

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 5 June 1996

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

MAWSON CAMPUS

A petition signed by 3 610 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to retain the Mawson campus as a recreation area and that it be renamed the Douglas Mawson Recreational Area was presented by the Hon. W.A. Matthew.

Petition received.

MOUNT GAMBIER HOSPITAL

A petition signed by 1 128 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to reopen closed facilities at Mount Gambier Hospital, retain staff and improve medical services to residents of the South-East was presented by the Hon. H. Allison.

Petition received.

OBSTETRIC INDEMNITY INSURANCE

A petition signed by 1 447 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to resolve the issue of obstetric indemnity insurance for medical staff was presented by the Hon. H. Allison.

Petition received.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

The **SPEAKER:** In response to the question yesterday from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I am happy to provide the following information.

1. As members are aware, there is a security system in Parliament House for the protection of members and all who work in this building. I do not propose to describe these arrangements publicly because to do so could compromise the security system.

2. The security system is operated by staff under the control of an experienced senior officer of the Parliament.

3. In relation to the Deputy Leader's question that a list of some sort was supplied to a member of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, I have been advised by staff that no such list has been taken by any member of the Parliament.

4. I did receive a request from a member of this House to use some information on the security system. The member provided me with justification for the request. I considered the justification provided by the member was valid. If any member of this House were to make a similar request and it was in the legitimate interests of the Parliament, I would consider the request on its merits.

5. I can assure all members of the House that I am determined to protect the privacy of all members from either side of the House and to do everything to ensure that privacy is protected and that any information contained within the security system is not misused.

6. It is my understanding that currently there are no written guidelines for the use and access of the material

collected. I have instructed the appropriate officer to draw up appropriate guidelines for my consideration.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): I bring up the report of the committee on the Corporation of the City of Marion By-law No. 3 concerning council land and dealing with small-wheeled vehicles and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr CUMMINS: I bring up the twenty-sixth report of the committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): I bring up the twenty-fifth report of the committee on the Blanchetown Bridge replacement and approach roads and the twenty-sixth report of the committee on the Berri Bridge project and move:

That the reports be received.

Motion carried.

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

That the reports be printed.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION POLICY

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): On World Environment Day, will the Premier outline initiatives being undertaken by the Government to further protect and enhance South Australia's environment?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: On this day throughout the world people are concerned about the future of the environment in which they live. It is about time the world sat up and took note of that and made sure that we live in an environment that is sustainable. As we all know, there has been an ongoing problem with a serious deterioration of the environment, brought about by the practices of modern man. I am delighted to say that this Government has put in place a series of programs; we have already carried out actions and will continue to carry out actions which I think have led the whole of Australia and in many ways are recognised around the world as leading the world in some of that technology. I will give some examples.

The Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development referred to some of these yesterday and the way in which we are now taking our environmental management practices and are able to sell them overseas. This State is leading the world in terms of moving to recycle effluent water, has introduced pioneering legislation for Australia in setting up catchment authority protection and is judged second best in the whole of Australia in terms of reducing emission gases and the greenhouse effect. We are a State Government that has moved to set up the first marine park in South Australia and protect the whale. Members would be aware that under public consultation at present is a very significant proposal to set up both a

sanctuary and a larger protection zone for whales right across the Great Australian Bight.

We have introduced other measures to protect the marine environment. In fact, I was outlining these at the launch of the whale season at Victor Harbor only last Sunday. They include the treatment of stormwater before it runs into the sea so that many of the pollutants that previously went into the marine environment will now be taken out, particularly through the use of wetlands in the MFP area.

This State is looking at recycling effluent water. Cabinet has taken a decision to develop a marine strategy for the whole of South Australia. We have also put out management plans for aquaculture on the southern coast and in Gulf St Vincent, and again that is a first. I know that the Chair of the parliamentary committee on the environment has been involved in a number of the initiatives that have been put forward. That parliamentary committee has reported favourably on the stance that this Government has taken on the environment.

Let me assure the House that at the launch of Environment Day today and Environment 2000 the Minister outlined a number of the Government's initiatives. I draw those to the attention of members. I am sure the Minister will make available more information if they would like it. It is a very comprehensive program, involving the school children of the State, very importantly. It is a recognition that this Government is one of the leaders within Australia, if not the world.

On this day I also highlight what we have done in initiating the clean-up of the Murray River. It was a South Australian Liberal Government initiative. We took it to the Centenary of Federation Committee. It picked it up as the top priority project for the whole of Australia for the year 2001. I put it forward first on behalf of this Government, and I am delighted to see that it has now been taken up by the national Government as well, and endorsed by the New South Wales and Victorian Governments. In the space of less than two years, an idea of the Government of South Australia has now been adopted as a national project.

I could not think of a more appropriate day to send a message to all the senators and House of Representatives members from South Australia, whether they are Liberal, Labor or Australian Democrat that, for the sake of the future water supply coming down the Murray River system, we want them to support the legislation which is in the Senate at present to make sure that we have the money to clean up the Murray River. It is so important to the long term quality of water and the sustainability of the Murray River system. Without that we will find that salt levels, overuse of the water and algal blooms will increase. We must stop that if the residents of this State, particularly in the City of Adelaide and those in the surrounding areas who receive 50 per cent of their water from the Murray River system, are to have an assured high quality water supply in the future. We need our Federal members of Parliament to support the legislation to put the Murray River project in place.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Will the additional acute beds established for mental health patients over the past two weeks be sufficient to overcome the acute bed shortage; what additional funding has been made available to ensure the continuation of these beds; and was the Minister wrong when he gave assurances that acute beds were always available and

that there was no crisis? The Opposition has been advised that an additional 20 acute beds for mental patients have been made available over the past two weeks and that they were filled as soon as they became available. On 15 May the Minister was reported as saying:

The acute bed situation for the mentally ill is under control.

On 29 May, the Minister told the House:

I said, 'That does not worry me' because I know there is no crisis. . . I assure the House that acute beds have been available all the time.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I really do believe that this is a case of the member for Elizabeth shooting herself in the foot—again!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: What I have been saying incessantly for a number of weeks is that, whilst we train the staff so they can be in the appropriate community teams, the bed situation is tight. What I have also said is that we are backfilling those beds according to need. That to me seems like a perfectly reasonable way of approaching a short-term demand whilst the need in the community is catered for. I find it very strange that apparently the member for Elizabeth is now saying we should not be doing that. That is exactly what we have done. In some instances we have gone to the private sector. Recently we reopened some beds in Glenside to cope with the short-term problem, but it has always been on the understanding that beds would be available.

I would like to identify in this matter that the member for Elizabeth and, indeed, the Opposition are delighting in spreading furrphies. On 30 May 1996 the member for Elizabeth said:

On Tuesday last week, Glenside Hospital staff reported there were no acute beds available and on Tuesday this week staff reported a shortage of six beds.

The facts belie the scaremongering. The simple facts are these: on Tuesday the member for Elizabeth said that it had been reported to her that no acute beds were available. Of course, it is possible that she is simply regurgitating this information; I will give her that credit. However, the information with which she has been supplied is incorrect, because on Tuesday 21 May the official figures indicate that there were three open acute beds and one closed acute bed. With respect to the following Tuesday, when again the member for Elizabeth and the Opposition delighted in saying that no beds were available, the figures with which I was provided indicated that there were two vacant open acute beds and three vacant closed beds at Glenside.

I am also informed that, in addition to Glenside—and the member for Elizabeth was directing her accusations at Glenside—psychiatric beds were available at the Repatriation Hospital, Modbury Hospital, the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Flinders Medical Centre, the Lyell McEwin and Noarlunga Health Services. The facts simply belie the scaremongering that the Opposition is attempting to spread about this important matter. I am almost getting tired of repeating it, but I clearly will be called upon to repeat it time and again *ad nauseam*—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Yes, but it does not always get *ad nauseam*; however, it is getting *ad nauseam* in this instance. The simple fact is that the bed situation is tight. Another simple fact is that we have committed ourselves to backfilling so that we can put the community teams in place

in the most appropriate circumstances. The sole intent of the member for Elizabeth's question was to say, 'The Government should not be doing that.' That is clearly not what we will do: we will cope with the short-term pressures while putting in place world's best practice in the community.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. What action has the Minister taken to investigate the circumstances of a mental health patient who during the week beginning 13 May this year was twice refused admittance to the psychiatric ward of the Royal Adelaide Hospital even though he had attempted suicide? The Opposition has been asked by a family member to raise the contents of a letter which was sent to the Minister for Health and which raises serious questions about the treatment and protection of this person. The letter states that even though 'he (the patient) alerted staff to increasingly unstable thoughts and suicidal feelings and asked for admission' this was denied. He then returned home and attempted to slash his jugular vein and wrist before returning to the hospital where he was left unaided and alone in casualty. The letter states:

(He) left casualty in fear, without admission and without receiving the mental or physical treatment he sought.

The patient then jumped from a bridge into a ravine in a second suicide attempt.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Again, I am delighted to be able to debunk yet another attempt to scaremonger by using the vulnerable members of the community for political gain, which is clearly what the member for Elizabeth is delighting in doing. In debunking these accusations, I in no way decry or underscore the obvious emotional anguish experienced by families when a family member has a mental illness. I would remind the House that on previous occasions I have indicated that one in five people will have a mental illness, and it is unfortunately a fact of life that the vast majority of families will have some contact with mental illness. I in no way underscore the anguish and emotional burden experienced by family members of people with a mental illness.

However, whilst acknowledging that, it is also important to address the facts, rather than the emotion of the member for Elizabeth. In response to the honourable member, I also would like to quote from the letter, as follows:

During the week beginning 13 May 1996 a close relative attempted to gain admission into the psychiatric ward of the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The patient did, in fact, have two lengthy telephone conversations with a psychiatric nurse and received appropriate counselling on 13 and 14 May. As is unfortunately the case with people with a mental illness, this was not an unusual occurrence for this patient. This patient is a well-known client of the hospital. The letter indicates that the patient asked for admission and probable treatment. I am informed that the patient would have been informed that in order to be admitted over the telephone he would have had to undergo a psychiatric assessment in the emergency department. That obviously is the appropriate procedure. The letter continues:

Admission was denied to him.

There is absolutely no record whatsoever of admission having been denied to him. The member for Elizabeth in emotional tones quoted the letter where it alleges that this person 'proceeded to slash his jugular vein and wrist'. The patient did attend the emergency department at 1332 hours; he arrived with superficial lacerations to his left wrist. He was

attended by the emergency doctor at 1400 hours. His wrist was treated with Betadine (in other words, an antiseptic) and steri-strips (in other words, a bandaid) and did not require sutures. There is no account of any neck injury. The member for Elizabeth further went on and stated, 'He was left unaided and alone with his self-inflicted injuries in casualty.' That is incorrect. The patient was placed in a visible area directly adjacent to the work station which always has staff in attendance.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I didn't interrupt you; you just listen to the facts. The patient was seen by the emergency doctor, as I indicated, a lengthy and detailed history was taken and his wounds were treated. Nursing staff in the area also observed the patient. On one occasion he was noted to have appeared agitated. He was spoken to by one of the nurses who tried to calm him and advised him that the psychiatric registrar would be attending him shortly. The emergency doctor contacted the psychiatric registrar to review the patient. When the psychiatric registrar attended the emergency department, the patient had left. It was thought that the patient may return to the department, so the registrar advised that, if he returned, he could be admitted to Glenside, and this is documented. It is documented in the notes.

In summary, the patient was counselled by staff in the ward on at least two occasions. He was advised to attend the emergency department for assessment and, on attending the emergency department, he was fully assessed by the emergency doctor but left the hospital voluntarily before he could be seen by the psychiatric registrar. If he had been seen and had required admission, a bed was available at Glenside Hospital. I emphasise that at all times the patient was treated on a voluntary basis according to his wishes. He was not under a detention order at the time of the above events. It is therefore completely appropriate that this patient have the freedom to move to and fro as he may wish.

Mrs Kotz interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As the member for Newland says, that is totally different from the way in which the Opposition wants people with a mental illness in our community to be treated.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education says, Opposition members, reliving all the shibboleths of the 1920s and 1930s, want mental patients locked up. They clearly want them all put away behind bars. Here we have a perfect example of someone who is a voluntary mental patient in the community and who made voluntary decisions when there was a very small physical injury that had already been treated.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION POLICY

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources report to the House on the release of statistics this week on the level of environmental care in South Australia compared with elsewhere in Australia? As parliamentary secretary, I was with the Minister this morning at what was a fantastic set of events involving over 2 000 young people, teachers, departmental officers and interested community members. We were involved in the launch of a magnificent series of programs for the environment and I believe that members who are

interested in the environment would like to hear what occurred.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Before I refer to the statistics that were mentioned by the member for Mawson in his question, for which I thank him, I will say a little about the two activities that I attended this morning as part of World Environment Day. I was pleased that the member for Mawson was able to join me on that occasion. The first was the presentation of an excellent document entitled 'Water Care: A Curriculum Resource for Schools, Years 6 to 10' which I was pleased to be able to present to my colleague the Minister for Education. It is vitally important that the environment and education portfolios work closely together, and I was very pleased to be able to make this presentation to the Minister recognising that water is our most important resource in this State.

The second activity was to join with some 2 000 school children from 24 schools from different parts of the State, and that was a significant event because I was able to present certificates to a number of the schools that have excelled in environmental activities in working towards the protection of the environment in this State. I do not need to remind the House that that is what we are all about in protecting the environment—to ensure that those children and those children's children enjoy as good an environment, if not a better environment, than we experience at present. They were two excellent occasions as part of World Environment Day. I have been told, and it is interesting to note, that South Australia has more activities taking place to recognise World Environment Day than does any other State in Australia.

It has often been said that this Government inherited a large black hole when it came to the economy, as it did. The same can be said for the environment, with this Government's having to respond to years of inaction and neglect. We inherited a national parks system that had been allowed to degrade; our waterways had become septic; significant tracts of land had been left contaminated; there had been a lack of action in marine, land, sea and air environments; and there was a clear lack of vision and commitment under the previous Government. I am very pleased to be able to say that we are now turning that around.

It is also worth noting that the level of community participation in the environment under this Government is greater than ever before. Literally tens of thousands of people, from school children through to older people, are involved in hands-on environmental and conservation initiatives. As was pointed out yesterday by my colleague, I am also delighted with the strong stance that industry is taking in this State in cleaning up its act and in support of the environment.

This involvement is mirrored somewhat through a report which was released yesterday by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and the statistics make for interesting reading. They show that the level of concern about environmental issues in air pollution, ocean pollution and ecosystem destruction is falling in South Australia, and that reflects the success of actions being taken by environmental agencies and this Government. The statistics also show that South Australia has the second lowest level of lead emissions from vehicles than any other State; the second lowest level of oil spills; it is the second highest of any State to use recycled paper products; and the second highest State to donate money to environmental groups. It is a leading recycler of cans; it has the second last level of household waste disposal; it is the State with the second highest number of farm businesses involved

with an organisation with a Landcare focus; it uses the lowest level of fertilisers on farms of any State; and it has the highest number of plantings of native shrubs and trees on residential properties. It also has the third highest percentage of visitations to national parks, and we are actively working towards even more visitations and are encouraging more South Australians to enjoy their national parks.

I think that these figures show that South Australia and South Australians, under the leadership of this Government working with the community, are leading the way in the overall care of our environment, and that is a very good sign that we are well on the way to a sustainable future.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to you, Mr Speaker. On what date did the member for Florey approach you and ask to have access to the computerised security records of this Parliament, and on what grounds did you grant him such access?

The SPEAKER: In relation to the first part of the honourable member's question, it was the date on which the Parliamentary Liberal Party held its seminar. In relation to the second part of the honourable member's question, I advise him that I was informed that defamatory material had been distributed in Parliament. The material was anonymous: it defamed another member of this Parliament. The member concerned wished to identify the person responsible for the distribution and considered that the information and security system might help identify that person. I do not consider that the facilities of the Parliament should be used to disseminate anonymous, defamatory material about members from either side of the House and I would hope—

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has asked the question and I am answering it, and I would hope that I had the cooperation of members in preventing a recurrence of this incident. The member for Elder.

SHOOTING BAN

Mr WADE (Elder): Will the Minister for Police respond to claims by some sections of the shooting lobby that the Government has blundered in the national plan to restrict the availability of, as well as banning, certain firearms? Some constituents have expressed concern that the Government is going too far with the proposed new legislation on firearms. I am aware that in some quarters the actions of this Government and other Governments around Australia are being seen as a so-called conspiracy to de-arm Australia.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Yes, I would like to give an update on the firearms situation. When some of the critical issues are determined by Canberra, everyone will know exactly what all the changes will be and how they will take place. Suggestions of a conspiracy have been made and I repudiate that from the very beginning. The Police Ministers, with the total support of their Cabinets, met in Canberra to reach an agreement on the changes to gun laws to meet the needs of this nation. Can I say—and I will pay a compliment to the previous Government and even earlier Governments—for many years South Australia has asked for realistic gun reform in this country. Consistently we have been to the Police Ministers' conference in order to get some rational gun laws in this country. The same gun lobbies that stopped those

reforms are now claiming that the Governments around Australia are in a conspiracy.

The great irony is that, if we in South Australia and previous Governments—and I compliment them—had had prevailed over a number of the other States, we might not have had the tragedy in Tasmania. Certainly, we would have had some rational gun laws in this country. The very reason why we did not get rational gun laws in this country is that there are problems emerging in the top end of Australia where these extremist groups are head-hunting. The people concerned do not want reform: they want to have their guns at any price, no matter what the cost to the community may be, and they are dragging along a number of sensible people with them, although here I make a distinction: the local groups have been far more constructive in the way in which they have approached this issue and we have not heard the extremist comments that have emanated from points further north and north-east. This was no conspiracy. It was a determination by the Prime Minister of this country that it was high time we changed the laws. It is not the first time that Governments have tried to do this. Prime Minister Keating and other Governments, including South Australian Governments, have tried to do this over a long period.

In terms of some of the issues arising, I must express my disappointment with the Combined Shooters. I intended to meet with them on Friday of last week prior to the rally to discuss some issues that needed their expert opinion. I was under the impression that the meeting would involve all the groups. I was told by the head of the Combined Shooters that they could not meet as a group; we could not have the collective wisdom around the table: it had to be the Combined Shooters, and the Combined Shooters only. I wished to raise technical questions with them so that I could reply to questions from Canberra.

It would be very helpful if these major parties could be more cooperative in our desire to, first, implement sensible laws and, secondly, take on some of these important issues, including the matter of collectors' items dating back to the turn of the century. These items fall within the categories that we are determining but have no dangerous component about them because they are simply historical items. There are a number of other issues. For example, with Olympic shooters, including Libby Kosmala, under the laws that have been laid down she would not be able to shoot her weapon. It is important that those issues are sorted out.

Then there is the issue of the Olympic clay shooting contest involving a two-shot self-loading shotgun which, in my terminology, is the same as a double-barrel shotgun. A whole range of issues need to be sorted out, especially the issue of compensation. We must determine how it can work and how we can do it properly. When I have answers to all those matters I will be able to sit down and communicate with all the people out there who are still worried about these matters. People are contacting us and saying, 'I have a single-shot bolt action rifle. I have had it for 20 years. I am being told by some of the gun lobbies that I will lose it.' Again, that is rubbish. I would like some clarity on this issue, and when I have the relevant information I will disseminate it as widely as possible.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to you, Mr Speaker. Did you receive legal

advice or consult with other Parliamentary Liberal Party colleagues as to whether you would grant access to the member for Florey to the security records of Parliament House; and, if so, who were they and on what basis and on whose authority in the future will these records be made available to other members of Parliament; and will they be released also to the Opposition Whip and to the member for Davenport?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has asked a series of questions and I am very happy to respond to them all, but let me say to the first part of the question that I discuss issues with a wide range of members on a regular basis, and the role of a Presiding Officer is to keep those confidences involving those discussions with members on both sides of the House. In relation to the remainder of the honourable member's question, I will be pleased to give him a considered response as soon as possible. Let me also say that I have not had access to the printed material. I can advise the honourable member that that material is kept by the officer in charge and, to my knowledge, no other person has had access to it. The member for Mitchell.

POLICE FORCE

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Will the Minister for Police inform the House of the Government's position in relation to a series of matters involving the South Australian Police Force? A number of issues have been raised both in this place and in the media in the past 24 hours, including claims that police stations such as the one in my electorate in Darlington are being closed to the public, and an off duty police officer was not breath tested after a road accident.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I have a number of answers to a number of issues that have been raised and I am sure the House will bear with me. There was some Channel 9 footage about speed cameras. As to wanting to know whether or not a camera has been hidden, anyone who looks at the Channel 9 footage showing where that camera was placed at the airport will find that it was the best vacant spot available.

Looking at the footage showing the angles from which various points were taken, anyone interested will understand exactly what I am talking about. The particular location is listed as a black spot area. I am advised that it has been a subject of complaints from a union official representing workers from one of the airlines and the Federal Airports Corporation was concerned about speeding vehicles. There were concerns about the safety of workers crossing the road, with reports of vehicles travelling 60 to 80km/h in a 40km/h zone. There was consultation with the Federal Airports Corporation prior to the operation of the speed camera, and I am advised that the FAC inspected the site prior to the camera operating and was satisfied with the location. As I have said, if anybody wants some photographs of the area I am more than happy to provide them, at an appropriate camera angle.

More importantly, the results of the speed camera operation show that indeed there is a speeding problem along Airport Road. Speed cameras operating over a four day period in May, for less than four hours a day, snapped approximately 600 drivers speeding along Airport Road. That was in response to safety issues. Let me make it clear, so that members of the public understand: I make no apology for the police enforcing the law; this is a matter of road safety, and those who obey the speed limits have nothing to fear.

We have maintained our policy on camera visibility, as we did on Airport Road. I make the point that, if I need a camera and the circumstances do not allow it to be as visible as some members suggest it should be, I will go for the solution that will provide us with the results that we need. So, the general policy of visibility is maintained, but in some circumstances it may not be feasible. I would remind the House that the road toll is eight higher than it was last year, and it is my intention that we make sure that, even if it is done through the speed camera process, we get that road toll down.

In relation to the member for Playford's question about police station closures and the 24 hour stations, we had an opportunity to check the allegations. Those stations are available for service 24 hours a day, as I clearly pointed out. Despite misleading suggestions from the State Opposition and the police associations, those stations do in fact operate 24 hours a day. I have been advised, however, that on one occasion some six weeks ago the Elizabeth station was closed to members of the public for a period of about 90 minutes. That was due to circumstances where there was not only sickness but also an issue that had to be sorted out in the police cells at the time, so no-one was available. I am advised that that is the only occasion when that problem has arisen.

In respect of the way in which these stations operate, quite often they are locked and an intercom operates. The Police Association raised the matter of Christies Beach; the police have assured me that on no occasion within their living memory has Christies Beach station been closed. On occasions they have had to lock the door but allow the intercom to remain on, because they have experienced incidents there, as members opposite would recognise, when police officers have been assaulted late at night by certain individuals. It is the same issue in the emergency sections of the major hospitals and business premises. I happen to think it is a very sound policy that, at very late hours of the night and if there is no customer traffic, there should be a level of security to stop some of these things but without risking the safety of the public.

In relation to allegations against a police officer that were reported in the media last night, the matter is under investigation by the Police Complaints Authority and it is therefore inappropriate for me to comment. In relation to the matter of fingerprints that was raised in this House, let me assure members that the Police Commissioner has informed me that no official request has been made, and he has not been able to identify any fingerprinting of the nature referred to by the honourable member. I hope that those collective answers will satisfy the House.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I direct my questions to you, Sir. When did you become aware that the member for Florey had removed letters from the post boxes of members of Parliament? Were you told at any stage that the member for Florey intended to have these letters fingerprinted, and by whom?

The SPEAKER: I am not aware of what members have done with their mail and whether the honourable member had access to any member's mail with their permission. In relation to the other matters, I have already responded in detail and believe that I have adequately answered the matter. The member for Lee.

SWIMMING TEAM

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Will the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing provide details of the successes achieved by South Australian swimmers at the recent Olympic swimming trials?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: One of the best kept secrets in South Australia is the South Australian Sports Institute and, under the coaching of Glenn Beringen, our swimming team and the individuals in the team have had spectacular success in swimming, not only nationally but also internationally. In February of this year Helen Denman became the world breast stroke champion in competitions in France, Italy and Germany. More recently, Phil Rogers has done some excellent work in the same area. One of the things that we have been trying to do for a long time is to make sure that the accolades that come to our athletes, and particularly those who are trained at the Sports Institute, get far more prominence than they had before. We are making sure that these two individuals—Helen Denman and Phil Rogers—get the recognition they deserve. At the same time I refer to and support the introduction yesterday of Port Adelaide into the AFL, the national football competition. Whilst it is fairly difficult for me to get those two words ('Port Adelaide') out, it is a very important issue in terms of sport in South Australia. It really does add another 40 to 50 national athletes now to the national football arena. It is very important that we now have two very successful teams (hopefully) in the AFL.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I direct my question to you, Mr Speaker. Do you now know the identity and the source of the unsigned letter about the member for Coles? You have questioned that honourable member and can you confirm that the fingerprints of that person were sought and examined?

The SPEAKER: Unfortunately, I do not know the source of the material. I am surprised at the line of questioning, because it would appear that members opposite do not appear to be particularly concerned about the distribution of this type of material.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair is still answering the question. I say to the member for Playford that the Chair has no knowledge of whether there was any such—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! As I understand it, the Leader of the Opposition made a threat against the Chair.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: I am talking to the Premier, who interjected on me.

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the honourable member said, 'You have put your foot in it, mate.'

The Hon. M.D. Rann: To the Premier.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that, as someone who has talked about the behaviour of members of Parliament—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!—and complained, he should set a good example.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition for the first time. In conclusion, I inform the member for Playford that I have no knowledge of whose

fingerprints were on the document or whether there were any fingerprints on it. The member for Colton.

POWERLINES, UNDERGROUNDING

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Minister for Infrastructure report to the House on the progress being made on undergrounding powerlines in South Australia? Will he also advise what arrangements have been made with Optus regarding cabling from Telstra poles and explain the impact of this on the long-term undergrounding plans? I have been advised that South Australia leads the rest of Australia in its comprehensive program of undergrounding powerlines.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The Government's commitment to undergrounding powerlines continues. We recognise that there is a community preference and we are aware of the value in particular to key retailing commercial and tourism locations in undergrounding powerlines. That is why since 1990 some 8 300 kilometres of powerlines in South Australia have been put underground, and we are way ahead of all the other States in Australia. Some 10.2 per cent of our powerlines are currently underground. The national average is 6.4 per cent, Queensland is 4.2, Victoria 4.4, Western Australia 5.5, and Tasmania 5.9.

Undergrounding has been funded by the Powerline Environment Committee comprising representatives of ETSA, DENR, the Department of Transport, tourism, local government and conservation groups, with the State Government contributing some two thirds of the cost of undergrounding. In fact, in this current financial year \$2.8 million will be committed, and that is based on a percentage of revenue of the Electricity Trust. It will be locked in on a two year cycle to give some certainty for planning for communities that want to underground powerlines.

More than 17 communities will benefit from undergrounding projects so far this year. That includes Lockleys, Marino, Port Adelaide, Thebarton, Norwood, West Torrens, Bordertown, Aldgate, Kapunda, Angaston, Port Augusta, Moonta, Port Lincoln, Normanville, Mannum and Meadows. In addition, as advised to the member for Morphett I think late last week, the latest approval will extend undergrounding in Jetty Road, Glenelg, from Moseley Square to Nile Street, approximately one third of the distance from the square to Brighton Road. The project is of particular significance due to Jetty Road's importance as a retail, commercial and tourism destination.

In addition to that, and in responding to the member for Colton's question in relation to Optus and its roll out, I note comments of recent times from the Local Government Association in some press releases that it has put out. Optus has put to ETSA a proposition to install an aerial broadband cable network on ETSA poles in South Australia. Negotiations have been continuing for sometime, since about July or thereabouts last year. The House needs to understand, as do the public of South Australia, that the Federal Telecommunications Act provides clear and forthright powers for general carriers, such as Optus, to construct and attach communications equipment to any land and buildings. Under the Act, they are only required to compensate ETSA, for example, for financial loss and damages.

Under the powers of the Federal Telecommunications Act, Optus can commence installation now without any agreement with ETSA, referring it to arbitration if there is no agreement in respect of compensation. Optus wishes to enter into heads of agreement, and they have been negotiated since about July

last year, to provide a commercial procedural framework that will enable all future arrangements to be subsequently defined and agreed. The agreement requires that, if powerlines are undergrounded, Optus must follow with its cable at its cost. ETSA has also negotiated an arrangement with Optus to ensure the best deal is secured for South Australia. It is unique in Australia in that net revenue rental, from the poles from which the cable is strung in the roll out, will be used solely to accelerate South Australia's undergrounding program.

Without qualification, all the revenue will go into and be added to the \$2.8 million currently allocated for undergrounding in South Australia, so we can further accelerate and further outstrip the other States of Australia with the undergrounding of our cable. This will ensure that we maintain the lead in undergrounding powerlines around Australia. The matter is subject to Federal legislation over which the South Australian Government has no power. Through ETSA, the Government is ensuring that the best possible deal is established for South Australia.

The Local Government Association put out a press release last week after I announced that approximately \$1 million in net revenue would go into the scheme, suggesting that the revenue base would be \$4 million plus, and therefore we were going to siphon off some of the funds for poles, maintenance or whatever else. I take some exception to that implication in the press release of the Local Government Association and repeat to the House: net revenue from the Optus roll out, over which we have no control, will be dedicated funds for the purpose of accelerating the undergrounding of powerlines in South Australia. Where we underground powerlines, Optus will be required to follow suit. In the circumstances, that is a good deal for South Australia.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Mr Speaker, my question is directed to you. When did you inform the Premier that the member for Florey was undertaking an investigation into the source of the letter about the member for Coles; did you tell the Premier that fingerprinting was involved; and did the Premier support any of the investigations?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has asked me three questions. Let me say from the outset that, if the member for Playford has any information in relation to the identity of the particular person or persons who circulated the material, I would be most grateful, and I am sure the House would be most grateful, if he could assist in that identification.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! This would ensure that the facilities of this building are not used for that sort of activity in the future. In relation to the question of fingerprinting, I point out that I have given no authority for anyone to be engaged in any fingerprinting in this building.

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not intend to give permission for anyone to do that as I believe it would not be correct. Further, I have not had a discussion with the Premier about fingerprinting. I have had a discussion with the Premier to ensure that the confidentiality of any material contained in the system is guaranteed to be secure.

MURRAY RIVER CATCHMENT LEVY

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources provide details of the size of the environment catchment levy for irrigators along the Murray River? For some months consultation has been under way with local communities over the size of the levy to help fund the remediation of the Murray River in South Australia. A recent press release from the Riverland Horticultural Council claimed that the Government had decided on a .6¢ per kilolitre levy for irrigators based on water allocations, and constituents are continuing to ask when the levy will be announced.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I thank the honourable member, along with the members for Ridley and Custance, for the representation they have continued to make on behalf of the Riverland community in respect of this issue. I think the timing of the honourable member in asking this question on World Environment Day could not be better. I cannot think of any greater environmental project than the restoration of the Murray River which is increasingly under threat through a range of factors, including salinity, European carp, turbidity and high nutrient loads which lead to outbreaks of blue-green algae.

I believe that Murray-Darling 2001, which is so strongly supported and promoted by the Premier of this State—and the Premier has referred today to what I would suggest is the most important project in this State—represents the greatest single environmental initiative undertaken in Australia, and South Australia can be proud that it is leading the charge.

I can inform the honourable member and the House that the catchment environment levy for irrigators will be .3 cents per kilolitre—well below the 1¢ per kilolitre level that was first suggested. This levy will raise \$1.7 million in 1996-97 and will be used in conjunction with the \$800 000 being raised from SA Water to fund South Australia's contribution to the Murray-Darling 2001 project. The money will be matched dollar for dollar by the Federal Government to provide \$5 million for Murray River remediation in South Australia.

This project represents one of the most exciting environmental undertakings in Australia. It will help halt the decline in water quality, overcome land degradation, and move substantially towards improved management of the whole of the Murray-Darling Basin. The funds in 1996-97 will be spent on four core priorities: first, integrated catchment management; secondly, restoration of floodplains and riparian vegetation; thirdly, integrated flow management strategies; and, finally, stormwater disposal and re-use. Expected outcomes from these initiatives include better water quality in the river, reducing nutrients and salinity, carp control and improved environmental flows; corridors of green along the river and its tributaries to assist in the control of non-point source of pollution and enhancement of natural habitat; revegetation of aquifer recharge areas; revegetation on areas of potential dry land salinity; more efficient water use; protection and enhancement of habitats for threatened species; and development of sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices.

The allocation of levy funds to the project will be managed by a Murray River catchment water management board which I will announce soon. I inform the member that there will be significant local community representation on this board. The action of this Government will help protect the future and provide much needed confidence for people

throughout the Riverland region. The Murray River is a vital lifeline to South Australia—economically, environmentally and socially—and the Riverland region generates about \$600 million a year through irrigation industries and tourism with more than 70 per cent of economic activity based on the production of fruit.

This action is long overdue, and I believe that the announcement heralds a new era for the Murray and for the Riverland. It will allow people in the region to plan ahead with the confidence that the welfare of the river is being treated with care and is a very high priority.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to you, Sir. With which Liberal members of Parliament did you consult regarding giving the member for Florey special access to the Parliament House computerised security information, and did those Liberal members of Parliament include the Premier and the member for Coles in which you sought their advice about the nature of the member for Florey's investigation? Mr Speaker, earlier you said that you had spoken with colleagues about giving access to the security records of this Parliament to the member for Florey. The Opposition has been informed that you did, in fact, speak with the Premier and that he agreed with the investigations.

The SPEAKER: Order! In response to the last part of the explanation, that is not correct. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that, if he has any information concerning who was responsible for circulating this material, I would be most grateful. I would also appreciate any suggestions as to how it could be prevented from being circulated again. In relation to the remainder of the question, I discussed the matter with the member who was the subject of this scurrilous material.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

PATAWALONGA

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. What method is the Government using to pass information to community groups—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair cannot hear the honourable member.

Mr OSWALD:—about the clean up of the Patawalonga and also the Glenelg foreshore development?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am delighted to answer that question, because we are using a number of methods to communicate with local residents. The most spectacular and most successful method is that which was conducted on Sunday last when between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. over 1 000 visitors looked at the displays and undertook a tour of inspection of the proposed works at Glenelg and West Beach.

The people who came to visit were provided with a number of opportunities to gain information about the entire project. Information was provided in relation to the clean up of the Patawalonga itself; the master plan for the development along the Glenelg Foreshore and West Beach; the management of the Patawalonga water catchment; the Patawalonga South Golf Course redevelopment; the extension of the Adelaide International Airport runway; and, most importantly, the two EISs in relation to the Glenelg Foreshore and the

International Airport runway extensions were available for the public to peruse.

I am delighted with the way in which those who are interested in this project are utilising the opportunity to provide input on the EIS for me to consider when this matter is concluded in the next few weeks. Guided bus tours were provided for those who attended the open day so that they could move around the proposed development and have the key areas of development pointed out to them. As well as that, we are using the EIS; officers of my department are working closely with the local community and a number of meetings have been held. I am confident that in two weeks, when the public consultation period is concluded, I will have sufficient information on which to make a balanced judgment as to the way in which the works will proceed.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY INFORMATION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to you, Sir. Do you believe that it is the role of the Speaker to be the protector of the rights and privileges of all members of Parliament and not just those of the Speaker's factional colleagues?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That is clearly a reflection on the Chair and I therefore ask the Leader to withdraw the comment.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Sir, I am referring to the role of the Speaker—Erskine May, page 185.

The SPEAKER: I warn the Leader of the Opposition for a second time. I ask the Leader to withdraw that part of his question which is clearly a reflection on the Chair.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I withdraw the question in relation to you, Sir, but I am asking questions about the role of Speakers under the Westminster system of Government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: When the House comes to order, the Chair will answer the question. As Speaker of this House I have set out to protect the rights of all members of this Chamber. The Leader of the Opposition knows that a number of his colleagues have come to me seeking assistance. The course of action I took in relation to the matter which they have raised is in the spirit of ensuring that not only the member who is currently the subject of scurrilous material but in the future no other member is placed in that situation. I appeal to the Leader and all members for help and assistance in ensuring that the good names of members of Parliament are not treated in that fashion.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Does the Premier believe that the Speaker and the member for Florey acted appropriately in pursuing the source of the unsigned letter about the member for Coles and in the use of computerised parliamentary security records, and does the Premier believe that individual members of Parliament should have access to the security records—

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order, Sir. Since when has the nonsense about which the Leader is speaking been part of the portfolio responsibilities of the Premier?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ridley will resume his seat.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I say to the Leader that the whole question is very close to being out of order. I will allow him to briefly complete his explanation.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Does the Premier believe that individual members of Parliament should have access to the security records of Parliament House and should be able to remove mail from other members' post boxes—

The SPEAKER: Order! Those matters are not the responsibility of the Premier: they are the responsibility of the presiding officers, not the Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Leader of the Opposition and some other members have been trying to imply that the Speaker consulted with me on this matter when it was first raised with him. The first conversation I had with the Speaker on this matter was after Question Time yesterday. I can assure the House that, as I would expect him to, the Speaker has used his own independence on the protection of the House.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Let me take it further. What the Speaker has done today is explain to the House why he took the steps that he did. A defamatory letter, which I will touch on shortly, was put out in some of the mailboxes. What disgusts me is that any member of the House, knowing that an unsigned defamatory letter had been distributed, should use the protection of the Parliament to read that letter into *Hansard*. Frankly, I cannot remember any Leader of the Liberal or Labor Parties who would have allowed their colleagues to do that; yet the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party was allowed to read a letter which he knew was defamatory, which he knew was anonymous—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—into the record.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is quite clear that the Labor Party in this House has absolutely no regard for the rights of this House in terms of the protection of individuals.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Who used the protection of the Parliament to read that letter into *Hansard*? It was none other than the Labor Party of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues will not interject again. He has asked a question. The Chair has shown great tolerance and leniency in allowing him to ask it. I suggest to the honourable member that some of my predecessors would not have allowed it to be asked. To ensure that all information that the Leader seeks can be obtained, I call on him to show the same courtesy that he was given to the Premier in answering the question.

An honourable member: How do you know who wrote it?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That is an interesting question: who did write it? Was it perhaps even the Labor Party?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is out of order.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Speaker, this afternoon you have outlined to the House the steps you took to protect the interests of members of this House. The role of the Speaker of the House, who is an independent person in the

House, is to protect the interests of the members of the House and its independence. The Speaker has always been independent of the Government and to even suggest that—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

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

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: To even suggest that the Speaker would discuss with me—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Giles. If he wants to be suspended he should keep on going as he is.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I point out that even to suggest that the Speaker of the House would discuss with me as Premier and Leader of the Government the use of the security system in Parliament House is outrageous. Those matters are not discussed between the Speaker and the Premier, because the Speaker is independent of the Government. When the matter was raised, as it was, because the Speaker and I did raise the matter after Question Time yesterday, I suggested to the Speaker that an appropriate protocol be put in place—written instructions—because, under the former Labor Government when the security system was introduced, no-one put down any guidelines—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: No-one. When the Labor Government introduced the security system, no-one put down any guidelines on its use. I put to you yesterday, Mr Speaker, that such guidelines should be prepared and I am delighted to say that you have agreed to do so. Mr Speaker, you have explained to the House this afternoon that you acted in the interests and the protection of a member of the House who had been defamed in an unsigned letter that was distributed within this Parliament.

Mr Foley: You support that?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Yes, I do. I do support the actions of the Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—in protecting the rights of a member who has been defamed by a letter, and I am surprised that the Labor Party apparently has so little regard for that that it was prepared to stand in this Parliament yesterday and read that letter into *Hansard*. Lynn Arnold would never have stooped to that depth. Lynn Arnold would come to me—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—and discuss matters such as that with me, and we would resolve them in a manner that was in the interests of the Government and the interests of the Parliament itself.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Lynn Arnold would never—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart's continual interjections are out of order.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Lynn Arnold, as Leader of the Labor Party in this Parliament, would never have allowed the circumstance to arise where the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party had the gall to stand in this House and use the protection of the House in that way. Mr Speaker, I support your actions in protecting a member against a defamatory letter.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: Order! The question before the Chair is that the House note grievances. The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, today we have seen extraordinary events, but the key question—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order from the member for Ridley.

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

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will have to wait until the time for noting grievances has concluded. I have given the Leader of the Opposition the call.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr BECKER: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: They are very nervous.

Mr BECKER: Sit down.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to all members of the House that they are given the privilege of being elected to this place and they ought to appreciate that the public does not condone this sort of irresponsible behaviour, which would not be tolerated in any other forum. I suggest to the member for Peake that his comment was not helpful. I take it that the honourable member has a point of order.

Mr BECKER: Yes, Mr Speaker. My point of order is that the member for Ridley rose before the Leader of the Opposition, and he did try to attract your attention.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. In the opinion of the Chair, the Leader of the Opposition rose first. I call the Leader.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: This is an attempt to try to use up the time to prevent me from speaking. We have got the extraordinary situation—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has the call.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: When will we have this issue between the Premier and the Minister for Infrastructure resolved? When are they going to pull on their fight rather than this constant leaking and backbiting? We all know what is going on. We are rung up late at night, we are passed information—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If the House is going to continue to carry on in this manner, the Chair will suspend the sitting for a considerable amount of time so that members can cool down. If they do not have matters of importance that they want to discuss, I am particularly surprised—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want any interjections from my right. It is obvious to the Chair that, if members want to carry on in this fashion, they do not have matters of importance to raise, and I will suspend the sitting of the House until they can behave themselves.

Ms HURLEY: I rise on a point of order, Sir. Can the clock be restarted on the Leader's time? Time has been used up by the Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We have a situation where one Liberal MP, a supporter of John Olsen, put out a dirt sheet against the member for Coles. What happened is that that MP then went to the Speaker, who basically gave access to

computerised security information to one MP to begin his own Inspector Clouseau investigation. We have been told that that member of Parliament, the member for Florey, removed information from members' post boxes.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a clear intent from certain people. It would appear to the Chair that certain members have a clear intent to cause as much noise as they possibly can. It is very clear what the purpose is: they want to get themselves on television tonight and appear to be carrying on with some sort of beat-up indignation. If that is what they want, they might also get on television for another course of action. I do not want any further interjections. The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you for your protection, Sir. The fact is that we have an MP not only who without permission removes letters from other MPs' post boxes but who actually goes out and tries to fingerprint a Liberal colleague in order to try to damage them in the Party room. What is going on? When are Dean Brown and John Olsen going to sort out their problems—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—in the interests of the State? We have the senior economic Ministers in this State—the Premier and the Minister for Industry—who cannot get on and will not get on, and whose supporters are actively leaking to the media—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: You have been warned.

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—and to the Opposition about each other. That is what this is about. We are seeing this comic cut, this Inspector Clouseau regime, going on. They cannot manage themselves. If the Premier cannot manage his own Party, how can he manage the State of South Australia? We have a situation—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—in this State where the Premier today supported the actions of secret information being given to the member for Florey—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Colton will not interject. He is warned.

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—of material being stolen from people's post boxes and of the illegal fingerprinting of other members of Parliament. This is supposed to be a Parliament. There is high youth unemployment; what are you doing about it? Get on with it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Premier.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I can understand the sentiments that have been expressed by the Leader of the Opposition—and he has just gone, which we are all thankful for. If there was evidence that one of his members had been involved with that letter and had done a disservice to members on this side, I can understand why he would want to pursue the issue. He would not want to have this discussion in a rational fashion: he would want this to be a major issue. Anyone who has looked at the polls recently would know that his position has not improved and that, in fact, it has gone backwards.

The reason why the Labor Party has indulged in this is, first, because its standing is rotten and, secondly, because it

cannot grapple with the fact that it is in opposition and has a budget to scrutinise. We have not heard about the budget during this whole period. I can understand why he wants to hide his inadequacies. I can understand why he wants to create divisions. But why should the Parliament tolerate it? Why should the Speaker tolerate such behaviour? It is about time the Opposition got up to the mark. The reflections that have been made on the Speaker of this House are disgraceful. How many times has the Speaker, in the essence of fairness, protected members on this side? Every day of the week.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: On so many occasions where the misbehaviour from the Opposition ranks has reached a crescendo—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The honourable member opposite says that he is a model of fairness. Indeed, he is, because I could imagine that we would not even have a front bench if the Speaker applied the rules of the Parliament in the way in which I believe they were meant to be applied. In terms of fairness and the protection of rights in this Parliament, we have seen this on numerous occasions in this Parliament; and, as the Speaker has said, when there are matters of confidentiality, he accommodates them, just as I do, just as the Premier does and, I think, on most occasions, just as the Opposition does.

I want to talk about anonymous letters, because when I was in opposition I received a lot of anonymous letters and some of them were pointed at members of the then Government. I did not once use those letters. Members opposite would understand. I would never use a letter that was unsigned.

Mr Atkinson: Not much you wouldn't!

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: You can go back through the record. I have had piles of them.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: There was an official report on Genting. I am saying to the honourable member that there was an official report. If he wants to use that as an example, he is out of line. I would like to put on the record that the Speaker has, at all times, attempted to protect the Parliament.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: In terms of whether I used anonymous material, sometimes the material that was provided to me had an indication of where the Government was going sadly astray. I did not read out or ascribe to anyone the contents of that material, even though it was very accurate. The standard I apply is clear: if it is an anonymous letter—if people do have the guts to put their signature on it—it is not worth responding to or raising in the public arena.

The quality of opposition in this Parliament leaves a lot to be desired. It is about time the vision was raised above the gutter. Indeed, if the members have had problems with the actions of the Speaker, they know that a course of action can be followed: that is quite clear. Members opposite have that right and, should they so wish, they can take up that right and we can contest it on the floor of this Parliament. I am happy to do so.

On numerous occasions the Leader of the Opposition has talked about scruples, honesty and good behaviour, but he breaches them every week in this Parliament. He happens to be a disgrace to this Parliament. It is about time that members

of the Opposition took their jobs a little more seriously than they are doing at the moment.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):

What an extraordinary performance we have seen here today on this issue involving members of the Liberal Party leaking on one another, and distributing leaflets and anonymous letters aimed at sowing division amongst members of their Party in order to replace the Premier with the Minister for Infrastructure. But let us deal with the letter itself, because there have been a number of allegations with respect to this anonymous letter. Let us remember that it was the member for Coles who took the matter to court as a defamation action against the *Sunday Mail*. It was she who chose to take that action, and it was she who chose to settle that action with the *Sunday Mail* whereby the *Sunday Mail* apologised for two out of some eight accusations that were made: out of eight claims that the member for Coles made against the *Sunday Mail*, it retracted two.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence and the member for Hart have been warned. I do not intend to issue individual warnings on an *ad hoc* basis for the rest of this debate. This is a final warning to both those members and to any other member who chooses to interject. The next warning will simply be a naming.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point that I was trying to make earlier was that it was the member for Coles who settled with the *Sunday Mail*, and an apology was issued with respect to two of the eight grounds on which she took the action. Therefore, the remaining six grounds were not apologised for or, as far as I know, settled on. It is probably not even a defamatory letter in any event, as it is in the public domain because of the civil action taken by the member for Coles.

In any event, it is not for the Speaker or for any member of this House to determine what is defamatory. It is a civil matter. It is a matter for a judge and a jury, not for any individual member of this Parliament: a judge at the end of the day settles the issue, not members of Parliament, not the Speaker, not the Premier. It is not for any member of this House, not for any citizen, to go to another person's letter box and remove their mail. Not for anyone. If somebody took a piece of mail out of your letter box that was posted to you through Australia Post, it would be an offence, and it is no less an offence for any member of this Parliament to go around the corridors to the post boxes of members of Parliament and remove mail. If the mail is defamatory or whatever, it is for the individuals to take action in accordance with the appropriate laws, not for a Speaker or for the member for Florey, believing that he happens still to be a policeman, to decide that they will interrogate members of Parliament—interrogate and actually fingerprint them.

We are not a police state—whatever other members in this House may believe—and, therefore, if they wish to settle their factional disputes, it should be done within their own Party Room without impinging on the rights of MPs or any other citizens of this State. Unfortunately, the sheer level of personal hatreds that exist among Government members in this House has interfered with the governing of this State because they keep counting numbers day in and day out, minute by minute. Therefore, along with the Leader of the Opposition, I ask: when will the Liberal Party finally resolve this issue between the Minister for Infrastructure and the

Premier? Get it over with, have a vote and then get on with the governing of this State.

We have the second highest level of unemployment of any State in Australia—the highest on the mainland—yet we have silly boy or silly girl type of pranks, distributing such leaflets. What we call one another within the Labor Party forums is child's play. God Almighty, what was alleged against the member for Coles in the document that was distributed by other members of the Liberal Party we do every week in the Labor Party and, God Almighty, we do not air our dirty linen.

Mr BRINDAL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Unley has a point of order.

Mr BRINDAL: I believe that profanity offends against the Standing Orders and the Deputy Leader said, 'God Almighty' twice. I object to that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Individual points of order should be taken by individual members. The member for Kaurua.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurua): I seem to have the feeling that today I am the only member of Parliament who is interested in their constituents, but I intend to talk about one or two of mine, which might be terribly boring to everyone else—and I imagine members opposite will all get up and leave, which is probably quite normal for them. First, this week I had the pleasure of representing the Hon. Diana Laidlaw as Minister for the Status of Women at a Muslim Women's Association launch of the cookbook called 'Scented Kitchens'. I place very briefly on record my congratulations to the group of ladies who produced a down-to-earth basic cookbook that can be used by anyone. I looked through it and thought that even I could probably cook some of the recipes in this cookbook. The donations given for that cookbook will be presented to charities to overcome poverty in the Muslim community. I congratulate them on that and I was very pleased to be the Minister's representative.

The other issue I raise regards a constituent of mine, whom I will not name in this Parliament other than to call him Paul, who has worked previously for Metro Meat at Noarlunga. While in the employ of Metro Meat he had an accident at work, which resulted in neck injury. He has tried to claim insurance cover from Metro Meat since that time. Metro Meat, as members may know, is a self-insured company. On 18 October Paul had a work related accident while he was on duty. He immediately went to his local GP. It was reported to the Metro Meat work doctor, Dr Chris Kelly, who, as a result of that accident, sent him to have physiotherapy treatment. He took no time off work at this stage because he believed that physiotherapy would allow him to continue working.

On 1 December 1995 Metro Meat then accepted responsibility for the medical expenses that he incurred. The letter he received from them on 1 December 1995 says that they are claiming acceptance for medical expenses. It further says:

... if you should incur any further medical expenses please pass those on to the accounts pay office promptly and they will be paid.

As a result, my constituent attended physiotherapy. Those medical expenses have been passed on to Metro Meat and they have still not been paid. He then had time off as part of the injury. His local GP diagnosed disc rupture and commented that delays in recovery were due to this problem, which were backed up by X-rays. The Metro Meat doctor

requested that he see a neurosurgeon, which he did at Flinders Medical Centre, and the area of disc rupture was once again identified.

A worker's compensation claim was then lodged on 16 February this year with Metro Meat. It was received by them on 20 February 1996. A further medical assessment was set down for March, and that took place. On 27 February Paul first presented to my office and we arranged with the payment manager of Metro Meat for an interim payment to be made to him as soon as possible. On 4 April Paul received a letter from Metro Meat confirming that his claim was rejected. All this time, I might add, he has been unemployed and was not being paid by Metro Meat. On 24 April he again presented to my office, having then been retrenched from Metro Meat. At this stage he had had no money for 13 weeks and no medical bills had been paid. He has passed his complaint on to his union representative, Graham Warren, who has been acting on his behalf.

However, in all that time they still have not managed to get this listed once again before the commissioner. Prior to Easter the commissioner ordered that this be decided on and agreed to before Easter. The retrenchment occurred a day before Easter, making no time possible for Paul, or the union representative, to have this matter listed with the commissioner for action that day. An application was sought for a further review, which was supposed to have been finished within four weeks. That was over six weeks ago. We again contacted the Workers Compensation Review Panel, on 17 May, and there is still no listing. Finally, on 27 May Paul sought representation from a lawyer.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Kaurna's time has expired. The member for Elizabeth.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): The letter to which I referred in Question Time reads as follows:

Dear Dr Armitage,

I wish to draw your attention to an article titled 'Dangerous \$5 million mental health cut predicted', published in the *Advertiser*, 16 May 1996, page 5. The article quotes you as having said that 'the acute bed situation for the mentally ill was "under control"'.

This is not so, and therefore it is likely that you have received erroneous information and advice regarding the state of South Australia's mental health system.

I have been a carer/guardian of a psychiatrically disabled person over the past 10 years, and I have been personally aware of the difficulty in ensuring that persons in need were given timely and safe treatment both during acute psychotic issuing episodes and for preventative purposes.

The most recent example of this lack in policy and funding occurred the day after the aforementioned article was published. I wish to inform you of the following events, and am asking for your scrutiny concerning the incident.

During the week beginning 13 May 1996, a close relative attempted to gain admission into the psychiatric ward of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. He alerted staff to increasingly unstable thoughts and suicidal feelings, and asked for admission and probable treatment in order to save him from himself. He was informed that details of available beds were not given out over the phone, and so he arrived in person to again ask for admission. Admission was denied to him, despite its clear urgency, for observation and treatment.

He returned home and proceeded to slash his jugular vein and wrists. While it is unclear how he then presented himself to Casualty within the RAH (that is, by ambulance or in person), it is known that he again attempted to gain admission to the psychiatric ward through Casualty (the standard procedure). He was left unaided and alone with his self-inflicted injuries at Casualty. As with other persons with severe psychiatric illness, this person was also suffering from an acute psychotic episode at the time (leading to the suicide attempt), and left Casualty in fear, without admission and without receiving the mental or physical treatment he sought.

On the night of 17 May 1996, the South Australian and Victorian police informed me that he caught the next available plane to Victoria, went to the Dandenongs and threw himself off a bridge into a ravine. Happily, he survived and is now in a Victorian hospital.

Although I was named as the next of kin, the RAH would not assist me in determining how this travesty had occurred. I had tried to find out from the hospital whether or not he tried to present himself to Casualty before giving up and returning to his suicide attempt. This information was deemed to be 'none of (my) business' and 'a matter of patient confidentiality'. I am therefore unable to determine what had occurred and why—and of course who can be held accountable in continually sending a dying man away from hospital treatment?

It appears that although this person had attempted to gain admission several times that week, including once with clear visible injuries, he was informed that there are no psychiatric beds available and to come back 'some other time'. Psychiatrically ill persons do not have the option of returning when it suits the hospital. The analogy of a person suffering a heart attack can be used as a comparable case in point—and I am sure no hospital, member of the public or indeed of Parliament would tolerate it. While I have never before complained about injustices in mental health sectors (again due to the crucial problem of consumer trust and confidentiality), I intend to pursue this matter and ask for your assistance.

I noted the Minister's answer to my question, and I want to make the following points. The fact is that the person concerned was treated for his physical wounds, and then it went wrong. The Minister said that the patient was placed in a visible area directly adjacent to the work station, which always had staff in attendance. My question is whether that is the appropriate treatment for a person suffering a mental illness and in an agitated state. Further, the Minister said that on one occasion it was noted that he appeared agitated. I wonder what happened in relation to the staff acting on that 'noting' that the person appeared agitated. Soon after that, we gather that the person then left. So, he had his physical wounds attended to and he sat there being observed, but I wonder how it felt from the patient's point of view. Obviously, he felt that he was not being attended to and that he was being left alone.

Finally, the Minister noted that the person did not ever get to see the registrar and that the registrar advised that if he returned he could be admitted to Glenside. The fact is that this person fell through the massive holes that exist in our mental health system. The person was in need of help, he did not receive it and the consequences followed that I outlined. The issue is real for hundreds of people in our community and deserves attention; it does not deserve a cut to the budget of \$5.3 million. This is just another example of what is going on, and the question needs to be asked: how many more examples must we hear before the correct action is taken?

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

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): Society is a complex organism, and as a student of it I would have to share with my parliamentary colleagues my concern about the way in which the debate on several issues in the public domain at present has turned. On the one hand we have the Democrats and other weirdo dogooders advocating the legalisation of trafficable substances such as heroin and crack, reducing their penalties to those which are imposed for marijuana in South Australia. Whether they would include in that angel dust, amphetamines, LSD, full cocaine and so on is a matter of grave concern to me. The basis of their argument seems to be that if we make it an expiable offence we will remove the capacity of organised crime to make substantial profit from it and we will remove the attraction which it has as forbidden fruit. Doing this, going all the way on those propositions in societies where it

has occurred, has invariably led to a greater incidence of death arising from addiction to drugs and from the diseases that afflict the people who become addicted to them—by the destruction not only of their physiology through the effect of the drug but also of their immune systems and so on. It will kill them. Indeed, in this State we are now distributing free syringes in the belief that that will reduce the incidence of AIDS, whereas we know that the drug sub-culture using syringes to shoot up heroin requires the people participating to sit around in the shooting gallery and, one after the other, use the same syringe. It will kill them.

There is some watered down halfway position for those who cannot make up their mind but who think that, because it is still a crime and the crime rate is growing, we should no longer treat it as a crime. I see that as a half-witted view. After all, we have not decriminalised murder just because people continue to commit murder. On the basis that, if we were to decriminalise it, people might not become criminals and offend so much because it is no longer a crime.

On the other hand, those same people point the finger at legitimate, lawful firearm owners who enjoy an instinctive human activity as old as, and indeed older than, the species of *Homo sapiens* itself, and that is hunting—or, if not hunting, then perhaps the activities associated with it, such as honing their hunting skills and improving their proficiency through practice. Those people who legitimately and lawfully own firearms have been made to feel as though they are criminals simply because they lawfully own and enjoy using a firearm. They are sane, quiet, responsible people engaging in a satisfying, relaxing sporting activity. There are hundreds of thousands of them in this country, and well over 100 000 of them in this State.

It is an activity which is lawful, harmless and often constructive in that in the process it results in the removal of the feral animals and vermin that very often threaten native species through predation. The likes of the Hon. Ms Kanck in the other place want to make the activities of the people in question as difficult as possible, judging by what was reported as being her remarks on the news in the past 24 hours. She wants to make this activity totally unlawful and to make these people criminals and put them in gaol, just because they own or seek to own a firearm. Yet at the same time she wants to let drug peddlers go free. They really are weird attitudes of weird people, to say the least. They do not care about the consequences for public safety when, for example, these druggies go driving under the influence of the drugs they are using. Nothing has been said about the consequences there, or about what happens when these people go berserk with a knife or something else and then in court plead diminished responsibility.

With respect to the massacres, all involving military style weapons in recent times, in all cases the firearms were not lawfully possessed by the perpetrator. In all cases in the past 20 years or so the same people have been fascinated by violent movies, videos and magazines and the violent computer games they play in the penny arcades and on their PCs and so on. The real culprits are the big media film and publishing interests which publish and distribute this material and make hundreds of millions of dollars for themselves in the process. They provide the violent models of behaviour that these perpetrators of massacres are acting out. It strikes me that it might be a lot more constructive if we were to address our attention to these root causes of these problems, rather than to the innocent people who are now being victimised.

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

PARLIAMENT HOUSE MANAGEMENT

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

Leave granted.

Mr LEWIS: It seems to me that in recent times there has been some misunderstanding as to which organ or which people are responsible for this place. I draw members' attention especially to sections 28 and 35 of the Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985, so that they can better understand who is responsible, and for what.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (COMPETITION) BILL

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for oversight of the prices charged by Government business enterprises and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: 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 establish an independent source of pricing oversight to apply to the prices of selected monopoly or near monopoly Government businesses in South Australia. The framework proposed will also establish a mechanism for the investigation of competitive neutrality complaints. To this end, this Bill establishes the office of Competition Commissioner which draws these elements together in a cohesive and flexible framework which will promote efficiency and competitiveness in the supply of services by government enterprise.

At a meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in April 1995, Heads of Government signed agreements to implement the national competition policy reform package. This package comprised a number of key policy elements, including pricing oversight of Government monopoly businesses and competitive neutrality between competing private and Government owned businesses, as embodied in the Competition Principles Agreement.

The *Competition Policy Reform Act* enacted by the Commonwealth amends the *Prices Surveillance Act* so that its provisions can be applied to State owned businesses. Strict conditions govern its application, requiring a finding that another jurisdiction has been adversely affected by the pricing of a State monopoly before the Commonwealth Minister can declare the business for price surveillance.

In agreeing to this framework, the States committed to an approach which would allow jurisdictions to develop State based pricing oversight regimes. This recognises the sovereignty of the States and the crucial role they play in the implementation of competition policy. Consequently, the Competition Principles Agreement enables States to establish and administer their own pricing oversight regimes, provided these accord with a set of agreed principles.

This Bill will enable South Australia to perform this function, avoiding the need for a Commonwealth administered pricing oversight regime of government businesses in South Australia, while also providing a mechanism for competitive neutrality complaints to be lodged and investigated. The introduction of such arrangements was foreshadowed in the *Competition Policy Reform (South Australia) Bill* recently introduced to the House. The framework established in this Bill will complement this legislation and put in place a key element of the Government's competition policy strategy.

This Bill is intended to provide a flexible legislative framework which will enable the investigation of future price movements of designated Government Business Enterprises (GBEs). This oversight will only be required in instances in which a GBE dominates the market and effective competition is weak or cannot occur. It is intended initially that the prices oversight regime would be applied to the electricity and water sectors.

This model will ensure that price increases of declared Government businesses will first be subject to independent assessment and scrutiny prior to decision by Government. This will enhance public accountability and introduce greater rigour and independence in the setting of prices for declared government businesses.

A Competition Commissioner will be empowered by this Bill to review the pricing policies of declared GBEs and to recommend to Government a suitable price structure to apply for a period of up to five years. Commissioners will report to the Premier as the Minister responsible for administering this legislation.

Once the services of a GBE have been declared for the purposes of this Act, a pricing investigation will be required before any decision can be made regarding pricing policy. The process envisaged will involve several key stages.

Firstly, the enterprise must notify the portfolio Minister of its intention to seek a price increase. In turn the Minister would then notify the Minister responsible for the administration of the Competition Commissioner, in this instance the Premier. A Competition Commissioner would be appointed by the Governor and requested to undertake an investigation into the pricing policy of the enterprise. Following the preparation of an interim report, a final report must be delivered by a fixed date recommending a pricing strategy and the reasoning underlying these recommendations.

The recommendations will cover a period of up to five years and may be based on a formula, and will therefore not necessarily be restricted to actual increases. This will provide greater certainty for both consumers and the enterprise and reduce the cost and disruption which could result from multiple investigations. Within six sitting days the final report must be tabled before both Houses of Parliament and its recommendations thereby made public. Its recommendations and findings will also be published in the Government Gazette.

Based on these public recommendations, the Government will make a final decision concerning the pricing policy of the GBE. These measures ensure the price setting process is transparent and that final accountability remains with Government.

While the recommendations of the Competition Commissioner will not necessarily be accepted in all instances, this will clearly provide a greater level of independent scrutiny and rigour in the establishment of prices levied by declared government businesses.

In the establishment of prices for key services provided by Government businesses, it is important that a range of relevant criteria and objectives be considered and that these factors be clearly and explicitly identified. This Bill establishes efficient resource allocation as the primary objective of the Competition Commissioner and provides that the factors considered in undertaking investigations will include:

- the need to protect consumers from potential abuse of market power;
- the efficient costs of production and supply;
- the costs of complying with government directions and community service obligations;
- relevant intergovernmental agreements;
- the efficiency of the operations of the enterprise and reasonable efficiency targets in delivering services;
- service quality considerations;
- the need to achieve a return on assets.
- the cost of complying with statutory and other legal obligations.

A Commissioner will also be required to take other objectives into consideration and any further factors which the Minister may specify, as appropriate to the specific investigation. However, Commissioners will not be subject to Ministerial direction in relation to either recommendations or findings.

Importantly, the Bill will provide for public input in investigations, and allow consumers to have a say in future price adjustments. Inquiries will be publicly advertised and input will be sought from the wider community. In this way, investigations will be placed in the public arena, enhancing the level of public scrutiny and giving the community greater influence on the decision making process.

As mentioned earlier, this legislative framework will also establish a competitive neutrality complaints mechanism. The Bill will enable the appointment of a Commissioner who can investigate such complaints as they arise. The objective of this element of

competition policy is to ensure that GBEs do not enjoy any net competitive advantages purely by virtue of their government ownership.

Competitive neutrality principles will be proclaimed by the Governor, and will be entirely consistent with the set of principles embodied in the Competition Principles Agreement. The model will enable competitive neutrality complaints to be lodged and investigated at any stage. This will allow such complaints to be promptly and efficiently addressed, highlighting the flexibility of the proposed approach.

The Commissioner will report on competitive neutrality investigations to the Minister, the complainant and the agency concerned. As a further reporting mechanism, the results of such investigations will be reported in the annual report of the Competition Commissioner, to be incorporated in the annual report of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. As previously announced, the Government also intends publishing a policy statement detailing how it will give effect to these principles.

A key advantage of the Competition Commissioner model lies in its simplicity, providing a straightforward approach to pricing review and the investigation of competitive neutrality complaints. The model also adopts a less bureaucratic and prescriptive approach for South Australia than that applied in some other States.

The framework outlined in this Bill forms a key element in the implementation of competition policy in South Australia, and will deliver tangible benefits for consumers. This initiative also represents an important step in the on going reform of GBEs and builds on the range of regulatory, structural and financial reforms implemented by the Government, while also increasing the level of transparency and public scrutiny.

This approach will assist in promoting more competitive and efficient outcomes in the absence of market competition by producing pricing outcomes similar to those which might be expected to result from a more competitive environment. This is in line with the central thrust of competition policy and will lead to the achievement of greater efficiency in the wider economy. The model is also broadly in accordance with approaches adopted in other jurisdictions, consistent with the vision of a national approach to competition policy.

The elements of competition policy together with the Bill now before the House make up a comprehensive framework for delivering greater economic efficiency by increasing competition. It is vital to ensure fair and efficient pricing of key Government services in the economy, consistent with the objective of encouraging efficient service provision and improving the overall business climate in South Australia. This will stimulate efficiency and provide a degree of assurance to business and consumers alike, enhancing the State's competitiveness and thereby helping to maintain South Australia as an attractive place in which to invest and do business.

I commend this Bill to the House.

PART 1 PRELIMINARY

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Interpretation

This sets out a number of definitions that are required for the purposes of the proposed new Act.

Clause 4: Pricing recommendation

This clause deals with certain aspects of pricing recommendations. A pricing recommendation may set out recommended principles for fixing prices and may contain recommendations about price limitation.

A pricing recommendation remains current until superseded by a later pricing recommendation. However, if it is not superseded by a later recommendation within a term stated in the recommendation or 5 years (whichever is the lesser), it lapses at the end of that term.

A pricing recommendation is advisory only and does not bind the GBE to which it relates.

PART 2 COMPETITION COMMISSIONERS

Clause 5: Appointment of Commissioners

This clause provides for appointment of Commissioners by the Governor. The terms and conditions of appointment are to be as determined by the Governor. However, an appointment cannot be made or renewed for more than 2 years. A Commissioner cannot be removed from office except for misconduct or mental or physical incapacity to carry out official duties satisfactorily.

Clause 6: Independence of the Commissioners

A Commissioner is not subject to Ministerial direction about a recommendation, finding or report. However, the Minister may, by written direction, require the Commissioner to take into account specified facts, policies or issues in a particular investigation.

Clause 7: Power to require attendance of witness or production of documents

This clause gives a Commissioner power to summon witnesses and gather evidence.

PART 3 PRICES OVERSIGHT

Clause 8: Liability to prices oversight

This clause provides that the Governor may declare a GBE to be subject to prices oversight. The Governor must be satisfied, before making such a declaration, that the GBE has substantial market power in one or more markets. The declaration must identify the market or markets in relation to which the GBE is subject to prices oversight and fix the period for which the declaration is to be effective. The Governor may amend or revoke a declaration under this clause.

Clause 9: Requirement to make investigation and make pricing recommendation

This clause empowers the Minister to assign a Commissioner to carry out an investigation into the prices charged by a declared GBE in a declared market. This may be done whether or not there is a current pricing recommendation in force.

If a declared GBE notifies its portfolio Minister of an intention to increase prices in a declared market, the Minister must, at the request of the portfolio Minister, assign a Commissioner to carry out an investigation into the prices charged by the GBE in the declared market.

A Commissioner assigned to carry out the investigation must be independent of financial or other relationships with the GBE which might improperly influence the Commissioner's judgment.

The Commissioner is required to provide a report on the investigation including a pricing recommendation within a period fixed by the Minister.

Clause 10: Budget for carrying out investigation

This clause provides for the preparation and approval of a budget for an investigation. The GBE must, if the Minister directs, pay the costs of the investigation or a proportion of those costs decided by the Minister.

Clause 11: Public notice of investigation

This clause requires the Commissioner to give public notice of an investigation inviting representations from interested persons. The Commissioner is required to consider all representations made in response to the notice.

Clause 12: Matters to be considered by Commissioner in carrying out investigation

This clause sets out the prime objective of an investigation and the matters to be considered by the Commissioner.

Clause 13: Draft report and pricing recommendation

When the Commissioner completes an investigation, the Commissioner must prepare a draft report setting out the findings made on the investigation, the proposed pricing recommendation and the reasons for it.

The Commissioner must give copies of the draft report to the Minister, the GBE and other persons to whom the Minister directs. The Commissioner must allow the persons to whom the draft report is submitted a reasonable opportunity to comment on the report.

Clause 14: Final report

The Commissioner must consider comments made on the draft report and make any recommendations to the report and the proposed pricing recommendation that the Commissioner considers appropriate in the light of those comments. The Commissioner is then to issue the report as a final report.

Clause 15: Increase of prices

This Clause prevents a declared GBE from increasing prices for services in a declared market unless a pricing recommendation is current.

PART 4 PRINCIPLES OF COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY

Clause 16: Principles of competitive neutrality

This clause provides for the promulgation of principles of competitive neutrality—*ie* principles designed to ensure that private sector bodies are able to compete, on a fair and equal basis, with government and local government agencies engaged in significant business activities in the same market.

Clause 17: Complaints

This clause provides for the making of complaints of infringements of the principles of competitive neutrality.

Clause 18: Investigation of complaints

This clause provides for the assignment of a Commissioner to investigate a complaint of infringement of the principles of competitive neutrality.

Clause 19: Investigation of complaint

The Commissioner is to report the result of the investigation to interested parties. If the Commissioner finds that there has been a breach of the principles of competitive neutrality, the Commissioner may recommend the adoption of policies and practices to avoid further infringements of the same kind.

PART 5 MISCELLANEOUS

Clause 20: Confidentiality

This clause protects the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of investigations under the new Act.

Clause 21: Annual report

This clause provides for a report on the investigations carried out under the new Act to be included in the annual report of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Clause 22: Regulations

This is a regulation making power.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATE CLOTHING CORPORATION (WINDING-UP) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the State Clothing Corporation Act 1977. 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 is to facilitate the winding up and dissolution of the State Clothing Corporation ('Corporation').

The Corporation was set up by the *State Clothing Corporation Act 1977* to manufacture, supply and deliver clothing and other textile goods to government departments and agencies.

The Corporation conducted its business from premises which it owned at Playford Whyalla, and also from leased premises at Ridleyton. The business was sold in May 1995. Trade debts were excluded from the sales and are being collected by the Corporation.

The land which the Corporation owned is being leased to the purchaser for a period of five years which commenced on 9 May 1995. The purchaser has the option to terminate the lease earlier if required on giving six months' notice in writing. It also has an option to purchase the property.

The premises on which the business at Ridleyton is conducted are leased premises for a period of five years as from 1 May 1993. The premises were sublet to the purchaser for the remainder of the term and the sublease may be terminated earlier on six months' written notice.

The Corporation no longer employs any staff. The term of the members of the Corporation expired on 30 June 1995 and no new appointments have been made.

A loan of approximately \$660 000 is outstanding to the South Australian Government Financing Authority and it is proposed that this debt will be taken over by the Asset Management Task Force.

An Annual Report and audited statements of account in respect of the year ended 30 June 1995 have been tabled in the Parliament as required by section 27 of the *State Clothing Corporation Act 1977*.

This Bill facilitates the winding up of the Corporation by converting it into a body corporate constituted of the Minister and thus obviating the need to maintain a board. The Bill contains a power to transfer assets and liabilities to other government instrumentalities. It is contemplated that the affairs of the Corporation will be wound up as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Once the winding up is substantially complete, proclamations will be made under which the remaining assets and liabilities will be transferred to the Minister, the Corporation dissolved and the Act repealed.

I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Repeal of headings to Parts

Clause 3 is a drafting amendment which repeals the headings to the Parts of the principal Act.

Clause 4: Repeal of s. 3—Arrangement

Clause 4 is a drafting amendment which repeals the arrangement section of the Act.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation

Clause 5 inserts two new definitions into the Act. 'Asset' is defined to mean a present, contingent or future legal or equitable estate or interest in real or personal property, or a present, contingent or future right, power, privilege or immunity, (and includes a present or future cause of action in favour of the Corporation). 'Liability' is defined to mean a present, contingent or future liability or obligation (including a non-pecuniary obligation and a present or future cause of action against the Corporation).

Clause 6: Substitution of ss. 5 to 29

Clause 6 repeals all the sections of the principal Act that deal with the establishment of the Corporation, the powers and functions of the Corporation, the staff of the Corporation and the financial management of the Corporation and replaces them with sections to provide for the dissolution of the Corporation and the repeal of the Act. The proposed sections provide—

1. that the *State Clothing Corporation* continues in existence;
2. that the Corporation is a body corporate, has the legal capacity of a natural person of full age and capacity, has a common seal that may be affixed to a document on the Minister's authority and that a document apparently bearing the common seal of the Corporation will be presumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have been duly executed by the Corporation;
3. that the Corporation is constituted of the Minister;
4. that the Corporation holds its property for and on behalf of the Crown;
5. that the Corporation may exercise its powers for the purpose of winding up the affairs of the Corporation and disposing of its assets and liabilities;
6. that the Corporation may delegate any of its powers;
7. that the Governor may, by proclamation, vest assets or liabilities of the Corporation in an authority or person;
8. that the Treasurer may direct the Corporation to pay any money from time to time in the hands of the Corporation to the Asset Management Task Force Operating Account at the Treasury to be used for the purposes of retiring State debt; and
9. that the Governor may, by proclamation, fix a day on which the principal Act will expire, at which time any remaining assets and liabilities of the Corporation vest in the Crown.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATE LOTTERIES (UNCLAIMED PRIZES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the State Lotteries Act 1966. 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 amends the legislative scheme in relation to forfeited prize money, and makes it an offence to claim or collect prizes on behalf of minors.

Under the current legislative framework and rules, a person must produce the winning ticket in order to claim a prize, and certain prizes must be claimed within a specified period. In addition, upon expiration of 12 months, prize money not collected or taken delivery of is forfeited to the Lotteries Commission of South Australia. An amount equivalent to 50 per cent of the prize is applied for increased or additional prizes in subsequent lotteries as required by the State Lotteries Act, and an amount equivalent to the remaining 50 per cent is paid into the Hospital and Recreation and Sports Funds pursuant to established practice.

In the 1993-94 financial year, forfeited prize money totalled \$3 287 000. In the last financial year that figure was \$3 129 000.

The Lotteries Commission receives numerous claims every year from customers who have, for one reason or another, failed to claim, collect or take delivery of their prizes in accordance with the State Lotteries Act or Rules. Pursuant to the current framework, the Commission rejects these claims. The result is a string of unhappy customers, bad publicity and potential loss of sales.

By way of example, a person recently claimed the \$334 150 first Division X Lotto prize for the game drawn on 3 December 1994, alleging that he had lost his ticket. Whilst the Commission is satisfied that the claimant is the winner of the prize, the claim cannot be met because the person cannot produce the winning ticket as required by the Rules, and the prize has, in any event, been forfeited to the Commission pursuant to the Act.

The Bill will enable the Lotteries Commission to meet this and other such claims from unclaimed prize money, by way of *ex gratia* payment, thereby expanding the use to which unclaimed prize money can be put. In addition, whilst maintaining the use of unclaimed prize money for additional or increased prizes in subsequent lotteries, the Bill also allows the Commission to use unclaimed prize money for prizes in promotional lotteries conducted by the Commission to generate sales and increase profits. Further, the current practice of applying a sum equivalent to 50 per cent of unclaimed prize money to the Hospital and Recreation and Sports Funds is to be entrenched in the Act.

Finally, whilst the Act makes it an offence to purchase a ticket on behalf of a minor at the minor's request, it is not an offence to claim or collect a prize on behalf of a minor. The Bill accordingly creates the offence of claiming or collecting a prize on behalf of a minor at the minor's request.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 16—The Lotteries Fund and application of proceeds of the Commission

This clause provides that unclaimed prize money that has been forfeited to the Commission is to be applied as provided later in the Act.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 16B—Unclaimed prizes

This clause simply provides that an unclaimed prize is forfeited to the Commission after 12 months. The provision as to the use of unclaimed prize money is to be found in the next clause.

Clause 5: Insertion of ss. 16C and 16D

This clause inserts two new sections into the Act. *New section 16C* requires the Commission to establish a separate reserve in the Lotteries Fund to which forfeited prize money will be transferred. The Reserve will consist of forfeited prize money that has not, as at the commencement of the new section, been applied for any purpose, and all subsequent forfeited prize money transferred to the Reserve under this section. Half the money in the Reserve from time to time will go to the Recreation and Sport Fund and the Hospitals Fund (divided between them on the basis of unclaimed prizes from sports lotteries and special lotteries going into the Recreation and Sport Fund, the remainder into the Hospitals Fund). The balance in the Reserve is to be used by the Commission as additional prizes in future lotteries, prizes in promotional lotteries and in making *ex gratia* payments as contemplated by new section 16D. *New section 16D* gives the Commission the power to make an *ex gratia* payment to a person who has lost a winning ticket but can satisfy the Commission that he or she was the holder of a winning ticket, or to a person who fails to claim a prize within a particular time limit. The decision to make an *ex gratia* payment, and the amount of such a payment, are at the Commission's discretion and cannot be the subject of review by a court. The provision is retrospective to 1 November 1994, and includes prizes in an instant lottery that commenced before but concluded after that date.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 17—Value of prizes to be offered

This clause is a consequential amendment.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 17B—Minors not to participate in lotteries

This clause makes it an offence for a person to collect or claim a prize on behalf of a minor at the minor's request.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

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

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting that the Minister for Education and Children's Services (Hon. R.I. Lucas), the Attorney-General (Hon. K.T. Griffin) and the Minister for Transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw), members of the Legislative Council, be permitted to attend and give evidence before the Estimates Committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE) BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Infrastructure) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Waterworks Act 1932 and the Sewerage Act 1929. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: 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 is primarily of a housekeeping nature and clarifies some of the regulation making powers under the Waterworks Act 1932 and the Sewerage Act 1929, preparatory to remaking the regulations under those Acts, which expire on 1 September 1996.

The Bill also makes a number of other minor amendments that either simplify or ratify administrative procedures and practices. Amongst other things, it:

simplifies the procedure for declaring Water Districts and Drainage Areas

Water Districts and Drainage Areas are administrative prerequisites for rating—only land within Water Districts and Drainage Areas may be rated. As the water and sewerage infrastructure is extended it becomes necessary to extend the boundaries of the Water Districts and Drainage Areas. This must be done by notice in the Gazette and the current requirement is for these proclamations to be made by the Governor in Executive Council. As this is purely an administrative requirement it is appropriate that the South Australian Water Corporation take responsibility for publishing these notices.

transfers from the regulations to the Waterworks Act the ability of the Corporation to reduce the supply of water to consumers where adverse supply conditions prevail

The regulations under the Waterworks Act provide that where there is a shortage of supply the Minister may discontinue supply for certain purposes. It is appropriate that such a power be contained in the Act rather than the regulations. The power can only be exercised with the approval of the Minister.

The regulations also provide that where the supply to a particular consumer is likely to effect the hydraulics of the supply system, that consumer may be required to provide and use a flow reduction device to reduce the draw on the system.

provides a clear power to reduce the water supply for non-payment of rates

The Waterworks Act provides that the water supply may be cut-off for breaches of the Act, including the non-payment of rates. In practice, where rates remain unpaid, the water supply is reduced rather than completely cut-off. It is desirable that the power to reduce the water supply be separately and clearly provided for.

provides for the Corporation to authorise entry on to its land subject to conditions

In a number of instances the public is permitted onto reservoirs and other land owned by the Corporation. There is no power for the Corporation to set conditions of entry and police them. This power cures that deficiency.

I commend this Bill to the House.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Interpretation

Clause 3 provides for references to the principal Act in Part 2 and 3 of the Bill.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation

Clause 4 inserts provisions that explain how the term 'adjacent land' in the *Waterworks Act 1932* works in relation to land divided by a strata plan or a community plan.

Clause 5: Insertion of Part 1A

Clause 5 inserts a standard delegation provision that will enable the Minister to delegate his or her functions, powers and duties to the Corporation or any other person. Subsection (3) provides that the Minister cannot delegate his or her functions, powers or duties to set water rates under Part 5 of the *Waterworks Act 1932*.

Clause 6: Substitution of s. 6

Clause 6 replaces section 6 of the principal Act with a streamlined provision that will enable the Corporation to declare water districts.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 10—Regulations

Clause 7 amends section 10 of the *Waterworks Act 1932* which is the section providing the power to make regulations. The regulations under the *Waterworks Act* expire on 1 September this year. In the process of redrafting these regulation it appeared desirable to amend the Act to make it clear that the regulations are within the regulating making powers of the Act.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 33—Power to lessen or discontinue supply

Clause 8 amends section 33 of the principal Act. This section enables the Corporation to reduce or discontinue the supply of water in time of drought with the Governor's approval. The amendment provides that the Minister's approval is required instead.

Clause 9: Insertion of s. 33A

Clause 9 inserts new section 33A into the principal Act. This section provides for restrictions on the purposes for which and the manner in which water can be used in drought conditions. It replaces regulation 14 of the *Waterworks Regulations 1974*. It is considered that a provision restricting the use of water should be in the Act and not in the regulations.

Clause 10: Insertion of s. 35A

Clause 10 inserts new section 35A. This section provides a mechanism for the rate at which water is supplied to land to be reduced at peak periods. Without this precaution the pressure at peak periods may be reduced to a point where an inadequate supply of water is provided to consumers.

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 54—Power to cut off or reduce water supply

Clause 11 amends section 54 of the principal Act to enable the supply of water to a consumer who has failed to pay rates or is in breach of the Act to be reduced as an alternative to it being cut off completely. Although the Corporation is subject to the direction and control of the Minister (see section 6(1)(b) of the *Public Corporations Act 1993*) the Corporation must obtain the approval of the Minister before cutting off a supply of water under section 54 (see new subsection (2)).

Clause 12: Substitution of s. 65

Clause 12 replaces section 65 of the principal Act with a provision that provides for authorised entry onto the Corporation's land subject to conditions that can be imposed in a number of ways.

Clause 13: Amendment of s. 87—Recovery of money by Corporation

Clause 13 makes consequential changes to section 87 of the principal Act.

Clause 14: Amendment of s. 90—Gazetted mains

Clause 14 makes a consequential change to section 90 of the *Waterworks Act 1932*.

Clause 15: Insertion of Part 2

Clause 15 inserts a standard delegation provision in the *Sewerage Act 1929* similar to the provision inserted in the *Waterworks Act 1932* by clause 5 of the Bill.

Clause 16: Amendment of s. 13—Regulations

Clause 16 amends the regulation making powers in the *Sewerage Act 1929*. The *Sewerage Regulations 1973* expire on 1 September 1996. In the process of redrafting these regulations it appeared desirable to amend the Act to make it clear that the regulations are within the regulating making powers of the Act.

Clause 17: Substitution of s. 18

Clause 17 replaces section 18 of the *Sewerage Act 1929* with a provision that enables the Corporation to declare, alter and abolish drainage areas.

Clause 18: Amendment of s. 80—Notice of amount payable

Clause 18 amends section 80 of the *Sewerage Act 1929*.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WARD QUOTAS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Local Government Act 1934. Read a first time.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: 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 short Bill allows for some transitional flexibility in the ward quota provisions of the Local Government Act to assist with the structural reform of Councils. The amendment allows newly formed Councils with wards to defer the need to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act that each elected member represent an equivalent number of electors within a tolerance of 10%, pending review to determine a new ward structure. It is proposed that this transitional arrangement be bound by time limits established either by proclamation or by the date of the second general election after the transitional ward structure takes effect. This will ensure that the principle of 'one vote—one value' is attained within a reasonable period of time.

The Government is committed to structural reform in the local government sector and the Local Government Act provisions introduced by the Local Government (Boundary Reform) Amendment Act 1995 provide the mechanism to assist the process through the Local Government Boundary Reform Board.

The Local Government Boundary Reform Board (the Board), as part of its deliberations, requested every Council across the State to submit a status report on progress in achieving structural reform as at 31 March 1996. These status reports were considered by the Board at its April meeting. Whilst pleased with progress, the Board noted that a number of Councils were concerned about the issue of representation. Smaller Councils in particular have expressed reservations about structural reform offering their communities adequate representation in a new, larger Council. Although there is power under the current provisions for requirements of the Act to be varied for a transitional period by proclamation to assist the establishment of a newly-formed Council, legal advice to the Board has indicated that these provisions do not extend to the ward quota requirement.

In seeking to facilitate the structural reform process, but mindful of the imperative to ensure the principle of 'one vote—one value', the Government proposes in this Bill to allow the ward quota requirement to be waived for a strictly limited period of time. The benefit of this approach will be to reassure smaller Councils that they will not be subject to a 'takeover' by larger Councils in pursuing genuine structural reform, while retaining the requirement for the new Council to review its composition and ward structure within a reasonable timeframe to meet the ward quota parameters defined in s.11 of the Local Government Act.

The structural reform process is such that new Councils may be formed before or after the May 1997 general election date. The Bill provides for this situation, by specifying that a ward structure which does not comply with ward quota requirements must be brought into compliance on or before the date of the second general election of the Council after the non-complying ward structure takes effect, but allowing for an earlier date to be fixed by proclamation in cases where this formula would allow compliance to be deferred for an unreasonably long period.

The Local Government Association has been consulted and supports the introduction of these transitional arrangements in principle provided they are applied only where necessary in relation to amalgamations and not beyond the first term of office.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of s. 11—Formation, alteration or abolition of wards

This amendment provides that the ward quota requirements under section 11 will not apply to a proposal under Division X. However, if a proposal does not comply with those requirements then the new council will need to undertake a review of its ward structure by a date fixed by proclamation or, if no date is fixed, on or before the

date of the second general election of the council after the proposal takes effect.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

PULP AND PAPER MILL (HUNDREDS OF MAYURRA AND HINDMARSH) (COUNCIL RATES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Pulp and Paper Mill (Hundreds of Mayurra and Hindmarsh) Act 1964. Read a first time.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: 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 short Bill seeks to amend the provision of the *Pulp and Paper Mill (Hundreds of Mayurra and Hindmarsh) Act 1964* which relates to the payment of Council rates to reflect an existing agreement between Kimberly-Clark Australia and the District Council of Millicent.

The Act ratifies an Indenture entered into in 1964 for a period of 50 years between the Government and Apcel Limited (now Kimberly-Clark Australia) in relation to the pulp and paper mill complex owned by Kimberly-Clark at Snuggery in the District Council of Millicent.

Section 4 of the Act which deals with local government rates was amended in 1976 to provide that the rates payable for the mill complex are to be a prescribed percentage of the 'net annual value' of the mill site and the mill. However, there have been difficulties in interpreting and applying this provision because 'net annual value' is not defined in the Act. Although the 1976 amendment was probably drafted in the context of the rating provisions of the *Local Government Act 1934* and the definitions of the *Valuation of Land Act 1971* as they were in force at that time, these provisions and definitions could not be applied to the assessment of 'net annual value' required by section 4. This left valuation authorities with little guidance in arriving at 'net annual value', other than English cases decided before 1925.

As a result of this ambiguity, and Millicent Council's desire to rate the mill complex on a basis more consistent with local government rating provisions, an agreement between Council and Kimberly-Clark was reached. The agreement provides that the mill complex be rated on the same basis as the surrounding rural properties, which is currently the capital value of the land, and be liable to the same rate in the dollar as those properties.

The agreement was phased in over several years and from the financial year 1994/95 Kimberly-Clark has paid rates equivalent to those paid by surrounding rural properties. This arrangement still provides some level of subsidy as the Council's differential rating powers under the Local Government Act would, in the absence of these provisions, allow it to put in place a rating structure which would result in higher rates for the mill complex. The Bill is designed to ensure that the intent of the agreement will be preserved even if the Council should change its current rating policies and practices using the powers currently available to it under the Local Government Act.

Kimberly-Clark Australia and the District Council of Millicent have been involved in the development of this Bill and support the introduction of these provisions to formalise the practical arrangement which is now in place.

This Bill is a hybrid Bill.

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of s.4—Local Government rates

This clause provides that the Company that operates the mill is liable to pay the District Council of Millicent general rates each financial year in respect of the mill site and the mill. The rates will be the same as those that apply to farming land in the vicinity of the mill. No other rates or charges under Part X of the *Local Government Act* may be levied by the council in respect of the mill or mill site. The new rates will apply to the 1996/1997 financial year and each subsequent year.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 4 June. Page 1684.)

Mr ROSSI (Lee): I stand here today in support of the Bill. I am quite happy with the progress of the Dean Brown Liberal Government in its direction to stabilise the economic status of this State. Of course, I am quite impressed with the Leader of the Opposition in the way he has been conducting himself and his Party both yesterday and today in not asking questions of the Government on the Appropriation Bill but attacking the procedures of the Speaker and of the Premier in respect of what occurred in this House a few days ago.

In the Labor Party's criticism of this Government, it always says how it would do better, but I understand that, when it was in Government, it lost over \$8 billion in the budget, there was a fiasco with the State Bank, and during its time in office it closed down the Seaton North Primary School and West Lakes High School in my electorate. So much for the criticism by the member for Price of the Minister for Education in closing down some schools that are uneconomical with student numbers not being sufficient to support such schools.

When Labor was in power, it totally ignored the conditions of the buildings, the wards and the operating equipment in theatres at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. In the past two years, the Liberal Government has upgraded these facilities, and it has found ways and means of encouraging private enterprise to help out in the economic recovery of this State. When Labor was in Government, it did nothing to upgrade the revetment steps of the West Lakes waterway. This is another problem in my electorate. The Liberal Government is spending over \$500 000 a year to upgrade and restore the confidence of the builders of the day who built the revetment steps.

Labor did nothing to remove the smell of the Port Adelaide sewage treatment works. I understand that my predecessor, continually year after year, when representing the seat of Albert Park, brought up the subject, but his colleagues did nothing to help him out in relation to upgrading the treatment works. Labor did nothing to reduce the crime in my electorate or anywhere else in the State. It did nothing to upgrade school buildings and playgrounds in the electorate of Lee.

The member for Spence criticised the Minister for Health for downgrading and bulldozing Tenterden House. I attended Woodville Primary School in 1962. In the past 14 years, if the Labor Government wanted to do anything about Tenterden House, it could have turned that building into a library for the primary school, and the area surrounding that building could have been used for playgrounds. Further, the southern part of the present primary school oval could have been used by the hospital for parking, but nothing was done because Labor had neither the foresight nor belief that Tenterden House was worth saving. When I have visited local schools in my area, constituents have criticised the Government for not buying up-to-date computer systems and new technology for the teaching of students. I understand that the Minister for Education this year will provide grants to schools, particularly in my area, to upgrade computer equipment.

Teachers have been asking for a wage rise of \$90 a week, yet parents have told me that the quality of teaching has been poor. The teachers say that without a wage rise the students will suffer, although I do not see the correlation between teaching and wages. I believe that the teachers are now conducting themselves in a similar manner to the former BLF, the Transport Workers Union and the former Waterside Workers Union. Their industrial activities do not set a good example for the students of today. Teachers have a responsibility to perform a good day's work for a good day's pay. I am also upset with the dress standards of some teachers; it provides a poor example to the students who are required to dress appropriately at job interviews in order to successfully gain employment.

I am pleased that the Liberal Government will upgrade the Port Adelaide business centre and the wharves of Port Adelaide. I am also pleased that the Liberal Government will provide funds to Seaton High School to upgrade the buildings and facilities which the previous Government neglected. I support the Liberal Government in its efforts to encourage export growth of the area under the control of Hindmarsh and Woodville council; I believe that Hindmarsh and Woodville councillors recently travelled overseas to try to generate more industry and more exports for local businesses.

Labour costs have reduced under the Liberal Government and are now 5 per cent below the national average, and that will attract business and provide employment in this State. State debt has been reduced by \$1.6 billion, plus all the interest saved for years to come. A \$15 million program will provide extra computers for students in the State schools in South Australia. I also support the basic skills test for years three and five, which is another Liberal Government initiative. It provides information to parents, teachers and students about a student's ability before they progress to higher education. Under the Labor Government most students left high school unable to conduct an interview and unable to add up, and employers were forced to make them sit for an aptitude test before they were accepted for employment—so much for the high standard of education under the Labor Government.

A \$79.1 million capital works program will enable the South Australian Housing Trust to construct 230 new dwellings; a \$15.2 million extension of the Adelaide Airport runway has been announced—another initiative of the Liberal Government in this State; and the Bolivar to Virginia reclaimed effluent pipeline will be upgraded. The Liberal Government not only talks but also listens to what people say and then acts—not like the Labor Party which says it listens but totally ignores what it hears. The Labor Party does not have the capability to implement the ideas that it is told should be implemented. I support the Appropriation Bill.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I rise to make a few comments about the budget. Sadly, I am somewhat disappointed with it. The budget makes light of the real needs and concerns in our communities. The Premier and the Treasurer play with words and dollar figures simply to manipulate the truth and the facts of this budget. The Treasurer said, 'This Government has made big changes'. He further says, 'These changes were fair in their impact and implementation.' Yet Dean Brown's budget attacks the fundamental needs and the services on which the people of this State rely. Health services are still declining, dollars are coldly taken, they are ripped from the health budget, and a token gesture of

\$1.3 million in real terms is made available to pacify the public.

The Premier, Dean Brown, claims that this budget has made provision in the health system for the sick, the elderly and for our children. Why do my constituents have to endure long waiting times for surgery? Why must they be in pain unnecessarily? Why is their surgery cancelled and then cancelled again? I believe that this situation occurs because we are not being told the truth. Waiting lists in real terms are growing but the fact is hidden in a maze; it is covered up by the fact that people needing surgical medical attention are being delayed and denied that service because they are queuing on waiting lists simply to get an appointment with a specialist, let alone get onto the queue to have the surgery done.

Modbury Hospital is taking only day surgery cases either this month or next month—I cannot recall exactly at this stage. These day cases are called elective and emergency cases. The reason for this situation is to maintain staff ratios while staff take holidays. Elective surgery is not just a nose job or a tummy tuck: elective surgery is also a term used for procedures such as hip replacement, knee reconstruction and back surgery—surgery that is needed to relieve pain and suffering, keep people mobile, enable them to get back to work and live a fair quality of life. We do not see this in the budget: we do not see any recognition of the health needs of our community.

Mental health and associated areas have also had funding cuts—\$5 million from the service—when mental health problems in the community are great. Earlier today the Minister said that the Opposition would like to go back to the 1920s. That is simply not true. Members on this side of the House do recognise the needs of people. Deinstitutionalisation has created many new problems and needs. Support services are not coping with the problems because they are under-resourced, particularly in respect of staffing levels. The community, not to mention the families, cannot cope and neither do they have the skills nor the expertise, yet increasingly they are bearing the burden. Sadly, this Liberal Government does not seem to care; it simply takes away more dollars.

In his budget speech the Treasurer referred to innovative approaches to involve the public sector in the provision of health infrastructure and associated services. He claims that this will provide benefits to the public and private facilities. What is innovative about cutting services? No specific mention of services to mental health is made and, as my colleagues have said, what if John Howard's budget is as severe as the Premier's? The Premier knows that he cannot rely on John Howard's commitments to provide services so, when the inevitable slashing occurs, he will attack his Federal Leader to cover his own lack of commitment to the people of South Australia.

The South Australian Housing Trust has not been left off the list, either. It is still reliant on Federal grants, and the Premier has reduced Government commitment to public housing by taking more dollars in real terms from the housing budget. The commitment to construct some 230 rental dwellings and upgrade 850 dwellings may just be words if Federal funding is not forthcoming. In my electorate, particularly in the area of Hillcrest where redevelopment is presently occurring, the changes that are taking place are causing some concern in the community. The Treasurer failed in his explanation to mention the number of properties that are being sold so, for every one gone, we do not find that one

replaces it. The waiting lists for housing continue to grow while in reality public housing stock is in decline.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: It is in decline and the Minister may like to come out to my electorate and talk to people who are on the waiting list and who cannot get housing. We have an urgent need for housing.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We are doing a lot more about it than your lot did.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I am not saying that the Government is not doing something about it, but I am saying that housing stock is in decline and waiting lists are growing. As need in the community grows—

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: It is an interesting point that the Minister makes—that waiting lists are well down—and I dispute it. One of the reasons why waiting lists are not continuing to escalate at an enormous rate is that, when people are told that they have 10 or 12 years to wait for housing, they are forced out into the private sector.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Come on!

Mrs GERAGHTY: That is a fact, Minister.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: They are the same rules that applied when your lot were in.

Mrs GERAGHTY: You are claiming that you are restructuring everything and making it perfect. I am pointing out that it is not perfect and there is a lot more that you could do as opposed to taking away our homes. I should like to make a comment on the Police Force.

Mr Bass: I am listening.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Yes, I thought the member for Florey would be listening. Our Police Force has come under attack again and the pressure on police is enormous. We complain about crime and we complain that police are not catching criminals or responding quickly enough to calls, but we have seen police numbers falling and, with the cuts in this budget, the numbers will fall even further. Morale in the Police Force is already low and I fear that it will decline even further and we will lose many of our experienced officers to other areas in the work force. Sadly, as I have said, the workload and the pressure is enormous, and certainly increasing. The officers from the Holden Hill Police Station are dedicated men and women, and they are very committed to our community.

The Government is very proud of its budget. Members opposite have stood proudly in this Chamber and espoused the virtues of the budget, but I do not believe that they are so blind as not to see the cuts and know the pain that Dean Brown has further inflicted on people. They should tell him what their constituents are saying and what they are feeling because, if the constituents of members on this side of the House are telling us that they are hurting and that they are in trouble, one fails to accept that they are not also telling Government members. It is impossible that the stories between the two sides of the House are so different, so I ask members opposite to speak to the Premier and just tell him what his budget is inflicting on people in the community.

On many occasions I have referred to education cuts, as have other members on this side of the House, but I do not think that either the Premier or the Treasurer has been listening. None of the cuts so angered people as the cuts regarding SSOs. I was interested to read in the Treasurer's explanation that he is giving cash grants to provide extra assistance for children with learning difficulties with an option that that money be used for SSO hours, and that is just tokenism. On the one hand, SSO hours were reduced, so

valuable skills and teacher support was lost. It was deliberately taken by the Government simply to save money.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: To pay your debt.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I am going to ignore that remark. Suddenly we find that the Treasurer wants to convince us that the Government is concerned for our children's education and intends to give \$3 million to a special needs area. Basically, that is just robbing Peter to pay Paul. In my electorate—and I know this is the case in other electorates—our children will suffer in the long run. Over the past two years, the education budget has been slashed by some \$47 million. There is nothing in this budget to crow about, I must say.

We have seen the assets sales, which must be carefully monitored, and I refer specifically to ETSA. We are told that there will be no privatisation of this essential service but, if we read the Bill carefully, we find that, although it may not happen in the life of this Parliament, the option is there for a future Parliament. We need to monitor that carefully, because the sale of such an essential service is of great concern to the community. Indeed, there was no option in this House for a public decision on the water contract, and people are still terribly concerned about that.

I do not believe that this budget was framed to provide proper and full services to the community. I think it is about saving dollars, and that means cutting services. I briefly mention that I am pleased to see that the redevelopment program for Hillcrest Primary School, which was talked about last year, is to commence this year. That has received a very heartening response from the community, because the schools in my electorate—three schools in particular—need dollars put into them. The classrooms are in poor condition, and parents and friends in the community do painting and other jobs to give the kids a fairly comfortable environment. I am particularly delighted that, finally, redevelopment of Hillcrest Primary School will commence. Apart from that, I do not see much joy in the budget. If, as has been indicated, John Howard withdraws further dollars from this State, our communities will just continue to suffer.

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

A quorum having been formed:

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I participate in this debate in order to draw attention to the funds which are appropriated for the purpose of advancing the interests of primary industry. I support the Bill. I echo the remarks that have been made by other members about the benefits which have come to the State through prudent management by this Government. This has been quite outstanding. Without question, this budget continues to repair our State. We have broken the back of the debt. We will see a reduction to 20.3 per cent of gross State product by this time next year, after having seen it rise to over 28 per cent at the end of June 1992. We will see public sector net debt falling to around 16 per cent of gross State product by the year 2000.

That warrants comment. That figure will be the lowest ever on record. In the process, this State has become very competitive with the other States of the Commonwealth. We did that in order to attract here again not only the capital that is essential to expand the State's manufacturing and general export productivity base, and thereby provide jobs, but also the people who will want to enrol their children in our schools, need homes to live in, buy other goods and services from the existing service industries and thereby strengthen the economy which, under Labor, had become thin, frail, indeed

brittle.

Most South Australians do not realise how perilously close to mendicant State status we came. Had it been our misfortune and misjudgment to have re-elected a Labor Government at the last State election, it is almost certain—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: Well may the Lord have been involved to forbid it! I support the sentiment that the member for Hartley has expressed. Had that been our misfortune, we most certainly would have ended up in the hands of the International Monetary Fund or the national Treasury and the Reserve Bank, or a combination of both those general institutions. Our debt would have been unmanageable.

The prerogative of this Parliament to make policy about what money we spend on providing an education for children and training for those young people who want to enter the work force, providing hospitalisation for those who become sick or otherwise injure themselves, providing protection from the predators in our community through the Police Force, the courts and so on, would have been removed. We would not, as a Parliament, have had the prerogative to go on determining, through debate and democratic means, what we would do. That would be dictated. The only role that this Parliament would then have had would have been to pass laws which govern the conduct of behaviour and business in society. That would have been a sorry day indeed.

I say to people such as Mr Don Dunstan and others like him—including the Democrats—who have behaved with gross irresponsibility and impropriety in recent times (whereby they advocate that we need not reduce State debt, or that we can do it more gradually) deserve the contempt with which they will be treated by people who have some insight into what the consequences would have been. They are the kind of people who do not understand how to be responsible. They illustrate it by making the comments that they make about the level of our debt—by saying that it was not all that bad, that it was manageable. Well, it was not. No responsible finance house manager would agree that it was manageable. It definitely was not. Now let's consider the pluses.

We still have in South Australia distinct advantages, with a labour cost of production 5 per cent below the national average. We have an enlightened industrial relations framework in our legislation which enables the job provider and the wage earner to get together and determine how the wage earner will be rewarded for his or her work. Our per capita of taxation is 23 per cent below that of Victoria and 26 per cent below that of New South Wales. What is more, we have a very low level of industrial disputation, 28 days being lost in South Australia per 1 000 employees compared with the national average of 79 days during the last year.

We have managed to reduce the debt level simply by biting the bullet, and biting it in big lumps. We have sold assets and used the proceeds to retire debt rather than to do as Dunstan would advocate—put it into the recurrent expenditure account and blow it. We have achieved what Professor Cliff Walsh should aim for in his audit of Government affairs, which was commissioned by the Premier and Treasurer just after we came to office. We will reduce that debt by \$1 800 million, and that will be achieved 18 months ahead of schedule.

Whilst we could always have done better—and I can think of instances in which we could have done better—it nonetheless ill behoves any of us to be critical of the efforts of the Government. On the basis of the recommendations contained

in the Audit Commission's report, it has been an outstanding achievement. As I have pointed out already, the net proceeds from asset sales and businesses have been applied directly to the reduction of our debt—a most important exercise. Painful—maybe: necessary—absolutely. Sir, we have addressed the social areas of concern abroad in the community by allocating \$90 million extra to help. There has been a provision of 20 000 extra admissions to hospitals in the past two years and a further 3 000 expected in the next year. We are able to provide \$39 million extra now for major building works at Royal Adelaide Hospital, Lyell McEwin Hospital, Repatriation General Hospital on Daws Road and other major equipment purchases as well as information technology projects within the health system.

In education we are providing an extra \$60 million and, in recent days, have announced that extra computers with their necessary ancillary technology and equipment will be provided for all students. There is to be \$15 million provided for that program, which ultimately will supply, on average, a computer for every five students in our schools. That is very commendable in that the future of this State, indeed the future of those children once they reach working age, is very much involved with the use of computers. That is in addition to the \$100 million that will be spent on new schools, on the development of existing campuses and on maintenance and other capital projects. We will continue to benchmark performance in our schools.

We will be continuing the basic skills tests for years 3 and 5. Anyone who says that is an unnecessary exercise, or argues that it is ineffective in some way or other, is clearly failing to recognise the benefits that come with having at least some testing across time by which comparisons can be made. It is not so much an absolute test of the day for the student in particular as a test taken on the day by thousands of students, which over time can be compared with students at the same stage of their development doing the same tests across time. Testing them in years 3 and 5 will give us a progress picture, as it were. It is not about providing for a subjective interest by parents in the results of their own child, but rather it is about providing us all with a measure that is a standard with which we can make comparisons across time.

What we have to remember, though, is that the Democrats, those poor duffers—or their unfortunate representatives in this Parliament—and the ALP oppose these asset sales. They oppose contracting out. They want more dollars for education and health, even more than we have provided. God knows where they would get—and God is not saying—the \$350 million extra required to meet their budget deficit, if they were to continue with that opposition. Would they double payroll tax (since that is the amount the State collects almost exactly in payroll tax)? I wonder whether or not that would produce more jobs in South Australia for the people who are unemployed or whether it might drive business investment and the jobs provided through that investment out of the State.

I believe members opposite to be poor managers. In the case of the Democrats they will never have to manage anything and they know it, so they can get away with their specious propositions, claims and advocacy. It is to my eternal amazement that anyone at any time could have ever supported that Party. It is a two bob each way Party and completely morally bankrupt, in that it never has to be accountable for the consequences of its policies. It knows it will never have to put them into effect. Indeed, I suspect that its representatives in this Parliament would not have the wit

to govern in the unlikely and unfortunate event that they were ever put in that position. They would not understand the nature of the responsibilities they would be accepting.

I am astonished at the Leader of the Opposition's argument that the budget has a shelf life of a few months. He believes that we are not serious when we say that we will do only what we are able to do within the framework of what is provided in this document. We have no intention of picking up the programs that the Commonwealth says it will not continue to fund, which involves the special purpose grants. They were always Commonwealth programs, and if the Federal Government of the day decides against continuing them it is the responsibility and the judgment of that Government, not the responsibility or the judgment of the South Australian Government. We were not capable of financing it under Labor and we did not finance it under Labor. We will not now finance it, either.

We are demonstrably incapable of financing it under the Liberal Government led by the current Premier and have no intention of attempting to do so, in spite of what the Labor Party might set as expectations for us, once we discover whatever it is that is cut from special purpose grants when the Federal budget is brought down in August. Whatever that is, it will remain. As for the general purpose grants which the State has a prerogative to determine, most certainly we can expect that the Commonwealth will honour its contract. We have a signed document for that money and there are no circumstances in which the Commonwealth should feel that it is entitled to break that contract.

I now turn to some of the specifics contained in the budget and expenditure in an area very dear to me and to the people I represent; that is, to those engaged in primary industry where it is not mining. I am very interested in mining, of course, as you, Mr Deputy Speaker and other members, know but I am now charged with the responsibility of being Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Primary Industries. It is high time that we all took a close look at what has been happening in recent years. There has been a continuing erosion of the commitment from the public purse to the development of new technologies that enhance productivity. We can look at some specific examples obtained from SARDI—and I am grateful to their senior executive officers for helping me in obtaining this information to put before members.

We often crow about the benefits that might come from investment in the arts, for example, where we may spend \$1 and get back \$1 or \$2. That is remarkable and laudable and I do not detract from it, but let me point out that, where we spend a dollar in areas such as primary industry projects as undertaken, for instance, in SARDI, we get back not just \$2, \$4 or \$8 but well in excess of that amount. For the benefit of members I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* a small table that sets out the ex-ante BCAs for SARDI regarding the funded projects in this coming year. It is a statistical table which provides a benefit cost analysis.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can the honourable member assure the House that the information is purely statistical and not of too great a length?

Mr LEWIS: I can.

Leave granted.

Minute to: Mr Peter Lewis
Member for Ridley
Subject: Benefit Cost Analysis

Benefit cost analysis (BCA) is a commonly used and widely accepted measure of the performance of a research and development program.

BCA is performed either at the commencement of a project (ex-ante) as a strategic priority setting mechanism or after a research project is finished (ex-post) and the outcomes are being expressed as an economic return. Ex-post BCAs can be repeated over time to assess how a project outcome is performing.

Ex-ante BCAs have been undertaken in the grains and livestock industries for some time. A more qualitative form of industry assessment and significance analysis is carried out for horticultural projects.

Ex-ante BCAs aggregated into SARDI sub-programs have been determined for the grains research portfolio.

Ex-ante BCAs for SARDI proposed GRDC funded projects 1996-97

Pulses for low rainfall areas	28:1
Control of cereal fungal diseases	17:1
Investigation of wheat performance on West Coast	11:1
Southern region nematology investigations	10:1
Vetch breeding program	14:1
Bacterial blight detection in peas	38:1
Assessment of ALS herbicides in acid soils	32:1
Crop and tillage rotations for improved soil fertility	21:1

Rigorous ex-post analyses have been carried out in the following areas:

Oat Breeding

The BCA for the oat breeding program gave a return of 69:1.

Oats are of increasing importance as the feedlotting industries expand, the intensive animal industries become more competitive and great importance placed on milling quality.

There are 130 000 hectares grown in South Australia.

Mr LEWIS: The benefit cost analysis is commonly used and it is widely accepted as a measure of the performance of research and development in any program. Members can look at the ex-ante (beginning) or consider it as a strategic priority setting mechanism, or they can look at it afterwards as the project is finished (referred to by economists as ex-post).

What we see there is that, for instance, pulses from low rainfall areas can produce a benefit to cost ratio of 28 to 1. We would not expect to get that from any theatrical production or investment in some big event, yet we can easily get it by investing in these kinds of activities. Bacterial blight detection in peas yields us a benefit to cost ratio of 38 to 1. At the other end of the scale, members will see from the table that the nematology investigations in the southern region yield a benefit of 10 to 1, and so it goes. In oat breeding, the benefit cost analysis gives us a return of 69 to 1. That is of increasing importance in the feed lot and intensive animal industries, and increasingly as a milling product. We grow 130 hectares in South Australia. If we look at disease resistance in peas and beans we find that we get a yield of \$103 for every dollar outlaid, with a \$150 million return. That is an amazing benefit. An analysis of the performance of the lucerne improvement program shows that between 1978 and 1994 we had a benefit cost ratio of 17 to 1 on \$200 million.

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

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Just before I start on the main part of my speech today, I want to rebut some comments made by the member for Ridley. It is an absolute fantasy to say that the Labor members of this place—and for that matter of the other place—have opposed asset sales. As shadow Treasurer I have not opposed a single asset sale that has come through this place, except for the matter of forests, when I asked, 'Will you please explain and give us some information?' We have supported everything else—the whole lot, including the pipelines. If that is to be the attitude of the Liberal Party and if the member for Ridley is saying that, then indeed we will start opposing some of these things. I know he will peddle this claptrap around the paddocks, and

that is fine. I just hope that he will add this disclaimer to it; however, I know better.

I now respond to the Treasurer on the 1996 budget. Early in his speech the Treasurer declared victory over the State debt. The exact terms of this declaration were, 'We have broken the back of the debt burden we inherited.' On the Treasurer's calculations the extent of this reduction in State debt over his first three budgets is '\$1 673 million in real terms, representing about one-fifth of the total public sector debt'. To achieve this, there had to be some budgetary adjustment, but it is interesting to note the symmetry of real reduction in debt of \$1 673 million and the Treasurer's claim that 'since this Government came to power the asset sales program has generated proceeds of over \$1 600 million'.

So, we can see that, while net outlays have been restrained, the big effort on debt reduction has been through asset sales, which is exactly what the Liberals promised in their pre-election recovery program. Members will recall that the recovery program adopted the debt reduction strategy contained in the Labor 1993 'Meeting the challenge' statement, which had already begun to reduce the State net debt in real terms, but it added that the Liberals would reduce net debt by an extra \$1 billion by way of asset sales.

As we would expect, the Liberals have proceeded with their asset sales program with enthusiasm, given that they do not share our commitment to a strong public sector. In cutting outlays, the Brown Liberal Government has not kept all or even many of the promises that the Premier made during the election campaign. The promises to increase funding for schools and maintain class sizes, to increase funding for hospitals and reduce waiting lists and to increase funding for law and order and public safety will not go beyond the provisions of the Labor Government's target for public sector work force reductions of 3 900. Those promises were disposable—the sort of disposable promises made by all State and Federal Liberal politicians when they get elected—and disposed of immediately, either by a convenient memory lapse or under the pretext of the Liberal Party's excuse breaker, the Treasurer's Audit Commission.

The Treasurer's May 1994 statement set out the revised medium-term debt reduction program in response to the report of the Audit Commission. Having established the concept of an underlying deficit, it set out to eliminate it by the financial year 1997-98. The Treasurer's estimate of the underlying deficit in the budget of 1996-97 is \$60 million, and a surplus of \$10 million is projected for the following financial year. The implication is that the State is covering not only the cost of its recurrent expenditures or running costs but also most of the provision of new non-commercial social capital costs, as diminished as the State's capital program has become.

Previously, those non-commercial capital assets were paid for with the borrowings and paid for over the life of the assets by the generations that used them. That was a totally appropriate policy of regarding capital expenditure as a proportion of total Government expenditure, the greatest exponent of which was Tom Playford, when he undertook many of the capital expenditures required for the industrialisation of South Australia. The Brown Liberal Government would have had no justification in introducing its more conservative financial approach if it were not for the State Bank debt but, with debt now cut by one-fifth, according to its own calculations, it is using it as an instrument to cut other social expenditures according to its ideological agenda. We can accept the Premier's assurances that he has broken the

back of the State's debt problem, but we cannot accept the manner in which he has gone about it.

Over the past two years we have not been impressed by the big cuts in expenditure on schools, hospitals and police, when the Brown Liberal Government has been taking from them and giving extraordinary handouts to business. The Premier's strategy of buying State development trophies so that he can say that something is happening in the State is clearly not working, when his own Government budget papers forecast that economic growth will continue to lag behind the national average. That is in total contradiction to advertisements he ran in newspapers such as the *Australian Financial Review* only a few weeks ago, saying that South Australia was leading the nation. Nor will the Premier be able to sustain his hype that this is a caring budget, when the much heralded \$47 million increase in education funding, after allowing 3 per cent for inflation, is only \$2 million in real terms and does nothing to redress the \$47 million cuts made over the past two years.

The story is the same for health, where a \$69 million increase in nominal terms amounts to a \$1.3 million increase after allowing for inflation and compares with the previous cuts of \$79 million. The Premier's line about a caring budget will prove to be as illusory as his line about South Australia leading the nation in economic growth.

The Labor Party has also expressed its concern about the secret deals to contract out the management of the State's water supply system and to hand State Government computing facilities to EDS which the Premier assures us are saving the taxpayers money, although he is totally unwilling or is unable to provide any evidence to substantiate this. So, with these and other very interesting substantive reservations about the way this has been achieved, we accept the Treasurer's claim that he has broken the back of debt. Having said that, I intimate that the focus now shifts from looking back at State Bank debt to looking forward to the new financial threat that faces this State.

That threat is to the cuts too, and what was until now 55 per cent of this State's revenue coming from Commonwealth grants. They are about to be visited upon South Australia by the Howard Liberal Government with the complete complicity and connivance of the Premier and the State Treasurer. About half the revenue is untied general revenue assistance and financial grants (or FAGs as they are known). The other half comprises specific purpose payments and contributions (or SPPs).

The thing that is phoney about this 1996 State budget is that it makes no allowance for cuts in this funding, though clearly it contemplates that there will be significant cuts in the August Federal budget. The Treasurer has been quite explicit. He expects cuts in the SPPs, and he says that when they occur, 'Any budgetary adjustment which the State Government is forced to take as a consequence of announcements in August will be reflective entirely on the Commonwealth's priorities and not the State's.' This is the Treasurer taking out his political insurance. He thinks he can let these new cuts fall where they may on State programs by saying that they are coming from Canberra and evade any public responsibility for them.

The Labor Party has two responses to that. The first is that if a major SPP, like the hospital funding agreement, which is expected to provide \$491 million of the \$967 million this budget allocates to hospitals is cut, the Treasurer may well have great difficulty avoiding recasting this phoney budget, if the alternative is closing large numbers of wards. The

second is that he can hardly absolve the Brown Government of responsibility for these cuts when, in the budget speech, he said:

As Treasurer of South Australia, I had to lead the process of budgetary adjustment in this State, and I call upon the Commonwealth to put its own house in order, just as we have done.

Neither the Treasurer nor the Premier has at any time questioned the need for the Howard Liberal Government's totally arbitrary \$8 billion cuts, because they agree with them. They will be another instrument by which the State Liberals will inflict their conservative agenda on South Australia.

Given the Premier's failure to mount any defence, let alone an effective one, these cuts in South Australia will not be totally blamed on Canberra. The annual Estimates Committee process will begin soon. I call on the Premier and the Treasurer to provide a second opportunity to examine the real estimates after the Federal budget is handed down in August. I am not optimistic about our being given this opportunity, because of the increasingly obvious systematic strategy by this Government to reduce parliamentary and public scrutiny of the Executive on financial matters. This is, as we saw in the 1980s, a very dangerous path. Legislative or institutional arrangements which put Government business activities beyond the scrutiny of the executive Parliament and the public are even worse.

We are seeing a series of Government business undertakings corporatised and moved off budget. That need not necessarily result in a reduction in public accountability if appropriate processes to examine their performances and operations are put in place. Unfortunately, they have not kept pace. There is no adequate comprehensive or systematic means of ensuring accountability. The Treasurer wrote to the Leader of the Opposition setting out the limitations on Estimates Committees inquiring into the activities of SA Water and United Water. It is clear that some reform is needed in this area, and I call on the Government to provide an opportunity for proper parliamentary scrutiny of all Government business enterprises. It would be appropriate to do so at a second series of Estimates Committee hearings convened to look at the real estimates after the Federal budget in August.

The Government, in its increasing arrogance, is becoming extremely reluctant to supply financial information that it has promised to provide. In 1993 the Liberal Opposition promised to 'require any deficiencies in asset registers to be remedied by 30 June 1994.' On 8 March 1995, the Treasurer promised to provide a State balance sheet in the 1995 budget, but he did not do so. In his last report, the Auditor-General said that urgent attention was needed to be given to this issue, describing the present Government's decision not to publish this information as 'a backward step compared with earlier approaches.' The earlier approaches were, I suspect, the last Labor budget in 1993 which did include a simple balance sheet. We now have the 1996 budget with no balance sheet, despite an assurance from the Treasurer last September that one would be included.

The budget documents are deficient in a number of other important respects. It is time that the budget documents were brought up to national standards. At least under the Federal Labor Government detailed information was provided in several principal areas. First, three year forward estimates of outlays by function, portfolio and program. Secondly, three year forward estimates of revenue by revenue type. Thirdly, outlays measured and tabled, including expected costs of each measure in all three out years. Fourthly, a revenue measures

table including expected receipts from each measure in the next three out years. Fifthly, a reconciliation table showing variations between the last forward estimate and the budget for the budgeted year as a result of parameter and other estimated variations and policy decisions by portfolio or function.

The absence of measures tables is nothing less than an attempt to cut programs by stealth. There has been a marked decline in the quality and usefulness of the information contained in Financial Paper No. 2. A prerequisite of good public policy is transparency and accountability. This Government is clearly performing well below standard. There is no point in the Treasurer's blaming State Treasury for these inadequacies. The limits on the information provided in the budget documents are an enormous public convenience to him.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Emergency Services): I move:

That this Bill be referred to Estimates Committees.

Motion carried.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I move:

That the House note grievances.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Mr Speaker, in grieving about the budget, I seek your guidance. I believe we can go slightly wider than we can in the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

The SPEAKER: Well, it is grievances.

Mr BRINDAL: I wish to put before the House a situation which I view with some seriousness, and it is an historic situation. I put it before the House in the hope that it will never be repeated. It concerns a time when, as shadow Minister of Consumer Affairs, I wrote to the Minister for Health of the day, Dr Don Hopgood—

Mr Quirke: Did you get an answer?

Mr BRINDAL:—who I must say I always found generally to be a fairly honourable man and a good member of this House. The member for Playford asked whether I received any response. I received an acknowledgment. Six months later, I did follow up yet still received no reply. I regarded the substance of the complaint to be serious and I raised it in the press at the time: it concerned salad bars, self-service food and other unsavoury food practices in supermarkets. I had been advised by local government, and health inspectors in various branches of local government, that the practice was illegal and that was the substance of the letter. I wrote to the then Minister as a member of Parliament saying, 'I have been advised that the following is an illegal practice and I seek your advice.' An acknowledgment of the letter was received. I followed up the matter six months later, yet received no further reply.

It again has come to my attention. Members will be aware that Dr Kerry Kirke recently had a large article in the *Advertiser* wherein he claimed that salad bars are a death trap waiting to happen, that they are a serious health issue. I did some probing, and what I found out greatly dismayed me. Although I received no response from the then Minister, two sitting days before the previous Parliament rose for the last time, the Minister of the day, Dr Hopgood, introduced a regulation which clearly made this practice legal. All members would know that, when a Parliament is about to be prorogued, regulations that are introduced are not carefully scrutinised.

After the election of this Government—certainly for the first three sitting days—everyone who was sworn in, either as a new member or as a Minister, had a lot to do and perhaps did not scrutinise carefully the new regulations, especially those introduced before Christmas and before the Parliament rose. As a result, two days before the last Parliament rose, the then Minister for Health introduced a brand new regulation which made this activity legal. It clearly changed from an illegal activity to a legal activity sanctioned by the Government. I would contend that it was done, to my dismay, at a time when the House was not properly fitted, as it generally is, to scrutinise such matters. If I was being uncharitable I would suggest that it was snuck in behind our backs. As I said, it made an illegal activity legal.

We are witnessing the consequences of that in the press. Dr Kerry Kirke has said that the practice is not strictly a good health practice and there are inherent dangers with it. I would hope that there is a lesson to be learned: I would hope that the Government is not here to patch up bad practice and illegal activity and to stick up for the big chains over the health of its citizens. I raise the matter because it is of historic importance to this House. I point out that the previous Government now sits in Opposition. The members of that Government, the inheritors of that tradition, are exactly the same people who carried on like pork chops about the Garibaldi affair, who tried to almost lynch the Minister over his involvement in the Garibaldi affair, and who were vociferous on the issue of public health.

The Opposition, which seems to be slightly depleted at the present time, cannot have it both ways. Members opposite wish to be the guardians of public health; they were in Government; they had an opportunity, although quite clearly in this instance they were highly negligent in the opportunity afforded to them. Yet months later they came before this Parliament and pilloried the Minister about a situation which was largely beyond his control and about which he did everything possible.

I am pleased that the member for Elizabeth has entered the Chamber. She is the shadow Minister for Health and I would ask her to carefully read the *Hansard* tomorrow about what I have said thus far in the debate. From the point of view of the responsibility she may one day carry in the area of health, she should show some interest.

I believe in this institution; it has evolved over hundreds of years and this form of Government has served Australia well. However, any system has its strong points and its weaknesses. What I have laid before the House is an example of how even the best system can be used in a way in which it was not intended. I suggest to members that perhaps we should look at avoiding this type of practice in the future.

I hope that, in line with the Appropriation Bill about which we are now grieving, the Government in this session will look at other legislative matters which, while not involving appropriation, will effectively create better government for the people of South Australia. In that context, I believe that we must compliment many of the Ministers for the work they have done thus far. Many initiatives have been taken by this Government which are not dollar items but which have resulted in a better community for South Australians.

In particular, I mention the Minister for Transport who honoured me by asking me to be on the Pedestrian Facilities Review Group. In that context, the Minister received a report which outlined a new regime of crossings, the most significant of which is a wombat crossing which enables people in

wheelchairs and people who have less motor skills to cross a road at the same level as the footpath; it is a hump and most people would recognise it as a type of zebra crossing. It is a new sort of crossing introduced by this Minister—not entirely without cost, but it is not a significant budget item. I believe that we can go through the portfolios of many Ministers of this Government and find similar examples of good Government and good community initiatives.

Harking back to the Minister for Transport, Sir, you would recall the absolute furore in this place following the introduction of the rollerblading legislation. To hear the hoo-ha at the time, one would have thought that the world as we know it was about to come to an end; elderly citizens would be killed in the streets; there would be mayhem. The legislation was introduced in February, yet to the best of my knowledge—and I am sure the papers would report it quickly—there have been few, if any, instances of injury. The law has worked well.

I believe that some councils have adopted a 'wait and see' attitude. Many councils have not yet banned rollerblading or small-wheeled vehicles on the streets. Now that the legislation is settling down and councils can analyse the situation, I would hope that they seriously consider the matter. I believe that the Minister clearly intended that certain areas be declared unsuitable for rollerblades and other small-wheeled vehicles. We need a facility by which this activity can be banned in those areas; and the facility is the legislation which enables councils to effect that. Councils, as the level of government closest to the people, should know the local streets where it is appropriate to ban rollerblading. I congratulate the Minister on her initiative which can be further strengthened and improved for the community if the councils look at those areas that are applicable and those areas that are not applicable.

Mr WADE (Elder): On Friday 31 May I had the pleasure of representing the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education in addressing competitors and presenting medals to the winners of the State heat of the Australian Skill Olympics. Skill Expo is part of the Skill Olympics, and it was held at the Wayville Showgrounds on 26 and 28 May. The expo is designed to give those young people who have skills an opportunity to compare them with others in our State. It offers young Australians an encouragement and motivation to develop very high levels of precision and to increase their range of skills.

Skill Expo came about as part of the Skill Olympics, and I will spend a few minutes discussing the Skill Olympics to inform members of its history. The concept was developed in 1949 when the Spaniards were involved in vocational training. They hit on the idea of inviting their neighbour Portugal to participate in the competition. The first competition began in 1950 to promote vocational training standards in what was then post-war Europe. The competition has expanded and we now compete with over 28 countries in over 45 categories of trade.

Workskill Australia was formed in 1982 as a practical response to what was seen then and now as an urgent need to raise the skills standards in the workplace and forge a new commitment to excellence in the vocational training of our young skilled workers. What is relevant right now is that a study conducted in October 1994 by La Trobe University in Melbourne found that about two-thirds of Australians do not possess basic logic skills and will not be able to keep up as life becomes more dependent on technology. The study

looked at 2 000 young Australians aged 18 and under. They were questioned in a survey, and two-thirds did not understand the basic skills that would even get them involved in a trade. For Australia's future, it would be a complete debacle in trying to improve and educate our children if they could not understand basic logic skills. Workskill Australia is designed to ensure that they do understand those skills.

Workskill in the 1990s has been widely recognised as helping to meet that real need in the community, to improve the status of vocational training and for creating a greater competence in the skill base of Australia and South Australia. It has made a particular contribution in presenting young people with an opportunity and incentive for the achievement of excellence in the vocational areas of their choosing. In 1989, South Australia had three competitors in the national team, and all three won silver medals. This count was one-third of the medal tally for that year. It should be noted that Mark Vincent, one of the silver medal winners in electronics that year, was awarded a cadetship by his employer. He completed an engineering degree at Adelaide University this year. So we see that this kind of training and vocational exercise helps our young people to achieve.

In 1991, South Australia achieved its greatest medal tally in the national team. Eight competitors, making up one-quarter of the national team, went to Amsterdam. The Australian team won one gold, two silver and three bronze medals. Of the bronze medals, two went to South Australians. In 1993, South Australia had one competitor in the national team and the team picked up 13 diplomas of excellence at the international competition in Taiwan. Australia's achievements at the International Skill Olympics have been considerable. Indeed, over the past five years Australia ranks as the best performing English-speaking nation, in terms of both the numbers of medals it wins and the percentage of competitors bringing back diplomas of excellence. In the past five years, two-thirds of team members have brought home from overseas diplomas of excellence. South Australian young people have been part of this achievement.

In the 1995 competition in France, Australia topped the English-speaking nations and finished tenth overall in the thirty-third International Youth Skill Olympics. Australia maintained the tenth ranking despite an increased number of participating nations. There were 28 countries and 527 competitors. Australia was awarded one gold, one silver and two bronze medals, as well as 16 diplomas of excellence, which was the most number of diplomas awarded to any of the 28 countries.

The categories that Workskill covers include auto body repairs, bread baking, bricklaying, cookery, electrical installation, hair dressing, industrial electronics, jewellery, metal fabrication, plastering, plumbing, refrigeration and air-conditioning, wall and floor tiling, and wood pattern making. The object of this exercise is to cover as many skills as possible to assist our young people to achieve and compare themselves with other young South Australians, to compare themselves with Australians in national competitions and then to compare themselves with world youth. As can be seen from the facts that I have given, South Australia fares well internationally. Scott Plane, the Adelaide Hyatt Regency's 1988 Skill Olympian and the 1991 international judge, put it best in the following words:

The benefits are taking part, not in winning. Your personal standard is raised every time you take on extra training and go through a competition. It's very valuable to develop contacts with

acknowledged experts in your field and to learn new skills from the best in the business.

It is all about having a go and motivating yourself to improve the quality of your work by training for higher and higher standards.

I congratulate John Marshall (the committee Chairman), Norm Schutze, the committee, the parents, the supporters, the companies and, of course, the competitors involved in this year's Skill Olympics. One small point that I must mention was that, when I gave out gold, silver and bronze medals to the outstanding young people of our State, I was surprised that some of them dressed so casually. In fact, a few of them probably would not have been allowed in the local hotel the way they were dressed, but they came up for their awards dressed in a casual manner. The Skill Expo was impeccable in its organisation and in its objectives. It has international significance, and our winners should be very proud of their achievements.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I would like to address some issues in the State budget that affect Elizabeth in terms of new facilities. The first is the \$28 million stage 3 redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Health Service, which I am pleased to see will occur. It has been on the books for a number of years. In fact, stage 1 and stage 2 of the redevelopment occurred several years ago, and the plans for stage 3 were being drawn up at the time of the change of government. As I said yesterday when I made my second reading contribution, this is one of the items that was on the capital works program last year but slipped and is on again this year. I am pleased this is to occur: we certainly need that facility. Elizabeth is the regional centre for the northern metropolitan area, having a fast growing population. We have particular health needs and we need a hospital of a good standard: we welcome this move.

In terms of the amalgamation of the Lyell McEwin Hospital with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the board was told that the only way any money would come to the north was if the amalgamation was signed up. That was done in August 1994, and now we are eagerly awaiting the money and the facilities that should be flowing from that amalgamation.

I acknowledge the building of the Regional Community Health Centre in Elizabeth. That was another project that was down for last year but it slipped, too. I noted the comments made by the member for Light last night: he said that acknowledgment of these things in Elizabeth had perhaps slipped my mind. Under last year's budget the Minister made an announcement about a fantastic new program—the home visiting program—which was to amount to some \$1.2 million, which was to be based in Elizabeth and which would be a pilot for the whole of the State. I welcomed that. I saw it as the only shining light in the budget. Unfortunately, two months later, the Minister cancelled that program. I hope that the Minister will not cancel the Lyell McEwin Health Service redevelopment or the community health facility, and I also hope that these programs do not again slip for another couple of years, because we need them and have needed them desperately for some years now.

I now turn to education. Last night when I heard some of the things that members were saying about education, extolling the virtues of this budget and talking about the schools in their areas, I wondered whether they were living on the same planet, because in Elizabeth things in State schools are pretty grim. Members referred to the Early Years

strategy and programs for students who were having difficulty. Speech therapy was mentioned by a number of members.

I will deal with this matter during the Estimates Committees, but I would like the House to know that in State schools in Elizabeth speech therapy is a dire need. In some schools the activity of a speech therapist has been reduced to half a day a term, and the hours of school support officers, who used to do the job in conjunction with the speech therapist, have been cut. Things are really desperate. Members need to talk to school communities, because what I heard in the House bears no relationship to the sorts of things that I am hearing about education not only in Elizabeth but also across South Australia.

I did note that the Government is putting aside money for schools to redirect into the programs of their choice. That is a good principle: it is good to have the flexibility to direct resources to wherever they are needed. However, it was interesting to note that, in handing out this money, the Government said that schools could use it to pay school support officers. In other words, although the Government has decreased school support officer hours, it is now giving schools money to replace them but it is making out that it is providing special funds for students with particular needs. The Government is simply replacing what it has taken away—and that was not sufficient in any case. In schools like the ones in my electorate, teachers and school communities have been reduced to the level where they can deal with only the most serious cases in terms of, for instance, speech therapy, literacy—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: Just listen. It means that all those kids who have minor problems that a small amount of input could fix do not get a look-in because they are not difficult enough. So, there is an escalation of those problems and things get worse for those kids until they reach secondary school. Do not let us be taken in by what is being said in relation to this budget. State schools are now at the lowest ebb for many years. One has to ask whether the Government's true agenda is to make things so bad that—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order! The member for Hartley is out of order.

Ms STEVENS:—anyone with money will opt for the private system and the rest will be left in our struggling, debilitated State schools. I have to ask, 'Is that really the way we want to go in our State?'

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: The member for Hartley was in a classroom a long time ago, and he probably did not know a lot about what was going on the grand scale, wherever he was.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: I think I know a little more than the member for Hartley. I now turn to another issue in relation to education, and that is the closure of The Parks. I worked at The Parks Community Centre in 1977-78; I was there when the school moved into The Parks Community Centre. I worked there in TAFE for a year or so, and then I was a community worker working with residents and assisting them in raising issues of concern and having them dealt with.

What impressed me about The Parks was, first, the facilities—and they are still impressive when one compares them with the facilities of the surrounding schools. When we are talking about facilities, we have to ask why the Govern-

ment is closing that school. Given the sorts of programs that are running at The Parks, it is a tragedy that it is being closed. The Regency Park Centre caters for adult students, Bowden-Brompton students, non-English speaking background students, many students at risk of leaving school early, and special education students.

The first reason that the Minister gave for the closure of the school was that it did not have the numbers, but his numbers are not correct because he has used full-time equivalent figures and we know that, with adult students in particular, there are more bodies because they are part-time students. There are 500 bodies, yet the Minister carefully reduces that figure to 360 full-time equivalents—but that is not true. That figure does not reflect the actual number of students.

The second reason that the Minister gave for closure was the rent cost for that property. I understand that the Port Adelaide-Enfield council is seeking to talk to the Minister about renegotiating the rent, but I believe that the Minister is not interested in talking. The issue about the numbers is a furphy. There are other schools close by with those sorts of numbers, and they are still open. I believe that schools such as The Parks are important for our system: they are benchmarks. There is a time to have schools that deal with different sorts of students. It reminds me of something said by Ken Boston, who was the Director-General when I was still in the education system: 'What we need is a comprehensive range of schools, not a range of comprehensive schools.' It is important to have differences.

The Parks is a school that caters for a very important set of students. We will rue the day we close schools like that, because it will leave many people with nowhere to go. This will mean the end of The Parks Community Centre because, if you take away the school, the buildings will be empty.

Mr VENNING (Custance): Today, I will inform the House of what has been achieved in my electorate of Custance since December 1993, the time when the Brown Liberal Government came to office in South Australia. I was very pleased with last week's budget, which has brought to a climax a very successful period in the Barossa and Mid North region. In 2½ years—and I say this quietly—the electorate of Custance, which I am representing currently, has been allocated in excess of \$41 million. I am extremely grateful for that and I pay tribute to the Government, particularly the Ministers who have been receptive to my lobbying in many of these areas. I am very pleased and I cannot complain for one second. My first priority on our coming into Government related to having planned regional development in my region. Nothing has happened in relation to regional development in the Mid North and Barossa region for at least the past 25 years. Nothing had been spent, nothing was organised and the community was going nowhere and without direction.

During the 2½ years that I have been the member for the district, I have consulted very widely, particularly with the community leaders, to whom I pay tribute. The local government authority and BREDA (Barossa Regional Economic Development Association) were very valuable in the early days. I also pay tribute to my constituents, particularly the members of the Liberal Party who at all times have been helpful and given me advice and who, when I was successful, encouraged me to go further; I thank them for that. It is an ongoing situation and I am listening all the time. Certainly, our members are out there doing whatever they can

to promote the region. Together we are getting the runs on the board, and \$41 million is 41 million reasons for saying we are succeeding.

A plan has been formulated in relation to regional development in the Barossa Valley. It is a substantial document of 100 pages, and I thank the Government also for funding that document. BREDA, which was funded and set up by this Government, is now operating very effectively. I pay a tribute to its executive officer, Mr Brian Sincock, who liaises with me regularly—sometimes more often than I would like when things are not going so well. The relationship I have formed with Mr Sincock has been very commendable and, if there are any little hiccups or glitches at all, we are on the telephone to each other. It is a very valuable resource and the Government is receiving good value for its money. The Government spent \$331 500 directly on the planning of the regional development in my district, and that was achieved through the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development.

We are very keen to promote businesses in the area. Many businesses are appearing on the horizon, and no stone is left unturned in an effort to encourage those businesses set up in our region. Whether they be barrel makers, glass makers, glass packers, or makers of anything else at all, we will do all we can to facilitate their entry into the Barossa Valley. I look forward to the oncoming amalgamation of the District Councils of Angaston, Tanunda and Barossa. Certainly, it will make it much easier to coordinate the whole area, particularly in relation to our industrial enterprises. We have some very good industrial areas within the councils but within the total picture of one council the small-mindedness that can be involved in small town politics will be removed.

I will refer briefly to the direct areas in which the Government has helped us in funding. Road access is a very serious problem in the Barossa and, in particular, as my colleague the member for Light and I remind the House all the time, the Barossa Valley Way, which connects our two electorates, is a disgraceful piece of highway. Its only merit is that it is a very picturesque route. Certainly, as a through road for commercial traffic it is a disaster. Only yesterday the honourable member and I were looking at a section where a fatality had occurred in recent days. I very much appreciate the \$4.5 million which the Government over several years has put towards straightening the highway and redesigning it in places to remove the dangerous sections. In addition, \$8 million has been allocated to building a new Blanchetown bridge, which I certainly welcome, and \$4 million has been allocated to the Sturt Highway development involving the bypass at Daveyston, in which the member for Light and I are both interested. That development includes the bypass deviation and an overtaking lane, which will certainly be of great interest to and appreciated by the locals.

An extra \$4 million has been allocated to sealing the Burra to Morgan road. As I have said previously, no speech of mine is complete without referring to that road. I remind the House that a total of \$17.5 million has been allocated to the electorate for this project, and I am very pleased with the Government's priority here. I also remind the House that this is a total strategy designed to get the Barossa region up and running and to be at the forefront of South Australia's economic development, where it ought to be. The main aim is to have better access to the Valley. An additional project I have in mind is a new road south of Tanunda out through to Gomersal to provide a new commercial road link for the

lower part of the Barossa Valley in order to get commercial vehicles off tourist roads and out of our towns.

In relation to health, I am very pleased that we have had some high priorities in the area. I refer, for instance, to the development of a new day surgery unit and the refurbishment of the palliative care suite at the Angaston Hospital (\$125 000 in 1995-96); the provision of endoscopic equipment at Tanunda and Angaston Hospitals (\$80 000 in 1994-95 and continuing); the purchase of an operating microscope for Angaston Hospital (\$50 000); installation of a computer based patient information and financial system at Angaston and Tanunda Hospitals (\$55 000); financial support for Tanunda Hospital in recognition of gaining accreditation by the Australian Council of Health for their standards (\$15 000)—and the list goes on. I have mentioned the small amounts because they have not hit the headlines like the others have. I could be accused of being greedy, but I always say, 'The record speaks for itself', and I will stand by the record. I am very pleased that we have been able to achieve this.

Water is a key issue in the region and we certainly welcome the Government's announcement that contracts are signed and work will start almost immediately and will be completed in the next year to provide the Barossa Valley and the Mid North region with clean water, as I mentioned in my speech yesterday. That is at a total cost of \$29 million. With regard to education, I am very pleased that the Government has an ongoing commitment to this area because it certainly was lacking under the previous Government. I welcome the Government's contribution towards the new Tanunda Primary School's upgrade and also to the new centre at Faith, which is to be a shared entertainment centre and school facility.

Tourism is a critical and important area in the Barossa, and \$261 000 has been earmarked for expansion in the region. That money will be spent over many areas. One of the major areas, which I have mentioned previously, is \$50 000 Government input to the Barossa Valley Vintage Festival. There was the Arthur Andersen report on the area and also a Kinsmen market study which, together, amount to over \$50 000. In relation to the Chateau Tanunda planning work, involving \$25 000, that is a figure that came out of the woodwork. I was very pleased about that, because in Chateau Tanunda we have a magnificent State asset and we have to plan carefully what we will do with it. No stone is left unturned throughout the tourism area.

As I have said, the Barossa Wine and Tourism Association has attracted almost \$1 million of Government funding. It is now ready for opening and I wish that venture every success. All in all I am certainly very pleased with the success achieved during the 2½ years that this Government has been in office and the six years in which I have been a member of Parliament. The team work has been exemplary and I am very pleased to see the runs on the board and, most importantly, that our regional development strategies are working.

Mr BUCKBY (Light): I rise tonight to say a few more words on the budget, having spoken yesterday on a number of issues that are important to the electorate of Light and the State. I am pleased to take this opportunity to inform the South Australian public of the gains that have been made by this Government over its (so far) short period in office. Yesterday in my speech I mentioned the difficulty of getting business to return to a State once the attitude or reputation of that State has been tarnished by a State Bank debt and by mismanagement of State finances. It should not be underesti-

mated. I think I mentioned yesterday that the industrial development and expansion now going on in this State just show that this Government is making very large inroads into restoring the faith and confidence that business previously had in this State. I will give a few examples. One is the expansion of Holden's and the expansion of the GMH plant at Elizabeth to produce a new mid-sized vehicle called the Vectra, which will be produced in both left-hand and right-hand drive and which is a major new investment in this area.

Do not underestimate this, because this decision was made not only by management here: it was also made by General Motors-Holden's in Detroit. To allocate that amount of money to expand premises and produce a world model here in South Australia really shows that, first, our work force has greatly improved its efficiency and productivity—which is a pat on the back for both unions and workers as well as management at GMH—and, secondly, it also displays confidence in the Government. The stability of policy that will underlie this State is seen as a positive indication that the State is moving in the right direction financially. The correct decisions are being made that engender that sort of confidence in a company to invest in South Australia. Likewise, Mitsubishi has also seen fit to invest another \$500 million in the expansion of a new model and the production of a world car and engine blocks here for world markets. Similarly, that decision was made not just here in South Australia but also in Japan. Again, it is an indication of South Australia's being seen as a stable place of investment, employment and industrial policy.

Another matter that is interesting, to say the least, is the additional investment of \$200 million by Santos for exploration purposes. It really shows that the policy of the previous Government in the aeromagnetic mapping program of South Australia was a very good decision which is being continued by this Government and which is still attracting investment into this State. It should be noted that, following the aeromagnetic mapping of the very Far North of the State, right up against the Western Australian and Northern Territory borders, some 36 applications were made for exploration licences in a particular area. Some cores there showed deposits of what is thought to be kaolite, which is the same sort of mineral-bearing rock which exists in Western Australia and in which the Argyle diamonds were found, so it is a particularly interesting find.

Another interesting matter is the expansion of the wine industry. I have said before in this place that, while I am very pleased to see it and the expansion of the export market—and I trust that that continues—one of the factors that will face this Government in time to come is whether, when the 4 000 hectares in South Australia (50 per cent of 8 000 hectares Australia-wide) come into full production, the demand will exist for that volume of wine that is produced from those 4 000 additional hectares. That is a matter of concern, because we all remember the vine pull program of the mid-1980s, when growers could not sell their wine because the demand was not there. I think that is a challenge that growers and this Government will have to face somewhere down the track.

One very good thing that has come out of discussions held recently by the Minister for Infrastructure, the Hon. John Olsen, is that a company in Malaysia has indicated interest in supplying Bolivar water to the Barossa valley. A number of growers have been to see the member for Custance and me over the past two or three years indicating the lack of underground water in the Barossa and the fact that their hands

are basically tied in terms of expanding their vineyards because of the lack of water. One of the options has been to place another dam on the North Para River, expensive though that is. That is one option, but the interest in transferring Bolivar water to the Barossa valley really opens up another avenue of negotiations and expansion that has not existed previously. I commend the Minister on that and look forward to receiving further news indicating that the Barossa Valley, which is the premium wine growing area in this State, can reach its maximum potential. The member for Custance and I will press very hard to ensure that this program is adopted and, if we can get private investment into that program, all the better.

I often speak about the debt in South Australia, and probably to some people it becomes a little boring, but it is the overriding factor that affects both the budget and financial attitudes in this State. It is a crippling factor, which we have inherited. One of the major elements of that debt is the large amount of interest that we have to pay out each year, this year estimated at some \$700 million. I do not have to tell the House that if that State Bank debt were not inherited and did not exist we would be paying out some \$300 million to \$350 million less in interest, which would mean that this Government would not have been forced to cut so many programs. However, in association with that, I am very pleased to see and commend the Treasurer and Cabinet on the fact that we are reducing the debt at a faster rate than we had estimated in 1995. That has occurred partly because of the increased value of sales that we have had for BankSA, the Pipelines Authority and SGIC and the very good deals that have been done there by the Asset Management Task Force.

Other properties and Government instrumentalities that will come up for sale in the next 12 months will be Forwood Products; SAAMC, which has been losing money for many years; the bulk loading facilities for our ports; and, of course, 333 Collins Street, Melbourne, which I am pleased to say is now getting enough occupancy to make it quite a marketable building. In 1995 we estimated that in real terms net debt would be \$7 146 million by June 1988. We have now reforecast that to \$6 890 million, which is an improvement of \$256 million. That really shows that this Government is doing an excellent job in restoring this State's economy and reducing debt. When we came into this place the debt as a percentage of gross State product was 28 per cent; by 1999 that is estimated to be 18 per cent.

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

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I wish to continue the remarks I was making earlier this afternoon in the course of my contribution on the budget. My concern—indeed, my responsibility—is to ensure that this State continues to enjoy the benefits to be derived from a focus on our primary industries, predominantly agriculture in all its forms and aquaculture. There is no doubt that Primary Industries South Australia (PISA) will continue to work with industries to realise the very many opportunities that exist in this State which are part of the more than \$3 billion we derive from those parts of our primary industry which are agriculturally based in the main—that is, all those things exclusive of mining that I am talking about. In fact, we are talking about 60 per cent of this State's export revenue; and a good portion of the remaining 40 per cent, whilst it comes from manufacturers, comes from the very commodities produced by primary industry as raw material in the first place. We simply

add value to it by, for example, turning wheat into flour, or anything else from the primary industry area, such as beef bones into soup. It may surprise members to realise that there is a substantial and rapidly expanding market for those kinds of by-products in our East Asia market region—those countries to our near north who are our best trading partners and immediate neighbours.

Primary Industries South Australia as a department recognises that we need to link our quality primary production with those markets in East Asia or, indeed, anywhere else in the world for that matter, so we have a particular emphasis on collecting market intelligence and providing that to people who can supply the commodities. PISA will be a major player in that regard. It will ensure that the public understand that the information is there and should make use of it.

Within the department, the Economic Development Agency will continue the role that it has had, strengthened in recent time, to promote regional development. That is especially true on Eyre Peninsula, and it will be done in every instance in an ecologically sustainable way. That means that the way in which we farm today will not adversely affect the capacity we have to continue farming tomorrow, in the next decade and the next century beyond that time. If we are doing anything anywhere in our farmlands or anywhere else in our society for that matter which is not ecologically sustainable, we should stop now. That is a general maxim that all of us have to recognise. If we cannot stop now, we must apply ourselves immediately to the discovery of means by which we can avoid the damage we are doing and eventually eliminate that damage.

Farmers have recognised that point, and all efforts in PISA are aimed at establishing sustainable farming systems, regardless of whether it is in dry land rain fed agriculture or in horticulture, or any combination of those two which involves irrigation. We need to be sure that the soil we have will be there next year, 10 years from now and 100 years from now. We need to be sure that that soil is not contaminated with compounds or ridden with diseases that make it impossible for us to continue deriving production and income from it.

One of the most important aspects will be the development of aquaculture. Currently it is running up to about \$200 million, but the efforts that have been made have brought it into existence in barely 10 years. The member for Flinders well knows the benefits that can come to regional communities from aquaculture in that she represents communities scattered along the West Coast and on Kangaroo Island that are now deriving considerable benefit from that, and communities which can see the even greater benefits that will result as present production technologies are expanded species by species and new technologies are brought into effect. PISA has a role to play, along with SARDI, in that work.

We must continue to support the fishing industry by ensuring that practices in any of the fisheries—the species which we exploit from the wild stock—are sustainable in perpetuity not only for the sake of those people who derive an income from it but also those hundreds of thousands who enjoy the recreational benefits as part of the tourism product of South Australia. We will be nuts if we allow irresponsible poaching from wild stock to destroy those fisheries, whatever they may be. In my judgment, there are no circumstances in which we can reduce the surveillance effort. Indeed, we need to improve yet again our effort in respect of the surveillance,

detection and prosecution of people who behave selfishly, short-sightedly, narrow-mindedly and irresponsibly in the criminal way in which they over-exploit various species, particularly when they do so in areas which we know to be important as nursery areas that have been set aside explicitly as reserves from which no species should be taken. That must stop.

Moreover, our management needs to be increasingly based on scientific information rather than on hearsay. Any policy which does not have its basis on scientific information is on shaky ground. Indeed, if it flies in the face of scientific evidence, it will certainly fail, and we have seen some illustrations of that in Australian waters generally in recent decades. More particularly, I suppose we could look at what has happened in some of the major fisheries and locations around the world where they have simply collapsed. They have not just been brought down to the point where they are no longer sustainable in their yields but they have literally collapsed. They will never recover because the collapsing of the species exploited commercially means that you change the ecosystem irreversibly.

I commend the Minister (Hon. Rob Kerin), who has followed in the footsteps of the member for McKillop in handling this portfolio. They have ensured that we focus on the new opportunities and have respect for those things about sustainability that I have just been drawing to the attention of members. We can establish a world competitive hardwood industry here in South Australia. We will certainly be able to establish a world competitive olive industry and, more importantly, we are doing our darnedest to make sure that salinity problems right across the State, wherever they occur, are identified and that an appropriate strategy is put in place to deal with them. That is not just revegetation, but it includes it.

More particularly, we are certainly supplying native plants to places like Israel as an export development exercise, and we are providing beef cattle genetics and management technology to the emerging beef industry in China, as well as selling livestock and management techniques into the Middle East. All that brings income to South Australia for the technologies we have developed here and which are worth something to us.

With respect to the cost benefit analyses I mentioned earlier, such as the lucerne improvements we have had, we receive \$17 for every \$1 we get back on the variety improvements—varieties such as Springfield, Wakefield, Sheffield, Hunterfield, Sceptre and Eureka. In respect of the clones of Valencia oranges, we get a 29:1 benefit cost analysis on the outlays we have made there. Looking at abalone, in prospect, that will eventually provide us with an enormous income of about \$300 million alone as a species, with a benefit cost analysis already proved up of 15:1. Clearly, our primary industries are an important part of this State. They have been historically and will be in the future, and we must continue to finance them adequately from the public purse.

[Sitting suspended from 6.1 to 8.15 p.m.]

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): I am pleased to comment on the announcement of the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources this afternoon that a .3¢ kilolitre water levy will be struck for irrigators up and down the Murray River. I know that the Minister had planned to make this announcement before the end of June, recognising and acknowledging that the legislation was passed last year to

give him this power and ability consistent with the levy that is collected currently by other catchment management boards in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

I am pleased that the Minister has made the announcement today to avoid what I would call further negative and unhelpful speculation in terms of what the levy might be. There has been speculation over recent weeks in terms of what the levy might. I thank the Minister for announcing the levy now so that debate and discussion can progress from here, particularly in relation to aspects of the proposed Water Resources Bill which will be introduced later this year. I reinforce the comments I made earlier this week about this issue in relation to the forum that was held about three weeks ago when a number of representatives from irrigator groups up and down the river met with the Minister for more than half a day. The Minister asked them directly whether he should bring down this levy in the first instance and then continue to consult on the Bill or, alternatively, provide further consultation before declaring the levy.

On Tuesday I stated in the House that there was strong, overwhelming support to declare the levy and proceed with the major issues in relation to how the levy should be spent and how it should be administered. I believe that the .3¢ per kilolitre for irrigators is a fair levy, first, because it is less than that which is being paid by most of our interstate Murray River counterparts. While it could be argued that some of the contributions from the irrigators, for example in Victoria, are used to provide head works and infrastructure, some of them are paying in the order of .5¢ per kilolitre for their irrigation water.

I believe that it is commendable that the South Australian Government, through the Minister in this case, is determined that our contribution in terms of the water resource levy will go towards environmental improvement of the river. Secondly, there has been and continues to be a commitment to spend the money that is collected on local projects and programs; there is a commitment that this money will not go into State Treasury, and therefore it is very much a levy because it is designated to a specific purpose. It will be spent on local projects and local programs, and I believe that it will return a real dividend to the irrigators. It may not be necessarily returned in year one, but in terms of the environmental improvement that is required, whether improving salinity standards or improving the nutrient status standards of the river, there will be a dividend return not only to irrigators but also to all water recipients out of the Murray River system in South Australia.

The third reason why this levy is fair is that ultimately more dollars will be spent on the river's improvement than would otherwise be spent. It means that additional funding will come from both Federal and interstate sources. I compliment the Premier on his initiative and leadership with respect to the Murray-Darling 2001 project which has been the initiator of this extra contribution from outside the State. It will mean that, South Australia being the catalyst and having the leadership in this area, more money will be spent on the river.

In addition, it will allow the State Government to negotiate strongly with interstate water users and their respective Governments in regard to two issues. The first is water capping. We are all aware of the high flow diversion licence ability of New South Wales irrigators in relation to the Murray-Darling system. Currently there is an interim capping proposal in place through the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. Our ability to contribute in this way, from an

irrigator's perspective, will assist in terms of water capping. It will also assist with the interstate negotiations with respect to the transferability of irrigation rights between the States.

As the Minister and the Premier have expounded on a number of occasions, I believe that if we can free this interstate transferability of water licences it will provide not only flexibility for more efficient irrigation diversion to areas where there is existing drainage infrastructure, as there is in South Australia where there is quality soil type and high standard irrigation and environmental management, but also the facility for environmental flows, which will be an environmental bonus.

There are other reasons why I believe the levy is fair. As most members will be aware, the Government has already made a commitment that other users of Murray River water coming into the urban system throughout the State, including domestic, urban and commercial users, will contribute at 1¢ per kilolitre. Although the levy at this rate will be an impost, it will be tax deductible so that it is not a direct cash contribution off the top. Therefore, it is not as much as it would seem to be. Whenever an additional levy like this is created and implemented, there is apprehension, which I acknowledge.

I also place on record my own interest in this matter as a member of a private horticultural company. That company will be up for significant dollars as a result of this levy requirement. However, as an irrigator, I believe that I will ultimately receive the benefit that will accumulate from the imposition of this levy. To put it in perspective, a horticultural irrigator with a 12-hectare or 30-acre property with a 150 000 kilolitre allocation will have a levy of about \$450.

While I argue that the levy should be based on usage rather than allocation, I acknowledge that this is an impractical achievement. However, I expect that in the future this will become a major responsibility of the proposed River Murray Catchment Board. I am sure that, as a matter of high priority, it will consider what mechanisms can be implemented not only to spread the levy to a usage factor but also to implement the suggestions that have come forward from irrigators that bonuses and debits should be implemented to reward efficient, or penalise inefficient, irrigators appropriately.

The focus should be on the Bill, particularly in respect of the make-up, role and responsibility of the Murray River Management Board. This is important as it will in the process bring about more efficient and responsible management of the Murray River resource. I recognise and place on the record that irrigators are not the major contributors to the degradation of the river system. An easy summary is that one-third of the salt which enters the Murray River in South Australia comes from other sources, one-third comes from irrigators and one-third comes from—

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

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his third budget, because it shows his focus of responsibility in addressing the needs of all South Australians in turning around the finances of this State in such a short period. I have listened to Opposition members deliver their addresses, and it worries me that, after the enormous debt that was created under the previous Labor Government, they have still not learnt lessons from those failures. Lessons have not been learnt because few of them have ever been involved in their own private businesses in which one risks one's own personal capital and in which mistakes lead to either personal failure or possible bankrupt-

cy. Unless you have run your own business and know that there is no room for error, it is difficult to understand a State budget, because the principles are the same. You never take a risk, especially when the money belongs to the people of South Australia.

Governments have to remember that they have no money of their own: the money belongs to the taxpayers, to the people we represent. The Leader of the Opposition has said on many occasions that the Premier is the only person not to see the locomotive coming. The Leader of the Opposition makes this statement because he believes that the Premier has not allowed for the impact of the August Federal budget. In the last two weeks the Premiers of New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland have all delivered their budgets and have disregarded any possible impact of the forthcoming Federal budget.

The Leader of the Opposition is the same person who in the late 1980s publicly stated that the people were fortunate to have a banker of the expertise of Tim Marcus Clark leading the new resurgence in the State Bank with its benefits for all South Australians. Through proper financial management, South Australia has broken the back of its debt burden, and it is on track for a genuine surplus budget next year. My inquiries reveal that no South Australian Government has delivered a surplus budget: this will be the first time ever in the history of South Australia that that has occurred. Everyone in the Liberal Party is looking forward to being part of that history.

It is a budget with no new taxes, and in the space of three years we will move from being \$350 million in the red to a forecast \$10 million surplus next year. We have taken the tough decisions to sell off assets. The money has been used to reduce debt and not to prop up budget spending. In the first three budgets, we have reduced debt by \$1 673 million, which represents about one-fifth of total public sector net debt.

We could have taken the short-sighted and easy option of increasing taxes, but that would have driven business out of South Australia. The Government's strategy was to work more smartly and more efficiently, with less money and a smaller public service, for long-term benefits. We have given business and the people whom we represent one of the lowest taxing States in Australia—23 per cent below Victoria and 26 per cent below New South Wales. We have the second lowest payroll tax of that in all States, and we have a 50 per cent rebate on payroll tax for new exports. We have created a low inflation, low labour cost business environment. Our strong growth in exports has been focused on the manufacturing industry, the wine industry, aquaculture and fresh produce. We have created an environment for huge profits from the overseas students who come to Adelaide for their education.

We have put \$90 million more into health in South Australia with an extra 20 000 admissions to hospitals in 1996-97 compared with 1993-94, and we have continued to reduce waiting lists. There is help for people with disabilities and their families with an additional \$3 million, we are improving the health of Aboriginal people with an allocation of \$5.2 million, and \$39 million has been provided for major building works at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Lyell McEwin and the Repatriation Hospital.

We have put \$60 million more into education, with a new allocation of \$15 million to purchase extra computers in schools, with the ultimate objective being to have an average of one computer for every five students. Under the Liberal Government, South Australia spends more per student than does any other State and has the lowest and best student to

teacher ratio and the lowest average class sizes of those in all States. We have about 12 per cent more SSOs than the national average for all States. I am very proud to be part of a Government that has delivered a responsible budget. I believe that South Australia is on the threshold of being able to launch itself into a mode where all South Australians can benefit, and I congratulate the Treasurer on his budget.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I should like to raise a number of issues that I consider to be important for the people in my electorate of Hart, and it is important that I, as the local member of Parliament, do so. Although we are very excited about the prospects of participating in the AFL through the admission of Port Power, other issues are very pressing in my electorate. I am a little disappointed that the Minister for Health is no longer in the Chamber, having been replaced by the Minister for Industrial Affairs. I do not intend any disrespect to the Minister, but I wanted to touch briefly on the mental health problems in my electorate.

During Question Time I listened to the exchange between the Opposition and the Government about this issue and, while I am not the official Opposition spokesperson on health, I understand that my electorate has the second highest concentration of people with mental illness outside the Glenside precinct, so it is a very real issue in my electorate.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the honourable member not answer that interjection.

Mr FOLEY: Sir, I would not attempt to do so. The issue of mental health in my area is a very difficult one, and requires a compassionate, sympathetic and very sensitive approach. It is a critical issue and the Government simply cannot say that we do not have a crisis in mental health, because in my electorate there is a crisis, as much for the mentally ill as for the community in general.

It is not an issue of wanting to go back to the 1950s or the 1960s, as the Minister says so flippantly. It is about having compassion and concern for the rights of individuals who are put into hostels. Does our society believe that it is more humane and decent to force people into a hostel in Semaphore where, in many cases, they are subjected to less than appropriate treatment, and where they are forced out of that accommodation at 8 o'clock in the morning and told not to return until 6 o'clock in the evening?

These people walk up and down Semaphore Road simply for amusement, and sometimes at 7 o'clock, even at 10 o'clock at night, they are still walking up and down Semaphore Road. Members can ask any trader on that street about the plight of the mentally ill in my community. It is a tragic case. If it were not for the good grace and support of the bakeries and the general stores along that main shopping precinct, many of the mentally ill in my community would not have one decent meal a day.

The manner in which the owners and operators of some of these institutions conduct themselves and treat the people who reside within their hostels is simply disgraceful. It is an issue. I strongly criticise this Government, as I do the former Labor Government's decision, to deinstitutionalise the mentally ill in our community without putting the resources into the community. Both Governments stand condemned for that. This is not a political issue, it is fact. The Minister for Health cannot simply argue it away by saying, 'We have allocated another \$3 million or \$4 million.' My electoral office alone has at least one to two visits a day from the mentally ill in my electorate who want a glass of water, who

want to make a telephone call, who want assistance in putting a stamp on an envelope or who simply want some assistance in trying to track down their welfare payment. My office is a *de facto* drop-in centre for the mentally ill in the Semaphore area.

The only decent facility we have is something run three mornings a week through the good services of many volunteers in the community, and one in particular, Miss Mel Monfries, who has since retired after nearly 10 years of voluntary service. They serve breakfast three mornings a week for some 50 or 60 local customers. It is a purely volunteer service. It is supplemented during the day through other outreach programs from Mental Health Services but, in the main, it is patchwork, fragmented, not targeted and less than satisfactory. That existed under past Labor Governments and it exists under this Government. It is wrong. It is almost inhumane.

I understand the budgetary pressures that this Government is under in the sense of its mental health budget and its general health budget in particular, but I am not convinced that it is more humane to put these people into the community without services than it is to have them in Glenside or in an institution. Their welfare and care may be better delivered within an institution until we can get the infrastructure right in the community.

The other concern is the fire risk. The Port Adelaide police tell me regularly—and I know the Minister for Police would understand this as, no doubt, the member for Florey would as well—that they are very concerned about the fire risk that is ever present in these hostels. The police are concerned that they are being nothing more than *de facto* mental health workers. They are required to address the issue of returning certain patients to Glenside only to see them released almost immediately and find their way back into the community. I have incidents reported to me on regular occasions concerning some hostels in my community where there are six to eight people in a room, many of whom are on a mattress on the floor. There might be a night supervisor for over 30 or 40 people. This is a less than satisfactory arrangement, given the potential for fire and the near horrific consequences which we have already witnessed in Victoria in recent months. They are very real concerns.

We as a community are all to blame, myself included. It is too easy to turn a blind eye, to believe the rhetoric and the advice given for it by the department. As my colleague the member for Giles said earlier tonight—and it is a very telling point—for the past 13 or 14 years that he has been in Parliament he has never known a health Minister, Labor or Liberal, to ever stand in this place and admit the department had got it wrong at some point. For 14 years we have had both Labor and Liberal Health Ministers simply saying, 'We have no problem with our health system. We have no problem with our mental health system.' The reality is we do. We should have the courage to face up to that fact. We simply should not accept the situation of putting people into the community without putting in place the appropriate infrastructure. It is not a political issue, it is an issue that is very much at the core of what we should be doing at a State level in the provision of services.

I think the mental health issue is in crisis in my electorate as it is in many other electorates. I am prepared to say to the Minister, 'It is not a matter of politics in my community. Please come to my electorate, walk with me down Semaphore Road and talk to the shop owners. Let us visit some of the hostels.' Perhaps the Minister and I could visit these hostels

when they will not expect us, for instance, at about 8 a.m. when they are busily getting these mentally ill people dressed and forcing them out onto the streets. Let us drop in and have a look at their practices at that point, because quite frankly they are a disgrace. There is no doubt that many hostel owners observe the regulations, the law and decent principles, but I know for a fact that in my electorate there is a number who do not, who simply collect the social security payments, provide minimal services in terms of delivering quality of life to these people, and are only too eager to push them out into the community.

I have already called for a number of measures in my electorate. I would like to see, if possible, a permanent 16 or 24 hour drop-in-centre. I would like to see some sort of flying squad introduced where Government inspectors regularly visit hostels unannounced to check on the conditions of the people who live in them. Those visits should be unannounced and at a time when they are least expected, because I think they would paint a picture that would cause the Minister some distress. I, again, issue a challenge to the Minister to join with me in improving the mental health situation in my electorate.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I rise tonight with a great deal of pleasure to talk about some of the smaller in some instances but not in all instances important and essential areas of concern which have existed in my electorate for some time and which have now been addressed in the areas of tourism, ETSA, roads, education and children's services. I am delighted to see in the budget that \$170 000 has been put into a specific line to help us to develop further and complete the McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Regional Visitors' Centre at McLaren Vale, which now has a total commitment from the Government of \$965 000 and from the Federal Government and the private sector an additional \$560 000. I am also pleased to see that in the tourism lines in the budget \$205 000 has been allocated to the Adelaide Hills Fleurieu Tourism Marketing Board. That is very important, because we will need to make sure that we brand our position in the tourism field with the opening of the new visitor centre. There are still some problems of parochial interests to be sorted out between the Adelaide Hills and the Fleurieu, but at the end of the day people must realise that in the best interests of our region they need to work for the common good.

With respect to ETSA, after years of neglect by the previous Government which did very little to upgrade capital infrastructure and even less to accommodate business, and in the private sector the domestic market, when it came to maintaining competitive tariff rates compared with other States—and I am now pleased to see that there has been a further initiative to drop that tariff rate for business—it is good to see that the Minister has allocated \$310 000 out of the ETSA budget to fix up and reinforce the feeder system throughout McLaren Vale. He has also allocated \$480 000 to address the power situation with line upgrades between Happy Valley and Morphett Vale East, and an additional \$300 000 to upgrade the line between Morphett Vale East and Willunga. Those are things that my community have been calling for for years, and I am delighted to see that they have been accommodated in this budget.

We have \$29.6 million to complete stage 1 of the Southern Expressway, which will have enormous benefits to my electorate of Mawson, because the first stage hooks into Panatalinga Road, a \$28 million project which will be completed by the Department of Transport this year. Then, in the area of education and children's services the \$500 000

completion of the Woodcroft Heights Preschool has just been completed. We are also about to see an important upgrade of home economics, hospitality, tourism and science laboratory facilities being undertaken at Wirreanda High School. That \$800 000 will be very important to the young people in my electorate when it comes to placing themselves in the marketplace for jobs in the next few years.

Tonight I was again pleased to hear that the member for Hart accepted that major problems were caused by the previous Government, when he was a senior adviser to Premier Lynn Arnold. He is the first person I have seen on the other side of this Chamber who has been prepared to state that fact, and I commend him for that. He is prepared to state the fact because no doubt one day he will be the Leader of the Labor Party in South Australia, unless the Party happens to be able to get somebody else with more ability than he has over the next five or six years. It is a pity that the current Leader of the Opposition did not have the guts to admit the mistakes to which he in particular was a senior party when all the destruction and devastation of South Australia occurred, from the mid-1980s until about 1992. We hear the Leader of the Opposition saying that we should be improving health services and increasing funds to education—in fact, in every area—but he forgets or fails to understand basic economics. When as Minister of Tourism and in other capacities as a senior Cabinet Minister in the previous Government he left office, the net debt at 30 June 1992 was up to 28.1 per cent of GSP. In other words, 28.1¢ in every dollar of State Government GSP revenue was being spent on trying to pay interest on debt.

I am delighted to see that that net debt is set to fall to 20.3 per cent of GSP—about 20¢ in the dollar—and in a couple of years it will fall further, so that by about the year 2001 it should be back at around 16 per cent. Only when it gets back to that level will we be able to address all the issues that members on our side and particularly on the other side like to hammer home in this Parliament on a daily basis—issues members opposite never addressed, such as upgrades of ETSA or competitive tendering so that we have more accountability in Government. To that end we have already been able to inject \$250 million worth of economic opportunities into the private sector through outsourcing. The private sector should be looked after and encouraged to create jobs and build this economy. The Government is really only there to create that environment and provide the services that the private sector cannot or will not provide. That is why as a member of the Government I am delighted to see that through outsourcing and restructuring reform we are already putting an additional \$250 million this year into the private sector.

The Leader of the Opposition has a few problems himself, and we all know that. Only just prior to the budget session the talk was rife around the corridors about the problems he had with his numbers. I know from friends on the Labor side that the Leader of the Opposition spent a fair bit of time trying to shore up support to hold in. Apparently, at least for a little while, the Leader has been able to convince his colleagues that he should remain the Leader. Of course, we would understand why that would be the case. When they look at the fact that we have delivered a great budget, which members opposite could not lay a glove on because they know we are on the right track, they know that we are in for at least another six years and more likely another 10. Let us look at it. Why would the member for Hart—who has ability, is prepared to be bipartisan on important issues and is young

and energetic—want to knock off the Leader of the Opposition at the moment?

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I do not know whether he is good looking; I do not look at men like that. The member for Hart says that he is good looking, and that shows that he has confidence and a bit of an ego. Of course, he will need that when he becomes the Leader of the Opposition. I guess that eventually—probably in another three terms or so—we will not be in Government and the member for Hart may well be the Premier, but certainly the Leader of the Opposition will never be the Premier. Then we have the member for Playford. Of course, we know that the member for Playford currently is the man who has all the ability, who has a commitment to South Australia and a real commitment to the Labor Party and who is not about creating fraud and innuendo and running around the corridors with silly little press releases, as is the Leader of the Opposition. But the member for Playford has already been knifed pretty badly by some of his opponents and he also does not want to capitalise on the opportunity of taking over the leadership of the Labor Party at this time.

The lame duck Leader of the Opposition, the man who was not even able to hold down a senior position in journalism in South Australia, will obviously sit in the chair until the next election. But my strong tip from the Labor Party is that straight after the next election they will get rid of Mr Rann. I guess that by then he will have been able to build up enough superannuation and will have been in this place long enough to be able to go off and do something else, or probably the Party will find a job for him, as the Labor Party often does. But the difference between the Opposition Leader and the Premier, in terms of ability, credibility and the desire, commitment and passion to get this State going, is chalk and cheese.

We have a visionary Premier; a Premier who is committed to ensuring that we have long-term sustainability; a Premier who, for once, is prepared to address that massive \$10 billion debt for which Labor was mostly responsible over only 10 short years—on average, about \$800 million of debt a year. We also have a Premier with vision. I would expect the Leader of the Opposition, over the next 18 months, to go down the same track he has taken over the past 18 months since he took over from Premier Lynn Arnold, namely, to run around the corridors calling things phoney and a fraud, to get into the gutter and stay there because he has nothing to offer this State.

He is not a credible Leader and, as long as he is Leader, we will be able to get on with the job. However, I would call on the community of South Australia to keep behind our Government as we continue to work through the process of restructuring and reform. Many of the hardest, toughest decisions have been made and we will continue to make them until we get everything corrected.

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

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): The honourable Attorney-General keeps telling us that our law of self-defence is extremely complex. I disagree with him. I think it is simple and the great majority of people can understand the principle. Section 15(1)(a) of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act provides:

a person does not commit an offence by using force against another if that person genuinely believes that the force is necessary and reasonable—

(i) to defend himself, herself, or another;

That is the law that Parliament made in 1991 to protect householders from being prosecuted for defending themselves against burglars. We passed the law after a petition containing 60 000 signatures was presented to Parliament and a recommendation from a cross-Party select committee of Parliament. It was the biggest petition presented during my six years in Parliament.

The Hon. Trevor Griffin opposed the 1991 law when he was in Opposition, and now that the law and a jury verdict has acquitted Mr Kingsley Foreman, after an expensive prosecution for murder brought by the State Government, the Hon. Trevor Griffin is saying that the law is too complicated. I think the jury in the Foreman case understood only too well what the law was. The Attorney-General says he will appoint a committee to review the law, but members can bet that the committee will be comprised of lawyers and academics. In fact, although the Attorney-General says he is appointing a committee to review the law, I know he has already drafted legislation to change the law, and that is to take that law right back to what it was before 1991.

Under the pre-1991 law, if a householder confronted a burglar in her home and belted him with a cast iron frying pan, the householder might be charged and the judge would then look at the case and decide whether the householder had acted reasonably. The judge would carefully weigh whether Mrs Jones of Brompton was guilty of murder because she hit the burglar in her kitchen with a cast iron frying pan and killed him, when she had a rolled up *Sunday Mail* to hand and could have ushered him out the front door with that. The judge, who can weigh the situation carefully with the luxury of hindsight, might tell the jury that Mrs Jones had not acted as a reasonable man would have in using the frying man when she might have wielded the *Sunday Mail*.

We changed the 'reasonable man' law in 1991 to a genuine belief test so that victims of break-ins should not end up as the accused. The question that should now be put to the jury is: did the householder, in the heat and desperation of the moment, genuinely believe the force she used to repel a burglar was necessary? The Parliamentary Labor Party believes that is the right question to ask.

It is the 1991 change in the law that ensured that Bowden pensioner Albert Geisler was not charged with murder last year. Albert is in his 80s and stone deaf. Burglars had repeatedly broken into his home, taken his possessions and assaulted him until one night yet another intruder broke through the glass in his side window. In the dark of his bedroom, unable to hear and expecting another belting from a young burglar, he picked up his rifle (which was registered and for which he was licensed) and shot at a figure in his bedroom. The Australian Democrats legal spokeswoman (Hon. Sandra Kanck) called for Albert Geisler to be charged with murder. But, in my opinion, the 1991 law worked well in ensuring that Albert was not charged because he genuinely believed that what he did was necessary to defend himself, and I am pleased to say that Albert is back in his home on the corner of Drayton and Fifth Streets, Bowden, enjoying life safe from burglars.

The Kingsley Foreman case, on the other hand, is right on the edge of the law. It is a hard case. He should not have been carrying a pistol in a service station and he should not have had ammunition with him. It was not his home. Many people are uncomfortable with his getting off scot-free. But the Government should have known that it was going to be

almost impossible to convince a jury of 12 ordinary men and women to convict him of murder. A manslaughter charge, standing alone, or firearms charges would have been more appropriate.

This is what the Hon. Trevor Griffin said in 1991 when he was opposing the genuine belief test—and I would agree with most of it if I did not know where he was leading. He said:

Self defence cannot be used as a cover for aggression. There is a duty to retreat and to avoid confrontation if that is reasonably possible. The response to the threat of or the attack itself ought to bear some relationship to the violence offered, that is, the defender must not overstep the mark.

That all sounds fine until you realise that the Hon. Trevor Griffin is leading up to a reasonable man test instead of a genuine belief test.

In understanding this area of law, you have to understand that lawyers, legal academics and the authorities in general have a horror of householders solving their own problems with burglars and trespassers generally. These people believe you ought always to retreat in the face of a burglar and ring the police. In general, I agree with that. Where I differ from the lawyers, the academics and the Attorney-General, is that if 'push' comes to 'shove' and the householder does stick up for herself against a criminal, the law should be on the householder's side to the extent that she should be judged on what she genuinely believed, not on some airy-fairy reasonable man test.

The Law Society is pushing the Attorney-General to go back to a version of the pre 1991 law, not that he needs much pushing. Mr Rice of the Law Society told the *Advertiser* the week before last:

The law should be amended to make it more difficult for accused people to establish self-defence. Before 1991 common law determined what was self-defence. Part of that was a test of reasonableness. That meant that, even if an accused person thought he was using appropriate force, a reasonable person in the same situation may not have used the same degree of force.

The article continues:

Mr Rice believes the element of reasonableness should be reintroduced into the equation. He says that he is waiting for the Attorney-General to come up with a draft alternative wording to section 15 of the Act—

which I mentioned earlier. With respect, I disagree with that. Most senior lawyers and Government Ministers have their homes guarded by high fences and alarm systems. They do not live in the suburbs that have high break-in rates and they do not live in homes where the best defence you have is a screen door. The trouble with the Attorney-General we have is that he is a lawyer's lawyer, and when it comes to self-defence that is his biggest vice.

Ms GREIG (Reynell): I want to spend my grievance time speaking briefly on the Appropriation Bill. In doing so, I want to congratulate not only those who put this framework together but also those people in the community who have worked and lived under some very tight restrictions to assist us in getting this State back on track. Our budget indicates that South Australia has broken the back of the debt burden and is on track for a genuine surplus budget next year. As a Government, we have achieved a dramatic turnaround in the State's finances, moving from \$350 million in the red three years ago to a forecast \$10 million surplus next year. Through budgetary adjustment and a very successful asset sales program the first three budgets of this Government have reduced debt by \$1.673 billion in real terms, representing about one-fifth of the total public sector net debt. As a

Government, we have focused on reducing Government expenditure and improving efficiencies to achieve savings targets.

The role of Government itself has changed and will continue to change through leading edge contracting out arrangements, partnerships with the private sector and competitive tendering. Economic growth is up and State debt is down. An important component of our Government strategy has been to keep costs down for business and provide the most competitive environment possible to attract investment and jobs. Adelaide's competitive cost structure makes it at least 20 per cent cheaper to do business here compared with either Sydney or Melbourne.

In my own electorate we are seeing proof of this renewed confidence in our State. It has been with great pleasure that I have been able to report to the House the many industrial developments that have occurred in Reynell. Mr Speaker, you may recall the Mobil Refinery announcement in December 1994, following the conclusion of the Adelaide Refinery wharfage agreement. The sum of \$50 million was allocated to upgrade the Mobil Adelaide Refinery to boost its international competitiveness and export capacity. Mobil in 1996 is now progressing with a \$22 million investment to upgrade the product wharf at the Lonsdale Refinery. Following extensive engineering studies and review the current facility will be substantially upgraded. This will involve extensive refurbishment of the jetty trestle, raising equipment that is most susceptible to wave damage and replacing significant sections of the wharf. The project is due to be completed by 1997. Along with the wharf project the Mobil Adelaide Refinery has committed \$23 million to the lube expansion project, which is due for completion in September this year. Mobil's investment alone is a tangible demonstration in economic confidence.

In my electorate we have also seen the technological growth in the optical industry. Only a few months ago I welcomed Transitions Optical to the electorate. Of course, Solar Optical played a leading role in encouraging Transitions Optical to establish its Asia-Pacific base at Lonsdale. We have under construction and near completion the Agean Aged Care complex. This new aged care facility is something of which we should all be proud. Of particular interest to me is the allocation of \$300 000 from the Community Development Fund to be used in assisting children who are alleged victims of sexual abuse. I will admit that it is a sad reflection on our community knowing that this sort of unacceptable behaviour continues in a number of homes.

Money from the Community Development Fund will be used to establish an inter-agency abuse assessment panel for a trial of 12 months. The panel is the culmination of more than 18 months intensive work by representatives of the Attorney-General's office, the Director of Public Prosecutions' Committal Unit, the Bar Association, the police, the Department for Family and Community Services and the Child Protection Service from Flinders Medical Centre. The panel aims to oversee the referral, assessment and therapy of children who make allegations of sexual abuse. All sexual abuse matters relating to children 17 years and under will be referred to the panel by Family and Community Service intake teams. The panel will operate from the FACS office at Noarlunga and will be independently evaluated during and after the 12-month trial period.

South Australia's community legal centres will receive a total of \$269 000 from our Government for the next financial year. This is an increase of \$50 000. The centres provide a

valuable service to the community, including legal advice and representation for clients, community education and suggestions for legislative reform. Staff and volunteers advise and represent clients in the areas of disability discrimination, matrimonial matters, mediation of neighbourhood disputes, consumer law and, in some cases, financial counselling. The centres have also had a positive and lasting impact through their work in making the legal system more accessible and its outcomes more just. Additional funding will allow all the existing staff to be paid under the social and community services award and help them continue their good work, particularly at a time when there is an increased emphasis on access to justice.

I think we are all well aware of the need to reduce the State's debt and the difficult decisions associated with this. Our health system has also been a victim of this inherited pressure. However, through some hard decisions and sound economic management the Health Commission has achieved budget objectives and, at the same time, achieved an increase in public admissions.

On this note, we should acknowledge the work undertaken by the medical staff throughout our hospitals who have worked tirelessly under somewhat pressured conditions. I am pleased to see in the budget that primary health care funding has extended the links between hospitals and community-based services. I also congratulate the Minister for Health on his recognition of Aboriginal health care needs and, with a budget allocation of \$5.2 million, I am sure the Aboriginal Health Care Division of the commission will work with the Aboriginal communities towards improving the health of Aboriginal people.

The streamlining of hospital and community services and the expansion of competitive tendering will ensure that the health care needs of the whole community are met more effectively. In education, I am particularly looking forward to the \$61 million increase. I would like to see more money heading in this direction, but we are now in a position to make some positive advancements in the area of education, and \$61 million is a good start. The DECSTech 2001 project, to provide computers and associated high technology, is a real plus for all our schools and I, for one, anxiously await the implementation of this project. This budget is not a treasure chest of goodies. It has been thought out and planned under the framework of a recovering economy. In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer and his team for guiding us through some very difficult years and more so on implementing a sensible recovery program.

Mr BASS (Florey): I rise to discuss the budget that Premier Brown and the Cabinet have brought down. It is more good news for South Australia. During the 2½ years that the Liberal Government has been in office, it has not resiled for one moment from the hard decisions that have had to be made. Even given the criticism from some areas of the community and the Opposition, the Government has never backed off and has forged ahead with the plan to resurrect South Australia from the doldrums and to make it a power in Australia and the world. Some of the decisions that had to be taken, while not being popular, such as reducing the Public Service, had to be made. Even though the number of public servants has been reduced, the Government has been able to reduce debt and still give the South Australian public better service than they had in the past by delivering services in a more efficient way.

The Government has restored confidence in the State's economy and provided more jobs. The unemployment rate is the lowest it has been for almost five years; it has fallen from 11.2 per cent to around 9 per cent. Full-time employment also has risen to 3 900, and that was after a rise of 6 000 last November. The indicators are that what this Government has undertaken is working. We have heard much about the job creation involved in the EDS contract, as well as that involved in the metropolitan water and waste water service contracting out, the Westpac Mortgage Centre, and the Bankers' Trust Investment Management Centre. It is all good news for South Australia. As I have said, we have managed to provide high quality Government services, notwithstanding that the Public Service has been reduced.

We have attacked the problem in respect of the environment. The environment is one of the largest disasters that we have had not only in South Australia but in Australia. On a recent trip to Europe, I met with Thames Water and North West Water, and I was amazed at how much further advanced they are in relation to the environment. There is no finer example than the work that Thames Water has done, and the work that has been done on the Thames River. For the first time in 25 years, fish have actually returned from the sea in numbers to the Thames River.

This indicates that Thames Water and North West Water are doing something positive in relation to the environment. Many projects have been implemented by this Government: the Murray River clean up campaign; the establishment of water catchment authorities to try to reverse the damage that has been done to our waterways; the recent development of a management plan for the Great Australian Bight Marine Park; the recent release of a State water plan; the establishment of Recycle Park; and the recent proclamation of the Environment Protection Authority Act.

Much criticism has been levelled at the Government in relation to health but, notwithstanding the baying from members opposite, health services continue to improve. There has been a massive increase in the number of people using the public health system, but the Government is still managing to reduce the waiting lists. The new public hospitals at Mount Gambier and Port Augusta and the regionalised country health services will provide better health facilities for South Australia, yet still save money.

The key objective of the Brown Liberal Government was to restore the State's financial position. Aside from cutting the State debt, there were major asset sales to remove the underlying budget deficit. The action taken by the Treasurer, notwithstanding the hard decisions, shows that the right decisions have been made to restore confidence in the State economy, to rebuild jobs and boost the GSP. The public sector reform to support financial and economic objectives was not the most popular decision, but it has been effective and it is showing results.

The most recent figures show that the net debt is rapidly falling, and that by 1998 we will be once again in the black, which is a fine achievement especially in today's economic climate. Notwithstanding all of this, the Brown Liberal Government has continued with its major capital works, many of which are planned to commence in the next two years. The Southern Expressway has not yet started, but about 85 per cent of the houses in the area have been demolished and work should commence shortly to lay the expressway. There has been controversy about the Adelaide Airport runway extension, but it will commence and I am sure that it will be a windfall for South Australia.

For years, South Australians have been complaining about having another bridge on the Murray River and, at long last, thanks to the Brown Liberal Government, a bridge at Berri will soon be a reality. Many other areas have been neglected in the past; a new grandstand at the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium has been an absolute must. We have had two teams in the national soccer competition—the most successful being Adelaide City—yet, when they play at home in the finals, the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium has been inadequate in that it does not have sufficient seats in the grandstand to hold the crowd. That situation has now been addressed. The Cadell Prison redevelopment will improve the way things are run there.

Demolition of the Adelaide Magistrates Court has commenced and rebuilding started. However, the facade has been retained, and that is very important, because it is a magnificent structure. I have on many occasions stood outside the front of the building while waiting to give evidence. It really is a nice building. We are still maintaining the facade of the Magistrates Court because it has historical significance.

The school building and maintenance program is still going ahead. Notwithstanding that we have been hard in the way that we have dealt with education, we still have the best education system in Australia.

There has been recent criticism of the Mount Lofty Summit development because some trees have been knocked down. I would remind members of the Ash Wednesday fires. We must redevelop with fires in mind, and this sometimes means removing a few trees. However, at least it makes the area safe and it is quite easy to replant bushes, and so on, which will blend with the Hills facade and still be safe from being burnt out by bushfires.

Mr BECKER (Peake): The past 24 hours have seen some unprecedented scenes in this Parliament. In my 26 years here I have never seen such behaviour: allegations, innuendoes and probably the greatest abuse of parliamentary privilege and/or the protocol of Parliament. I refer to the incident that has attracted the attention of the media in some respects regarding something that may or may not have been placed in some member's letterbox in this building. It annoys me to think that each one of us, with the responsibility of representing a constituency of about 22 000 people, their lives, employment opportunities, standards of living, education, health and welfare services, should be concentrating on who did what or who put what around. I have never seen or heard anything like it before and I am disgusted with the whole business. I hope that we do not see or hear any more of this drivel.

The budget document which has been presented to the people of South Australia is a strategy to revive business opportunities and create employment and a situation which will enable South Australia to get back to doing what is best for South Australia and at the same time demonstrate responsible government.

I am particularly delighted that for the first time in living memory a Government is spending so much money and commitment on the electorate of Peake, including the City of Thebarton, Torrensville, Brooklyn Park, Lockleys and surrounding suburbs. I was surprised when I first took over the seat how run down some of the schools and facilities were. I give full credit to Robert Lucas, the Minister for Education and Children's Services. No matter what is said about him, he supported my promise to the schools that he

would visit them within the first 12 months and do all that he could to assist them. The grants and payments have now come through to assist those schools.

There is a long way to go in terms of helping to improve the education facilities in my electorate. I am surprised that several schools in my electorate still do not have a multi-purpose hall big enough to hold the entire student body at one time. It is an indictment on any Government and parliamentary system that we cannot put all the students together in one room at the same time in a multi-purpose hall. We lack a multi-purpose hall for the benefit of the surrounding community and for the enjoyment of sport and recreation in those areas. That is something I would like to see commenced. We are now doing that at Underdale High School, some 22 years after the school was established. We have had to sell-off some land to fund a multi-purpose hall there, and that will certainly be a huge benefit to the campus and to the community in general.

The main feature of the 1996 budget is that it contributes \$200 000 towards tourism in my electorate via the Australian Cup gymnastics. It will be a wonderful boom and boost for my electorate. Of course, gymnastics is one of those sports in which young Australians, particularly young South Australians, are starting to excel. It is a very demanding and tightly disciplined sport, but it is something in which we have proved that, with the right coaching, assistance and encouragement from the Government, we can do as well as any other country.

Naturally, I am delighted that \$8 125 000 will be spent on the redevelopment and extension of the western stand of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. This money will be made available by the Department of Recreation, Sport and Racing. This will help to stamp South Australian soccer well and truly in the high annals of this very popular football game in Australia. It will help the two national clubs, West Adelaide and Adelaide City, but it will also ease the problem that exists, as on many occasions good games of soccer are played, but with only very limited facilities.

The Hindmarsh Stadium has been due for a revamp for some years, and it is a matter of whether or not that was the ideal location. On my recent trip to the Hong Kong conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, I had the chance to look at a purpose-built soccer stadium at Leverkusen in Germany. We have the opportunity to do at Hindmarsh what they have done there. I hope that those ideas will be incorporated and that a master plan, which may involve many millions of dollars, will gradually be established.

I refer to the roads in my area. The Hindmarsh Bridge replacement and the Port Road widening, on the northern boundary of my electorate, will see \$4.4 million spent. More importantly, there will be further upgrading of Henley Beach Road between Marion and South Roads. The widening of that road will cost \$2.4 million. The work being done on Henley Beach Road from the city parklands to South Road is outstanding. It has totally transformed the entire Mile End area. As the upgrading reaches Marion Road, it will demonstrate to the people of the electorate that things get done under a Liberal Government. With the Thebarton Main Street program there has been almost a total facelift change to the bulk of this area.

I congratulate and support the various business people who have remodelled, redeveloped or constructed new buildings, established cafes and who have sought to establish alternative businesses that have been badly needed in that

area. More importantly, they are slowly transforming Henley Beach Road into a living place. It is a place for outdoor eateries and for different foods, and it will enhance the lifestyle in that area. I anticipate that, in another 10 years, if we are fortunate enough to still have a Liberal Government, Henley Beach Road at Mile End, Thebarton and Torrensville will be a very stylish place to visit. As we upgrade and promote that through the Main Street program, with the work that will be undertaken by the Government, it will be something that we can all be very proud of in the western suburbs.

A sum of \$1.4 million will be spent from South Road, Torrens River, to Ballara Street for widening and reconstruction. For the emergency services, there is an allocation of \$435 000. Six Ford F250 ambulances will be purchased and stationed at the Fulham ambulance depot. Apart from the multi-purpose hall that is being built at Underdale High School, there is another \$800 000 for the library and resource centre, and \$1 232 000 worth of improvements will be made at the Thebarton Senior College. It is a pleasure to be able to serve as the local member on the council of Thebarton Senior College and Underdale High School. Over the past two years since my election, many deputations have taken place with the Minister and departmental officials to secure funding but more importantly to improve the facilities that were allowed to run down for so long.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Minister for Industrial Affairs): I move:

That the proposed expenditure for the departments and services contained in the Appropriation Bill be referred to Estimates Committees A and B for examination and report by 2 July 1996, in accordance with the timetable as follows:

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Tuesday 18 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Premier, Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs and Minister for Information Technology

House of Assembly

Joint Parliamentary Services

Legislative Council

Auditor-General's

Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs

State Governor's Establishment

Premier and Cabinet

Commissioner for Public Employment

Premier, Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs and Minister for Information Technology—Other Payments

Information Industries

Information Technology Workforce Strategy Office

Wednesday 19 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Police and Minister for Mines and Energy

Treasury and Finance

Deputy Premier and Treasurer—Other Payments

Mines and Energy

Police

Minister for Police—Other Payments

Thursday 20 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Primary Industries

Primary Industries

Minister for Primary Industries—Other Payments

South Australian Research and Development Institute

Friday 21 June 1996 at 9.30 a.m.

Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations

Housing and Urban Development

Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations—Other Payments

Tuesday 25 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development and Minister for Infrastructure

Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development and Minister for Infrastructure—Other Payments

Manufacturing Industry, Small Business and Regional Development
Wednesday 26 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Tourism, Minister for Industrial Affairs and Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing

South Australian Tourism Commission

Minister for Tourism—Other Payments

Industrial Affairs

Minister for Industrial Affairs—Other Payments

Recreation, Sport and Racing

Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing—Other Payments

Thursday 27 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Health and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

State Aboriginal Affairs

South Australian Health Commission

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Tuesday 18 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Education and Children's Services

Education and Children's Services

Minister for Education and Children's Services—Other Payments

Wednesday 19 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Transport, Minister for the Arts and Minister for the Status of Women

Transport

Passenger Transport Board

TransAdelaide

Arts and Cultural Development

Minister for Transport, Minister for the Arts and Minister for the Status of Women—Other Payments

Thursday 20 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Attorney-General and Minister for Consumer Affairs

Attorney-General's

Attorney-General and Minister for Consumer Affairs—Other Payments

Courts Administration Authority

State Electoral Office

Tuesday 25 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education and Minister for Youth Affairs

Employment, Training and Further Education

Wednesday 26 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister for the Ageing

Environment and Natural Resources

Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister for the Ageing—Other Payments

Family and Community Services

Thursday 27 June 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Correctional Services and Minister for State Government Services

Correctional Services

Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Correctional Services and Minister for State Government Services—Other Payments

Country Fire Service

South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service

State Government Services

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Minister for Industrial Affairs): I move:

That Estimates Committee A be appointed, consisting of the Hons H. Allison and Frank Blevins, Messrs Bass, Caudell and Foley, Mrs Hall and the Hon. M.D. Rann.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I move:

That Estimates Committee B be appointed, consisting of Messrs Becker, Brindal, De Laine and Scalzi, Ms Stevens, Mr Wade and Ms White.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Minister for Industrial Affairs): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Ms HURLEY (Napier): Yesterday the Premier responded to a question about the Adelaide City Council and a series of decisions that had been made. In his response, the Premier accused the Adelaide City Council of, among other things, a lack of vision. This was duly reported in today's *Advertiser* and I think it is worthwhile reading some of the comments in that article. It states:

The Premier, Mr Brown, has launched an extraordinary attack on Adelaide City Council, accusing it of lacking vision by focusing on salaries instead of the city's future. . . 'What concerns me is it's about time we got the city council in there with a long-term vision for the city and putting its resources where it counts.' In Parliament, Mr Brown expanded his attack to include the council's attitude on a range of development issues.

This is the Premier's traditional method of attack—to blame someone else for a failing of his own Government. Recently I have been very critical of this Government because it seems to be lacking in vision for development in this city and in this State. Rather than the Premier's being critical of the Adelaide City Council, I would like to see his leading by example. After all, that has not hampered the Premier of Victoria, who has been forthright in his views about what should happen in the City of Melbourne and the State of Victoria. We have heard very little from the Premier of this State or anyone from the Liberal Government about what should happen regarding development in this State, other than that it should be left wide open for developers.

Any projects cited as being part of this Government's development plans have been projects that were started a long time ago and under the former Labor Government. This Government has done very little except perhaps initiate the clean-up of the Patawalonga and promote the marina development at Glenelg, although questions about that development are yet to be fully answered. In the article once again we have the Premier blaming another body for his own failings. It is not good enough. There are a number of critical issues regarding development in this State, and the Premier touched upon one of them in his criticisms of the Adelaide City Council. The article further stated:

The City of Adelaide needed strategies in areas such as combating the growth of regional shopping centres.

The Premier should know that his own Government has been promoting approval for the development of these regional shopping centres in the absence of any definitive plan for retail shopping in this area. The only thing it has done in terms of shopping is to allow shops in the City of Adelaide to open on Sundays thus, to some extent, shutting out the regional shopping centres. The Premier has criticised the Adelaide City Council for not taking the lead, but we have heard nothing from his Government about regional shopping and retailing in this city and in this State. We have seen no plans. We have seen no blueprint for what should happen with development in this State in retail, tourism and residential development anywhere.

Similarly, the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations has been silent on these issues, even in the face of criticism about the slow depletion of open spaces around Adelaide and the hills face zone—although, if all the proposals are passed, it will start to become a rapid depletion.

Another aspect of development concerns residential housing in this State, which is beginning to become a severe problem. The number of housing starts, as I have said several times before, has reached a critical level in this State. In the *Advertiser* of 5 June there is an article on the housing

market's views on the reduction in mortgage interest rates by several banks. I will refer to some of the statements referred to in that article in terms of whether the latest cuts in home loan interest rates will have any effect on the housing market. The Executive Director of the Real Estate Institute of South Australia, Mr John Munchenberg, said:

But cuts in interest rates had to be combined with a population increase and greater growth in employment and industry to significantly boost the market.

Similarly, the manager of Myles Pearce Real Estate agreed that interest rate reductions would not have a dramatic effect on the market. He said:

The market will be improved by greater job security for younger people and a general freeing up of the economy.

For some years the Premier has been telling us how wonderful the South Australian economy is, how it is growing more than any other economy in Australia and how much he has done to boost jobs and industry.

Yet, quotes from people within the industry who actually work in the field in South Australia give no credence whatsoever to the Government's hype on the South Australian economy. Everyone in the building industry and indeed the development industry well knows that the Premier has no credence on this issue. It is all very well to stand here in Parliament and use statistics and figures to try to prop up what is an appalling picture for the South Australian Government, but the people in the marketplace know that this is not fact. They know that they are operating in an incredibly difficult climate, and that that is not about to change simply because the Premier stands up here and fudges the figures. They know that it is only a Government that is prepared to stimulate the economy in an effective way and do something to create real jobs that will make any difference to them. I am sure that by now they realise they are not about to get that out of this Government.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I would like to use this time to compliment the Government on its latest budget. I think all South Australians would recognise the great achievements of this Government during the two and a bit years that it has been in office. It has been a remarkable achievement no matter which guidelines you use to compare it with. In fact, it is clear that South Australia has now broken the back of its debt burden and is on track to record a genuine surplus budget next year. Who would have thought that possible when the Liberal Government came into office? I certainly knew that hard decisions would have to be made. Many hard decisions have been made and the results are now showing forth.

It is a great shame that the Opposition does not seek to recognise the great achievements of this Government, that it keeps seeking increases in services and opposing the sale or contracting out of assets. It does not acknowledge that the way in which it would have tackled the problems would have been to further increase debt and, obviously, taxation and probably introduce new taxes. That is certainly not the way South Australia would have wanted to go. It is fortuitous that a Liberal Government came into office at the end of 1993 to enable it to tackle these major problems in such a realistic and forthright manner.

I am particularly pleased that in this budget there is a \$61 million increase compared with expected expenditure for this year. This extra financial commitment to education will mean that South Australia continues to spend more per

student on education than any other State of Australia. That is a great achievement when the Government has had to cut back its areas of expenditure, including education. Most of us would know that the extra resources for education will be spent on a significant pay increase for its employees—teachers, in particular—a new five-year information technology plan for schools, further early year strategy initiatives, and a range of initiatives in other areas.

I am pleased that my electorate of Goyder will benefit not only in the general sense but also through some major projects that are planned or in some cases already in progress. I mention, in particular, the refurbishment of Balaklava High School at a cost of \$1.25 million. It is somewhat ironic that when I was first the endorsed Liberal candidate for Goyder way back in 1982, I was at Balaklava High School and the push then was for a new school. That was 14 years ago. It took a Liberal Government to come in before anything was done in this area. For those people who have not been to Balaklava recently, I think you will be very pleased and impressed by the stage of construction of the key new science building there. If you are able to look at the plans for the continued development I think you will realise that this Liberal Government has put in place a project that is now well under way, and people in the region will be very proud of Balaklava High School. It is long overdue.

I also refer to the Kadina Primary School redevelopment. Again, I have been pushing that for many years. We used to refer to those temporary buildings as 'dog boxes'. I think that perhaps that is a little uncomplimentary, because they have been improved inside enormously, but from the outside they leave a lot to be desired. So, where Kadina Primary School has a lot of these temporary buildings they will be replaced. Plans are well in hand for that and, hopefully, we will see some building later in this financial year.

I was also very heartened to see that Ardrossan Area School is to get a laboratory upgrade worth \$500 000 which will commence in this financial year and which I would assume will continue into the next financial year. Ardrossan Area School is situated in an area that is growing rapidly. In fact, as a person who lived at Maitland until two or three years ago when I shifted to Wallaroo, I had no doubt that Ardrossan was starting to outpace Maitland in population growth, simply because it is on the coast and a lot of retired people have gone to live there. It has also attracted other service industries. I am very happy that the Government has recognised the need for an upgrade of the laboratory area, and a lot of money has been spent there over the past couple of years in other areas.

Those are three areas that I am happy to highlight, as well as something that many people may not regard as a big project, but I am sure that the schools that will benefit from

it will regard it as a significant step forward, and that is the move for extended preschool sessions for rural preschools. In fact, this Government will provide another \$141 000 so that 21 small rural preschools will be able to increase the number of their sessions from two to three per week, thus giving young country children extended access to first class preschool programs. In my electorate, the preschools that will benefit include Brinkworth, Kulpara, Port Wakefield, Stansbury and Troubridge. I say 'Thank you' to the Minister and also acknowledge the work that the preschools have done in making sure that their requirements have been pushed and have been noted by the authorities that gather this information and in this case have provided additional money to assist those areas.

We will also receive some \$1.8 million for the Wallaroo-Port Wakefield road reconstruction, particularly the section from Wallaroo to Kadina. People who have travelled on that road recently would realise that most of the road is completed from Wallaroo to Kadina, but now the situation arises where major planning alterations have had to occur through Kadina, and I hope that it will be possible to complete that in this financial year. Also—and I was on this road only last Friday—additional passing lanes will be constructed on Highway 1 north of Port Wakefield at a cost of \$2.6 million.

Certainly my electorate has some passing lanes. Ironically, I remember advocating this measure after I had been on my first overseas trip to America. That is when I first came across passing lanes and I advocated them to the then Minister for Transport, the Hon. Gavin Keneally. I believe I also advocated the measure in this House and received a very negative response; a response that indicated, 'Really, we are not interested in these sorts of developments.' It has taken this Government to recognise the essential nature of and need for passing lanes and, my word, I was appreciative of passing lanes last Friday evening as I travelled to Snowtown.

I know that the people in the Brinkworth, Blyth and Snowtown areas are very pleased that a large section of the road was sealed in the last financial year, and additional sealing worth \$400 000 will occur this year. The road from Blyth to Brinkworth was an absolute disaster during the wet season last year, but that will not occur this year. I believe the budget is not only helping Goyder—in fact, it is helping Goyder in many ways—but it is also helping the State as a whole, and it is very heartening, as the member for Goyder, to be a part of this Government that has a clear knowledge of where it is going for the future.

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

Motion carried.

At 9.46 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 6 June at 10.30 a.m.