premier?'

Mr Clarke: Where are they?

Mr ATKINSON: Madam Acting Speaker, I again rise on a point of order. Is it a requirement of Standing Orders and parliamentary tradition that during a sitting of Parliament a Minister be on the bench at all times, or is it merely a convention?

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Goyder.

Mr MEIER: We had the Opposition asking, 'Where is the Premier? Where is the Treasurer?' I do not know how long the Leader has been around, but if my memory serves me correctly he was a Minister in the former Labor Government, so surely he knew that in debate after debate the Premier or Treasurer did not have to be present if other Ministers were here representing them.

The Opposition has not even thanked the Government for giving it the opportunity to debate the Auditor-General's Report. I know what I shall be suggesting to my Party: that, as the Opposition has disregarded and treated with contempt the opportunity to debate the Auditor-General's Report, we must seriously question whether we will ever give it the opportunity again.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MEIER: The Leader has not learnt a thing from the time when he was a Minister. It is no wonder that he did not get anywhere as a Minister and that the Government of which he was a Minister was thrown out. Tonight, the Leader got so far into the swill it is unlikely that he will surface again. In my opinion, he is finished as a Leader. I am sorry to say that, but it was obvious from his performance tonight.

The Leader's contribution tonight reached a new low in his political career, and it was obvious from the looks on the faces of Opposition members. All I can say is, 'Good luck to the Leader aspirants', whether it be the member for Playford, who has left us for a while, the member for Hart, the member for Taylor or the member for Elizabeth. Whoever it is, I say, 'Go for it now, because you will have the numbers after tonight's performance, and take the embarrassment away from your Party.'

The garbage put forward by the Leader during the debate is not worth responding to, but I should like to respond to one area on which he touched. He said, 'Day after day the Minister for Infrastructure has failed to answer questions.' What a hopeless statement! Only yesterday we had 37 questions answered by the Minister for Infrastructure. If Opposition members listened, time after time the Minister said, 'I have answered this question *ad infinitum*.' In other words, tens, if not hundreds, of questions have been answered on this particular subject. The Leader is becoming the super fabricator. He is reaching new heights of fabrication because he is able to tackle several issues in one fabrication. But what a dismal performance the Leader's contribution was. It brought a new low to debate. All I can say to Opposition members is, 'Replace your Leader before none of you is left.'

Mr FOLEY (Hart): That is a difficult act to follow, having just been savaged by the member for Goyder in one of his typically aggressive speeches. I rise to debate the report of the Auditor-General. As has been mentioned tonight, the Government has been very difficult with the time allocated for us to debate the Auditor-General's Report. No provision has been made to question the Auditor-General or heads of agencies with the benefit of having the Auditor-General's Report before us. For a Government that talks about being open and accountable, it could not have had this debate at a later period of the parliamentary sitting than tonight. It has tucked it right out of the way and well away from heads of agencies.

What does the Auditor-General's Report say about this Government and, more specifically, what does it say about the Treasurer and the Premier of this State? It is a critical report that makes a number of criticisms of the handling of the State's accounts. Let us look at what the report says. The Auditor-General has called for parliamentary scrutiny of all significant asset sales and—that euphemism for asset sales—outsourcing. He has said that there is no mechanism for proper accountability of outsourcing and privatisation in this State. He further states that no longer is the committee structure of the Parliament operating as it was intended. No longer does the Economic and Finance Committee of the Parliament have the ability to scrutinise these areas of Government expenditure.

That is an absolute indictment on this Government. It is bold, it is stark and it is in this report. It is saying that this Government has deliberately manipulated the committees of this Parliament to ensure that they can no longer properly scrutinise the accounts of the State. The Auditor-General also criticised the Government's use of the budget papers to make untrue or misleading claims about its financial management. He goes on to complain about inadequate and one-sided data on the financial position of the State, particularly the Treasurer's repeated failure to provide a comprehensive balance sheet of assets and liabilities.

The Auditor-General has pointed out the high cost of the Government's financial policies and shows that we paid at

least \$160 million more in interest than we needed to while our schools and hospitals are haemorrhaging. He said that, because this Treasurer and his Treasury are incapable of reading the interest rate market, they cost this State a minimum of \$160 million and, quite probably, a figure as high as half a billion dollars—simply because this Treasurer got it wrong. And what did the Premier say in addressing that statement? The Premier said that, with hindsight, in respect of the interest rate policy of this Government, this strategy may have resulted in a slightly higher cost of funds. With hindsight! That defence was not accepted from John Bannon in a previous Parliament, yet this Minister trots out here and tries to use the defence of hindsight, trying to use the defence—

The SPEAKER: Order! First, there is far too much noise. The member for Mitchell has a point of order.

Mr CAUDELL: During my speech the member for Hart raised a point of order about addressing comments through the Chair and you, Sir, warned me about it. I ask that you also warn the member for Hart about the same matter.

The SPEAKER: All members are aware that the appropriate course of action is to address their comments through the Chair, and I suggest that all members follow that course of action.

Mr FOLEY: This State paid a minimum of \$160 million more, and potentially \$450 million more, on the cost of funds because the Treasurer and his officers got it wrong, and the defence that the Premier quotes in this Parliament is the defence of the value of hindsight. That defence did not work with John Bannon, nor should it have. It should not and must not work for this Premier and this Treasurer. They should be judged by the criteria they put down for the former Government, and they fail on that measure.

The other defence of this Government is to blame the Auditor-General and to say that the Auditor-General got it wrong. This Government cannot stand up and face the music and cannot admit that it gets things wrong: it has to blame independent authorities in the same way that it says that the Bureau of Statistics gets it wrong. When growth figures show zero growth, the bureau is wrong! When the Centre for Economic Studies dares to criticise the outsourcing of information technology, the Centre for Economic Studies gets it wrong! It is about time this Treasurer and this Premier owned up to the fact that they are getting many things wrong and that they, as have former leaders of this State, have to accept responsibility for their actions and their mistakes.

The Auditor-General also raises concerns about this Government's rush to off balance sheet transactions with the private sector to hide away its racking up of public liabilities. The Auditor-General supports the Opposition's and community's concerns about the level of accountability of many of this Government's arrangements for executive remuneration. Again, we have seen salaries throughout the public sector increase at an alarming rate from a Government that used to make great mileage when in opposition about any salary paid to anybody in or attached to the former Government. However, it is a different story when they are the ones signing off on it and they are the ones making the decision about what people should be paid within Government. That does not matter. As the shadow Treasurer pointed out, we saw a pay-out figure approaching \$500 000 for the former CEO of the Lotteries Commission.

For the second year running, the Auditor-General has criticised the Premier's approach to the outsourcing of information technology. He makes clear that the Premier's

approach maximises risk to the South Australian public because the Government has not established the basics on the value of assets in Government ownership, an understanding of in-house costs and service delivery information. The information technology criticisms contained in this report are a damning indictment on the Premier, and the Auditor-General talks about what needs to be done to get the contracts right. He states:

A satisfactory outcome in respect of cost benefits and service delivery is generally more readily achieved if the client negotiates from an early established position of firm knowledge regarding critical issues such as in-house costs, asset identification evaluation and detailed service delivery requirements.

The Auditor-General is saying that, if we are going to outsource all the computer functions of Government, we had better get some fundamental issues right before issuing tender documents; namely, what is it that we are putting out to tender and what is the value of the work we are putting out to tender. He goes on to say that that firm basis was not a characteristic of this contracting-out process.

Here in the Auditor-General's Report he is saying that the Premier has made an absolute sham of the whole process of outsourcing information technology in this State—the single largest contract of its type of any Government anywhere in the world. The Auditor-General has been quite scathing in his criticism and has pointed out deficiencies in the way that the Premier has addressed that issue and made very clear, if you read between the lines, that the risk factors to this State are quite significant and that the Premier and his team have already made fundamental errors in their process. Unless they can quickly make amends for their wrong direction, lack of detail and homework, this State could be faced with a major multi-million dollar disaster in the years ahead, simply because this Premier did not get it right.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The member for Hartley can moan and groan as much as he likes. I suggest that he read the report and take on board what the Auditor-General is saying about the exposure and risk potential of the outsourcing of the IT industry in this State—not because it is necessarily the wrong thing to do but because the Premier got the process wrong. That is what he says: 'The Premier got the process wrong.' I do not want to have to come back here in four or five years and have to point out—

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: On that side. I'll have to fix up the problem. Exactly! I am trying to save myself a hassle in the future by encouraging the Premier to get this right so that I, as Minister, will not be responsible for having to fix it up. The most damning issue in this report is the fact that the Premier and the Government are not giving this Parliament the appropriate opportunity to scrutinise the accounts of this State. We have an Estimates Committee process which is only partly functioning and which is really just a shadow of what it was before, because we do not have the benefit of the Auditor-General's Report.

The Auditor-General said that the Economic and Finance Committee of this Parliament no longer functions as it was intended and is no longer able to scrutinise properly the accounts of this State, as was intended. He goes on to make the point that there is no effective monitoring process in this Parliament for the large number of outsourcing contracts into which this Government is very quickly entering, be it the \$2 billion water contract, the half a billion dollar IT contract, the hundreds of millions of dollars worth of contracts, the

hospital, the transport contracts or whatever. This Government is rapidly moving into substantially outsourcing functions of Government, and the Auditor-General is saying that the Parliament has no mechanism capable of scrutinising those contracts.

Looking back at the State Bank, members opposite were forever saying that the Parliament was not able to scrutinise the State Bank of this State. What hypocrites you have become! When the arguments and the debate suited you a few years ago, you were quite happy to trot out those lines but, now that you are in Government, with the ability to put those structures in place, you are abusing the processes of Parliament. You are thumbing your nose at the processes of Parliament, and you are simply saying, 'We will not open the books of this State to this Parliament; you'd just better trust us.' Quite frankly, that does not fill me with a great deal of confidence.

The Auditor-General's Report is a good and detailed document. Over the years, I have read many Auditor-General's Reports. This is the most scathing Auditor-General's Report on the accounts of a Government—not of a bank—that this Parliament has seen. You can joke about it; you can laugh about it; you can make mock humour. However, it will come back to haunt you. If in 12 months you have not addressed the issues contained within this report, you will stand condemned. I challenge members opposite: if the backbench in this State Parliament wants to have a chance of going to the next election with some credibility on the financial front, you had best put pressure on your Treasurer to get the accountability right.

It is extraordinary to have an Auditor-General's Report as critical as this, pointing out so many errors of accounting procedure within Government, making so many warnings about the risks associated with many of the things you are doing, 18 months into government. If you backbenchers want to just sit back and allow your Executive Arm of Government to trot along thinking they are getting it right and not heeding the advice of this document, then you do so at your own peril. This is an extremely damning indictment on this Government's performance that, after 18 months of Government, your financial and economic credibility has been severely undermined. Whether or not you can recover is in your hands. But I tell you now: you will have an Opposition that will put maximum pressure on you to ensure that this document becomes the benchmark and, in 12 months you had better have heeded the warnings of the Auditor-General or it may well be the last 12 months you spend in this Parliament.

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Tonight we have heard some fabrications. We have heard from the ultimate historians who have actually rewritten the Auditor-General's Report. The Leader of the Opposition stood and literally rewrote the Auditor-General's Report. I have never seen anything like it. By the time he finished his speech, I thought I was reading a different document. I thought that we were listening to a rendition of *Alice in Wonderland*. The members for Playford and Hart rewrote the document. Some long bows have been drawn tonight, but none so long as that by the member for Playford about the changing of the time of the bringing down of the budget. If my memory serves me correctly, he said that we did this to ensure that the Auditor-General's Report was not available for public scrutiny. That is why we brought down the budget at the end of the financial year.

Irrespective of the fact that every other Government in Australia is bringing down its budget at the end of the

financial year, rather than in August and September when we were well into the first quarter of the new financial year, we changed the system to fit the proper accounting practices. But the member for Playford decided to draw the long bow and say that we did that to try to hide something. We heard from the Leader of the Opposition, one of the greatest fabricators, one of the greatest tellers of untruths in this Parliament that I have ever seen. He can stand up here and try consistently to tell everyone that black is white. I have never seen anything like it. I thought the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was bad at it, but no way in the world. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader is out of order.

Mr CAUDELL: —has nothing on the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition will talk underwater, telling people that black is white.

Members interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: We understand they've got problems, too. I have never seen a fabricator like the Leader of the Opposition. He used every word from 'sham', 'deceit', to the suggestion of having lackeys in the Treasury and of having all types of people preparing reports. I have never seen anything like it. Obviously, he was playing to an audience. Tonight, the people who were behind the cricket team that was behind the Leader of the Opposition were obviously there to make up their opinion. Where are they going? From the Centre Left to the Left, the Centre Left to the Right, the Right to the Far Left, the Far Left to the Looney Left. They were all there tonight to try to make up their mind. But I am told on good authority that no-one wanted the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Right does not want him, the Left does not want him, and the Left of the Left does not want him. Unfortunately, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been left out in the cold. The member for Playford will be moving to the Right, so that that just shores up the bets. He knows that he will be leapfrogged in the run towards the position for Leader of the Labor Party. No-one wants the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Even the fairies at the bottom of the garden in the other place, the Democrats, do not want the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, because he does not do as good a job of fabrication as does the Leader of the Opposition and those other fairies at the bottom of the garden.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: I am not being sexist: I am definitely being a realist, because we have seen tonight the way in which the Leader of the Opposition has rewritten history by his statements. Obviously, he was making a play for the factions. There is a big vote coming up on 14 October.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: Well, the Leader of the Opposition has a very good record regarding preselections. We need look only at the electorate of Lee where he put his bib in. Against his best advice, they trotted out again a has-been, Michael Wright, who in previous elections had lost, but we know that against the might of the member for Lee—

Mr CLARKE: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I raise the issue of relevance. I thought we were debating the Auditor-General's Report, although I am quite happy to have a debate on the factions within the Liberal Party at some time.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If the Chair were to strictly require members to comply with that rule, very few speeches

would be made in the Parliament. I suggest to the member for Mitchell that he has strayed somewhat off the mark and he should debate the motion before the Chair. For the benefit of all members, I draw to their attention that the motion is that the report of the Auditor-General be noted. I therefore call the member for Mitchell.

Mr CAUDELL: I appreciate your comments, Mr Speaker. I was going to drag my comments back to the debate; I would have eventually got around to that. However, I have limited time, so I will come directly to the point. The Auditor-General has not been critical of the Government in regard to borrowings: rather, he has made a comparison with regard to short versus long borrowings. It is not a matter of criticism, as the Opposition has been trying to paint, but more a comparison. It is most important that when we read this document we understand what the Auditor-General was doing in making these comparisons.

Ms White interjecting:

Mr CAUDELL: I will continue when the member for Taylor is finished. It is obvious to the Government that the Opposition does not understand that, when the debt is high—the debt that the Opposition left us after the last election—it is most important that you shore up your borrowings to ensure that you have consistent repayments so that you know what sort of budgeting you are faced with. You must ensure that everything is correct. There are problems associated with having that high level of debt. There are enormous problems with regard to borrowing short. Most people do not understand what short borrowings are. Short borrowings relate to—

Ms White interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the member for Taylor that, as her conduct in this House has been exemplary to this stage, she not spoil her good record. I understand that the member for Hart sits in front of her and that he does not always set a good example. The member for Mitchell.

Mr CAUDELL: It must be remembered that the previous Government did create this debt and that in doing so it undertook some creative accounting with regard to its borrowings. It used bankcard to borrow money to pay off the interest, and it did some very creative accounting which made the Kemlahni affair look like kindergarten stuff. It borrowed on the short, and it borrowed on a falling market but, basically, it must be understood that no other Government in the whole of Australia had a portfolio such as the previous Government had in relation to its borrowing short.

When the Government came into power after December 1993 and decisions had to be made, interest rates at that stage appeared to be steady. However, at present we still have a Federal Labor Government that seems to be really keen on manipulating the Reserve Bank and the interest rates associated with that bank. We currently are in the run-up to a Federal election, and we have the promise of the Reserve Bank possibly reducing interest rates by up to 1 per cent in the next few months. However, as a result of that manipulation of the market, interest rates and inflation are likely to rise. So, the net effect is that we could be facing a rising market in relation to interest rates.

We are about to face a volatile market so, if we borrow short, in relation to what the Auditor-General said in making his comparison on the 90 to 180 day situation, we open ourselves to a volatile market situation and penalties. A State that is faced with such a very high debt as this State cannot afford to have the uncertainties associated with budgeting for short-term borrowings. It is most important that a State which is indebted in the way this State is indebted and which has an

economy that has only just moved out of intensive care into a critical care situation should borrow long and should have stable rates for stable budgeting for stable expenditure forecasts. Without this consistency in the marketplace, we would be faced with enormous problems. I refer members to the Auditor-General's Report of 1993, in which he said:

Given the high level of net debt that exists in this State, it is clear that the State is benefiting from the fact that interest rates are the lowest for two decades. Importantly, however, the State is also sensitive to unfavourable movements in interest rates.

The Auditor-General, following the previous Government's involvement in borrowing short, said that 'the State is also sensitive to unfavourable movements in interest rates'. The Auditor-General went on to say in his 1993 report:

While there are benefits from this position, there are also risks to be monitored and managed. For example, a high reliance on short-term debt could cause difficulties when raising new borrowings concurrently with rolling over existing debt especially when there are disruptions in the market or market confidence. Short-term interest rates are also subject to greater volatility, which can cause budgetary problems for highly indebted borrowers.

That is what we are: a highly indebted borrower. If we followed the Leader of the Opposition's advice and borrowed short and gambled on bankcard as his Party did, there is every chance that we would more than double our debt and end up in a financial mire. We would have businesses leaving this State, because no-one would want to stay in a State which had the high level of debt that we had when we came to government. Every 1 per cent increase in interest rates reflects an extra \$85 million in interest costs in the budget of this State, so it is most important that we in South Australia, because of our previously high indebtedness, have stable long-term borrowings to ensure that we have known interest costs, known indebtedness and known costs of our operations.

It is also important to remember that the Treasurer, contrary to what the member for Hart and what the Leader of the Opposition have said, has not been critical of the Auditor-General. To the contrary, the Treasurer said that there has been a comparison by the Auditor-General of our borrowings over the past 18 months in respect of the situation if we had borrowed on a short-term market. However, it is only at the end of the loan term, when the volatility of the markets both up and down has concluded, that one can make a comparison as to whether the financial management of the debt of this State has been worthwhile. It must also be understood that the previous Government had no expertise and showed itself to be a very poor manager of the financial situation of this State. Contrary to what has been said by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hart, no money has been lost in this State. This Government has not punted taxpayers' funds on the open market. We have not played the market with regards to taxpayers' funds: we have followed a sensible economic management process.

The market has recognised the process that the Government has followed and has supported this Government's debt management strategy. This is endorsed by credit agencies, which have removed the negative watch associated with this State's borrowings, and this is reflected in the reduction of premiums applicable to interest costs. It is important to note that in his 1995 report the Auditor-General emphasised that his analysis was not a criticism of Government policy. He stated that his analysis has the benefit of assessing performance with after the event assessment, a benefit that is, of course, not available to decision makers who are faced with imperfect knowledge of the future. His report further states:

... it is of importance to emphasise that the following is indicative of the possibilities and that it would be wrong to imply that this was presented as a criticism.

I can understand that the member for Taylor has a problem understanding economics. I can understand why she is more at home playing with meccano sets. When it comes to economics and finance, she is a little bit adrift. The member for Taylor is okay at buying meccano sets and getting a spanner out but, when it comes to actually managing the debt to make sure that you have enough money to buy your meccano set, the member for Taylor is amiss.

The Leader of the Opposition claimed that the Treasurer fabricated information, used lackeys to falsify information and submitted dishonest information. He said that those statements had been made by the Auditor-General. I find those claims by the Leader of the Opposition to be devious, unacceptable and typical of the snide character that he has come to represent in this House.

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I ask the member for Mitchell to withdraw those comments. If a throw away line of 'a mongrel' earns three day's suspension, I think that 'a snide character' warrants a week or so.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): I do not accept the point of order. I inform the member for Mitchell that, while his comments are not unparliamentary, they do not do anything for the standing of this House.

Mr CAUDELL: The fabrications of the Leader of the Opposition were totally unacceptable and his statements should not be accepted. During his speech the Leader of the Opposition had a stand up argument with the Acting Speaker in relation to his comments. It is rather hilarious that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition should stand up and say that my comments about the Leader of the Opposition, which are totally true, are a slur on this House. The Leader of the Opposition said that the Treasurer had fabricated information, used lackeys to falsify information and had submitted dishonest information. He said this about Treasury people and I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to make those statements in relation to those Treasury officials on the steps of Parliament House. I can assure members that, if he were to do it, our State debt problems would be over tomorrow.

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

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Health): I move:

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

Motion carried.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): You really know when the Government is in strife: it wheels out the big guns on the Auditor-General's Report to date. I refer to the members for Ridley, Goyder and Mawson: Larry, Curly and Moe. They are the heavy hitters from the Government coming out to defend this Government.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I understand that Standing Orders provide that members should be addressed either by their name or by the electorate which they represent. I take great offence to being called a stooge when it is the Labor Party—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I accept the point of order. I remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of the Standing Orders.

Mr CLARKE: I am pleased that the member for Mawson recognised his nickname, being one of those three. What this all boils down to—

Mr BROKENSHERE: I rise on another point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I request that you deliberate on that comment given the matter I raised regarding Standing Orders. The member for Ross Smith has turned the issue immediately back and thrown accusations against members on this side again. I take serious offence at that sort of inference.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I accept the point of order. I remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of the Standing Orders and ask him to accept the ruling and continue.

Mr CLARKE: The point is that the Government, as has been made abundantly clear already by the Leader of the Opposition and by other speakers on our side of the House, treats this whole exercise with the highest degree of contempt. The Minister for Health is in the Chamber as the duty Minister sitting here, but for a long period of time during tonight's debate there was not one duty Minister on the front bench. The Government could not even rustle one out of 10 Ministers to be present during this debate.

When I, as the leader of Opposition business, sought to negotiate with the Deputy Premier about how we would proceed with and handle the Auditor-General's Report, the simple fact is that, contrary to what the Deputy Premier and the Premier promised during the Estimate Committees—that the Deputy Premier would liaise with the Opposition as to how we would handle this matter—no such approach was made to the Opposition by the Deputy Premier or any member of the Government. It required a letter from me as Deputy Leader of the Opposition to the Deputy Premier to commence those negotiations on or about 27 September—or just prior to that. I received a phone call from the Deputy Premier, who said that it would be Wednesday night, 11 October, after 7.30 p.m. and that it would be in the form of a debate. He said, 'You probably won't like it, but that's tough; that's how it is': that was the level of consultation we had from the Deputy Premier.

On behalf of the Opposition I then said, 'We don't agree with that. We believe we should have more time.' In particular, we should have time to question the Ministers, as we do in the Estimates Committees, where members of Parliament can ask three questions with supplementary questions. That is the only way one can probe for the truth when one is dealing with a document the size of the Auditor-General's Report. All politics aside, everyone in this House knows that that is the way it should have been done if we were dinkum on the issue of accountability.

That is the way it should have been done if we were serious about scrutinising the actions of Government departments, the way they are administered and how they respond to criticisms or praise, as the case may be, in the Auditor-General's Report. The Deputy Premier wrote back and said, 'No way, Jose'; that was not on at all; it was not negotiable. The Deputy Premier told me, 'We have this huge legislative program we must get through by Christmas. We cannot afford more than three hours between 7.30 and whatever time it takes you to finish on Wednesday 11 October.'

I sat in this House the week before last and this week, and I am still waiting for this raft of legislation to be tabled so that we can deal with it this side of Christmas. Presumably the Government does have a legislative program. I do not know what it is, but not too many Bills have been tabled this week for debate next week. Where is this raft of legislation? Where

is this legislation the Government must have passed this session? It is not here yet. There was plenty of time today to accommodate a full day's debate and a full Question Time.

Like a fool, I actually believed the Deputy Premier when he said the Government had a raft of legislation and that it could not allocate any more than three hours to this debate. By another letter, I said, 'Mr Deputy Premier, if three hours is all the time the Government can spare for the debate on the Auditor-General's Report, let us not have a gun-flapping exercise, which means nothing.' As we can see, the Government is rostering duty Ministers. Ministers are rollicking around the decks or contemplating their navels while sitting on the front bench with, at best, the members for Ridley, Goyder and Mawson making some sort of contribution to this exercise on the part of the Government.

It is purely a gun-flapping exercise, because we cannot question Ministers in an Estimates Committee style format with supplementary questioning, where we are able to ask probing questions about Government departments and their administrations. On behalf of the Opposition I asked for a three-hour Question Time, that is, 30 questions being guaranteed to the Opposition. It is the same format as that to which the Government agreed at the time of the last election. The Government agreed that the Opposition would be granted a minimum of 10 questions in Question Time, and that is usually reached each hour. That is a minimum of 30 questions.

Quite frankly, I would have thought that is not such a bad proposition. All Ministers would be sitting on the front bench. I do not think it would have been too much of an imposition, given that we are dealing with the Auditor-General's Report, which was not available to us or any other member of Parliament when the budget was handed down. That is not an unreasonable proposition, I would have thought, if the Government was truly committed to accountability and wanting to be accountable and transparent. Of course, we have become used to this Government's sheer arrogance. Speaking of arrogance, I note that the member for Unley has entered the Chamber to entertain us.

I also draw the attention of members to the fact that we have a problem with the Premier because he literally finds it impossible to deal with the truth. Notwithstanding—

Mr BROKENSHERE: I rise on a point of order. I believe the Deputy Leader said that the Premier misrepresents the truth. I believe that is not parliamentary and he should be asked to withdraw that comment.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not accept the point of order. It is not unparliamentary, although it is not what should be coming from debate in this House. There is a point of order. The Minister.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: It is my recollection that during the contribution of the member for Mitchell the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party took at least one point of order on the matter of relevance. I believe his remarks are not relevant to the Auditor-General's Report and I would ask you, Sir, to rule accordingly.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I was here when the point of order was taken during the member for Mitchell's contribution. I would ask the Deputy Leader to bring the boat back into the middle of the river, so to speak.

Mr CLARKE: These are very important threads I am pulling together because they deal with the credibility of this Government and its head of Government. If one goes into a witness box in a court of law, swears on the Bible to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and then has

a Supreme Court judge say that he unhesitatingly prefers the evidence of someone else—

Mr ASHENDEN: I rise on a point of order. I support the Minister who drew attention to the fact that the remarks of the Deputy Leader at the moment have absolutely nothing to do with the debate before the House.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I accept the point of order, and I would ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to return to the motion under debate.

Mr CLARKE: Following my line of reasoning about the Premier's problems with the truth, I want to deal with one of the papers tabled at the time of the Auditor-General's Report, namely, the report of the Commissioner for Public Employment. It reminded me of an answer given by the Premier yesterday about the number of young people employed by the State Government. He made great play yesterday in Question Time of the fact that in 1992-93 only 370 young people were employed as trainees compared with over 1 000 people at the present time.

The Premier is again having difficulty comprehending the truth on these issues. The fact of the matter is that these traineeships are almost exclusively funded by the Commonwealth Government and in 1992-93, as was pointed out in the report of the Commissioner for Public Employment—

Mr ASHENDEN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. The honourable member is referring not to the Auditor-General's Report but to another report. I ask that he be required to address the debate.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I believe the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was coming around to the point of the debate, but I would ask that I not have to deal with a point of order on the same matter.

Mr CLARKE: I understand the member for Wright's embarrassment. The Auditor-General's Report refers to staffing numbers within the Public Service; it also refers to the number of trainees, and the like, who are employed. With respect to the Auditor-General's Report and those figures and, in particular, the Premier's flippant attitude to the truth in his answers, the fact of the matter is that, in 1992-93, 370 was the total number of young people who could be engaged under the Commonwealth scheme at that time. The scheme involved a combination of job skills and traineeships. I was involved, not so much with the State Government in that area but in the private sector, establishing job skills and the like.

The number of people one could hire in the Public Service under these traineeships depended overwhelmingly on how much money one received from the Commonwealth Government, because this State Liberal Government does not on its own volition employ any young people: unless young people are paid for by the Commonwealth Government this Government will not employ them whatsoever.

Another point on the Auditor-General's Report relates to the level of employment within the Public Service. There is a significant bulge in the 35 to 44 years of age bracket in the Public Service. A number of people in that middle age bracket will work their way through the system, and insufficient numbers are being brought in during their early years of starting a career in the Public Service who will be able to acquire the skills and experience necessary for the maintenance of an effective Public Service.

I also note from the Auditor-General's Report that there has been an increasing tendency by this Government to decrease the number of permanent full-time employees and a corresponding increase in the number of part-time or temporary employees on contract. That is partly answered by

the fact that the Government says it needs greater flexibility in its work force composition and, hence, it wants more people on contract as against permanent employment. That is a convenient excuse and in some instances it may be justified. However, full-time employment in the South Australian Public Service is being constantly eroded in favour of temporary employment because the Government believes that it can give people the flick at the end of their one-year or two-year employment contract and it has no ongoing responsibility.

Mr LEWIS: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The subject of debate by the Deputy Leader is not canvassed anywhere by the Auditor-General in his report, so far as I am aware. Debate about the age of public servants has nothing to do with the accountability of the Government or the conduct of finances within its agencies.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not accept the point of order. If we took that line, no-one would be speaking. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As always, with the wisdom of Solomon, we respect your rulings. The point I was making was that if public servants generally at an increasing rate feel no loyalty towards their employer because they do not know whether they will be employed beyond the end of their one-year or two-year contract, they have to start looking elsewhere for employment. They cannot secure mortgages or other long-term loans on the basis that they are employed on a 12-month contract. Indeed, Liberal members know only too well that on that basis we will have a decreasing pool of talented people prepared to commit themselves to the Public Service.

Not so long ago a job in the Public Service might not have been the highest paid, but it was not the worst paid, and people were prepared to put up with those conditions because they had job security and a reasonable superannuation scheme. Now they do not have the job security they once enjoyed, they are by no means well paid compared with many in the private sector, particularly for certain specialised skills and experienced managers—for example, the Police Force, as you know only too well, Sir—and they have a new superannuation scheme which even the broken-down corner deli at the end of the street has to provide for its employees. Therefore, it becomes less and less attractive for the right type of person to be engaged in our Public Service. That will be to the long-term detriment of this State in terms of the quality of people we can attract to work in the Treasury, the police, education and the whole gamut of public services. If we do not address those issues—and the Auditor-General in part does address them, as well as the accompanying reports from the Commissioner for Public Employment—we shall be doing a grave disservice to the long-term future of this State.

In response to the answer by the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education to a dorothy dix question about comments made by Mr Murdoch yesterday relating to the high levels of youth unemployment in Australia, and also in this State, I simply ask: what has Mr Murdoch done in this State or in other States about engaging young people under the Commonwealth's training schemes and Working Nation programs that it has had for the past couple of years? What has Mr Murdoch done for the country of his origin with respect to—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I believe it is outside Standing Orders to refer to a previous debate. The Deputy Leader is obviously referring

to the debate in another context which took place earlier in this Chamber. I believe it is therefore irrelevant and should be ruled out of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not accept the point of order. The member for Mawson.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): It has been interesting to sit in the Chamber and in our offices and listen to the rubbish put forward by the Opposition. Let us put a few things back into context. For a start, let us look at the facilities that the Government has given to the Opposition since it came to office compared with what the former Government provided to us when we were in Opposition. Let us also look at what we have done with regard to accountability, giving the Opposition a minimum of 10 questions a day, and the fact that it struggles to get those 10 questions up. Then let us consider why there were not opportunities to spend more time to debate seriously the Auditor-General's Report.

The fact is that the Opposition has struggled to put forward a reasonable debate on the Address in Reply, let alone having the time to give us a reasonable debate on the Auditor-General's Report. That was clearly shown by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who spent 12 or 13 minutes talking about matters which were irrelevant to the debate and then criticised the fact that the Opposition had no spare time.

It is unfortunate, but I guess to be expected, that the Opposition failed to talk about the plethora of positive approvals in the report. There are so many ticks in favour of this Government that I do not have the time in 20 minutes to list those positives. However, I suggest to any members of the public who want to look at the matter of accountability and the way the Government has handled the affairs of this State on their behalf in the past 12 months to get a copy of the Auditor-General's Report or, indeed, to call into my office where they will be pleased to see by and large what the Auditor-General has said. They will see it in its true context, not in the way misrepresented by the Opposition.

The Opposition failed to talk about the most important ingredients of accountability and debt reduction. Debt reduction is the key to fixing this whole situation when it comes to getting South Australia going again. Looking at the report, one will see a big tick for the way that the Government is going about its business. Of course, we expected the Opposition to try to run this line, because it has to try to keep out of the papers the facts about the disarray in which it finds itself. Indeed, one has to ask whether after the weekend there will be a South Australian branch of the Australian Labor Party.

Mr CLARKE: Mr Acting Speaker, I ask you to rule on the issue of relevance.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I remind the member for Mawson that the motion is that the House notes the Auditor-General's Report. Again, I would ask him to steer back to that subject. The member for Mawson.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I am talking about things like business acumen, the ability to get a team together to govern this State, the ability to have accountability and the ability to be able to manage. I am using the analogy that this Government clearly has that ability—as supported by the overall thrust of the Auditor-General's Report—as against the Opposition, which does not even have the ability to manage the factional disputes within its Party. You have only to look at people like Michael Wright, who will probably go down

in history as one person who clearly pulled apart the Labor Party.

Mr CLARKE: On a point of order, I ask you, Sir, again to remind the member for Mawson of the issue of relevance. I do not believe that Mr Michael Wright is yet a member of this House, although he will be in a couple of years.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Mawson that the motion is that the House notes the Auditor-General's Report. I also inform the House that I believe that the points of order are getting very frivolous.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I guess that Mr Wright will be the only person in his own faction, because I hear from all other factions that they do not want a bar of him. Frankly, that is the way it should be, when you listen to the rubbish going on in regard to the Auditor-General's Report. The South Australian public should not have a bar of the propaganda the Opposition is trying to run.

It is a misleading campaign, and the facts are quite clear. I compare it to a household situation where you are earning \$100 a week and spending \$120 a week; the equity in a house with a value of \$100 000 is less than 5 per cent; and you find that \$10 000 is owed to your parents and they are about to call on it. That is a diabolical position if you are trying to keep a roof over the head of your family. If you put a few noughts on the end of that, that is exactly the situation that our Government inherited. I will continue to remind the people of South Australia of that fact for as long as it takes us to get our house totally back in order. What would you do in that situation? Clearly you would have to take a conservative, careful and calculated approach to get yourself out of the mire to ensure that your family had a future.

When we came into government, the Audit Commission recommendations exposed the diabolical position of South Australia, thanks to the ineptitude of members opposite, so we had to be careful about difficult issues. We had to be particularly careful because we have an egomaniac called Paul Keating in the Federal Government. He stops at nothing—not even at bringing the Pope into debate to try to diffuse the issue and to call the Leader of the Opposition a Methodist, which clearly shows that the person who is back in the 1950s or 1940s is Paul Keating, because there has not been a Methodist in this country for a long time: they are members of the Uniting Church of Australia.

So, Paul Keating is back in the 1940s, and if he stays in Parliament much longer he will pull the rest of this country back into the 1940s with him. What did Paul Keating do as Treasurer when he was trying to knock off the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke? When things got a bit hot he did one thing only: he pulled the string and drove people to bankruptcy. He started to do the same thing again last year, and the advice was that anybody who would properly run Treasury in this State would ensure that proper accountability and proper budgeting and planning was in place. That is exactly what we have done.

And Paul Keating continued to push up the interest rates. If there were not a Federal election due about six months from now—because he does not have the guts to call it when he should, which is now—interest rates would probably go up again. I remind this House that when you are trying to fund a deficit of \$9 billion, 1 per cent interest is \$90 million. There is no way that we can afford that risk to our children's future. The good news is that we are concentrating on getting down that core debt. The answer to all the economic woes of this State is to get down the debt, to get a situation where we can balance our books and can confidently go to bed at night

and sleep properly because we know that there is a future for our children. That is what this Government is about, what the budget was about and those important points were recognised by the Auditor-General.

In the 1992-93 Auditor-General's Report we know that that is what the Auditor-General said. The Auditor-General clearly said that you had to be very careful in a vulnerable situation. I put on the record tonight that no State is in a more vulnerable position, thanks to the South Australian Labor Party, than is the State of South Australia. Just one debt—the \$3 billion-plus State Bank debt—is the biggest single corporate loss in the history of Australia and the second biggest corporate loss in the history of the international economic world.

Every time members opposite want to debate, mislead and misrepresent, I will stand up in this Chamber and say what a damn good job the Treasurer (Hon. Stephen Baker) is doing for the people of South Australia. No longer can we afford to play around with South Australia like some people play around with the poker machines. That is how the Labor Party handled the affairs of this State. It played with the poker machines and put it on the short-term money market, put it wherever it could, where it was at risk, and it did nothing to have in place a proper strategic management plan to address the risk factors it incurred for this State. I stand by the Treasurer. The Treasurer is doing a good job, and that has been confirmed by the *Advertiser* editorial, which has backed him all the way because it knows that we must have people who are responsible and who will set that foundation. And the foundation has been set. But we see the negative messages coming out again. The heat is turned on the Leader of the Opposition because he cannot control his factions. He wants a lady called Ms Chesser into Lee. He cannot get her because Wright knocks her off through manipulation. So, he goes overseas.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Mawson about relativity to the motion being debated. I ask him to keep to the point.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: It is relevant, because I want to talk about the points in the report relating to new jobs, new investment and the fact that we can start to create real economic activity in Asia.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The Deputy Leader says, 'Let's see some.' While the Leader was overseas because he could not handle the heat of the debacle, the tearing apart, the infighting, the punching and brawling of the Labor Party in South Australia, much of the good news that is backed up in the Auditor-General's Report was being announced in the paper. And every time, without exception, the also negative Deputy Leader, who is in bed with the Leader in order to save his own skin and who is prepared to continue to pull down this State and destroy it, rammed home the negative facts and misrepresented again, whether it be job improvements, new investment or whatever it was.

We are not going to be like the Labor Party or Paul Keating and lack responsibility. This Government is committed to being responsible and the only way you can do that is to have a long-term plan. By 1997-98 we will have a surplus. Had it not been for good management, by 1998 we would have had in our underlying recurrent budget deficit about \$750 million more spent by that year than we earned. By the year 2000, had we not become responsible, there would have been \$1 billion worth of recurrent underlying budget deficit on top of the \$9 billion, \$6.5 billion of which was created in

just 10 years under the previous Labor Government, not to mention the \$1.2 billion of the South Australian Housing Trust that you add on top of that.

Clearly, you have to go for the doctor, and we went for the doctor and went to surgery. We are now well and truly out of surgery and in the recovery ward. The Auditor-General's Report clearly indicates that the South Australian economy is now in the recovery ward. Because the surgery had to be so deep, thanks to the horse doctors in the previous Government, we will be in recovery for a while. Because we will be in recovery for a while we have to play it safe and, at the end of the day, we will be winning for South Australia. Within another 12 months we will be able to start giving South Australians the vitamin pills, because we will be back in our homes and fully recovering. By about 1998-99, South Australians will be in Utopia, because of the decisions made by a Government prepared to bite the bullet. Unfortunately—and this has not been pointed out by the Opposition in this debate—members of the Opposition are not prepared to be part of the recovery team. They want to continue to be horse doctors and to see the bad viruses they injected into this State thrive. However, the bad news for them is that we on this side of the House, with the rest of South Australia, do not want a bar of the horse doctors and of the viruses, so we have implemented a strategic plan. Overall, it has been endorsed by the Auditor-General in this report. The report is a good report. It is a report—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BROKENSHIRE:—that shows that the debt is on the way down and that we have a future. As I said, the Cliff Walshes of this world in the Audit Commission report clearly indicated that no longer could we put our wives, children and our future children in the jeopardy the Opposition set us up for. I am delighted to see the report come out, indicating that the recurrent budget deficit is coming back towards a balanced budget, that there has been a \$1.7 billion reduction in our core debt and that, at last, as you can clearly see if you look at the current financial books of South Australia, there is light at the end of the tunnel. For once, it is not the light of another locomotive flying down to roll us out as a State again. But there are a couple of fuel tanks on that locomotive, and it would help us to fill them if members opposite were prepared to give us a hand to inject that fuel quickly. As I have said before, we cannot expect that, so we will have to put up with the fact that they will try to mislead and misrepresent and do as Paul Keating does, that is, everything possible to mislead the people with everything other than the facts.

Let us look at the matter in summary. Debt in South Australia is on the way down; the books are becoming balanced; new investment is coming into South Australia at a rapid rate; and jobs are being created. There will be ups and downs in those figures but, as we all know, the State Government can only do so much about jobs—particularly when it has been crippled by high debt. The major player in job creation is the Federal Government, but what has it done for South Australia? We should have a close look at the Auditor-General's Report and at things that touch on our economic development and see how important for South Australia are such projects as the extension of the runway and the Alice Springs to Darwin railway line.

Paul Keating has been playing a game with South Australia, but at least we have a commitment from the Federal Leader that straight away next year when the Opposition gets into power we will be able to get into that

airport and develop it as it should have been developed under Labor, and we will be able to see on a daily basis \$500 million to \$750 million more exports flying out to Asia and those countries that we are now blitzing already, because last year there was a 45 per cent growth in South Australia when it came to the export from our industries—the wine industry in my electorate, the agricultural industries (of which I am proud), the manufacturing industries (of which we as South Australians are proud), automotive parts, and so on.

It is all coming together. The jigsaw is coming together. The picture is starting to appear. Obviously, when you put a jigsaw together not every part automatically fits, and now and again, you have to—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has had enough, and so have I.

Mr BROKENSHIRE:—pull a piece out and put another piece in. We as a Government admit that sometimes that has to occur. We have listened to the Auditor-General, and we have seen where matters need to be addressed. We have spoken to the CEOs, who are being paid big dollars, and reminded them that they have a responsibility to put through the accountability our Government is demanding. We have also reminded them that they must make sure that all the senior public servants follow the criteria; that they do not go willy-nilly with the bankcard, because we will not allow that. But, of course, that is what the Auditor-General is there for—to pick up on a few of those points. We have a Premier with the guts to get up and say, ‘Yes, there are a few points in that report that need addressing’, and as Premier of South Australia he is making sure that those points are addressed.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Again, the Deputy Leader has had enough, and so have I.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: So, he is accountable. He is prepared to listen to the Auditor-General, because the Premier of South Australia and the Brown Government are determined to fix the mess that the Labor Party caused for us and to make sure that our children and our unborn children have a future. That is what it is all about. That is why I am so pleased to see that, when you put all those pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together, the full picture is starting to develop. As I said earlier, the full picture is healthy for South Australia, but it will not happen overnight.

Because it will not happen overnight, to summarise the main point of the Auditor-General’s Report, no longer can South Australians afford to be put at risk or to play the poker machines. We all know what the poker machines have done and what they are doing, and we are addressing that matter as well. However, we are not prepared to play with South Australia’s money, as has happened with the poker machines, so we have worked out a budget. We are reducing the debt and we know exactly, year in, year out, what we will have to pay in interest payments. We will work as hard as we can as a team to reduce that core debt. That is what it is all about. The quicker that comes down, the quicker we will have a vibrant economic future and a sustainable opportunity for the people of South Australia.

They are the facts. I ask my constituents to read what I have said tonight. They are the facts; there are no furrphies in that. We should not bother to listen any more to the negative, misleading, inept Opposition. To finalise, the only chance it will ever have is if the member for Playford becomes the Leader.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Mawson that, when his time has expired, and I indicate that, he should stop speaking.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I will confine my remarks to accountability issues. I read the Auditor-General’s Report with great interest, particularly in relation to accountability issues. I will start by quoting his opening remarks, as follows:

So far as financial matters are concerned, it is my opinion that the matters of accountability considered in the section entitled ‘Financial Accountability in the South Australian Public Sector’ are the most important issues facing the Parliament at this time.

I was interested and pleased to see that statement, because earlier this year, when I had occasion to do a considerable amount of investigation on the Health Services Bill, the issue of accountability, particularly in relation to private sector involvement in the public health system, occupied hours of our time. We spent hours thinking, discussing and searching for answers and for ways to address that situation in relation to the Health Services Bill. So, it was with great interest that I read in the Auditor-General’s Report that he acknowledged that this, in his view, is the most important issue facing our Parliament at this time—not only the Parliament of South Australia but Parliaments across Australia and probably those in other countries as well.

As we stated many times throughout the debate on that Bill, we know that we are all breaking new ground in relation to Government, the role of the private sector, the public sector and the private not-for-profit sector. We are all breaking new ground, and we need to address these issues and to understand that we have to find a way through that balances both sides of the equation. I refer to other passages from the Auditor-General’s Report to prove what I am saying. In relation to the contracting out of Government services (page 71), the Auditor-General states:

Several of the Government contracting out arrangements that are being developed are high value and of a long-term nature. These matters will require constant monitoring to ensure that . . . cost benefits and stipulated standards of service provision are achieved.

Further, on page 75, he states:

Effective monitoring would entail adequate provision of information to Executive Government and Parliament.

I am particularly interested in this as shadow Minister for Health, because we are seeing within the health system a push by the Government to contract out *en masse* health units—and, of course, the unit that has gone that way already is Modbury Hospital.

When we look at what has happened in relation to the process of the contracting out of Modbury Hospital, we see that the Auditor-General’s comments are particularly pertinent. One of the over-arching features of the Modbury Hospital exercise is the secrecy with which it has been conducted—the lack of openness and information, and the fact that people have been kept in the dark. We know that a contract has been signed, but the only people who have seen that contract in its entirety are, I believe, the Minister who signed it, Healthscope and the board of Modbury Hospital. Even the select committee of Parliament has not had access to that contract and has not been able to see precisely how Healthscope will achieve the levels of service or what precisely those levels of service are. It has been secret; it has not been available for proper public scrutiny.

I have raised this issue previously, but I will do so again in terms of Modbury Hospital: even the media do not have access to Modbury Hospital in the way in which we have

become accustomed to media scrutiny of our health system. The media are simply locked out of the situation at Modbury. So we have no public accountability, no way in which we can actually find out what is going on at the hospital. Of course, we know that this is just the first cab off the rank, that Port Augusta will be announced imminently and that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital tenders will be called within a month or so, and we believe that the rest will follow shortly afterwards. We have little information and little accountability to the public and to Parliament.

We have a problem because, when we try to get answers in this House, the Minister does not answer questions but blames everyone else from the State Bank to the unions, to the Federal Government, to the hospital managers, to the doctors. I think I have covered all the people whom he blames for what is happening in the hospitals. He then says things such as, 'It is not my job to know these things.' I was interested to hear yesterday in this House the Minister for Infrastructure actually state that, when the contract for the outsourcing of our water and sewerage is to be signed, it will become a public document: it will be made available. That is something that has not happened in the health system.

With regard to what is happening in the area of health, the Auditor-General's comments are particularly pertinent. They bear out the criticisms and concerns that have been put forward in this House and in the community constantly over the past year, ever since we knew that this was on the agenda. In the section entitled 'Government contracts, commercial confidentiality and public sector accountability', the Auditor-General states:

... there needs to be a balancing of the Government's legitimate commercial interests with the right of Parliament to be informed as to what is going on.

I now refer to *Hansard* of Wednesday 12 April and the debate on the South Australian Health Services Bill, clause 43A, entitled 'Accountability of private contractors—private contractors must furnish reports', which the Minister used to bring down the whole Bill. I wish to refresh the memory of members of that debate. The Minister's response to our amendment putting up mechanisms for accountability was:

Secondly, if we look at the Modbury Hospital exercise, which clearly this is modelled upon, we see that there is public accountability between the board and the Minister. The board, however, has a contract with the private contractor, and that is subject to commercial confidentiality. The reason why that is subject to commercial confidentiality—and it is very important that we discuss the matter of commercial confidentiality—is not that the Government wishes to keep things quiet but that the private contractors wish to keep things quiet in any situation like this.

No private contractor wishes to bring into the public domain, for its competitors, information as to how cheaply or how expensively it might run a particular service or how well or how badly it might manage another part of that service. That is what the whole essence of commercial confidentiality is about.

The Minister then gave me the lecture that he usually gives when he answers questions. In response to his comments, I said:

I was interested in what the Minister said when talking about the private sector and being accountable. What I am saying is that it is all right for him to put in all the checks and balances in terms of the public sector, but as soon as we look at the private sector he has a hands off approach. That is not good enough. We are looking at the management of public services within hospitals, other community health service units or whatever and we are seeing the advent of a whole new set of health delivery options by the private sector working with the public sector. We say that accountability must be built in. It is not that we do not understand how much is disclosed in terms of companies' profits and so on. We are saying that it is not

all right, as the Minister says, to take a completely hands off approach either. Somewhere there has to be a balance.

I said further:

We acknowledge that this Government and other Governments are virtually breaking new ground with the involvement of the private sector in the public and private non-profit sector in the delivery of services. However, that does not negate the need for accountability in relation to public facilities. What we have before us is Modbury Hospital, but we are certain there will be others, and there must be accountability for the outcomes of those services.

Having gone through that debate and having worked through with the Minister in a conference 73 amendments, about 50 or so of which we had come to agreement upon, the Minister withdrew his Bill because he baulked on the accountability clause. So, members will see how pleased I was to read what I have just cited from the Auditor-General's Report, because they were the very issues that we raised time and again throughout the debate on the Health Services Bill, and time and again the Minister for Health was unable to see the need for balanced accountability across both sectors.

Throughout his report the Auditor-General referred to interstate developments, which I found very helpful in terms of his placing what is happening in South Australia in the context of what is happening under Governments across Australia. In relation to the WA Inc. inquiry he said:

One of the more important principles was that existing legal provisions within Government that protect commercially sensitive information would be acceptable only when other accountability requirements were satisfied.

The Auditor-General went on to suggest that we needed to look again at what we were doing in South Australia in relation to this issue. On page 12 of his report the Auditor-General states:

It is, in my opinion, clear that legislation... is now in need of review. The legislation which currently exists... would arguably be adequate in a situation where the role, size and structure of the public sector and its relationships with the private sector are stable, or changing only in minor respects. That is, in my opinion, not now the case.

So, the Auditor-General is clearly saying that we are breaking new ground. The issues of accountability are critical and crucial and must be addressed. I was interested to hear the Premier's ministerial statement on the Auditor-General's Report. I noted that in a number of places the Premier recognised the Auditor-General's rightly raising issues of accountability. The Premier said:

... the Government recognises the importance of this matter and will give careful consideration to the adequacy of the legislative and administrative framework to ensure full accountability in these matters.

I hope that the Premier and his task force read this report carefully and do this task thoroughly, because we need this, particularly when we are facing such a head long rush into private sector involvement with an inadequate framework within which to work. Further, the Premier said:

Nor, the Government notes, is the Auditor-General suggesting that negotiations now under way should be deferred pending further consideration of these accountability issues.

Obviously, that step is not the role of the Auditor-General: the Auditor-General's role is to comment and to review what has happened, and that is what he has done. It is our role as legislators in this community to read his report, to understand that he is saying that the legislative frameworks are presently inadequate and to acknowledge that we should call a halt to further negotiations and involvement of this nature until we have sorted out these issues. It is a matter of urgency that

these issues be addressed and that contracts in the health sector, in infrastructure and in terms of computer outsourcing, and others that are probably on the production line, be held until these issues are clear. If they are not, we could find ourselves in big trouble in 10 years or whenever these contracts elapse, down the track when the chickens come home to roost.

Finally, I point out that as shadow Minister for Health I have to listen day in and day out to people in the community. I have to make comment and hear the issues from people in a health sector which is staggering under the cuts which have been inflicted on it. The Auditor-General's Report states that interest rates could have been considerably lower and that somewhere between \$160 million and \$440 million could still be with us. When we look at what is happening in hospitals, schools and police, we see it is no wonder. I can imagine that there must have been some interesting conversations in Cabinet when the Ministers concerned realised the heat that is on them at the moment. If things had been done differently, perhaps the pain would not be so evident now. These are the financial managers who knew it all and who were going to get us out of it, yet in year one we have a considerable level of error.

Ms HURLEY (Napier): I was interested to hear the member for Mawson say that in 12 months we will see the benefits of what the Government has done, that the pieces of the jigsaw will all come together then. It was very interesting, because I wondered how the Cabinet was silencing its backbenchers, particularly its marginal backbenchers, on issues such as education, health cuts and local government reform. They are promising this utopia, this little pot of gold at the end of the rainbow in 12 months, just in time to make sure that they are re-elected. I thought that was a very interesting insight on how Cabinet has managed to gloss over the criticisms of the Auditor-General's Report.

However, I refer to the areas that involve my shadow portfolio. The Auditor-General's Report is very enlightening in this respect. It states up-front the significant features of the South Australian Housing Trust and reflects the bald truth that this Government has begun the process of significantly running down public housing in this State. Under the heading 'Significant features' (page 605) the Auditor-General states:

The trust's operating surplus, after abnormal items, was \$23.7 million, an increase of \$26.1 million over the previous financial year. The surplus on sale of assets increased by \$5.4 million to \$35.6 million. The trust received recurrent grant funding of \$70.6 million (\$82 million) a reduction of 14 per cent and capital grants of \$20.1 million (\$52.9 million) a reduction of 62 per cent over the previous year.

In summary, where the surplus has gone up and the sale of assets has gone up, the actual grant funding for the trust has decreased substantially—a reduction of 62 per cent over the previous year for capital grants. South Australia has had a proud record of providing public housing in this State. It has done so with bipartisan support in the past. It is often cited as a creature of the former long serving Liberal Premier, Sir Thomas Playford. In fact, Sir Thomas Playford did not initially support the Housing Trust: he opposed it in the House. It was later when he became Premier that he underwent a conversion and saw how well it could fit into his strategy for the State. He had a vision for the future, and the Housing Trust would form an essential part of it. Let us hope that the present Administration undergoes a similar conversion.

Since Playford's time we have built up a stock of housing almost double that in other States. Our public housing policy has assisted in keeping quality housing affordable and within the reach of most South Australians. I fear that this Government is in the process of dragging public housing down to a lower level as it is dragging down South Australian standards in other areas such as education, health and policing. The Auditor-General's statement revealed the truth, that is, that this Government is selling off public housing and not replacing it. The Government is also doing this without any specific direction or policy. As the Auditor-General says:

The reorganisation of the trust is premised upon improving the trust's management of its assets.

In introducing the legislation for the reorganisation of the trust in February this year, the Minister said:

This Bill is the legislative vehicle for the reorganisation of the portfolio. It is based on the concept of full accountability and responsibility of the Minister for the activities of the portfolio.

Later, he said:

The Bill places the Minister in control of all the Crown assets.

The Minister continued in this vein, with the implication that placing all the assets under his control would mean that they were more efficiently managed and operated. However, the Auditor-General now states:

The review of the trust's project expenditure noted that the trust does not have a documented asset strategy which guides the acquisition and development of new housing stock, or the disposal of the trust's property. The need for an asset strategy has been identified by the trust in its own business planning process.

This Government has reorganised the trust, put it more directly under the Minister's control and forced significant changes apparently without having a clear idea of the policy direction under which it should be operating. We have a Minister who now reigns triumphant over his little patch but whose little patch is not all the better for that. In fact, the Minister said during the committee stage of debate on the legislation that the trust would become a far more efficiently run business organisation. What sort of business does not have a strategy for dealing with the acquisition and disposal of its assets? What sort of business is selling off its assets willy-nilly without a plan for the future?

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: I am talking about a Minister who changed the legislation so that the trust would operate far more efficiently. The Auditor-General has clearly stated that the trust is not operating far more efficiently, and its own business plan has identified that it needs an asset strategy, which it does not have. I challenge the Minister to indicate when such a strategy will be produced. The changes to the trust have also not produced, apparently, any improvements in efficiency in administration, despite a reduction in staff of 30 employees. The trust's direct expenditure on programs was \$31.1 million, a reduction of 23 per cent from the previous year, while administration costs were \$7.4 million, an increase of 5 per cent on the previous year.

While expenditure on programs was dropping, as we all know, its administration costs were increasing. Again, hardly the hallmark of a far more efficiently run business operation. I now move to the private rental establishment support (PRESS) program, which also suffered a drop in expenditure of \$1.1 million to \$15 million—

Mr Brindal: Who wrote this?

Ms HURLEY: I did. We are not able to ascertain what this means for people applying for such support because the Auditor-General—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms HURLEY:—tells us that the activity statistics are not available for the current year. The new management of the trust, that is, the Minister, is not coping well enough with the introduction of a new system to be able to provide us with this vital management information. The South Australian Housing Trust annual report for the year 1993-94 indicates—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: The PRESS program, and it is relevant. The activity statistics for 1993-94 reveal that a total of 37 277 households were interviewed regarding assistance to establish or maintain a private rental tenancy. The annual report states:

Financial assistance for bonds, rents, furniture and removal expenses totalled \$11.622 million, reflecting a 20.3 per cent increase in demand over the previous 12 months.

We have a program, which was obviously increasing in demand, and where the activity statistics from the previous year had increased. We have no comparable statistics for this year and not enough detail by any means as to what is happening to that vital program. The PRESS program is also interesting because, out of a total expenditure of \$14.988 million, administration costs were \$4.637 million. This was against grant expenditure of \$10.35 million. In other words, administration expenses were around 30 per cent of the total program. I would be pleased to see a breakdown of money spent under this program.

It is important that we have this private rental support system because the Housing Trust waiting lists are still very long and because the Housing Trust is still encouraging people to move into private rental rather than apply for Housing Trust accommodation. Every time someone comes into my office who has been to the Housing Trust and who intended to be placed on the waiting list they tell me they have been shunted off into the private rental sector—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: No, they are not encouraged to go onto the list; they are encouraged to go straight into private rental. People who are in very poor financial circumstances need support to go into the private rental markets, yet we are not able to scrutinise the program and to ensure that this Government is providing the financial assistance to do that. In fact, it is interesting to see that—although we cannot tell from the Auditor-General's Report, partly because of the lack of information from the Government—in 1993-94 financial assistance in grants for bonds, rents, furniture and removal expenses totalled \$11.622 million.

The figure given in the Auditor-General's Report for the 1994-95 year is \$10.35 million. That seems to indicate an actual decrease in funding to recipients of this very important program. I would like to be able to ask these and a number of other questions of the Minister but, as has been so well documented by others in this place, we must manage with asking only 10 questions during Question Time. I would like the Minister here so that I can ask a series of questions about these important financial issues.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms HURLEY: The Deputy Leader is probably correct. The Minister does not want to be here to answer these questions because then he would be held accountable, and no-

one in this Government seems to want to be held directly accountable for their actions.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms HURLEY: Apart from asking the Minister questions about his responsibility for the Housing Trust program, I would like to ask him other questions. For example, I would like to ask about his Urban Land Trust responsibilities. The Auditor-General's Report highlights the fact that there is an increase in financial assistance to new urban areas from \$22.2 million to \$35 million. I would be keen to see some policy guidelines for this from the Minister because we are seeing quite severe cuts in public housing and obviously quite substantial increases in assistance to new urban areas. It is entirely possible that that expenditure is justified, but this information is not—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Unley to order.

Mr Clarke: Throw him out.

The SPEAKER: I suggest that it would be a good idea for the member for Unley and the Deputy Leader to take a supper break and to cease their continued chatter or they might both be thrown out. The member for Napier.

Ms HURLEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. A number of issues are raised by the Auditor-General involving other parts of the Minister's portfolio—for example, in the HomeStart area. A series of interim audit findings identify inadequacies in internal controls—for example, inadequacies in the arrangements for controlling the sub-agents who initiate HomeStart loans, and instances where sub-agents have acted outside established HomeStart practices. That is a serious consideration for people who are taking on what for them are very large mortgages. I should be interested to know what those inadequacies are and how the Minister intends to address them. There is concern that HomeStart did not appropriately limit the access of staff to its computer systems. I take it from that that staff members are able to access details of HomeStart clients on a not-need-to-know basis, and that they are able to look at other people's private financial details and confidential information.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: It may be wild speculation, but I would like to have the Minister here to confirm or deny that.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson will have more than imagination.

Ms HURLEY: Another serious point highlighted by the Auditor-General was that provisioning by HomeStart finance in 1994-95 reflects a response to a relatively constant level of arrears, but a significant increase in the number of loans where the value of the mortgaged property is less than the value of the outstanding loan. That is another serious issue, one which has caused problems in other States.

It may be that there are reasonable answers to all these questions. I challenge the Minister to answer these questions and to make himself available. Indeed, I wish other members of the Cabinet would also make themselves available to answer these serious and important questions. In that way we will know that they are truly accountable to the people of this State and that these savage cuts to programs are justified. As the member for Mawson said, we would have some definite policy guidelines so that the Opposition and those whom these cuts affect may have this insight that in 12 months the pieces of the jigsaw will come together and we will have

Utopia, but I very much doubt it. I think that this Government's backbenchers have been deceived by their Cabinet and will find, when they face an election in two years, that the people of this State realise that this Government has broken nearly every promise it made at the last election.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I commend the Auditor-General for his report. It is an important report, because it is plain to everybody that it is an objective assessment of the financial health and performance of this Government. Despite efforts by Liberal members to paint the report in a different light, the unavoidable truth is that the Auditor-General's Report is critical of the Government's mode of operation and raises fundamentally important concerns about the direction in which this Government is heading in both its management of the State's economy and its shirking of accountability.

The Auditor-General is very critical that, for both budgets of this Brown Administration, State balance sheet data have not been made available to the Parliament. He makes the critical observation that proper scrutiny in assessing the outcomes of asset privatisation necessitates that this information—a balance of assets and liabilities—be provided. The Opposition agrees with the Auditor-General. When Labor was in government it did publish such information. The reason is that this information is critical to assessing our financial position. The Treasurer seems to think that debt reduction alone is enough to improve our financial position. He is wrong. As the Auditor-General has pointed out, this needs to be understood in the context of our asset base. This is just another broken promise.

On 3 December 1993 the Liberal Party promised to 'require deficiencies in the asset register to be remedied by 30 June 1994'. On 8 March this year the Treasurer again promised that the forthcoming budget would include this information. It did not.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: If it was available.

Ms WHITE: I repeat, the Treasurer again promised that the forthcoming budget would include this information. It did not. The latest report of the Auditor-General is the second year running that he has stated his acute concern with this issue. In last year's report, he stated:

In my opinion, urgent attention needs to be given to the resolution of the issues that are seen to be a barrier to reporting the position of all the State's assets and liabilities. Resolution of the matters discussed will be necessary for the preparation of future information. In other words, without this information we cannot know whether we are making progress on our financial problems. We have nothing more than the Treasurer's assurances. This is an issue of particular concern because the Treasurer is racking up off-balance sheet liabilities in his attempt to get the private sector into the provision of public infrastructure. But, even if these deals do not add to the debt on the balance sheet, they certainly add to the State's ongoing obligations and liabilities and are the equivalent of debt—no less than \$240 million in extra liabilities in this form. The Auditor-General believes it is essential that there be proper scrutiny of these deals which, as experience shows, can be a lot more expensive than direct Government financing. The Opposition will not support some pea and thimble trick on the people of South Australia.

Clearly, adequate assessment of whether Government policy is correct depends on that information being readily available to this Parliament. The Government's removal of that information from the budget papers does much to hinder the Parliament and the public in their attempt to force the

Government to achieve the standards of accountability that we expect of it. Those are the Auditor-General's words, not mine. The Auditor-General goes further: he urges a review of legislation pertaining to the Government's accountability to Parliament. In particular, he points to a pressing need to improve parliamentary scrutiny of the privatisation, contracting out, or whatever other words one might use to describe the increasing involvement of the private sector in those assets which until now have been in public hands. The Auditor-General devotes considerable space in his report to the issue of accountability and parliamentary scrutiny. In fact, the main message in his report is: Government accountability is lacking; it must be improved.

The message is a constant thing throughout the entire document and, despite the Treasurer's attempts to gloss over the report and to paint the report in a different light, the message is clear: the Government's accountability to Parliament and to the people of this State is inadequate. We see in the Auditor-General's Report evidence of just how inadequate is the Government's accountability to Parliament and to the community, when we read the statements from the Auditor-General which indicate the prolonged process of his trying to extract supplementary information for audit from various departments to gain even an adequate understanding 'even in very broad terms' of the current and prospective trends in the State's finances. Hardly the open and accountable Government that had been promised by the Premier!

The Auditor-General in his considerable list of concerns regarding this Government's lack of accountability highlights the particular scrutiny of the private sector financing of public sector infrastructure. He offers the caution that accountability of this Government is required if we are to deal with the emerging transactions between the public and private sectors which, after they are entered into, will have major and ongoing financial implications for the State. Specifically, the Auditor-General says:

We must ensure that major public-private sector transactions, including asset sales, contracting out arrangements and special industry assistance packages take place after Parliament has had an opportunity to be informed of them and, if necessary, to make decisions about them.

Quite clearly, the Government's decision to avoid parliamentary scrutiny of a \$1.5 billion water contract is not in the best interests of the people of this State. In addition, the Auditor-General for the second year in a row points to reason—mighty good reason—for concern about the Premier's and Treasurer's handling of the EDS contract for outsourcing the Government's information technology function. He points to huge risks in the Government's current outsourcing policy, teamed with an extraordinary lack of Government accountability. He specifies a basic lack of knowledge of in-house costs, a lack of knowledge of areas of likely cost savings expected of the contractor and a lack of knowledge or appreciation of the assets involved. Very damning indeed, and a perfect example of how not to run an outsourcing contract.

It is a perfect fumble, and by a Government that does not have the right to act with the arrogance and secrecy with which this Government does. The Auditor-General makes it clear. The Parliament and the people of South Australia have been deprived of any say on whether the Government's privatisation plans are in the best interests of this State.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms WHITE: Quite damningly, in referring to the decision-making process of the Brown Government's debt management strategy, the Auditor-General talks about 'a policy passive approach'. The consequences are that, according to the Auditor-General, this Government cost us \$440 million more in interest payments than it would have had it adopted a different strategy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Taylor will resume her seat. The Chair does not want to continue to call members to order. They should reflect that they are members of Parliament and their conduct is far below what the public would expect of them as responsible elected members. It is getting late, and the Chair's tolerance is running right out. The member for Taylor.

Ms WHITE: The audit analysis shows that the particular financial strategies adopted over the 18-month period to December 1993 resulted in substantial savings to the then Government, whilst over the period January 1994 to June 1995 the Brown Government strategy cost us substantially as compared to possible alternatives for those periods. What is the attitude to such failures of this arrogant Government that portrays itself as the keeper of best budgetary practice? In response to the Auditor-General's pointing out one mistake to Treasury, the response was that the incorrect figures provided were justified because they were 'what you would intuitively expect'. Those are hardly the words to inspire confidence in the Liberal Government's plans for the future of this State!

Mr Foley: What plans?

Ms WHITE: What plans, indeed! The member for Hart is quite correct. It makes you wonder what benefits all these consultants the Government is paying for are achieving for this State if the basic and fundamental accountability and checks are inadequate. Accountable Government? Not according to the Auditor-General! So many Ministers are failing in their departments to comply with measures of accountability set down by this Parliament, let alone complying with the measures demanded by the public of South Australia.

I turn briefly to the area of education and the Auditor-General's assessment of that department. The very first thing that one notes when one opens the Auditor-General's Report on that item is the list at the beginning of this assessment of the following fact: \$73.7 million was spent on chopping 1 131 employees from the Department of Education and Children's Services.

Mr Brindal: How much?

Ms WHITE: \$73.7 million. I know that that is not the total of the Brown Government's staff cuts in education since coming to office, but 1 131 employees gone in targeted separation packages in one year is quite significant and means a significant degradation of the quality of education in this State. It is within this context that I wish to look at the commentary in the report on the department.

Mr Brindal: Which department?

Ms WHITE: DECS. The Auditor-General makes specific criticism of the general financial controls within the department. As with many other departments, there is highlighted the non-compliance with departmental rules relating to the use of corporate credit cards. Specifically, it was found that there were cases where transactions exceeded transaction limits, correct documentation had not been kept and unauthorised expenditure on accommodation and telephone bills had been incurred. Some question was raised as to whether

certain expenditure was in fact *bona fide*. According to the Auditor-General, there is reason to question the effectiveness of internal control procedures within the department. Specifically, the Auditor-General points to weaknesses in procedures and internal controls with respect to accounts payable, to salaries and wages, to fee relief for family day care and to workers' compensation.

According to the Auditor-General, the department lacks an integrated claims management system for workers' compensation, and reconciliations relating to a number of bank accounts had not been undertaken in a timely way. Earlier today in Question Time I asked the representing Minister about the sharing of school facilities with non-Government schools, other Government agencies and local communities. In his report the Auditor-General points to what he refers to as issues of major concern, both at the school and at departmental level. He says that the lack of management control of major projects involving shared facilities has resulted in non-Government agencies not paying capital contributions, recurrent costs not being recovered and a lack of direction to the parties involved in managing the relevant financial provisions.

The Auditor-General comments that signed joint use agreements have not been established between the department and these agencies and that processes have not been put in place by the department to manage the financial provisions relating to these facilities. The Auditor-General points to a lack of departmental direction to the parties involved about how they should manage the financial provisions of these agreements. It is particularly concerning to note that the department was unaware of a number of these issues before audits contact.

In conclusion, the Opposition supports rational and equitable policies for debt reduction and accountable management of Government. Where the Government's policies for debt reduction meet these criteria, the Opposition will be in support. However, after reading the Auditor-General's Report, it is quite clear that we are not doing as well as the Treasurer would have us believe. Looking further ahead, it is also quite clear that the Government is making massive assumptions about the future that verge on dreaming. For there to be real hope of the Government's reaching its debt targets by the end of the decade, we need to see economic growth running at levels far exceeding those of 1994 and 1995. In the first disastrous year of the Liberal Government, we grew by .1 per cent compared to 5.5 per cent nationally, compared with a South Australian budget prediction of 3.75 per cent for 1994-95.

In the year to March 1995 our economic performance worsened further. While Australia settled down to a growth rate of 3.8 per cent, South Australia went backwards, with an awful -1.5 per cent for the year. Actual savings from privatisation and outsourcing would need to be achieved, where much of the international evidence is that costs rise under privatisation. Interest rates need to stay stable under the Government's plan. We need the process of sacking public sector workers to be done efficiently—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms WHITE: —so that we will not require expensive additional recruiting and expenditure in later years. Already we are seeing a wave of expensive consultants being hired by the Government to perform the tasks traditionally performed by much cheaper public servants. As I have said, these are massive assumptions by the Government. But we do not need

to speculate about the future to see that all is not as the Treasurer has claimed: the Auditor-General has already demonstrated this.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.32 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 12 October at 10.30 a.m.