

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 22 October 1996

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

DAWKINS, Hon. M.B., DEATH

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

That this House expresses its regret at the recent death of the Hon. M.B. Dawkins, former member of the Legislative Council, and places on record its appreciation of his meritorious service, and that as a mark of respect to his memory the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

I would like to pay a brief tribute the Hon. Maynard Boyd Dawkins, MBE. The Hon. Boyd Dawkins was born on 2 January 1917 and died on 21 October 1996, in his eightieth year. He was born at Mount Lofty to A.M. Dawkins, OBE. He was educated at the Gawler High School and Roseworthy Agricultural College and then had his tertiary education at the Elder Conservatorium. Boyd Dawkins was known as a farmer, grazier, stud sheep breeder, choral singer, local government member and member of Parliament. In 1943 he married Constance and they had two sons, Ross and John. He became a member of the Legislative Council for the Midlands district in 1962 and he retired from Parliament in 1982, so he served this Parliament for 20 years. He was both Government and Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council.

Boyd Dawkins had a very full life. Not only did he run his farming activities but he also provided a lot of joy to a large number of people, and I will mention some of the areas of his activity. He formed and was the inaugural President of the South Australian Country Choral Association, with which he was associated for some 40 years and of which he was President for 25 years. He was a lay preacher of the Uniting Church for some 40 years. As a member of council he was involved in local government for some 25 years. He was the inaugural President of the South Australian Parliamentary Christian Fellowship Association. Within Parliament he served on the Public Works Committee and the Lands Settlement Committee.

I remember Boyd Dawkins very fondly, because while I was growing up and involving myself in Liberal politics Boyd Dawkins cut a very large figure in the Liberal Party of South Australia. He was a person of considerable humour, and of great strength and integrity. He gave his time freely to a large number of people, whether to his local constituency in local government or to his choral interests. As well as being the President and founder of the South Australian Country Choral Association he conducted the Gawler Barossa Choir. His tertiary education was at the Elder Conservatorium, and he was a very fine singer. All those who associated with him some years ago will remember Boyd Dawkins' very strong voice. He had a magnificent voice, and he shared his choral experiences across the length and breadth of South Australia when the Country Choral Association went on tour.

Boyd Dawkins was well respected and well loved by his local community. He was a person of very strong ideals and very strong beliefs, but he always had time to discuss matters that were not necessarily consistent with his own beliefs. Anyone who served with him will remember him with a great deal of affection. He served Parliament exceptionally well, he was always consistent, and he always worked hard for the betterment of South Australia.

He is survived by his wife Constance, his sons Ross and John, his daughters-in-law Sue and Helena, and his grandchildren. On behalf of the Parliament, I pass on my respects and condolences to his family, and say that he will be remembered with a great deal of affection by all those who came in contact with him.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I second the motion. I did not know Boyd Dawkins well because he retired from Parliament in 1982, several years before I was elected, but I did know him around the corridors of Parliament House when I worked for Don Dunstan, Des Corcoran and John Bannon. I always found him to be a most genial and decent person and, as the Deputy Premier said, someone who had a reputation around Parliament for being a decent, kind, family man with a real sense of integrity about the pursuits in which he was involved.

The Deputy Premier has mentioned Boyd Dawkins' role in the South Australian Country Choral Society. I found a clipping from the *Advertiser* of 1980 which mentioned Boyd Dawkins' conducting 250 singers at the Tanunda Show Hall with the Metropolitan Orchestra, conducted by Boyd Dawkins. He was both singer and conductor. I think that he conducted Handel's *Messiah*. He wanted to show the cultural abilities of country people, not just to parts of the country but also to the city. His performance as a conductor was compared to that of Sir Malcolm Sargent.

He became known controversially during his 20 years in Parliament, firstly representing the Midland district and then, after briefly considering contesting the Lower House seat of Goyder, he gave way to allow Steele Hall, who became Premier, a free run, and he remained in the Legislative Council, where he served as Opposition Whip. He was a very dedicated member of the Public Works Standing Committee, which is often underrated in terms of its activities.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: Hear, hear!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I am a former member of that committee, and the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources and I followed Boyd Dawkins onto that committee and knew of the very strong work he did as an active committee member. I am aware of Boyd Dawkins' very deep religious convictions. Apart from a very strong lineage in the Liberal Party, he also has a cousin, John Dawkins, who was a Federal Labor Minister, and a very strong background in the area around Roseworthy and the Gawler River. On behalf of the Labor Party and the Opposition, I extend our sincere condolences to Boyd Dawkins' widow Constance, his sons Ross and John, daughter-in-law Sue, and grandchildren.

Mr VENNING (Custance): The Hon. Boyd Dawkins was certainly well known to me, as he was to many other rural people in South Australia. He served in the Upper House for 20 years. He was a close friend of my father. They shared many experiences together, both in business and then in Parliament, and they also shared a love of music. As it has been said, Boyd had a lovely voice. I went to school with Boyd's eldest son Ross, and I now have much to do with his younger son John, as do many of my colleagues on this side of the House. Of course, John's wife Helena is my electoral assistant. I also used to purchase Dorset Horn rams from Boyd Dawkins, and I know many other members did as well. The Hon. Martin Cameron used to buy rams from Boyd, and my father told with great clarity the story of how the two of them drove the hardest bargains ever. In fact, Martin would often threaten to leave without buying any rams, but he

always took some home. Boyd Dawkins was a great stud man who was a breeder of this fine sheep variety for many years, and he was known right across the State.

Boyd was active right up to the end. His sickness came on quickly. He went to hospital and had an operation from which he never recovered. I will always remember Boyd as a man with a great voice, singing and conducting in choirs. He arranged musical afternoons right across the valley and in Gawler, always for some well meaning and deserving local charity. I join other members of the House in expressing my condolences to Connie, Ross, John and their families.

Mr BUCKBY (Light): I also rise to support the Deputy Premier's comments and offer my condolences to the Dawkins family on the death of the Hon. Boyd Dawkins. He was extremely well known in the Gawler and Gawler River community as an identity of the district; and, as the member for Custance said, his knowledge of the breeding of Dorsets and Poll Dorsets was second to none in this State. In fact, it even extended into the international arena because he was a judge at the royal show at Smithfield in England. His service to the community was well known through not only his choral work but also his work with the Gawler River Uniting Church, and he was a very staunch member of that church for many years. I offer my condolences to the Hon. Mr Dawkin's family and regret his passing.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I, too, wish to extend my condolences to the family of the late Boyd Dawkins. I associated with Boyd Dawkins in my early years in the Liberal Party, particularly when I lived at Yorketown. Boyd, as the former member for Midlands, continued to take an active interest in rural areas, particularly the Midlands, which included all of Yorke Peninsula and Goyder as we know it today. Boyd gave me a lot of encouragement in those early days, and he was always happy to give advice and to express his view on a variety of issues and topics. He was a great friend of the former member for Goyder, Keith Russack. When I spoke to Keith yesterday, after hearing that Boyd had passed away, he said that he will be sadly missed. I know that Keith and Boyd were in contact with each other on a regular basis until the very last.

I acknowledge the work that Boyd did in respect of not only choral singing, the Parliament and public works but particularly in the rural sector. He was the patron of many organisations, including the Balaclava Show. Boyd made it his objective to be there without fail every year while he was a member of Parliament. However, when he retired, he still continued that active interest in the Balaclava Show and was asked to open it on at least one occasion following his retirement. I am sure many in the rural areas will miss Boyd and certainly treasure the many things he did for this State.

Therefore, I extend my very sincere condolences to his wife Connie, his son Ross and wife Sue, and his son John and wife Helena. My association with Ross goes back to when I lived in Gawler, where I recall Rural Youth was under his chairmanship. He certainly made me feel welcome at that time. As has been mentioned by at least one other member, John Dawkins plays an active role in the political arena today. The father will be sadly missed in the Dawkins family.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.17 to 2.22 p.m.]

MULTICULTURALISM

A petition signed by 190 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Federal Government to give a firm commitment to the principles of multiculturalism was presented by Mr Rossi.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that written answers to the following questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 2, 10 and 11.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:
By the Premier (Hon. D.C. Brown)—

Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment—
Report, 1995-96

Office for the Commissioner for Public Employment—
South Australian Public Sector Workforce
Information—June, 1996

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

Director of Public Prosecutions—Report, 1995-96
Regulations under the following Acts—

Consumer Credit (South Australia)—Savings and
Transitional

Consumer Transactions—Extended Definition of
Service

Magistrates Court—Fees

Second-hand Vehicle Dealers—Fees

By the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing (Hon. G.A. Ingerson)—

Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing—Report, 1995-96

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

Department of Manufacturing Industry, Small Business and
Regional Development—Report, 1995-96

Department of Transport—Lease of Properties

MFP Development Corporation—Report, 1995-96

Motor Vehicles Act—Regulations—Farmers Tractors

By the Minister for Infrastructure (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

Environment, Resources and Development Committee—
Regarding Vegetation Clearance Regulations—

Response by the Minister for Infrastructure

MFP Development Act—Regulations—Land Excluded
from Core Site

Public Corporations Act—Regulations—ETSA Genera-
tion Corporation Dissolution

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

Controlled Substances Act—Regulations—Declared
Prohibited Substances

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

Environment Protection Authority—Report, 1995-96
Native Vegetation Council—Report, 1995-96

By the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations (Hon. E.S. Ashenden)—

Crown Development Report—SA Water Corporation—
Raw Water Pumping Inlet Structure (Jetty) in the River
Murray

District Council—By-Laws—

Barmera—No. 38—Use of Motor Boats, Water Skis,

Jet Skis and Other Like Equipment in Lake Bonney

Warooka—No. 2—Moveable Signs

HomeStart Finance—Report, 1995-96
 South Australian Community Housing Authority—Report,
 1995-96.

OVERHEAD CABLING

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Infrastructure):

I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Members will be aware of community concern about overhead cabling proposed in Adelaide by telecommunication carriers, and about vegetation clearance recommendations by the recent parliamentary committee on vegetation clearance. The difficulty posed for us as a State Government is that we have no control over the cabling. The Federal laws, in this case the Federal Telecommunications Act 1991, override State and local government laws and effectively allow the carriers to install cables without regard to the State.

South Australia has protested about these laws. In our submission to Austel on the revised Telecommunications National Code, we have argued that exemptions that carriers enjoy from State laws should be repealed and that carriers should be required to comply with State planning land use and environmental laws. In the meantime, however, the Government has announced a series of decisions that are designed to reduce visual blight on our city and to assist local councils with their endeavours to underground services. As a result, we are doubling the amount of money devoted to powerline undergrounding, up to a total of \$6 million. We will use the proceeds of net rents payable by telecommunication carriers to ETSA for use of their stobie poles, estimated to be about \$2 million, and devote these funds entirely to speeding up the undergrounding of powerlines. This decision, a first in Australia, will ensure that South Australia maintains its position as the State with the highest proportion of underground powerlines, at 8 300 kilometres, or more than 10 per cent of the system.

We will ban the extension of overhead 11 000 volt powerlines which are erected above the low voltage street mains and which are the main reason for vegetation clearance, at an annual cost of \$1 million per year to ETSA. The State Government will give inner metropolitan councils the responsibility to undertake their own tree cutting programs in place of ETSA. The money that ETSA saves, estimated at \$1 million per annum, will also be made available to councils to assist their undergrounding plans. This move is in response to council requests dating back to 1988, when ETSA was given the responsibility of vegetation clearance programs.

In addition, local councils will be given the freedom to plant trees of their own choosing on nature strips. As well, the Government has adopted most of the recommendations of the ERD parliamentary committee on vegetation clearance. I point out that local councils seeking to accelerate the undergrounding of powerlines have the power to do so under the provisions of the Local Government Act, which allow special rates for specific capital works purposes. Examples of these community-funded schemes that have been undertaken are: Arcoona Avenue, Rostrevor and Morialta; Gold Coast Drive, Carrickalinga; High Street, Kensington; Rokeby Street, Norwood; Esplanade, Elliston; and Smith Street, Walkerville, to name but a few.

This environmental package gives councils the chance to exercise more control in their own areas and demonstrates the Government's commitment to providing a better environment

in our State. I should point out that the State fully supports the introduction of new cabling technology, which is important for State development and especially for IT industries. The cabling can be expected to lead to cheaper telephone calls which businesses in South Australia need in order to ensure they are not disadvantaged when competing against Eastern States businesses that already have the cost benefits of this technology.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr BECKER (Peake): First, Mr Speaker, may I congratulate you on allowing the Commonwealth and State flags to be displayed in this Chamber. May the Union Jack, the Southern Cross and the Piping Shrike remain in this Chamber forever! I now bring up the nineteenth report of the Economic and Finance Committee, being the Annual Report 1995-96, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

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

That the report be printed.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

EMPLOYMENT

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): How does the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education reconcile his Government's election promise to create an average of 20 000 jobs each year with the fact that, after 2¾ years in office, a total of only 17 100 additional jobs have been created—a shortfall of at least 40 000 jobs?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: No-one in the Opposition should ever mention job creation, because members opposite were the specialists at losing jobs. They lost over 30 000 jobs—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The Deputy Leader and all Opposition members should have their heads hanging between their knees in apology to the people of South Australia. As a Government we inherited a very difficult situation. As a result of tariff changes our economy has undergone a massive restructuring. We have sought to diversify the economy to build up areas of IT, the wine industry, aquaculture and tourism—and we are doing that. We will deliver, despite the constant knocking from the Opposition. The Opposition should be supporting projects that create employment in South Australia.

PORT LINCOLN COUNCIL

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations explain any actions he can take to assist the Port Lincoln council and residents of the City of Port Lincoln in light of the courage shown by the nine councillors who resigned due to the comments of the Mayor?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am delighted to answer the honourable member's question. With respect to the present situation in Port Lincoln, the Act is quite clear that, when casual vacancies are created by resignation, the council will be required to conduct elections as soon as practicable

to fill them. That is therefore the first step the council must take. At the moment, a council is still in place even though it comprises only two members, one being the Mayor and the other a councillor. A quorum for that council is half the council plus one, which now involves two members. However, there is only one decision maker in the council, and that is the single councillor, because the Mayor does not have a deliberative vote. Therefore, the stage could well be reached where the council indicates that there is an irregularity in the way it is performing. Should there be an irregularity in the way a council performs, I am empowered to appoint an investigator to report on whether or not an irregularity had occurred. If an irregularity has occurred, I will be able to appoint an administrator, who will then take over the running of the council.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No, I can assure you that it will not be Mr Henry Ninio. I stress that there need be no delay whatsoever in relation to the functioning of the council. An election to fill the casual vacancies should be called immediately and the normal process should then be followed, which would take about six or seven weeks. Should it be necessary, a full investigation would take about six to eight weeks. As that would involve a longer process, it is not one that we would wish to put in place unless an irregularity were found to exist. If one or more of the remaining members of the council resign—that is, either the Mayor or the remaining councillor—an irregularity would probably exist immediately and I would then put in place the process I have outlined, that is, the appointment of an administrator and the process that leads to that. The situation over there is very fluid and one whose outcome is dependent on the council itself. Elections should be called immediately, but certainly we will be able to take action should developments occur that require that.

In relation to the actions of the councillors, as Minister for Local Government I indicate that I think they have shown great courage in standing up for something in which they obviously believe very strongly. As members would know, last week in this House the Government moved a motion strongly condemning the types of comments that have been made by the Mayor. The councillors obviously feel very strongly indeed about those comments and, having considered them, they believe that they need to make their protest felt; so, they have taken that very courageous decision which I believe will be admired by the vast majority of the electors of Port Lincoln. Should those councillors decide to seek re-election, I would certainly expect the electors to return them at the next election with a thorough endorsement to make quite clear that Australians want a fair go and that we will not countenance the critical comments that have been made so unfairly in relation to a large number of Australians.

All of us in Australia, apart from the Aboriginal community, come from families who at one time were immigrants to this country. All that Mayor is doing is being critical of people who, like his own forebears, have shown the courage to come to this country. I assure the honourable member that protections are in place in relation to the Act and that we will be watching the situation carefully. Again, I commend the action taken by those councillors to indicate how strongly they feel about the comments that have been made.

LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Does the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education support the Howard Government's decision to cut labour market programs in the August budget, given that 66 570 South Australians—about 10 per cent of the State's work force—were supported by Commonwealth labour market programs as at 30 June this year?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The Deputy Leader would have been pleased to note that the Federal Government has created a special committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, to try to address some of the deficiencies created by the former Federal Labor Government. That Government created many schemes so that the employment figures would look good. The community is not silly.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: We need training programs, but at the end of the day people want real jobs. Therefore, as a State Government we support the Federal Government's objective of creating real employment, and that will happen when the private sector invests. People employ when they can make money by employing, and they will do that when the economic climate is right and when we get rid of the silly unfair dismissal laws that are taken to the extreme. When the appropriate measures can pass the Senate we will be far more advanced in that area. When other areas of micro-economic reform can be addressed this country will progress, but it takes a while to get rid of the baggage of the previous Federal Labor Government. We agree with the objective of the present Federal Government, that is, to create real jobs. Certainly there will be some heartburn, and we acknowledge the need for some transitional programs, particularly for the most disadvantaged, but the Federal Government's objective of creating real, permanent jobs is a sound one that we support.

STATE DEBT

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Treasurer inform the House of the benefits to the State from contracting out, asset sales and other initiatives undertaken by this Government? This Government has dramatically reduced the State's debt over the past 2½ years as a result of savings initiatives and asset sales. These assets include State owned enterprises such as the good part of the former State Bank and SGIC, which collectively cost the taxpayer \$3.5 billion in bail-outs under the former Government.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

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

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I appreciate the member for Hartley's question. It is on the record that, if we had continued with a Labor Government beyond the 1993 election, our debt would have been well in excess of \$9 billion, with a commensurate interest bill. One of the facets of debt reduction has been to put our finances into good shape for the future of this State, and I believe that we have carried out an exceptionally fine exercise in that regard. However, I contrast that with the State ALP, which over the weekend had a convention and generated reams of paper to rewrite history. I smiled when I saw the reference in the Labor policy platform stating that after the 1993 election the State Liberal Government adopted Labor's debt management strategy.

When we were in the throes of the December 1993 election, we found a \$500 million error in Labor's debt reduction strategy; in fact, a \$500 million hole was suddenly discovered and had to be admitted to at that time. When we came into Government, of all the initiatives that Labor had suggested to meet the challenge, not one had been taken. So, the State Labor Opposition and the previous Labor Government stand condemned for their lack of action.

I refer briefly to the document in question, because it is very important that people understand what it contains. The document produced by the ALP and endorsed by the convention means many things for South Australia—and they are all bad. In that document, with all those reams of paper, there is not one mention of the State Bank disaster.

An honourable member: Yes, there is.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Well, Sir—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It must have been in very fine print. There is more spending, higher deficits, and, because they have not explained where it will come from, higher taxation and higher charges. Anyone reading that document would say that it is full of platitudes, it has no direction and, if this Opposition ever came to Government, it would cost the State an enormous price. That price will be with a debt blow out and higher taxes, and Opposition members are very silent on the issue of taxes. They should say that they should be fair and equitable. They do not say that they are committed not to increase the taxation take from the people of South Australia. An obvious vacuum is created. It is clear that, if it wins Government, the State Labor Opposition intends to put up taxes in this State. It is quite clear and it is in the document.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is in the document that members opposite want to put up the debt simply by running higher deficits. It is clearly set down in the document. I wish that everyone had a chance to read it. They will continue to languish in Opposition if they continue to produce this sort of rubbish.

DISMISSAL LAWS

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Given the claim by the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education and the Premier that unfair dismissal laws are stopping employers from hiring young people, will the Minister tell the House what has been the average compensation payment for unfair dismissal of a trainee with less than 12 months service in South Australia and the number of such claims made by trainees in South Australia over the past 12 months?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Two factors are significant in terms of creating employment: one is the straight economic aspect and the other is all the baggage that deters employers from taking on young people. One of those aspects is unfair dismissal. We do not support a system that does not give any rights to employees.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that he put into practice the advice that I understand he tendered to a meeting at the weekend, where he asked people to be quiet and listen.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: We have very fair dismissal laws in here, and I trust that they will be exercised in relation to

the Deputy Leader. The unfair dismissal laws which have been abused by a minority have acted as a deterrent for people to employ because employers will not take on someone who is a non-performer. If the honourable member thinks back a few years, there were companies, small organisations or family businesses employing 5, 10 or 15 people, but they are now down to employing basically their own family because they will not take the risk of taking on a dud because they cannot easily get rid of that person.

I can give plenty of examples where employers have stated that they will not employ until that situation is corrected. The Federal Labor Party is hindering the passage of that law in the Senate. Until that is cleared away, we will not see an improvement in the employment situation. In terms of the specifics, I will get the detailed information for the Deputy Leader.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I carry a lot of information around in my head, but I do not carry everything: I am not a walking encyclopaedia. I will ascertain the specifics, but the general point, which the Deputy Leader misses, is that until we address those issues, which Labor has frustrated in the Senate federally—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH:—and which Labor has frustrated in another place, in terms of reforms that we have tried to introduce—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Mawson for the second time.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: People look at Victoria, but Jeff Kennett has not had to put up with what we have had to cope with here, namely, an obstructionist Upper House, which has stopped reforms that would enable us to create more jobs. If we have not created more jobs, Labor is to blame.

MOTOR VEHICLE INDUSTRY

Mr VENNING (Custance): Will the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development inform the House of what action the South Australian Government has taken in response to the United States of America's moves to have Australia's automotive export facilitation scheme (EFS) outlawed, and the possible effects on the South Australian automotive industry? Tomorrow the annual automotive industry conference will be held in Melbourne.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As all members of this House would agree, the automotive industry is a key industry in South Australia which is responsible for some 17 000 jobs directly and 47 000 jobs indirectly. Over the past decade, the automotive industry, being a key employer and a key industry sector, has shown itself to be an internationally competitive manufacturing sector, and goods from South Australia, whether they be built motor cars, rear view mirrors, airconditioners, steering columns, wheels or a whole range of other automotive component supplies, have been able to access world markets on price, quality and reliability of supply. That speaks volumes for the industry in South Australia, and for the work force, for its diligence in developing over the past decade an internationally competitive industry, with management focusing on the changes that were

required to be put in place to enable South Australia's automotive industry to become internationally competitive.

However, it faces many challenges now. In the year 2000 there will be a review of the car plan, and a mid-term review is taking place in 1996-97, which the new Federal Government is considering. The South Australian Government will make a detailed submission to that review, and one of the key points that we will be making is that the promise has not been delivered. With the reduction of tariffs, it was a clear commitment of the former Federal Government that there would be microeconomic reform to compensate for tariff reduction, that there would be equality in terms of cost for the industry itself.

Tariff reductions were delivered but microeconomic reform in this country to equate to the reduction in tariffs has not been delivered. Therefore, the industry deserves double commendation because, despite the fact that the policy mix is not right, it has still been able to get it right in an internationally competitive environment. We will argue with the Commonwealth Government that one of the key features on which it needs to focus between now and the year 2000 is microeconomic reform. That is in terms of the foundation established under the Button car plan to build the car industry and what will be needed post the Button car plan, post the year 2000, to ensure that we build on that policy for an industry in the future.

One of the great impediments that we have in Australia is simply our size. We do not have the economies of scale. We do not have the production runs in the domestic market to give the economies of scale to amortise the cost of operation to access the international market. Therefore, Governments need to consider the ageing car fleet in Australia. How can we as Governments, Commonwealth and State, increase the domestic car market in Australia? We can achieve that by reducing the cost of cars through the taxation system, and a number of other policy initiatives can also be introduced. We will put to the Commonwealth Government that the size of the domestic market is an impediment and that that question needs to be addressed, as does the ageing car fleet compared with that in other western democracies.

We will also suggest that progress on microeconomic reform should proceed, assuming that there will be tariff cuts post the year 2000, with the tariff remaining at 15 per cent. We will also look at improved access to the regional economies of Asia. We have to be able to have access to those economies if the domestic market and the international competition are to be matched. In that way, the domestic market can amortise the cost, the build being significant enough to get into that market opportunity.

On a number of occasions I have put to the House that, because of our population base, particularly for small and medium businesses, we have to go overseas and win business and bring those contracts back to South Australia to make up for our small State status. It is our only lifeline post 2000, and that applies to the automotive industry as it does to any other trade or goods and services sector of the Australian economy. The Commonwealth Government will be required to take up in the GATT round World Trade Organisation meetings in December in Singapore the need for our Asian neighbours to remove some of the impediments placed on us in terms of our automotive components and our built motor vehicles going into those markets.

If we are to have the dismantling of trade barriers between the APEC economies, clearly that is an area on which we need to focus and attempt to put it in place sooner rather than

later. While the Industry Commission has been asked to report on assistance arrangements for the industry to apply after the year 2000, South Australia is putting to the Commonwealth Government that it should act immediately to develop a package of initiatives to ensure that South Australia and Australia retain a sustainable and internationally competitive automotive industry.

The investment decisions being made today are occurring on what Commonwealth and State Governments have in terms of certainty in policy direction for the automotive industry over a five and 10 year horizon. Uncertainty and a lack of clarity in terms of automotive policy in this country will impede major investment decisions, whether they involve General Motors, Mitsubishi, Lear Seating, Johnson Control, and so on. They want predictability to make major investment decisions. That is why the Premier has already taken up this matter with the Prime Minister, and that is why I have written to the Federal Industry Minister, pursuing the need to get clarity of policy in the automotive industry sooner rather than later.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Has the State Government received Commonwealth Government approval for the redirection of unemployment benefits to participants in the proposed Youth Bank and, if the proposal proceeds, how will the Premier ensure that participants do not simply displace fully waged young workers? The State Government has announced support for a youth employment program which is based upon the unemployment benefit, plus 25 per cent of the training wage. The Minister has recommended that young people who refuse to participate should have their unemployment benefit discounted.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Taylor for her interest in this question. The State and Federal Governments are trying to address the tragic situation we inherited in terms of unemployment, and we have had considerable success. I remind the honourable member that, under the previous Labor Government, unemployment reached nearly 13 per cent. It is now down to 9.7 per cent, which is still too high. When the now Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Employment, 34 South Australians joined the dole queue everyday. To put things in context—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The situation with respect to the 8 000 unemployed teenagers in South Australia warrants a new approach. Traditionally, they have been put into training schemes that have a short life. They mix with other young unemployed people who often lack self-esteem and who need special help. Through this proposal, with the support of the commonwealth, I am trying to turn it right on its head and put them into the workplace so they experience the work ethic. It is not about cheap labour. Members may not realise this, but the unemployment benefit ranges from an absolute minimum—if they are getting parental support—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader is not carrying out his own advice.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: —of \$65 a fortnight, but it goes up to \$256 a fortnight for an 18 year old who is considered to be independent. So there is a considerable range. We are

suggesting that, on top of that, they get 25 per cent of the training wage which is awarded to young people and, for a year 10 exit student, first year out, that ranges from \$179 to \$296 for a year 12 student who is out for two years. So, we are saying a quarter of that; we are not talking about paying them close to zilch. Under this proposal, they will get a lot more than they would if they were on unemployment benefits, and they get the opportunity to experience real work.

These young people face a fearful future if they cannot get on the work ladder. They are not even getting started because no-one will take them on. We are looking at a special approach. We need the support of the Commonwealth to do it. We must look at what we can do as a State Government. However, we will not sit back and allow these young people to be left by the wayside while the bulk of the community is in employment. The world has moved on. Of course, there is always an opportunity for exploitation by some people but, if the scheme gets the support of the commonwealth Government, we will be careful to build in safeguards to avoid substitution and exploitation.

The present situation is totally unsatisfactory. I meet these young people all the time, and they tell me that they do not want to be home watching videos—they want to be doing something constructive. They cannot get a work record because they are not in the workplace. They do not want to be on a short-term training program, on a continual cycle of doing another training program. Let us get them into the real world of work. Sure, they will not be paid the same as a top salary earner but at least this is a start. We are talking about the youngest people.

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLARKE: I refer to Standing Order 98. The question related to how the Minister would protect those already in paid employment from exploitation. The Minister has not answered that question because he has no idea.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the Deputy Leader is going to complain about a breach of Standing Orders, he should set an example by not continually disrupting members and completely ignoring Standing Orders. The Chair has a number of options. One member has already been warned twice today and, if he interjects again, he will find out exactly what the Standing Orders allow. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants to test the discretion of the Chair, he will not get the call or he will be named. I suggest that he put into effect that reported advice he gave the Labor Party Convention—to be quiet and listen.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: This Government would not be party to any scheme that involved exploitation of young people. No scheme is free from possible exploitation—we know that. One has only to look at the tax system to see that people rot it and do all sorts of things. We will never stop that totally in any scheme. However, we can build in safeguards to minimise the possibility of substitution and exploitation. What is happening to our young people is a tragedy throughout Australia. We inherited over 60 000 unemployed teenagers from members opposite.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is very close to answering the question.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: We are trying to do something about it. I would like to hear the Opposition's alternative proposal.

YUMBARRA CONSERVATION PARK

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): Will the Premier advise the House of mining initiatives being taken by the State Government to increase the wealth of South Australia and help remove the financial legacies of the State Bank from South Australian taxpayers? The South Australian exploration initiative, using aeromagnetic survey techniques, has identified a significant anomaly in the Yumbarra Conservation Park in the State's Far West. I am informed that this anomaly is similar to that on the map that identified the Roxby Downs ore body.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: There is no doubt that, due to the aerial magnetic surveys, some very interesting anomalies have been detected. Of course, the biggest anomaly ever found in South Australia was in the Yumbarra Conservation Park. The State Government simply wants to be allowed to explore what that anomaly is and, therefore, put some potential wealth on the anomaly. Then we can make the decision whether or not we proceed. I was amazed to find that over the weekend the State Labor Party's Conference rejected the proposal to allow this State to even understand what this ore body might be. A most astounding—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—decision by the State Labor Party to say that South Australians cannot even find out how valuable this very significant anomaly might be!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Let us find out what it is worth and then make a decision.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Taylor and others will not interject.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is very interesting because Gary Gray, the Federal Secretary of the Labor Party, handed out a speech at the State Labor Party conference which stated the following:

Our people above all our candidates for office need to study and understand the creation of wealth. Candidates who do not understand the process of wealth creation can effectively deny the benefits of employment and economic growth to the people whose interests they are meant to serve.

That is an astounding statement of truth from the Federal Secretary of the Labor Party.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is an astounding statement of truth. We then find that the same conference at which Gary Gray spoke then rejected a proposal even to explore Yumbarra Conservation Park. I reveal to the House that I happened to get a preliminary copy of Gary Gray's speech sent to me before he delivered it. In the original draft he had a further interesting statement to make and I will read it to the House. It is on page 7 of the draft copy of Gary Gray's speech to the State Labor conference. Members opposite may like to listen, as it is very relevant indeed. He states:

The bank is still poisonous. There is no immediate antidote, but we do need to say 'Sorry' to acknowledge the role we failed to play in protecting South Australia's bank. Unless we acknowledge this, there will be no forgiving from the electorate.

That is a very interesting statement indeed. It is interesting that, when Gary Gray handed out the speech on Sunday, that paragraph had been withdrawn.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I had a draft copy of the speech and on page 7—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

Mr CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, the Premier is either inadvertently or deliberately misleading the House. The National Secretary of the Labor Party did not give that speech and was not even in Adelaide on Sunday.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order: that is a statement.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows that there are facilities available in the grievance debate for him to address any matter he wishes, and that is the way he should handle it if he is unhappy with an answer. He does not have a point of order. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: He handed out a speech at the conference and that very pertinent paragraph on page 7 of the draft sent to me was missing from the copy of the speech handed out by Gary Gray during the conference. I will repeat it, because it makes a clear statement to the people of South Australia:

The bank is still poisonous. There is no immediate antidote, but we do need to say 'Sorry' to acknowledge the role we failed to play in protecting South Australia's bank. Unless we acknowledge this, there will be no forgiving from the electorate.

The very fact that that was removed clearly shows that the Leader of the Opposition insisted that it be withdrawn from the speech because he was not prepared to say 'Sorry' to the people of South Australia. It clearly shows that the State Labor Party is still not prepared to say 'Sorry' for the bank disaster in South Australia. I make one final point. We heard the Leader of the Opposition say last week that to run the next State election campaign they will bring in John Della Bosca. John Della Bosca is the man who ran the campaign for the seat of Lindsay.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. I suggest to the House that its conduct is particularly bad. The Premier is now straying considerably from the question he was asked.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will not interject while the Chair is addressing the House. I suggest that the Premier complete his response to the question and not stray.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I was about to point out to you, Sir, and to the House that I had just left a lunch at which the Prime Minister was speaking: he pointed out that in 1993 the Labor Party got 58 per cent of the primary vote in Lindsay and in the by-election on Saturday it got 33 per cent of the primary vote. I would welcome John Della Bosca to South Australia, because today's *Australian* describes the campaign as 'arrogance of the New South Wales Labor head office and its refusal to consult with the rank and file'. Mr Della Bosca has admitted that his decision to force the by-election was a mistake. That says heaps about the present Labor Opposition in South Australia. I still challenge the Leader of the Opposition to come out and apologise once and for all for the State Bank—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections from the Government Whip and the front bench.

SPECIFIC PURPOSE PAYMENTS

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Given that the Prime Minister is in Adelaide today, as we have just found out, has the Premier resolved the dispute with the Commonwealth over the size of cuts to specific purpose payments to South Australia and, if so, what are the details?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The specific purpose payments have finally been worked out. It is some \$24 million worth of cuts above the \$50 million previously agreed, so in total the cuts are \$74 million. Part of that is being accommodated by off-sets.

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Yes, as the Premier says, we are about \$9 million better off than when we came out of the Premiers' Conference and a lot better off than before we entered the Premiers' Conference. So, \$24 million is involved. The budget is still on target. We have said right from the very beginning that, where Commonwealth cuts were being made to the programs it has previously supported, we would not continue to support those programs to the same extent. It will be \$24 million. It will be the Commonwealth Government's decision on those programs and I will give a full report to the House when all the details have been put together on all the bits and pieces. A large number of programs have been affected in a limited fashion: others are far more drastic. I will be reporting that matter to the House shortly.

MINING AND EXPLORATION

Mrs HALL (Coles): Will the Minister for Mines and Energy inform the House what work is being done by the Government through the Department of Mines and Energy to encourage specific mining companies into South Australia? I understand that South Australia is now being viewed in the mining industry as the last great tract of land with enormous but unknown potential for exploration. I also understand that there is considerable exploration activity for gold in the Gawler Craton regions around Tarcoola while other companies are searching in other parts of the State for other specific mineral possibilities.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the member for Coles for her question. The expenditure on mineral exploration for the calendar year does not include the \$200 million in gas exploration by Santos or the \$1.25 billion worth of investment commitment by Western Mining. In the calendar year 1995, some \$20.8 million was spent on mineral exploration. That is the highest level since 1986. We are expecting a 50 per cent increase this year—some \$30 million—a record amount on what we know of the drilling in progress today. Some 105 companies are engaged in 265 licences with 31 per cent under licence or application and involving 312 000 square kilometres of the State. It is a boom in exploration, and South Australians can look forward to the future with some confidence, but I will put a caveat on that shortly.

Copper-gold exploration is at record levels and accounts for some 60 per cent of total exploration expenditure. Company exploration for gold and copper-gold is expected to increase during 1996, and some great discoveries have been made in the north-western part of the Gawler Craton and, of course, in the Olary-Broken Hill region. Seventy

companies are involved in exploration over 150 exploration licences in the areas that were surveyed by the SAEI initiative. South Australia's mineral potential is attracting enormous interest across Australia and overseas. I pay tribute to the efforts of MESA in ensuring that everyone is aware of this State's great capacity to provide significant maps, information and core samples like no other State in Australia.

However, there is a little bit of a dark cloud. The ALP held a convention on the weekend, and I was absolutely amazed: I think that the mining companies would never wish an ALP Government to be in power in this State again. An ALP policy platform states:

Require a biological survey and management plan for all...exploration to be paid for by the proponent of the mineral exploration.

This policy means that, before anyone can dig a hole, a biodiversity or biological survey must be undertaken. Someone must spend millions of dollars before they can sink a hole in the ground. That is a shame. I do not know whether the ALP consulted with anyone before it wrote this piece of garbage, but I suggest that that would be the toughest requirement anywhere in the world, including the most environmentally sensitive country—and South Australia is environmentally sensitive. The requirements of the next ALP Government—in 20 or 30 years—would suggest that, before a hole can be sunk or before any sort of survey work can be carried out, a biological survey must be done. It is a disgrace.

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Given the vital importance of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway to industry in this State, does the Government intend to introduce special joint legislation with the Northern Territory to help facilitate the Alice Springs to Darwin railway and, if so, when will this be brought before Parliament? The Opposition—which strongly supports the railway, along with the Government—understands that, to give push for the railway legal backing and to limit the State's liability to the \$100 000 000 already pledged by the State Governments, special legislation may be required to establish a joint statutory authority with the Northern Territory.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I indicate that, at this stage, there is no proposal for legislation. We are talking to the Northern Territory Government about a joint venture vehicle that would be established between the South Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government. Whether or not it needs legislation is still a matter being discussed between the lawyers. I know that the Minister from the Northern Territory, Barry Coulter, briefed the Leader of the Opposition on Friday morning. I assure the honourable member that we are working through that process—as we are a number of other initiatives—concerning the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link.

At this stage no decision has been made but, if it is necessary to form the joint venture vehicle, legislation will be introduced into the Northern Territory Parliament and, if necessary, into the South Australian Parliament.

ENVIRONMENT INVESTMENT

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources indicate the current level

of investment in the environment in South Australia and provide examples of where this money is being spent?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The question asked by the member for Morphett brings the whole issue of the environment into the economic realm, with associated investment and job creating opportunities. It serves to highlight the fact that environmental action is a lot more than words and commitment, but shows how this Government's care for the environment is also contributing to employment and the economic growth of the State. It also demonstrates one of the often unacknowledged roles of the EPA in helping to pioneer new best practice standards amongst industry.

Conservative estimates show that at least one-quarter of a billion dollars of environmental improvement programs has been put in place by the EPA in its first 18 months of operation. These improvement programs, which cover heavy industry right through to the wine industry, target prevention of contamination, lowering of emission levels, pollution controls, treatment and recycling of water and energy efficiency. The programs include \$152 million in waste water improvement by SA Water; more than \$45 million by BHP, Whyalla; at least \$14 million by Pasmenco BHAS at Port Pirie, with further expenditure proposed, including \$12 million on the construction of undercover storage of blast furnace undercover materials and major new plant; and also \$3.5 million for improvements by Penrice Soda. In fact, hundreds of companies are now undertaking environmental improvements as part of ongoing costs.

If we were to take into account other environmentally based initiatives under way in this State, this total would be considerably more than \$250 million. In just two years we have seen some \$10 million spent on the Torrens River and Patawalonga catchments, many millions of dollars spent on the Mount Lofty catchment, and millions to be spent on rehabilitating the Murray River, with work to begin soon. In addition, we now have housing developments that promote the treatment and reuse of household water and stormwater. In recycling, we have a new recycle park at Ottoway and in areas of Adelaide green household waste is now being recycled into compost for sale back to the public. Environmental efforts are not confined just to the metropolitan area but include country areas.

These few examples show that the whole issue of environmental care in this State has come a very long way in the past three years. In fact, the environment, its protection and improvement is now an active contributor to South Australia's economy, attracting investment and creating jobs in South Australia. This Government is committed to all three—the environment, investment and jobs—and its ability to recognise the relationship between the three adds a new dimension to South Australian politics. We do not talk about protecting the environment: we do not make empty promises. We do something about it. We take action, and that action has already generated investment of more than one-quarter of a billion dollars in South Australia.

ADELAIDE OVAL LIGHTS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Has the Government been involved in discussions about the installation of fixed-lighting towers at Adelaide Oval, and does the Government support this move, given persistent problems with the retractable lights and the needs, television and otherwise, of both cricket and the Rams based at the oval?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: No, to my knowledge no discussions have taken place.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Do you support it?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: How can I say whether I support it when no proposal has been put to us. What does the Leader expect me to do? Stand here and say 'Yes' or 'No' when no proposal has come forward? As I said, to my knowledge no discussions have taken place, with the one exception that, I think, at a social function about one or two months ago someone said to me that there were still problems with the lights, that they would have to look at something, and that one option they might look at is fixed lights. That was no more than a passing comment at a social function. No discussions have taken place with the Government at all.

ANTHRACNOSE

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Primary Industries outline to the House what action the Government has implemented in response to the discovery of anthracnose disease in lupins on the Lower Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I thank the member for Flinders for her question and acknowledge her interest in what is a quite worrying development within her electorate. At present PISA and SARDI officers are investigating an outbreak of anthracnose (a disease of lupins) on the Lower Eyre Peninsula. We can confirm that the outbreak of the disease has currently been detected on three properties near Port Lincoln. The disease has been confirmed through both SARDI and a specialist New South Wales taxonomist.

At this stage it is important that we investigate the full extent of the problem and the possible sources of infection. Five to six teams of departmental personnel are currently assessing the extent of the problem on the Lower Eyre Peninsula and investigating the possible causes. A steering group led by a PISA chief inspector has been established to coordinate the response, supported by an operations team on the West Coast which is out inspecting suspect paddocks. For members who are unaware, anthracnose is a seed-borne fungal disease which, if left unchecked, could destroy crops worth several million dollars. In the past few weeks, millions of dollars of crops in Western Australia have been destroyed to try to contain the disease.

The three properties of concern on the Eyre Peninsula have had movement restriction orders placed upon them, which will cover the movement of plant material, machinery, animals and people both in and out of the properties. At this stage, PISA and SARDI are doing everything possible, having just identified the source of the problem, and they are working to prevent it spreading further. It is a good example of the quick response by PISA and SARDI on behalf of the grain growers to what is a serious threat to crops. We all hope that the spread is no wider than that already identified.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier take the opportunity of the Prime Minister's visit to Adelaide today to protest about the abolition by the Howard Government of the Regional Development Program, or does the Premier agree with the impact these cuts have on South Australia's regions? The Howard Government's budget of 20 August cut out more than \$180 million of support for regional development over the next four years. Projects

recently lost to South Australia as a result of the abolition of the Regional Development Program include assistance to the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation; a program by SA Water for River Torrens flood mitigation and stormwater control; and a \$250 000 skills development project for the South Australian Department of Employment, Training and Further Education.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a bit slow. I raised that matter with the Prime Minister some time ago, when I highlighted the importance of these regional employment programs and regional development funds. I cited some of the programs where we have spent that money and asked that the Federal Government in future look at reallocating moneys for such programs. I am one who believes very strongly in regional development: it is something into which this Government has put a lot of effort, and it is occurring in South Australia. The sorts of programs where many of the jobs have been created are operating out in regional South Australia.

We can look at the wine industry, for instance. In the small region of Langhorne Creek, in the last two years alone 100 new jobs have been created. So many jobs have been created in Langhorne Creek now that the Minister for Education has been asked to buy some extra land to expand the Langhorne Creek school. Out in regional South Australia there are literally dozens and dozens of examples. We can look at Almondco, that excellent facility in the Riverland; at what has been done in the South-East with a range of developments with the timber industry, adding value; at what has been done in the hay industry, in the mid-north of the State; and at what has been done at Port Lincoln, particularly with aquaculture right along the West Coast.

We can go throughout the State and look at the very substantial regional development that has been taking place. I hope that the Federal Government will continue that program in the future.

DANGEROUS GOODS

Mr WADE (Elder): Will the Minister for Industrial Affairs advise the House of action taken by the Government to ensure that the transport industry is taking all reasonable steps to ensure compliance with legislation? It has been put to me that accidents involving the transport of dangerous goods have the potential to harm employees, members of the public, property and the environment, and often result in high clean-up costs.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Before I answer the question, I must say that I am surprised that the Deputy Leader should make such comments as he has made in the House when in the Senate only the other day the Labor Party opposed all youth wages and all age based youth wages, which has been estimated to cost something like 10 000 jobs for young people. It is quite staggering that he should stand up in the House and ask all these questions today about youth employment: he should know that his own Party is pricing all these young people out of jobs. The Deputy Leader also ought to be aware that in the transportation area the Department of Industrial Affairs plays a very significant role through an operation called Operation Tri-State, in which the police and the departments in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales come together at least twice a year to look at the issue of transportation of dangerous substances across the States.

During the project this year, 1 700 vehicles were stopped: 300 were transporting dangerous goods; 119 received expiation notices; nine, prohibition notices; and 30, improvement notices. It is interesting that, with the carrying of all these dangerous substances, the major problem was in relation to the safety of the driver. The problem areas were lack of first aid kits, lack of personal protective equipment for emergency use and the lack of emergency procedure guides. One of the things that come out of these tests is that we are now able to sit down with the transport union and employers and say, 'It's all very well to have in place certain practices in terms of the carriage of dangerous substances, but if you're not prepared to sit down and make sure that the safety of the drivers is taken care of, the whole thing is futile.'

It is a very important issue and one that also creates some interest in your electorate, Mr Speaker. It is an issue of safety for both employees and employers. It is a very good program and I commend it to the House.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Does the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development agree with the statement made by his Federal counterpart, John Sharp, that the Federal Government no longer has a role in regional development; and, if not, will the Minister raise this matter with Federal Cabinet Ministers today to ensure Commonwealth involvement in and support for regional South Australia? In a July press release, Federal Regional Development Minister John Sharp said that arrangements for regional development overlapped with State Government and, as such, 'there is no clear rationale or constitutional basis for Commonwealth involvement'.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As the Premier has already replied, in relation to regional development, discussions have consistently and repeatedly been held with Ministers at a Commonwealth level over the past six months. I want to put to the House the relevance of the South Australian program in terms of supporting regional development, the achievements in South Australia and the South Australian Government's picking up the fact that Business Advisory Regional Offices (BAROs) were withdrawn by the Commonwealth. Four regional development boards had that function withdrawn under a Commonwealth decision, and the State Government, through the Manufacturing Industry Department, has picked that up and reinstated those four offices so that every regional development board has a BARO officer available to assist small and medium businesses in regional areas.

Where the Commonwealth had retreated, in this instance we actually filled the gap to ensure that all regional development boards were treated equally. In addition, if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition looks at the annual report tabled today by the Department of Manufacturing Industry, Small Business and Regional Development, he will see that the department has facilitated something like \$224 million worth of investment in regions in the past year. In the region in the past year, we have assisted 154 companies, created 1 978 jobs and saved a further 186 jobs. That is not a bad track record.

PARENTING SA

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Will the Minister for Family and Community Services say why, in the \$500 000 Parenting SA Campaign, parents' common law right to smack their

children for disobedience as part of reasonable chastisement is not once mentioned in the leaflet *Discipline With Love*? Why is all physical punishment criticised at every mention, and why is smacking included in the same sequence as 'whipping, punching, beating and belting'?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I find it interesting that the member for Spence is at last taking an interest in Family and Community Services' programs. I was also interested to read negative comments by the shadow Minister (the member for Elizabeth) about this program—a program that has been hailed throughout Australia as a very significant one. Part of that program contained the release of 48 papers prepared independently on a number of subjects—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I would like to know who the member for Spence calls the 'same old crowd'. If the member for Spence had some concern about any of the literature that has been released I would have thought, as has been requested of anyone who has any queries, that he would make contact through the Office for Families and Children. I believe that the program is a very positive one: it is one that I support very strongly. The papers produced have been warmly welcomed by the vast majority of people who have had the opportunity to read them. I would be surprised if the member for Spence had even taken the opportunity to read those 48 papers.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Will the Minister for State Government Services inform the House of the outcomes of an important meeting of Australian construction Ministers hosted by the South Australian Government and held in Adelaide last Friday (18 October)?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The member for Lee asked me a question on Thursday during which I advised that State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for construction-related matters would meet in Adelaide to consider issues that affect Australia's \$45-50 billion construction industry. I am now pleased to be able to report the progress made during this conference. The key issues discussed at the conference focused on security of payment within the construction industry and also a code of practice to be used when dealing with this industry. The conference resolved to release a paper, 'National Action of Security of Payment in the Construction Industry', agreeing that jurisdictions should have a six-week period in which to consider the paper and agree to its introduction across the nation. The specific issues addressed within the paper include the following:

- participants have the right to receive full payment as and when due;
- all cash security retention moneys should be secured for the benefit of the party entitled to receive them;
- payment periods lower in the contractual chain should be compatible with those in the head contract;
- outstanding payments to participants, to the extent consistent with Commonwealth and State legislation, should receive priority payments over payments to other unsecured creditors;
- all construction contracts should provide for non-payment to be a substantial breach;
- all construction contracts should make provision for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms;
- only those parties who have financial and technical capacity and business management skills to carry out and complete their obligations should participate in the industry; and
- all construction contracts in the contractual chain should be in writing.

Australian and State Governments are responsible for approximately 70 per cent of the contracts into which the private sector enters for construction work across Australia. Rather than legislate, Ministers resolved that the advantage Governments have in being responsible for that amount of work within industry should be exercised to the extent that, if people within the industry do not pay their contractors appropriately and do not participate in the industry as Governments would expect, they forfeit the right to contract for Government work. I look forward to keeping the House informed of progress in this matter.

DAWKINS, Hon. M.B., DEATH

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier): I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I was out of the House when the motion of condolence was moved in connection with the death of the Hon. Boyd Dawkins. As Premier, and as a member of Parliament whilst Boyd was a member of this Parliament, I join with other members in acknowledging the achievements of Boyd Dawkins. He had a very full life. As well as being a member of Parliament, he was a farmer and grazier; indeed, he was a keen sheep stud owner who took a great interest in the sheep industry. He was also a choral singer with a magnificent voice. Boyd Dawkins was an enthusiastic person, with a particular interest in the agricultural industries of South Australia. He was very keen on activities involving Roseworthy College, an institution into which he put a lot of time and effort. Boyd Dawkins was deeply involved in all matters that related to rural communities in South Australia.

I join with other members of this House in expressing my condolences to his wife, Mrs Dawkins, his two sons, John and Ross, and their wives and families. South Australia has lost someone who gave very generously to the community and who was a great enthusiast for agriculture and the principles of democracy.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources): I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Last week the public was subjected to a variety of misinformation from the Opposition over the role and the ability of the Environment Protection Authority in carrying out duties to address issues of major environmental concern to all South Australians. As a result, I believe it is imperative that I place on public record the exact structure of the authorities so that the public can gain a better understanding of the operation of environmental protection in this State. While the Government of this State decides on laws and regulations through the legislative process, the Environment Protection Act provides for an independent body to act as the arbiter and enforcer of environmental law. The Environment Protection Authority was set up, with support from both sides of the House, to be independent of any ministerial, political or commercial influence and coercion, acting without fear or favour in the

same independent way that the judiciary or other statutory tribunals would act.

It must independently decide on whether licences are approved, on conditions of license or, in the case of any breaches, the most appropriate action. It is this body that must decide whether the evidence of a breach of the Environment Protection Act is sufficient to stand up in court and whether litigation will succeed. For the Opposition to suggest that this independent authority, which is chaired by an eminent QC, is being swayed, coerced or encouraged to turn a blind eye to incidents that result in environmental harm represents nothing more than a base attack on the integrity and autonomy of authority members.

It is also obvious that the current Opposition has forgotten the very principles of its own legislation that led to the establishment of the Environment Protection Act—and that was that the Office of the EPA was never meant to become an unwieldy bureaucracy with officers hiding behind every door, in every stormwater drain or outside every factory. The spirit of this law was to bring about environmental change through stringent licensing conditions, environmental improvement programs, company audits, and the imposition of clean-up orders which require companies to remediate environmental harm at their own cost and at no cost to the taxpayer. Investigations into the Bridgestone incident are currently continuing, but I am told that communications by Bridgestone's consultant to the trade wastes section of the former EWS in March 1995—before the EPA Act was proclaimed—indicated that pollution had been contained on site.

No indication was given of any migration of ground water contaminants off-site, and certainly no indication to the contrary had been communicated to either Trades Waste or the EPA when on 1 May 1995 new laws were proclaimed which put the very clear onus on industry to report incidents of this nature. Once notification was received in September 1996, the EPA acted quickly to implement a series of actions, ranging from an information discovery order, an environment protection order, the notification of relevant authorities and precautionary monitoring. As the Chairman of the EPA said on a radio program last evening, when the investigations are complete the authority, not the Minister, will make a decision on any prosecutions.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: And the Chairman of the EPA creamed you; he left you cold, and you know it. The provisions of the Environment Protection Act are very clear.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the second time.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: No company is above the law. Each has a precise responsibility to abide by the law and to its licensing conditions. This incident serves to highlight the fact that all industry has a responsibility to the public of South Australia and to the environment, and the public demands that those responsibilities be adhered to. Finally, last Thursday the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked a question, and I am pleased to be able to provide that information. Since 1 May 1995 the EPA has received 31 notifications of incidents under section 83 of the Act. The range of actions include the placement of environment protection orders and clean-up orders requiring site remediation, monitoring and prevention to be undertaken at the full cost to the company with no cost to the taxpayer. In addition, one case is before the court at the moment, with a

further four cases against companies and one case against an individual being investigated with a view to prosecution.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): The Northern Metropolitan Aboriginal Council has been operational in the northern suburbs for about two years. Its aims are first to support and promote the special needs of all Aboriginal people within the northern suburbs, and its particular goal is to create and establish an Aboriginal community and recreational centre for the social, cultural and political development of the Aboriginal people of the northern suburbs. The northern suburbs encompass the five local government areas of Elizabeth, Gawler, Munno Para, Salisbury and Tea Tree Gully. The 1991 census figures show that, in 1991, more than 2 296 Aboriginal people lived in the north within the surrounding areas of Salisbury and Elizabeth. The northern suburbs experienced the highest percentage of growth of Aboriginal people, at 36.3 per cent, and the highest in overall population in the period 1986-91. So, the formation and establishment of NMAC was greatly needed as an advocate for the needs of Aboriginal people.

Since that time, a number of services have been established. The first was an advocacy and emergency financial assistance distribution service. In the beginning, and for the first six months of the service, clients made bookings at NMAC for the sole purpose of obtaining emergency financial assistance. But, as the service developed, people got to know more about it and their trust increased, the role was extended to include advice and advocacy on issues such as emergency housing; supportive accommodation; dealing with Government organisations; negotiating the payment of bills; liaising with tenants and landlords regarding eviction, maintenance and rent arrears; and also transport assistance.

From 1 July 1995 to June 1996, 350 recorded interviews have been conducted by the staff in the services I have mentioned. While some interviews may take 30 minutes, the more complex inquiries last more than an hour. This has been a very successful and important service to Aboriginal people coming out of NMAC. An immunisation program has also been established in conjunction with CAFHS. Again, that is a very successful initiative and one that we had hoped to extend further. A number of new work opportunity training programs have been set in place through the old DEET (Department of Employment Education and Training). One was a recreation officers training program and the other an arts and crafts program.

I refer to the 1996 annual report from the Chairperson, Mr Sonny Morey, as follows:

It saddens us deeply when we read or hear about the many problems still being faced by our people, especially the youth, in relation to:

- lack of employment opportunities
- racial discrimination...
- alcohol and drug abuse
- glue and petrol sniffing
- high crime rate and subsequent arrests by police
- high rate of suicide especially among our young people.

Too often in the past, we tend to blame 'the system' for these problems, but what do we actually mean when we refer to 'the system'? Does it refer to the white dominated agencies such as FACS, Police Department...who have failed to listen to us and to implement suitable programs... Let us not forget that as directors of Aboriginal organisations...we, too, are part of 'the system' and we

are as much to blame for not implementing strategies to alleviate the pain, hurt and suffering still being incurred by our people.

NMAC has been a pro-active agency, working in the community to put forward the needs of Aboriginal people. The tragedy is that it has just lost its funding as a result of Federal Government budget cuts to ATSIC and it is now in danger of collapse. Pro-active people such as they have been, working with community groups, deserve support and funding but, unfortunately, it has been taken away.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Mawson. I am pleased to see that he has been quiet.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Thank you, Mr Speaker; I do listen to your rulings. This afternoon I place on record the appreciation I as one of the local members in the south have for some of the efforts that went into events in the southern region over the weekend. Anyone in this Chamber who comes to the good country in the southern region would know that a lot is always happening. A heck of a lot happens in the region, particularly in the springtime. On Sunday the first of what I believe will be ongoing, very successful biennial Scottish highland games occurred at the South Adelaide and southern sports complex that culminates at Noarlunga. I know that councillor Artie Ferguson, the secretary, put a lot of work and effort into that event, and the committee must be heartily congratulated, as well as the Noarlunga City Council, which contributed quite a large amount of funding to the program.

I was delighted to see how groups from all over Adelaide, in fact, as far as away as the member for Goyder's electorate, came to the highland games to perform and enjoy the festival. There was a great variety of stalls and eating houses, and everybody had a fantastic time. It highlighted to me what we have in the south, and that is a very good community spirit. That spirit has evolved by virtue of the fact that we have true multiculturalism right across our southern region. If we look at what is happening with the Willunga and Southern Districts Multicultural Association, the highland games and all the other multicultural groups within our area, we can see that they play an active role in developing economically and socially the great environment that we are fortunate enough to live in.

Also on that same weekend I had the pleasure of opening the sixty-fifth Annual McLaren Flat Agricultural Show. The McLaren Flat Show has been going for a long time. With dedicated people under the presidency this year of Mr Jeff Eardley, the secretary, Tracy Siviour and a committed committee, the McLaren Flat district was able to host what was probably one of the best shows I have seen there. The McLaren Flat Show has always had a large emphasis on horse eventing, and no-one was let down last weekend when the events were of a very high class, which reinforces the fact that the southern area is very committed to equestrian dressage events and horsekeeping.

Another thing that needs to be highlighted was the presence of some of our great local country music bands, led by Judith Waugh, who is very well known for country music across South Australia. It was also fantastic to see the Tatchilla Lutheran College band, which is first-class. That college specialises in music and, given that it has been going for only a couple of years, I know that we will hear more about it in South Australia.

The other thing about the McLaren Flat Show is that it is probably the closest agricultural show to Adelaide, and that

gives people who live in the city an opportunity to drive down south and see what happens in an agricultural community. This year, the harvest for meadow hay and cereal hay is wonderful, and I can see opportunities for the cereal growers in my district. There is also the huge potential income from the ever-expanding viticulture and all the diverse products that are developing, particularly floriculture and aquaculture, be it trout, yabbies or marron.

It is really great as the local member to be able to move around the electorate on the weekend and talk to people who realise that more is happening every week in the south. They also realise how important it is that the Government continue its commitment to protect the rural areas of the south, to enhance industrial development and to make sure that our rural areas expand. We have to do more with respect to water and other infrastructure, but I know that the Government is committed to that and, in the near future, I look forward to announcements of further initiatives by the Government.

As I highlighted at the beginning of this speech, community spirit is alive and well, and I strongly support further expansion of multicultural development. The Bocce Club at McLaren Vale has done a lot for multicultural development. The club, which continually puts back into the community, is comprised of hardworking people, and I congratulate them all.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): After 44 years of educating local children, including Crows coach and Woodville Magarey Medallist Malcolm Blight, Findon Primary School will be closed by the State Liberal Government this year. The four hectares on which the school stands will be bulldozed for a medium density housing development and, as a result, we will lose the open space that the school has provided. That open space, particularly its mature gum trees, is a most pleasant feature of the Woodville South and Findon area, and we shall miss it very much.

The Brown Liberal Government expects that Findon's 174 pupils will go to Woodville Primary School, which is full, or Allenby Gardens Primary School, but I believe that many will be sent to Catholic schools, including Our Lady of the Manger at Findon and St Joseph's at Hindmarsh. The funding arrangements for schools are that the State Government provides funding for State schools and most of the funding for Catholic schools is provided by the Commonwealth Government under the initiative for State aid to independent schools that was championed by the Democratic Labor Party in the 1960s.

The closure of Findon Primary School will take pupils off the State budget line and put them onto the Commonwealth budget line by encouraging parents to send their children to Catholic schools. What we are seeing with the closure of Findon Primary School is a clever cost-shifting arrangement by the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Those Catholic families who fought for State funding to Catholic schools did not fight for the principle that the Catholic system would educate all children alike, Catholic and non-Catholic. I think it is regrettable that, with the closure of so many State schools, the Catholic school system is expected to pick up many non-Catholic pupils. It alters the nature of Catholic schools and it weakens the State system of free, secular education, which ought to be valued.

The closure of Findon Primary School is the twenty-fourth closure since the Brown Liberal Government was elected in December 1993. None of the 24 school closures has been in the Liberal Party's eastern suburbs heartland, much less in the

Toorak Gardens area where the Minister resides. Findon Primary School has many virtues: it is a safe, comfortable school, small enough for parents, teachers and pupils to know one another and with fewer behavioural problems than comparable schools. Findon's community spirit helps it in many ways, including sporting achievement in cricket, netball and athletics. The school responded to migrant settlement in our district by teaching the Italian language.

I congratulate the parents on making an excellent submission to the Minister to try to save the school, but investigations using the Freedom of Information Act have revealed that, before the Education Department encouraged the parents to compile the submission, the Minister had already signed a minute allocating the money to be raised from selling all the land on which the school stands. The parents of children at Findon Primary School were misled, and in particular they were misled by the District Superintendent (Mr Craig Cameron).

Mr Cameron has entered the local newspaper, arguing very strongly for the Liberal Party and against the Labor Party. Mr Cameron has played Party politics, and he was in here last Tuesday dining with the member for Lee. Well might the member for Lee feed Mr Craig Cameron, because not only has Mr Cameron deliberately misled the parents of Findon Primary School by encouraging them to put in a submission to save the school when he well knew that expenditure from the sale of the land had already been allocated but he is using his position as District Superintendent for Party political purposes. He is the successor to the barbecue set, which, when he was Opposition spokesman, the Minister for Education and Children's Services often condemned.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the honourable member that, in the view of the Chair, it is not unparliamentary but it is unwise in some circumstances to make the sort of comments that he just has against someone who cannot defend himself.

Mr WADE (Elder): On 17 October, I raised in the House the contents of a pamphlet that had been drifting around my area of Elder and the disinformation and misinformation that was contained within that pamphlet. I am sure that you will remember, Sir, that one aspect of the pamphlet stated that Dean Brown was the first Premier in South Australia to make police officers redundant and that no Minister in living memory had done that. The pamphlet also stated that police officers had been given bus passes instead of police cars, and we all had a laugh at the thought of seeing police in buses with lights on top dragging down South Road trying to pick up a speedster. I should like to continue to speak about the contents of the pamphlet, but first I will finish the matter of the passes.

These passes were issued in the 1950s, so I do not know what yuppy juice the person who wrote the pamphlet was on at the time. In any event, the issuing of those bus passes was a news item 40 years ago, and perhaps that is when this person heard the story. After I had recovered from imagining this Keystone Cops situation, I made the mistake of reading the pamphlet further until I came to this bombshell:

The only people that can rest easy at night from these cuts are the burglars.

So said the person who wrote the pamphlet. An increase of 135 operational police is not a cut. Grammatically—and I know that the member for Spence will agree—it should have

read, 'the only people who can rest at night', rather than 'that'. All I can say is tut, tut! Bad grammar in a public pamphlet. It must have been written by a lawyer.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr WADE: We are talking about people, not lords. The member for Spence looks a bit cross—I should have said 'a practising lawyer'. That should clarify the whole thing. Has crime gone through the roof under a Liberal Government? Indeed, the burglars are definitely resting easier at night because, from last year to this year, we have had a drop in the incidence of robberies of nearly 37 per cent. Operation Home Protection, Operation Daybreak, our Neighbourhood Watch programs and the community as a whole have brought about a decrease of over 11 per cent in the number of break and enter offences. Burglars are staying at home, because they will be reported by the community and caught by the police if they attempt to burgle. Then they will rest easy in gaol. The person who put out this pamphlet either did not know that crime was on the decrease or chose to ignore it. It was designed to scare people. All it did was give everyone a good laugh.

Mr Bass: Who authorised it?

Mr WADE: I'll get to that. Words in this pamphlet were used in an advert placed in the *Police Journal*. I have always considered the *Police Journal* to be an apolitical organisation. Of course, I have made contact with the *Police Journal* with regard to this advertisement, especially regarding the lack of truth in the advert that that person put in. I am waiting for a response from the *Police Journal*. I am sure that, if the *Police Journal* is now taking adverts for a variety of causes, then it can take some from a few other political Parties and groups around the place.

Mr Bass: It was a mistake.

Mr WADE: It was a mistake, as my colleague said. It is beyond me how anyone could put their name to such a pamphlet—to such tripe. Then, to make sure everyone knows what a fool he is, he puts his picture on it as well. Of course, I am talking about the Labor candidate for my area of Elder. The people of Elder are not stupid; they are not taken in by that kind of tripe and that kind of rubbish. They respect commonsense, common decency and common honesty, and that is why they choose me to represent them and they will not choose the Labor candidate, Pat Conlon.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): It is fortunate that the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education is in the House, because I want to talk about the answers—more particularly the non-answers—he gave in Parliament today to my questions. One would have thought, reading the *Sunday Mail* this week that, with regard to this so-called Job Bank program that the Minister and the Premier have allegedly given so much thought to, the Minister would have been able to give ready answers to the questions put to him today. We have seen a sham act from the Minister and from the Premier, because basically this is a proposal that has not been thought through. It was a put up job to the *Sunday Mail*, and no thorough analysis was done of the consequences that might flow from the type of proposal the Minister talked about.

For a start, he could not answer the question as to why, under his Government's own pre-election promise in November 1993, there is a 40 000 job shortfall in total employment numbers in this State compared with their pre-election promise. Of course, as we learn with the Liberal

Party, there are promises, core promises and things said but never intended to be carried out, and that was one of them.

Further, the Minister was floundering when it came to what would take the place of the former Commonwealth Government's Working Nation programs which, I might remind the House, employed and trained 66 570 South Australians for the financial year ended 30 June this year. No program whatsoever has been put in place by this Government, Minister or the Federal Government to replace those lost positions for almost 10 per cent of the State's total work force. There have just been pious hopes, a wringing of hands and the hope that everything will be okay, even though we all know, from the Commonwealth Government's budget of August this year, that the predicted growth in the Australian economy is just over 3 per cent, which is too little to prevent unemployment increasing to 10 per cent and more, particularly in this State.

Here we have a Minister and a Premier floundering, going to the *Sunday Mail*, saying, 'We have this wonderful new program using cheap labour, where young people are expected to work for the dole, plus 25 per cent.' The attitude is, 'If they don't take on these jobs, they will lose 25 per cent of their dole payments'—no matter how scandalous the job offered to them. The whole basis of the Premier's scam and that of the Minister is the attitude, 'Thousands of employers have told us that, if we could get rid of the unfair dismissal laws, they would employ people; they would take on young people.' One would have thought this was a carefully thought out program by both the Premier and the Minister. However, when I asked the Minister how many unfair dismissal cases have been taken by trainees in the past 12 months and what was the average monetary compensation awarded against employers for unfair dismissals, the Minister was unable to answer. He said, 'I don't carry all these facts around in my head. I will get these figures for you.'

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: The Minister interjects and says that it is not his portfolio, yet the Minister was quoted in the *Sunday Mail* of the weekend gone by saying, 'We know there are hundreds of jobs out there for young people; if only we could get rid of this baggage such as unfair dismissal laws.' I would presume that, since the Premier was also quoted as saying that this was an idea he had had kicking around in his head for a long time, those sorts of crucial facts would have been known to the ministry before it embarked on this type of program. Of course, there are no facts to support the proposition put forward by the Minister or the Premier. The fact is they are looking for short-term, unrealistic, knee-jerk reactions to overcome problems deeply embedded within the structural employment position of South Australia. The Minister wants to allow employers to exploit young trainees, who, under his proposal, have no recourse through unfair dismissal legislation. That opens up that person entirely for gross exploitation.

Mr BASS (Florey): I refer to a matter of some concern. Over the past few days, many residents in the north-eastern suburbs would have received a flier in their letter box addressed to, 'The victims of hearing loss: are you one of them?' It is put out by a company called Better Care in Victoria, which also has an address of 50 Woodville Road, Woodville. I am aware of this company, and recently a constituent of mine came to me. He received an audiologist's test, which identified that he had a 35 per cent hearing loss.

As the audiologist was tied up with WorkCover, he was concerned and thought he would get a second opinion.

Someone at his work told him that a place called Better Care at 50 Woodville Road, Woodville, could do a second test for him. He attended at the Better Care premises at that address on 2 February and was given a test. At the end of the test, he was told he had a hearing loss and was asked whether he could re-attend on Sunday, two days later, to see a Sidney Ho, who was the specialist for Better Care. He returned on Sunday 4 February and was quickly fleeced of \$300, which he thought was paying for a report. However, in actual fact he was given another test—the same test he was given on Friday, 2 February. He spoke to Sidney Ho, who told him he had a hearing loss and that people would be in touch with him. My constituent came to me as he was quite concerned that he had forked out \$300 and it did not seem that he would get a report to confirm his hearing loss. On 9 February he received a letter which stated:

Better Care's hearing test shows that you have a problem with your hearing.

However, Better Care went on to say that Better Care is not a legal firm and that he should contact Anders, Salwin and Salwin in Victoria. The principal of that firm is a Director of Better Care. We now have a connection between Better Care and the legal people who will try to get payment from WorkCover. When I became involved, I wrote to Better Care and explained that my constituent only wanted a report on his hearing and, lo and behold, on 20 March another letter was sent to my constituent which stated:

We have received the results of your medical and/or audiological examination, which indicates that you have a hearing problem. The WorkCover legislation requires you to have a work related hearing loss of at least 5 per cent...

It goes on to say:

The industrial component of your hearing loss at this time is 0.00 per cent.

It is zero per cent. One would suspect that they had been caught out. It has definitely been caught out, because Better Care is nothing but an agent for Anders, Salwin and Salwin. They rip off \$300 from you and you then go to Anders, Salwin and Salwin, who try to get a claim from WorkCover, and I have no doubt that they take a fair percentage.

I have heard politicians in this place make comments such as this and they have been criticised because they have not given the company a fair go. I wrote to Better Care at the Victorian address on 29 July and 8 October and asked for a reply. On 16 October when these letters appeared in the north-eastern suburbs, I wrote another letter, which was faxed and was received, with a request that they contact my office immediately or I would have no alternative but to raise the matter elsewhere. I have now raised it elsewhere. I warn all people who have a hearing problem to go not to Better Care but to a respectable audiologist.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE 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): I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee be extended until Tuesday 26 November.

Motion carried.

ANZ EXECUTORS & TRUSTEE COMPANY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) LIMITED (TRANSFER OF BUSINESS) BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I move:
That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill has been requested by ANZ Trustees to enable it to rationalise its operation in South Australia.

Two ANZ companies are trustee companies under the South Australian *Trustee Companies Act, 1988*. These companies are ANZ Executors & Trustee Company Limited ('ANZ Trustees') and ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited. ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited is a subsidiary of ANZ Executor & Trustee Company Limited. ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited was originally authorised to act as a trustee company by Act of Parliament in 1985 and ANZ Trustees was authorised to act as a trustee company by the *Trustee Companies Act, 1988*.

ANZ Trustees wishes to amalgamate the operation of both companies under the umbrella of ANZ Trustees and the most efficient method of achieving this is by an Act of Parliament to transfer the trusts, agencies, assets and liabilities of ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited to ANZ Trustees.

The alternative to an Act of Parliament is for ANZ Trustees progressively to combine the operation of the two companies and run down the South Australian subsidiary. This would involve the company in keeping duplicate accounts for many years to come. It would be necessary for the South Australian company to continue to act where the company has been appointed as the executor of a will or as the donee of a power of appointment, unless the company could arrange for new wills and powers of appointment to be made. This may not be possible in many cases for clients may not be able to be contacted or may not have the capacity to make new wills or powers of attorney.

ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited has agreed to the enactment of this Bill.

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Interpretation

This clause contains definitions of words and phrases used in the Bill and, in particular, defines the trust business of the ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited (the subsidiary) that is being transferred to the ANZ Executors & Trustee Company Limited (the parent company).

Clause 4: Transfer to parent company of subsidiary's trust business and appointments

On the commencement of this proposed Act, the trust business of the subsidiary as at that date is transferred to and vested in the parent company. The consequential effects of the transfer are as follows:

- in each case where the subsidiary is acting as a trustee, the parent company is appointed as the trustee in place of the subsidiary;
- the subsidiary must account to the parent company for all assets and liabilities and obligations held or to which it is subject in its business as a trustee.

The production of an official copy of this proposed Act is conclusive evidence of the transfer of the trust business of the subsidiary and all property held by the subsidiary as a trustee to the parent company and of their vesting in the parent company. Any such copy of this proposed Act will (in relation to land or marketable securities) operate as a duly executed transfer by the subsidiary to the parent company of that land or those securities.

Clause 5: Evidence

If an application is made by the parent company to register the vesting of property in the parent company and the application is accompanied by—

- a certificate under this proposed section; and

· the appropriate certificate of title or other instrument, the Registrar-General must give effect to the vesting by registering the parent company as proprietor of the property.

A certificate under the seals of the parent company and the subsidiary to the effect that the estate of specified persons in land specified in the certificate is an estate vested by this proposed Act in the parent company is, for the purposes of—

- an application by the parent company to be registered under the *Real Property Act 1886* as the proprietor of that estate pursuant to the vesting; and
- an application by the parent company or a successor in title of the parent company to bring land under the *Real Property Act 1886*; and
- a transfer, conveyance, reconveyance, mortgage or other instrument or dealing in respect of land; and
- creation of an easement or other interest in respect of land (whether or not under the *Real Property Act 1886*),

conclusive evidence of the matters so certified.

SCHEDULE: Amendment of Trustee Companies Act 1988

The *Trustee Companies Act 1988* is amended by striking out from schedule 1 of that Act 'ANZ Executors & Trustee Company (South Australia) Limited'. This amendment is required as a consequence of the passage of this Bill.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY OF ADELAIDE)
BILL**

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 2 October. Page 39.)

Ms HURLEY (Napier): The debate on the Adelaide City Council has been going on for some time and finally we get to have a debate on the Bill itself. The crucial question that has been asked all through the lead up to this debate is: 'Why is the Bill necessary; why is it being done?' There are already provisions in the Local Government Act for the sacking of councils where there is corruption or mismanagement—sections 30 to 33. The Minister specifically stated in his second reading explanation that there was no evidence of any wrongdoing by the council, no evidence of any corruption and no difficulties with the council as such that he could cite.

So, what are the reasons? Why is this being done; why do we have this Bill before us? We heard early in the debate that the problem was with the Lord Mayor. I am not thoroughly aware of the proceedings and have no intention here of defending the Lord Mayor, who seems to have been involved in some fairly bizarre dealings, some of which, apparently, have been with members of the Liberal Party. We have not heard the end of that.

However, members of the council acted fairly swiftly to dissociate themselves from the Lord Mayor and asked the Minister to come in and investigate the situation. They invited the Minister to try to fix the problem, if there was one, with the Lord Mayor. However, the Government was not about to take up that option. Problems with the Lord Mayor were not seen as a reason to sack the whole council since it was obvious that the Lord Mayor was acting—for example, in the Libyan affair—by himself and not with the consent of elected council members.

We then heard that there were problems with obstruction of development. This was mentioned in a previous debate in this place on the Development Bill. We heard that the Adelaide City Council was not allowing development in the City Council area and that the Government had to step in and get through development that the Adelaide City Council was blocking. It turns out that this was not the case at all: in fact, the Adelaide City Council has an approval rate of 99 per cent

of development applications that come before it. Not only that, the Adelaide City Council has something of a record for the speed with which it approves development, the time being generally no more than 21 days. I suggest that most councils in Adelaide would be pleased to have that sort of record.

We did not have any clear expositions from the Government of what were the problems with the Adelaide City Council, but the Opposition believes that there have been long standing issues to do with the Adelaide City Council. They are fairly fundamental issues, on which we strongly support taking action. It seems to me that one of the principal issues is the tension between the residents of North Adelaide and perhaps the residents of the city and developers. Indeed, the Adelaide 21 report refers to this specifically and states that in-built tensions are arising between the investment and commercial importance of the State's capital and the proper representational requirements of residents, and that management reform cannot overcome the existing structural problems of organisational isolation from other local governments and tiers of government, conflicting residential and commercial interests and too many members for focused decision making.

As with many other aspects of the Adelaide City Council report, that sums up the situation fairly accurately. It deals with the tensions inherent between the so-called heritage faction and the development faction of the Adelaide City Council and the need for broader representation on the Adelaide City Council by other people who have a stake in the Adelaide city, that is, the people who work and shop there and who have recreational interests in the city. They are two key areas, and I believe that we are at one with the Government in recognising the significance of the inherent difficulties involving the structure and function of the Adelaide City Council. In my view, that is the principal problem concerning the Adelaide City Council, and has been over many years. Other problems have arisen recently, one of which is that there is a great tendency, both throughout Australia and world wide, to expand shopping centres in the suburbs, so that they become major shopping regions. A prime example is the huge development of the Marion Shopping Centre.

The Government referred to this issue in a previous debate on the Development Bill. One reason the Government urged the Opposition to support that Bill was that shopping centres at Marion, Hilton and Gawler could be built speedily. The Government made great play of this at the time, yet many people see this as a key problem for the Adelaide City Council, a problem which the Government does not seem to have a coherent plan to address. On the one hand the Government is asking us to pass legislation that enables regional shopping centres to get up and running more quickly, while on the other hand it is saying that there is a problem with the city because people are not going there any more and we need to have a more dynamic city centre.

Another problem is a surplus of office space in the city, and that has been exacerbated in recent years by downsizing the Public Service, by private companies relocating their offices interstate and, in particular, by Liberal Government moves over the past couple of years to decrease, quite dramatically, the size of the Public Service. As a result, fewer people are working in the city. These are broad issues that need to be addressed by many talented people and people with a great will. What are the solutions to these problems? The first structural problem confronting the Adelaide City Council is the need to change the way it is governed, and I

believe the Opposition is at one with the Government on that issue.

We are very keen to see a change in the way the Adelaide City Council operates. The governance of the Adelaide City Council has been canvassed over a number of years and was canvassed, I understand thoroughly, as part of the Adelaide 21 report. The issue of governance of the Adelaide City Council has been examined fairly thoroughly over the period, and the Opposition believes that it is possible to go in quickly and cleanly, change the governance and have the new Adelaide City Council structure operating by the May 1997 elections.

There is no need to mess about appointing commissioners for a three-year period and having an extended hiatus period in which people do not know in what direction the city is going. We would like to see the Government go in hard, take the tough decisions and put in place the appropriate governance, with the council going to the election and starting afresh in May 1997. Looking at the timetable for this proposal, we see that, if three commissioners are appointed whose sole task it is to look at the governance of the Adelaide City Council and to review the extensive work already been done by the council, and if we as an Opposition get together with the Government to determine the criteria for that review, there is no reason why that review should take more than a month or two.

As an Opposition, we are quite prepared to facilitate legislation coming into this place in February next year, so that we would have the new structures ready well before the May 1997 election. When one looks at the current Act, with the commissioners covering not only the governance of the city but also the full planning and development powers, as well as the administration, of the Adelaide City Council, one must acknowledge that these people have been given an almost impossible task. Currently administration, planning and governance matters within the council occupy the time of 15 elected councillors.

One might argue that that number is slightly too many, but those councillors sit on various committees and boards that require representation from the Adelaide City Council—committees and boards such as those involving Rundle Mall, the management of water catchment, and so on. These councillors are meant to be involved in the day-to-day decision making and administration of the council; they are meant to spread themselves over the various social functions that require representation from elected council members; and they are meant to attend to all the committee work requiring representation from elected councillors, as well as looking at the governance of the city.

Three people will be given an almost super-human task. Three people will need to have expertise in administration, planning and development and governance. It is an almost impossible task. The Opposition believes that appropriate people can be appointed as commissioners solely to look at the task of governance—people who have the relevant qualifications and experience in looking at such governance issues—who should be able to report quickly to this Parliament, following which we should have the legislation in place.

The Bill will provide these commissioners with quite extensive powers. I have referred to not only administration but also planning development, which is a major part of any council's function. The Bill stipulates that the commissioners will be directly under the control of the Minister and will report to the Minister. Enormous power is being given to the

Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations, and I believe that a number of people in the city are extremely uncomfortable with that—not only the residents but developers also. One reason why many people are uncomfortable about this is that, although the current situation concerning the direction of the council admittedly might be flawed, the situation is now about to be changed whereby the Minister and his three commissioners run the council, and we have no firm undertaking from the Government as to what it wants those commissioners to do.

If this Bill is passed, anyone involved in the city—whether they own a business or work, shop or play in the city—will face a situation over the next three years where they will be leaping into the unknown, as it were, with no indication as to what the Government believes should happen in the city. Then, at the end of that three-year period, they will again leap back into the unknown—perhaps not quite so unknown if the commissioners do their work—with an elected structure. People—planners and developers—in the city who must, of necessity, work long term are faced with two backflips within three years.

The Minister and the Government keep quoting what has happened in other cities such as Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Adelaide is not Sydney, Melbourne or Perth; it is not the same situation. The Government admits that there has been no mismanagement by the council. Why must we copy what other States are doing? Instead of having a long hiatus, a difficult change in environment for all concerned with the city, why do we not have these matters determined within a month or two? Why does the Government not take the tough decision here—because this really is a tough decision for the Government? Changes to the governance of Adelaide City Council involve delicate territory for the Government in North Adelaide, in which a number of members live and which one Minister, in particular, represents. These are difficult changes for the Government, and it does not want to take the hard decisions; it wants to defer the hard decisions over three years until after the next election.

We believe that this is the driving force behind the Government's introduction of this Bill: it wants to look tough, while really not taking the hard decisions. We want the hard decisions made this year. We want these commissioners in, the situation reviewed and recommendations made this year, so that there is a bit of certainty—

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: Exactly. And the Opposition intends, as the Minister asked us, to let the Government do it. The Opposition intends to put the commissioners in there, to undertake this review and to have it ready in time for the council elections next year. This is what we are pleading for. We have common ground with the Government: we both want to see the city developed; we both want to see jobs created in the city; we both want to arrest the decline of the city and see it become a dynamic centre. Why do we not work together, have the review undertaken, have the commissioners appointed and do all this so that we are ready next year to cooperate with the Government, to bring in any legislation required, and to deal with the problem of North Adelaide and its residents and their opposition to development in the city? Why not deal with the hard issues for the Government and let us get going and get something done in this State, instead of sitting here day after day seeing the Government blame everyone else for the lack of action in South Australia?

Ms GREIG (Reynell): The Bill before the House puts before us the unavoidable fact that the governance of the City of Adelaide is not working. On the one hand, it is not the sort of Bill that I would rush to support with enthusiasm as for me, as a former councillor and the current Secretary of the South Australian Division of the Australian Local Government Women's Association, this Bill goes against my fundamental belief in democracy and true grass roots politics. The appointment of commissioners and the dismissal of an elected member body is a reprehensible step. However, on the other hand, a council which has lost direction, which has held our State back and which, through its own petty squabbling, cannot get on with the job that it was duly elected to perform deserves to be sacked.

Current and past Governments have constantly raised concerns with regard to the behaviour of the Adelaide City Council, its lack of vision and the divisiveness that so obviously is preventing the city itself from growing. Malcolm Bradley in 1975 made a statement that I find relevant to the issue we are debating here today. He said, 'If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.' This is what we are currently faced with: an endemic problem and a solution that should be cut and dried. Local government offers many opportunities for experimentation and creativity. Because of their elected members and their multipurpose roles, local democracies are seen as the microcosms of the larger political systems. Negative leaders can stifle improvement, the lack of vision leads to an adaptation of uncompetitive pressures and, therefore, a change to technical, political and cultural objectives is imperative.

We have to recognise, and we are recognising, the need for revitalisation, yet at the same time we have watched closely the reactionary and self-interested forces that face us as we try to implement change. The City of Adelaide requires the creation of a new vision that is exciting and positive, not just a vision adapted through another State or another country. I believe that we have done this with the 'Adelaide 21' report. We have laid down a framework agreed to in principle by State and local government and business, and now is the opportune time to introduce this report as a mechanism for revitalising our city. The Premier has outlined the concern that Adelaide City Council is beyond repair, and this is reflected in the council itself, with the majority of the council members having no confidence in the Lord Mayor and two councillors resigning, saying that the council is unworkable.

I am aware that the Local Government Association and many, if not all, of its member councils are viewing this process with great concern. The method enforced through our actions is perceived as undermining the fundamental values and principles of democracy and natural justice. Councils and their elected members are accountable to their communities just as all of us in this House are answerable to the wider community. However, the principles of local government accountability become somewhat clouded when a council, particularly the City Council, becomes focused on individualism. The sense of community is lost. The social, political and economic environment impinging on local action becomes far more uncertain.

And what do we have? A totally dysfunctional operation packaging its own problems without a solution. Is this grass roots democracy? Is this responsible government? Is this proper accountability to the residents and ratepayers? It is not workable and it is not working. If we look at all the recent improvements within the City of Adelaide precinct, it is not

difficult to conclude that the majority of developments have been driven by the State Government. For example, there is the upgrade of the Art Gallery; the development of Garden East; the development of the multimedia precinct in the east end of Rundle Street; the clean-up of the Torrens Lake and the River Torrens; the clean-up of the Mile End railway yards; plans for the Australian Wine Centre; and, of course, security cameras in Rundle Mall.

Adelaide City Council, even though it is part of our local government body, is a different and somewhat separate entity from other local government bodies. I acknowledge that this is recognised in the Local Government Act, but what has never been acknowledged is that the City of Adelaide belongs to all South Australians, and a huge proportion of disenfranchised people believe that they should have some sense of ownership of their city precinct. After all, hundreds of thousands of South Australians come to the city to work, to play, to relax, to shop and to do business. We all rely on our city one way or another. Our taxes help to build and maintain what is often described as the gateway to South Australia, yet look around us.

Adelaide, our capital city, is stagnant and worn out. For a State renowned for its festivals, wines and cultural cuisine, our city is a sad reflection of what we as a State truly represent. And we know that we can change this image. We can bring our city to life: we can add colour and vibrancy. Why not indulge in and promote the true South Australian culture, and make Adelaide a place people want to visit, to invest in and to live in? Most importantly, we can make it a place we can all enjoy. The question most often put to me is, 'Why commissioners? The election is in seven months time: let the people decide.' But this is about more than a change in the elected member body. It is more than allowing a very small group of people to determine the future of a city that belongs to all of us.

We want to change the working structure of the City of Adelaide. We must see a change in the structure and the composition of the council. We need a council, an elected member body with the capability and structure to realise vision and to deliver a city of worth for all of us. The 'Adelaide 21' report recommends change and, for our city to survive, we must seriously consider the implementation of such recommendations. However, I reiterate that, even though I accept change and believe that it is needed, I still believe in the fundamental principles of local government and its consumers. Whilst we, through this legislation, will be faced with possibly a whole new way of local governance within the Adelaide city precinct, I would like the Minister to assure me that, while the council is under the control of commissioners, the ratepayers will still have their rights.

I want an assurance that decision making processes will remain open and accessible, and that ratepayers and residents will still have access to meetings of the council whilst under the commissioners, and to the minutes of their meetings. I want an assurance that there will be public accountability; and, finally, I want a reassurance that this legislation is in the greater interests of the City of Adelaide precinct and will not be seen to be a tool for dealing with local government in general. In conclusion, I would like to quote a statement from the 'Adelaide 21' report:

A vehicle without an engine can look impressive but goes nowhere. The Adelaide city centre strategy needs an engine to propel it.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I oppose the Government's Bill and support the Opposition's amendments which were spelled out by our lead speaker, the member for Napier. We will elaborate on the amendments at the Committee stage. We ought to go back to some basics on this issue and work out why the Government proposes this Bill. One could almost believe that this is something that the Premier and the Minister happened to think was a good idea one day, because they know, as do the public of South Australia, that this State is going backwards in terms of its economic development. But that is not the City Council's fault. It is not the City Council's fault that this State has record levels of unemployment. It is not the City Council's fault that there are no cranes on the Adelaide skyline.

Let me make it perfectly clear that, with respect to the Adelaide City Council and its councillors, I do not necessarily hold any brook for any of them. In any event, I do not know them that well. But, if they are being sacked because they are a bunch of prima donnas who have spats among themselves, they are no different from the Brown Cabinet. If being a prima donna is a necessary prerequisite to being sacked as a public official, 69 of us ought to get the sack from this place straight away. That is not a reason to sack an elected council. As far as I can tell, when development plans are put forward to the City Council they are overwhelmingly approved.

The member for Napier mentioned that about 99 per cent of development plans are approved within a record time. It is not the City Council's fault that developers are not queuing up at the town hall wanting to develop in this State. Developers will queue up at the town hall or anywhere else to develop in any State or in any city if they believe they can make a quid. The fact is that they know they cannot make a quid in this State because of the State Government's economic policies. The Premier wants to look tough. He saw what happened to Jeff Kennett's approval rating and decided to rattle his sabre with respect to the City Council. He used the Lord Mayor as his whipping post.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: I am addressing the issue. In all of the debate on this issue we have not yet heard from the Premier or the Minister the specific details of why such a drastic action in terms of sacking an elected council should take place. We have heard the generic-type statement: 'Developers will not develop in this State while Henry Ninio is Lord Mayor and while his bunch of prima donnas are city councillors.' Basically, that is the thrust of the argument. But when we ask the Government and the Premier to cite examples of developers who are bursting to come to Adelaide and invest a dollar but who will not do so because of Henry Ninio or his city council, the Minister cannot provide one example.

Members interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: That is what the Premier said. Of course, the Premier is losing his cool on this issue. He came to the absurd position on Sunday, when interviewed on television news, that if the council is not sacked Adelaide will be a crime city; it will be a doughnut. I am amazed: Henry Ninio and the City Council are supposedly now in charge of the State's Police Force. Clearly, this is a Premier who has abrogated his responsibility with respect to law and order issues in this State if he believes that if the City Council is not sacked it will cause law and order to break down in our city.

I agree with the member for Napier that there needs to be wholesale consideration of the City of Adelaide's governance. I know that there is the argument about Light's vision

and therefore North Adelaide should remain inseparable from the CBD. I am not so certain about that. I am prepared to let the commissioners consider the whole issue of the City of Adelaide's governance and come up with recommendations which can be debated by the community and within Parliament to see whether or not the best form of the governance of this city should involve the residents of North Adelaide in the governance of the CBD area.

Frankly, I do not believe that some city councillors, with their personal spats and animosity towards the Lord Mayor, have helped their cause with respect to this issue. They thought they were putting him on the slippery slope by pulling the rug from under him over his Libyan involvement and his personal use of the town hall phone to make free calls. The attacks those councillors made on the Lord Mayor were similar to turkeys welcoming an early Christmas, because that provided the excuse for the Premier and the Minister to say that the City Council was ungovernable and that therefore this drastic action had to take place. Those city councillors who picked on Henry Ninio in this area—and I am not saying that he is the world's greatest Lord Mayor, because I have not sat in his council chambers—have not helped themselves with these attacks on him.

Is the city ungovernable? When we look around the city at present, is the garbage piling up because it is not being collected? Are council employees not being paid? Are they still processing the work that has to be done in order to ensure the governance of this city? Are the parking inspectors refusing to issue parking tickets? I hope they are because the other night I was fined \$55 because I did not have my House of Assembly card on my car. To my knowledge, those fines are still being issued. The council car parks are opening. I understand that people who want to deal with the City Council in terms of the range of services that the City Council provides are being serviced efficiently. There are no industrial disputes paralysing the city's administration. Has anyone accused the City Council of maladministration or, indeed, of having its fingers in the till? Is the City Council broke or being grossly mismanaged? No, none of those things has happened, yet the State Government is intent on stripping away for three years the right of the people of the City of Adelaide to elect their City Council.

The franchise issue within the City of Adelaide raises a number of points. Fundamentally, the position must be one person, one vote, one value in terms of the governance of any local government authority. I have had it put to me by various developers, interest groups, landlords, etc. in the City of Adelaide that the property franchise must remain because they invest all these dollars in the City of Adelaide and therefore should have a say in the running of the council. However, as I pointed out, when Australians elect their Prime Minister it is people who vote, not properties. Fundamentally, if you believe in a democratic system of government, at the end of the day it is the people who vote, not property. It is people who are affected. Eventually, we must grapple with this issue of the property franchise and come down firmly in support of one vote one value.

At the same time I might add that if it is on the current boundaries I do not know whether I would rest all that easy with the residents of North Adelaide having a disproportionate say in the governance of the City of Adelaide. The way the residents of North Adelaide have behaved in the area of road closures—as I know will be raised by the member for Spence in respect of Barton Road—and their contempt for the people of the western suburbs in respect of the closure of

Stanley Street, Kingston Terrace and MacKinnon Parade, which I used to—

Mr Atkinson: And Jeffcott Road and War Memorial Drive.

Mr CLARKE: Yes, Jeffcott Road and War Memorial Drive, and a whole range of road closures which have inconvenienced me and others in getting around North Adelaide and commuting into and out of the city simply for the convenience of the residents of North Adelaide. I do not think that I would want the governance of the City of Adelaide totally entrusted to the residents of North Adelaide who view the City of Adelaide as their own personal play thing.

Therefore, I think the whole issue of the governance of the City of Adelaide should be looked at in a broader light because, as the member for Napier pointed out, 80 per cent of South Australians live in the metropolitan area. It is our major commercial centre and an area where a great many South Australians live, work and play. Therefore, they and not just an elite in North Adelaide should also have a say in how the city is managed. That is one issue which can be properly debated after recommendations have been made and, as proposed under our amendment, all the issues have been canvassed by commissioners who can hear all the arguments, weigh up their merits and put them out for public submission. The Parliament can then debate the issues and ultimately pass legislation. I will not prejudge what those commissioners might come down with; these are just some of my initial views on the subject. However, the Minister and more particularly the Premier want to appoint three commissioners who will have the total governance of the city within their control.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Don't you think they can do it, now you know who they are?

Mr CLARKE: Frankly, I am not prepared to allow the commissioners three years, with the range of powers that the City Council enjoys, particularly with respect to planning issues, and answerable only to the Minister and the Government, to take those sorts of decisions when that takes them out of the hands of the community. That is what the Minister is proposing for three years; he is proposing to have three unelected people holding office at the Government's pleasure to determine the whole range of functions that the Adelaide City Council undertakes, not just in the planning area. There is no reason why the city commissioners could not sell all the council's assets and terminate many of its programs.

On a number of occasions the City Council has initiated social justice programs which are important not just to the residents of the city but also to people living in the whole metropolitan area who utilise those services provided by the City Council. However, the Minister wants to say, 'Trust me: these three commissioners, with all the powers of an elected council but not responsible to the ratepayers or the people, responsible only to me and to the Government of the day, will have far-ranging powers to do whatever they like.'

What concerns me about this whole issue is that the development faction within the City Council got the numbers at the last election. They fell out with one another on personality grounds. So, the fact is that the ratepayers of the City of Adelaide elected a pro-development council, except that the councillors themselves fell out with one another, which caused some problems. But elections are due to be held in May next year. That can be sorted out in a democratic process but, more importantly, after a thorough review of the governance of the city.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: The Minister says that we would allow only about two months for that to happen. Frankly, two months is plenty of time for the commissioners to come up with recommendations in this area. They do not have to reinvent the wheel. A number of submissions concerning the City of Adelaide have been made over a number of years. There are those with interests in the City of Adelaide, how it should be governed, who should be represented on the council, how people should vote and all the rest of it. Those people do not have to start from scratch in putting forward their submissions. The arguments are well known, and they can be put together very quickly by the respective interest groups and presented to the commissioners, and the commissioners can report back in time—by the end of January, I think.

The Opposition believes that it can fix the problems of the City of Adelaide in three months, not in the three years that the Minister believes. This is the interesting point. The Minister wants to deny the democratic process within the City of Adelaide for three long years. No justification has been put forward by the Government or the Premier.

Mr Condous interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: It is very interesting to hear from the former Lord Mayor of Adelaide, the member for Colton. When we were in Government and he was the Lord Mayor, if we had walked in and said, 'Steve, you are too much of a prima donna; you have a divided council—'

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. In this Chamber I believe it is right and proper to address members of Parliament as the honourable member or name the honourable member's seat, not call them by their Christian name.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a marginal case. The honourable member has a point of order, but in fact the Deputy Leader purported to be calling the former Lord Mayor, the member for Colton, by the name of Steve, which would have been correct in that context. However, I do urge the honourable member to save himself some debating time by refraining from breaching Standing Orders.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. If John Bannon had said, 'Look, you are a prima donna and we will sack you because we do not like you', the honourable member would have been out there in his ermine robes and with his big chain around his neck, marching down the street calling on the good burghers of the City of Adelaide to throw out a Government that would dare to suggest such an undemocratic action. That is the crux of the matter. The Opposition wants to know why the Minister wants to sack the council. Do not talk about the great generalities of this issue and address your problems and perceptions, because the people of South Australia know that this State is in an economic trough, not because of Henry Ninio and his mad band of councillors or however we want to describe them but because of the economic policies of the State Government.

It is the Government that has sacked over 12 000 public servants, many of whom worked and spent their money in the City of Adelaide. It is the Government that created the type of climate where developers are saying, 'We do not want to invest in this city, not because of the city councillors' personalities but because there is not a quid to be made in this State, because you have not brought about the right economic conditions.'

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: In answer to the Minister's interjection, we have been sticking our chin out for the past two or three weeks since this whole issue blew up, and he has not yet come up with one solid argument. The best on offer are arguments put in the *City Messenger* by Alex Kennedy. I am sorry for her; I do not why she writes what she does about the Adelaide City Council, but I would have thought that as an investigative journalist she would want to probe the Minister and the Premier as to the specifics. Not once in her articles about the City Council has she ever reported the fact that it has approved 99 per cent of applications put before it or that the turnaround between applications being submitted and approved is about 19 days. None of those points is ever covered in her articles. I do not know why she has a bent against the City Council, but she seems also to miss the point that the economic conditions of this State are dictated by the State Government, not by city councillors.

I urge the House to support the member for Napier's amendments, reject the Premier's and the Minister's undemocratic and unjustified attack on an elected council and demand that, before such drastic action can be taken, the Minister give a full and proper report, detailing specifically what is the maladministration of the city that would warrant such drastic action.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I wish to highlight a few points in this debate but, first, let me say that I thought that the speech that I have just heard was the most disappointing effort that any Deputy Leader of the Opposition could make in opposing a Bill. When the community of South Australia read *Hansard* tomorrow, they will not be too surprised, because what I heard in the corridors about a division in the Labor Opposition as to whether they should support this Bill has been documented to be the case. Try as the Deputy Leader might to debate against this Bill, I can say from looking at the rhetoric in it that there is nothing substantial to support the Opposition's decision to oppose it. Indeed, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's comments reinforced the fact that the Government is correct in its decision to introduce this Bill.

It was interesting to note that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke about who is responsible for the economic mess that he continues to highlight, and we know that he puts in a lot of effort, together with his Leader, into pulling down this State. Let us get a few of the facts right. Economically, in virtually every area, South Australia is doing as well as, if not better than, most States of Australia at the moment. We know that nationally the economy is not real flash, and that is because we had 10 years of Keating-Hawke Governments in Australia.

In South Australia, as the Deputy Leader neglected to highlight but as the Premier highlighted today in Question Time, the Opposition pulled out Mr Gary Clarke, I think it was, who is from the Labor Party and who said it is about time that the South Australian Opposition came clean and said to the people of South Australia, 'We were inept. We did not have the ability to run this State. We cost you \$6 billion and we cost you 33 600 jobs in manufacturing. We are sorry for the mistakes that we have caused and we want to be part of the team that helps to rebuild this State.' What happened? The Leader of the Opposition pulled that from the 200 pages of propaganda that he put up during the two days of the Labor Party conference. The facts are simply this: the difficulties that South Australia is going through were all created by the 11 years of the Bannon and Arnold Labor Governments.

Mr Clarke: Why are you sacking the City Council—

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I am coming to that, because it is part of the jigsaw puzzle that I am putting together. The fact is that, under 11 years of Labor, unfortunately South Australia ended up with a heck of a mess on its hands. How do we rebuild? It is fairly straight forward. We have to address the problems. We have to create a new climate, a new culture, a new opportunity for our State. We have to get our debt down and we have to get the message around Australia and the world that South Australia is in a position to do business. All levels of government have a part to play in economic growth and opportunity—Federal, State and local.

I should like to say how much I appreciate what local government does generally for South Australia. When I look at councils down my way—Noarlunga City Council, Port Elliot and Goolwa council, Yankalilla council and Happy Valley council—I am pleased to say that those local councils are committed to making sure that every opportunity for economic development in their district is enhanced and given to the ratepayers whom they represent. By and large, local government *per se* has got on with the job of working through amalgamations.

Together with a lot of councillors in my electorate to whom I spoke, I was concerned that the Adelaide City Council was excluded from amalgamation, and the one argument for excluding it is that it is a special case: the square mile of Adelaide has to be an economic engine room for retail and commerce in this State. If that economic engine room does not operate properly for retail and commerce, the State will end up as a doughnut. As much as the Opposition tries to pull it down and not get the true message about, the fact is that we are recovering in the regions. There is evidence, against which they cannot argue, that there is light at the end of the tunnel and that a train is not coming the other way, as it was when the State Bank, SGIC and other things happened to South Australia.

Things are happening. Tens of millions of dollars are being spent in the regions, but let us look at the Adelaide City Council area. In the past three or four years, what has really been spent in the way of real infrastructure by the Adelaide City Council? I went for a walk down North Terrace and I looked at all the developments at the university, which are Federal and State Government initiatives. I went into the Art Gallery recently and it was great to see that the increase in expenditure has lifted the State's arts opportunities. Rundle Mall is coming along quite well, but who had to push and drive that? That should have happened a long time ago, but the City Council failed to do anything until so much pressure was applied through the media, through the 2001 initiatives and by the State Government that it got on with the act.

I feel sorry for the workers in the Adelaide City Council, and I happen to know quite a few of them. They do a very good job, but it is not easy to operate an engine room on a ship when there is no rudder, and the rudder should be the drive that the councillors put forward. I am not having a go at individual councillors, and I know that quite a few of them are doing the best they can, but it is clear that faction fights have been going on for years, and they have not had their eye on the ball.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The Deputy Leader gets excited when I talk about faction fights, and so he should, because he knows that his position is under threat. We see the member for Playford out of this Chamber on numerous occasions because the numbers are getting closer and the member for

Playford is nearly there. No wonder the Deputy Leader jumps off his chair and gets excited, because he knows what disunity is all about and he knows what happens when the left will not work with the right and a new faction is created. That is exactly what has been happening for far too long in the City Council.

The Deputy Leader said that we do not see rubbish on the streets, we do not see people on strike and there is no great debt. I ask you, Sir, to go for a walk down King William Street at the moment, but I would not like to be aged and frail and I would not like to be a mother pushing a little baby in a pusher along that street. That footpath has been a disgrace for ages: it is cracked and uneven. Nothing has been done. This morning I went for a drive to look at the parklands. There is grass six to eight inches high in the parklands that Colonel Light had the vision to see as a playground for the people of Adelaide. Frankly, I have been very disappointed about the lack of pristine conditions and at the messages sent to every visitor from our own State, interstate or overseas.

The Deputy Leader spoke about the lack of cranes. Until recently, the only cranes that were seen in the city were those on the Myer-Remm project and the State Bank building. We all know what happened to those projects, because, under Labor, the Myer-Remm project and the State Bank cost us a few billion dollars more, and we are still paying for that. However, there is a crane on the southern side of Victoria Square where a magnificent project is under way. Surprise, surprise! Who is spending the money? It is the State Government. The weekend newspaper states that \$70 million will be spent to capitalise on the university and high-tech training on North Terrace. Who is spending that \$70 million? It is the State Government. We are condemned about EDS and all the opportunities we are trying to develop for South Australia. As a result of all the initiatives I have just highlighted, the message will go out that Adelaide is again open for business.

I note that the Lord Mayor, Mr Ninio, said today in the *City Messenger* that my colleagues and I are racist. I am very angry about that, because I am certainly not racist, and I know that my colleagues are not racist. If the Lord Mayor wants to get down in the gutter and carry on like that, clearly he has no right to be the leader of the City of Adelaide. There is another example. Members should look at the *City Messenger* and see what he is saying. It is absolute tripe, and that indicates the quality of where the Lord Mayor has ended up. I am trying to highlight that we still have a lack of vibrancy in Adelaide when it comes to entertainment and all the opportunities that a City Council, if it was working like a Westfield, would have happening for Adelaide. Notwithstanding all the transport that feeds in here, the Adelaide oval, our great eating houses and all the State Government infrastructure, what happens on weekends? The State Government had to fight the Opposition like mad to get Sunday trading in the square mile of Adelaide, to enhance the tourism and convention opportunities we have. We had to fight like mad for that.

I would have thought that, once that went through, the City Council would really run with the ball and not worry about putting out a media release saying that it had lost a ball or whatever and that it would pick it up again. It should be concentrating on keeping its eye on the real ball, and that is looking at what Westfield at Marion does and at all the people who are really into managing and developing their regions. Why do people go to Westfield shopping centres? It is because there are things for their children to do and

security people moving around. The State Government had quite a job to get security cameras in Rundle Mall. These are just elementary things. However, failure after failure has occurred in this City Council.

It is about time three commissioners were brought in for a little while, there was a clean out and a new direction and base were put in place. It is also time that a clear message went to everybody who wants to spend some money in Adelaide that Adelaide itself is open for business, just like the rest of South Australia. Perhaps some incentives and packages could be put forward by the commissioners to get people to come here and invest their money. Instead of fighting about a few dollars worth of phone calls and whatever else the city councillors, the aldermen and the Mayor have been doing for the past year or so, with the commissioners there may be a clear direction and focus on getting things to happen. We have to get that development going, and I am convinced that this is the way to go.

During Committee I will ask the Minister to reassure me that this is not a precedent because, as I mentioned earlier, the City Council is a special case. As it is a special case, I am prepared to support this Bill. However, local government *per se* needs to have autonomy. That is why I am keen to make sure that the councils in my area have as much input as they require when it comes to the new Local Government Bill. Provided it is not a precedent, this is clearly the only way to go.

I am very disappointed that again the Opposition has highlighted that it does not have the ability to govern and that it does not have the ability to help the vigour and direction we need in South Australia. It has tried to cop out, but not because in its heart it believes it should cop out. I know from talking and listening to some members that they are fully with the Government. I believe they were virtually 50-50 on being with the Government on this Bill. That is why the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that he had his chin out there for three weeks. He had it out because he knew damn well that he would have trouble changing the numbers and the thinking in Caucus to get this Bill opposed.

In summary, they have tried to have a bet each way. That is so typical of members of the Labor Opposition. They have not learnt a thing. They sat on their hands for years in Government, and now they have not learnt a thing. They are still trying to have a bet each way. The people of South Australia can no longer afford to have opportunities gambled, as they did under Labor. They want strong leadership. They want a Minister who is prepared to work with the community but, when a decision has to be made that is in the community's best interests and there is no other clear way of getting that decision, they want a Minister, a Premier and a Government that are prepared to make decisions. That is what has happened in this case. Given other examples throughout Australia, I am convinced that this is not new. One only has to look at the situation in Victoria and New South Wales, where commissioners have been put in before. It has given the opportunity for reflection and new direction, and it has worked well.

I get sick and tired of hearing people come back to Adelaide and saying, 'If only we had the city humming like Melbourne.' Of course, they forget a few things. The first is that *per capita* we have the highest Labor debt legacy of all those other Labor States. We also lost more manufacturing jobs than any other State *per capita* under Labor. Finally, under Labor they did nothing to get new development opportunities, niche industries and so on into our State.

However, we are getting on with all that. In order to be able to get on with that, as I said, we need a city that is vibrant, pristine, sells a message, has a business plan for itself and will work cooperatively with the community and the Government to make sure that in a few years South Australia is reinstated to full sustainability and has that nice incline we used to have during the Playford era. That is what we are about. The Adelaide City Council needs three years to get its act together, just as the Opposition needs about eight or 12 years to get its act together before it will be able to govern.

Provided the checks and balances are there—and during discussion on this Bill I have been reassured by the Minister that they will be there and the Minister will not be in a position to override the commissioners and so on—this is certainly the way to proceed. I really hope that, whilst the Labor Party thinks this is a little win for it and another chance to drive South Australia further into the doldrums, before this debate is out Labor will, by virtue of what people are calling for, listen to the Government, listen to the Bill and listen to the fact that South Australians are sick to death of having negative and non-energy driven oppositions in city councils. I commend the Bill to this House.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): There are two ways to become enfranchised to vote for the Adelaide City Council: first, one can appear on the House of Assembly electoral roll as a resident of the suburb of North Adelaide or the central business district; or, secondly, one can be enrolled to vote on the supplementary roll, and one gains entitlement to do that by being an owner of property in the City of Adelaide. It is true to say that some people who own much property in the city divide their property in such a way as to maximise the number of votes that may be cast by them and their allies. These two methods of voting for the Adelaide City Council give rise to two factions on the council. On the one hand, we have the North Adelaide residents who acquire their right to vote by being on the Assembly electoral roll; and on the other hand we have the city business and commercial interests, and those people acquire their right to vote through the ownership of property and, therefore, vote through the supplementary roll. There are exceptions to that. There are residents who live in the central business district, of course, and there are businesses that are located in the suburb of North Adelaide.

These two methods of voting have given rise to two factions. They have given rise to the North Adelaide faction and to the business and commercial faction. These two factions grind ceaselessly against one another on the Corporation of the City of Adelaide, and that is why members opposite are saying that the council is unworkable—because there is now a factional system which is relentless and the two factions operate rather like political Parties. I would not have thought that, by itself, the existence of factions would have warranted the sacking of the Adelaide City Council. We have a Party system in this Parliament: we have two Parties in the House of Assembly, and those Parties act as Government and Opposition. We give each other a hard time—argue and debate—but at the end of the day decisions are reached. However, the antics of these two factions on the Adelaide City Council make the House of Assembly look well behaved, for those members who have ever been to the City Council and seen the way its members carry on.

It seems that, while the government of the City of Adelaide remains the way it is, these two factions will persist. So, the Government says, 'Sack the council and appoint three commissioners, and we will look at it again in three years

time.' However, in three years time when the commissioners leave, whatever kind of job they have done, what will happen? I argue that the same tired old faces, the same old ward heelers and operators from North Adelaide and the city, will come back. It will not be just the same factions but the same faces—people as disgraceful as Councillor Angove with his entirely selfish approach to the government of the City of Adelaide. He will be back, and so will the rest of the mob.

One thing the Government must have in mind with this legislation is that next May, unless this legislation passes, there will be an election for the City of Adelaide on the current boundaries and the current system of government. We know that Mr Henry Ninio, the Lord Mayor, was the leader of the business and commercial faction on the council and Mr Ninio has certain campaigning skills that his opponent Madam Rann did not have.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: Jose.

Mr ATKINSON: Miss Jose—I am sorry. Mr Ninio was elected by a thumping majority to be the Lord Mayor of the city. He was the leader of the business and commercial faction which had a healthy majority on the council. It was a good thing for the City of Adelaide—and a good thing for the people who live in the suburbs—that the business and commercial factor was in control of the council. I will tell members why. Whereas the North Adelaide establishment—councillors like Angove and Moran—do not give a damn about how the governing of the City of Adelaide affects people who live outside the city walls (they are only there for themselves), the business and commercial faction at least wants people from the suburbs to come into the city to work, shop or play because they want their money. So, at least those councillors have some concern for people outside the city walls.

I am not saying that the voting system which gets them in is necessarily a fair one, but the move to one vote-one value, to only residents voting in the City of Adelaide, would be one that would put the North Adelaide establishment in charge of the central business district—in charge of the treasury, and we must be cautious before we allow that to happen. Because Mr Ninio, by the force of his personality, has split apart the business and commercial faction, there is no doubt that, if we go to an election next May on the current boundaries and franchise, the North Adelaide establishment will be back in control of the council. So, the governance has to change. I appeal to the Government to give this matter some thought, because sacking the council achieves nothing by itself. An understanding is needed that the City of Adelaide is to be fundamentally reformed, root and branch, and that will not be achieved by putting in a few mates as commissioners for three years.

There are three ways, as I see it, that the government of the City of Adelaide can be reformed. The first is to create a greater Adelaide council, that is, to make all metropolitan Adelaide one council like Brisbane City Council; or, alternatively, one could include some of the inner suburbs surrounding the City of Adelaide to make a council of a decent size. The suburbs that immediately spring to mind are Bowden, Brompton and Ridleyton, but I am sure that many other suburbs could be put into the City of Adelaide to make it a council of a workable size and a council that had the interests of the whole metropolitan area more at heart. That is a difficult thing to achieve, because the suburban councils will be very reluctant to give up any of their territory to a greater Adelaide council. However, if the Government and the Opposition agree on a greater Adelaide council's being

a good idea, we can achieve that, because we can legislate it together: that fundamental reform we can achieve together.

The second alternative is to sever the suburb of North Adelaide, treat it like any other suburb in a suburban council. I would be quite happy for North Adelaide, moderately sized suburb that it is, to be part of Croydon Ward in the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville. I am quite sure that if North Adelaide were part of Croydon Ward no-one from North Adelaide would be elected to the council, even under proportional representation—I would make it my mission. Nevertheless, there is also the possibility that North Adelaide could go with Walkerville, Prospect or even Port Adelaide-Enfield. There are many alternatives. Perhaps it could go with eastern suburbs councils such as St Peters, Norwood or Payneham. I do not mind, so long as North Adelaide is treated as a suburb like any other.

As things stand, a comparatively small number of people in North Adelaide—and let us face it, only about 20 per cent of them vote, anyway, under the voluntary voting system for local government—are controlling the revenues of the central business district. They have their hand in the till. I am referring here to a small number of people, and I will name them: people like Dr Michael Hammerton, Dr Crompton, the property developer Theo Maras, and the Verco family. They are the class of people controlling the revenues of the central business district for their own interests and it is something that is against public policy and must be reformed.

The third alternative is to enfranchise the people who live outside the city walls—people who live in the suburbs but who use the city for one reason or another—to give them some say in the decisions made by the Adelaide City Council. The people in metropolitan Adelaide ought to have some say about how their city is run. As the member for Mawson said, the City of Adelaide is a special case—a very special case—and that is why the Government ought to be treating it as a special case instead of just suspending it for three years for motives that have not yet become apparent in this debate.

It is undesirable that the Government proceed by special legislation to sack the council: it is jurisprudentially undesirable; it is bad legislative practice. This is more a bill of attainder against Henry Ninio than it is the operation of the rule of law. If the Government thinks that there is serious maladministration in the City of Adelaide, it ought to work according to the provisions already in the Local Government Act. It ought to appoint an investigator to look at the City of Adelaide to see whether there is any maladministration or corruption, and to ensure that, if things are not being done properly, the Government can act on the recommendation of the investigator. They are the rules that apply to every other council in the State: why is the City of Adelaide being singled out for sacking by these extraordinary means? This is not a measure for law: it is a bill of attainder, and so I oppose it on that basis also.

I am sorry if earlier, when I was talking about people who use the City of Adelaide for their own personal benefit, I left out Michael Abbott, QC. I am very sorry if I did that, because he would be about the chief offender.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Have you said that outside?

Mr ATKINSON: The Minister asks whether I have said that outside: I have said it in so many places that it has now become trite. Let us look at the voting at the last council elections in May 1995 in this rotten borough of the City of Adelaide. In Robe Ward, in North Adelaide, Councillor Magasdi was elected with 346 votes and Councillor Moran was elected with 523 votes. There is a mandate; there is

democracy—346 votes, and you get to be a person who makes decisions about the future of the City of Adelaide. I reckon that some candidates in my Labor Party branch elections have received more votes than that. A person needs about 10 times as many votes as that to be elected as an alderman or mayor of the City of Hindmarsh-Woodville.

Let us look at the results in Young Ward: Campion, 20; Dunstall, 74; Lindner, an indefatigable letter writer, 67; Mewett, 258, elected; and Taylor, 570, elected. So Councillor Mewett was elected with the grand total of 258 votes, yet she takes decisions to close Barton Road and weighs up whether to close War Memorial Drive—which is in the City of Adelaide vision statement—and to close Jeffcott Road. Someone with 258 votes! But I will not stop there: alderman Moschakis was elected with 263 votes to represent the whole of the City of Adelaide, which has an enrolment of 13 892 people. I know that the Minister is pretty good at arithmetic, so perhaps he can tell us what percentage of the vote 263 is out of 13 892. This is the democracy that is so important that we will have to send commissioners away for three years to inquire into it.

I think that we can make a decision about the Adelaide City Council tonight over dinner, and I am prepared to supply the napkin on which we can draw the boundaries. I see that the chief offender of what I mentioned earlier has now arrived—the chief manipulator of the North Adelaide franchise for his own personal real estate benefit, and I have said it so many times that it is trite. I have said it in nine newsletters, and the member for Adelaide has never so much as sent me a solicitor's letter, because it is true, and truth is a defence at common law, and he knows it. He was the originator of the Barton Road closure. He originated it before he was ever a member of Parliament and the chief job of himself and his sister-in-law in another place is to make sure that it stays closed for their own personal benefit.

Let me move on. The Government says that it is sacking the council not for what it has done but for what it has not done. What an awfully risky rule to have for the sacking of any government. It is a very risky rule—what goes around comes around. The Government criticises the Adelaide City Council for being a 'do-nothing' council, but one of the reasons why Adelaide City Council has not taken many great initiatives in the past few years is that it has a rate freeze, and a rate freeze is something that this Government supports. Indeed, the Government sought to freeze rates with its last local government Bill—it was an important element that rates be frozen or reduced. The council, which Mr Ninio leads, has taken that advice. In fact, Mr Ninio's business and commercial team was elected on the basis that it would freeze rates, and that is just what it has done. So, judged from the taxation point of view, the Adelaide City Council is actually one of the more successful councils in this State—judged only on that basis. When a rate freeze is in place and the economy is flat—and, let us face it, trading in the city is flat, partly owing to the member for Adelaide and his faction's veto on the development of the LeCornu site—how will revenue increase in those circumstances? Revenue is needed to do things, but how can you do things without money? The Government's criticism of Adelaide City Council as a 'do-nothing' council is most unjust, because Adelaide City Council is following the same fiscal policy as the Brown Liberal Government itself.

I now make a couple of comments about the road closure provision (section 359) of the Local Government Act. If the North Adelaide establishment gets back into power next May

it will close Jeffcott Road and War Memorial Drive: that is part of its plan. I say to the Government that it had better have some method of dealing with it. I introduced a Bill in this place to amend section 359 of the Local Government Act to give the Government some say in closures of roads that run between one municipality and another. The Government had better think very seriously about what the North Adelaide Society will get up to if it finds itself in control of Adelaide City Council either in May next year or in 1999.

Earlier this session I spoke about the rate rebate. The central business district of Adelaide generates about 80 per cent of the rates. The council came up with a very creative policy of granting a rate rebate to people who live in the central business district because, for 75 years, the central business district has been losing population. People who live in the central business district receive a 45 per cent rate rebate. I support that: it is a good idea and it is being done for the right reasons—because there are certain privations of living in the city, that is, the central business district, such as noise, fumes and crowds. But why that 45 per cent rate rebate ought to be extended to North Adelaide, I have no idea, because the same reasons do not apply. The rate rebate does not apply if you rent out your house in North Adelaide, and why is that? Because the member for Adelaide does not want tenants living in North Adelaide. He thinks they are riffraff. He wants the rate rebate only for himself and his mates.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Health): I challenge the member for Spence to provide one skerrick of evidence about any of those accusations he has made about me—one skerrick of evidence. I am not interested in his diatribes: I challenge him to present one—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE:—piece of evidence—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE:—and, if he cannot, he should shut his trap.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want any further interjections. The Minister for Health.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I speak in this debate with a degree of sadness because I have been a personal supporter of the Adelaide City Council in the past and, indeed, I have worked for the election of a number of the candidates, both in this council and in previous councils. I stress that this action by the Government is quite clearly, in my view, not aimed at individuals but at the collective body of the council and, indeed, its immediate and past record.

What does a former member of that body say? Not I, as the member for Adelaide, but what does a former member of the collective body say about that collective body? I speak of Jane Lomax-Smith. It would be fair to say that Jane Lomax-Smith is regarded by everyone in the Adelaide City Council electorate as a doyenne of local government. She has been an intellectual leader in the Adelaide City Council over a number of years. I wish to quote several things from Councillor Lomax-Smith's resignation speech from the Adelaide City Council, as follows:

I find it demeaning to be part of such a dysfunctional body... Regrettably, members are driven by self-interest, naked ambition and an obsession with the mayoralty. I am frankly sick and tired of the petty ambitions that act tirelessly from one election night to jockey for control at the next election. Many within the current council have no sense of policy, ethics or desire for any outcome other than retaining power.

She goes on to note the situation where there are financial deals between members that may amount to a conflict. She says:

The current council has no leadership, just yearning for power. Half the council longs for the mayor's robes... The problem with electing people without policies is that there is no commitment to due process or adherence to the planning laws, only random voting, and no consistent outcomes—no certainty for those requesting decisions from our system... I would say to you this entire term—

by which she means the term of the council since the last election—

has been totally wasted. We have no achievements. Only the advantage of projects initiated several years ago—Rundle Mall, Gouger Street, King William Street South, bicycle tracks—all initiated by a former council and some delivered inadequately by this. At present we cannot even exercise the powers we have because of the bickering and infighting. We are regarded by the community as totally irrelevant and, sadly, most of the people in this room haven't even noticed.

I repeat: those are not my statements but those of someone who has given 20 or 30 hours of voluntary work for the past X number of years and has won election after election in difficult campaigns—and she has had enough. A number of individual members of the present council have said to me, 'It's hopeless in there.' One of them said that it is quite clear that a particular councillor votes on who puts up the issue, not on the merits or otherwise of the issue. Adelaide and South Australia is a city-State, and it is vital that we avoid an economic doughnut. A number of the present councillors have contacted me saying that they are prepared to work with commissioners, knowing that the council is not working now.

I make two observations about that. First, if the State Government form of legislature were under threat, I would not expect to be asked to be a contributor to the next form of Government, because clearly I would have a vested interest. I believe it is impossible to have the present council working beside commissioners. Secondly, and more importantly, there is the fact that a number of councillors would say to me, 'We know the council is not working now; we are prepared to work with commissioners'. I would ask why they did not come and tell the Government that it was not working over the past X number of years. Why did they not come and say that its functions and structures could be altered for the better? Perhaps it is because of what former Councillor Lomax-Smith says about individual interests.

If the Bill presently before the House does not pass, what are we left with? We are left with a dysfunctional council, on the admission of a former councillor, headed by a person who delights in telling South Australia, 'I was hoodwinked by Libyan interests.' 'I was hoodwinked—Ninio', read the front page of the *Advertiser* of Friday 20 September, as if he was an innocent bystander. The Lord Mayor was leading the charge.

I would like to tell the House about what happened on Australia Day. I went to the Australia Day naturalisation ceremony, either representing the Premier or on my own behalf as member for Adelaide. Immediately on coming out of the chamber, it has been traditional for me on former occasions to speak with the people who have been recently naturalised. I was directed by a phalanx of the Lord Mayor's staff not to go into the Queen Adelaide room but to go to an outside area immediately adjacent to the Lord Mayor's room. I was surprised to meet there a number of the Lord Mayor's now very well known business acquaintances with Libyan connections.

The Lord Mayor and his business associates then put a deal to me. These Libyan contacts, I believe, had put out a multimillion dollar tender for health services and supplies around the world, and it had not been filled. I know why, and I will explain it in a minute. As I say, it was a multimillion dollar contract. Earlier today I spoke with the Director of Export from the Health Commission who informed me that it was \$300 million to \$500 million. The specifications were for that sort of money, and it had not been filled. I was asked as a Minister of the Crown in South Australia to support the Lord Mayor's business interests, to give these Libyan interests up to \$300 million to \$500 million on the never-never, and we were to be paid if and when the Libyan oil was released by the oil cartel following the 'mother of all battles'.

Quite frankly, I could not believe it. I thought, surely this man is not so naive: having just gone through the State Bank disaster and all those unsecured problems that left us in a disastrous state, surely he cannot expect me to put \$300 million of health services unsecured into the marketplace and expect the taxpayers to like it. I asked for a number of appointments with people in the Health Commission just to clarify this and, sure enough, the Chief Executive came back and said, 'Minister, you missed nothing; that's what you're being asked to do.'

I suggest that the Lord Mayor has learned nothing from the excesses of the late 1980s and 1990s. It was a deal that I was simply not interested in doing anything about other than bursting into uproarious, hilarious, raucous laughter that someone would consider that. Of course, a number of articles have been written about his business deals, how much he was going to get from these processes, what his spotter's fee would be, and so on. I love Adelaide. It is far too important to see Adelaide used as a pawn in anyone's personal business machinations.

I refer to a recent meeting of the North Adelaide Society. I refer to it for two reasons: I am a member of the North Adelaide Society and I was a member of the North Adelaide Society Committee for many years. It is a pity that I have to say this, but I do. The invitations for that meeting were sent out selectively—not to every member of the society. That is a real problem because, as the North Adelaide Society is the longest-standing group of residents and ratepayers in South Australia, it ought to be seen to be above manipulation. One might ask: who issued the invitations? It was two members of the present council who happen to be members of the North Adelaide Society. I wonder whether any members of the North Adelaide Society who contacted my office and said things such as, 'It is about time; good on you; keep up the good work; just make sure that we get a democratic process at the end of it' were asked. I am sure that they were not. I was not invited to that meeting.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: A lot of people, in particular one councillor (and I give him his due), have criticised me. This is something else that is wrong with the City Council. Within the past couple of days there was a sister city visit to South Australia of about 30 people from Austin. Ostensibly, the visit was about looking at how good South Australia was and about encouraging business, etc. Only one councillor attended this function two or three days ago. I commend him for attending but, nevertheless, he criticised me for not attending that meeting. I should emphasise that I was not officially invited. I have discussed that with the President of the society. Nevertheless, the meeting

identified a number of issues. One issue was that people are anxious about a rate rebate. One councillor has chosen to say that in North Adelaide rate rebates are not secure—and they are getting into semantics about whether it is differential rates or rate rebates.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Clause 18(2) of the Bill provides:

The City of Adelaide must maintain the scheme for differential rates, in existence immediately before the commencement of this section, for residential properties.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Spence.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: That is quite clear. It is also quite clear that democracy must be restored. As the Government has indicated, there is a cut-off date in the Bill—May 1999 or earlier. I am sure the Government would be more than delighted if the commissioners were to say, 'We have organised this; we are now ready for an election, say, in May 1998.' I believe that they could do that. From the Government's perspective, this is something which has not been done lightly. It has been done with a passion for Adelaide and a desire to see Adelaide perceived as it ought to be: vibrant, progressive, cutting edge, sophisticated, full of life and all those things that good cities in Australia and around the world are. We have every potential to do that.

Finally, there was a meeting of my State Electorate Committee last night at which the Minister spoke. Invitations were issued to a number of people with an interest in local government. There was very vigorous debate on both sides of the argument, and it was excellent. There is definitely not one view of electors in the City of Adelaide that we are doing the wrong thing, which is what the present councillors are saying. I acknowledge that there are very strongly held views, but the view that we are doing the wrong thing is not the only view. I have a file from my electorate office in which we keep all sorts of input. For example, there is material from a Labor supporter who says, 'Must keep up the rebate; keep up the good work'.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: That's what they're saying. I quote from a leaflet which the Adelaide City Council paid for with my money:

Ring Dr Armitage and complain.

Well, the person did; he sent it back, saying:

Well done Dr Armitage; the sooner the better.

So, people are responding to the City Council's initiatives. There is no doubt that that feeling is important. I repeat: this action has not been taken lightly. It has been taken with Adelaide's best intentions in mind. I look forward to the day when a democratically elected council can re-enter a system which is clearly better than the one we have now. I look forward to the day when the council is seen as a functional body as opposed to the dysfunctional one which, unfortunately, the past decade has led to. I am sure that Adelaide will again be a city of which we can all be proud.

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

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! We will not have any more of that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Giles and the Minister will cease their interchange or neither will be here to participate.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members can participate in the proper forum of the House, not in this fashion.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Before the debate commences, I indicate that I do not want any more of this unruly interchange across the House, or I will take the firmest action. I do not care where it comes from. The member for Giles.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): The Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations is complaining because somebody said he was late. He was late; I was timing him. He was 30 seconds late, exactly the span of time by which the member for Napier was late on another occasion. The Minister—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Giles and the Minister for the first time.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Thank you, Sir. The biter has been bitten.

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the honourable member link his remarks to the Bill.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I am sorry, Sir. I wish to state from the outside that I am a ratepayer of the Adelaide City Council and have been for about 16 years.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I have said this before. For 15 or 16 years as a country member when Parliament was sitting I used to live in the Central City Motel in Hindley Street. I approached the Salaries Tribunal to do something about the living away from home allowance—which it did—and in 1979 or 1980 with a \$500 deposit I bought a very small cottage in North Adelaide. As soon as I had paid for it, I sold it and bought a larger unit in the city. As soon as I had paid for that, I tried to sell it too and bought a house in North Adelaide. I am very pleased I did all those things. I understand from a calculation the other night that this rate rebate which excites the member for Spence so much is apparently worth \$700 a year to me. I can tell the member for Spence and anybody else that I could not care less about \$700 a year because, with the money that the member for Spence and I get, \$700 a year is not terribly relevant. If somebody gives it to me I will take it and, if they do not, so be it.

I also do not care whether North Adelaide stays with the Adelaide City Council. All I want from the council is all that I have wanted for the past 30 years, that is, someone to pick up the bin every Tuesday morning (and they seem to do that very well), a phone number to ring if a branch of a street tree might fall into my garden, and someone to sweep up the leaves and keep the place tidy. That is all I want from the council.

I have been involved with only two councils, as I have mentioned in the House before—the Whyalla City Council and the Adelaide City Council—and I do not think that it needs the Adelaide City Council to do that particularly. It could just as easily be the Port Adelaide Enfield council, the Prospect council, the Walkerville council or even the Whyalla City Council. To me, it is irrelevant. I want nothing from the Adelaide City Council except very basic services, which it

does well, and so does the Whyalla council and every other council in South Australia. That is all most people want from their council and, by and large, they get it.

For this Minister—third in line, as two others refused the job before him—to spend all his time since he has been in the job waging war on councils is pitiful. It is the typical action of the bully. Why is this legislation before us? What has the Adelaide City Council done wrong? I am like the Hon. Jamie Irwin. I have absolutely no idea what it has done wrong. The council picks up my bins on Tuesday morning, it sweeps the streets, I assume, and does whatever else it is that councils do. I have absolutely no problem whatsoever. The only reason this Bill is before the House is that the Premier of this State wanted to show the people that he has a hairy chest. He wanted to show that he could take somebody on and win. He has not done it yet, but he thought that this was an opportunity. In other words, it seemed like a good idea at the time.

It is going wrong because members opposite are asking what everyone else is asking: why? What has the council done wrong? Members opposite have greater contacts in local government than do members on this side, with the exception of the member for Spence, who has something of an obsession about it, but by and large members on this side do not bother too much about local councils and let them get on with their business while we get on with ours. Members opposite are quite different. Members opposite have very strong connections with local government—

Mr Caudell interjecting:

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

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:—and they have made it quite clear to members on this side that they think what is happening to local government in this State is appalling, and there is more to come. It is not just what the Government is trying to do to the Adelaide City Council, and I carry no particular brief for it. If Donald Duck emptied my bin on a Tuesday morning I would be quite satisfied. It does not have to be the Adelaide City Council. I do not care who it is.

What this Government is trying to do to the Adelaide City Council and what it tried to do to all councils when we last had a local government Bill before the House is deplorable, and most people on the other side agree with that, and they are not shy in telling us that is the case. I congratulate the Hon. Jamie Irwin for stating at a public meeting that, like the rest of us, he has no idea what this Government is on about. People have asked, 'What is the agenda? What is the Premier's agenda?' I do not believe that he has an agenda at all, unless something a little bit iffy is going on with the parklands. That is the only thing that I can think of. I do not believe that there is any motive other than that the Premier wants to demonstrate to South Australia what a tough guy he is by pushing around local government. He has attempted it before. It is all done to make him look good. If there is a reason, the Premier ought to tell us, instead of slagging off at the elected representatives of the ratepayers and residents of the City of Adelaide. He should just tell us in clear terms what the problem is and what it has done or what it has not done—either will do me—and we will look at it.

There have been some claims that council does not do too much and, by and large, councils do not do too much. They keep the place in order at a local government level. One or two of them have delusions of grandeur but, by and large, councils potter along doing what they have to do, and doing it very well. Councils are not developers; it is not their role.

I urge any council that gets an aspiration to be a developer to go and take a shower, have another look at what it is supposed to do and not start worrying too much about development. It should certainly provide the climate so that sensible development can take place. However, it absolutely should do not get carried away with its own importance and start throwing around millions of dollars of ratepayers' money. Those ego trips are best left to State Governments. State Governments do all that, and do it very well. However, that is done at considerable cost to the taxpayer, and a lot of the costs are hidden behind commercial confidentiality. That is the role of State Government.

This afternoon I heard someone prattling on about the policing of Rundle Mall. They said that the local council had not done it. However, it is extremely important that policing in this State stay with the State Government. It is not the local council's role to have spy cameras installed and police parading up and down. That is the role of State Government, and I support the State Government's doing it, whenever it is reasonable. It is not the business of local government; local government ought to try to stay out of those areas. Apparently, it has suddenly found a doughnut.

I am pleased that the member for Colton is here because, as far as I have read—and I must admit that I have not been terribly interested but these things come up from time to time—just after the war or thereabouts, the Adelaide City Council had about 50 000 residents. It has been down to about 12 000 residents for at least the last decade or the past 20 years. It may be even longer; I do not know. People gradually wanted more and more living space. And rightly so; there is nothing ennobling about trying to bring up children in some of those little cottages in North Adelaide. I lived in a one-bedroom cottage, and the only reason it had one bedroom was that it was built in the backyard. There is nothing noble about such cottages. They look pretty when you drive past, but there is nothing noble about them for families; they are completely wrong for families.

People have moved out of every city of the world; the same thing has happened here. What has this Government done about it? If this Government was serious about it, it would do something sensible in the Planning Act about the ever expanding suburban shopping centres, for example. I am not advocating that; I have nothing against suburban shopping centres. If we want to do something sensible about the lack of population in the City of Adelaide measures such as that are available to the State Government. They are not available to the Adelaide City Council. It cannot stop or enlarge developments elsewhere. Only the State Government can do that. As I understand it, about 10 000 public servants have been paid off in this State over the past three years. Not all but I suppose a vast majority of them would work in the City of Adelaide. You cannot take out 10 000 of your own employees and then say, 'There are no cranes on the skyline.' It is not the Adelaide City Council's job to put cranes on the skyline. The Adelaide City Council did not want 10 000 fewer people working in the city centre. That is the result of a deliberate action of the State Government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is coming very close to a warning.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: What a load of claptrap, yet the Government is hanging all this on the Adelaide City Council. Adelaide City Council members—and the only thing I know about them is what I read in the *City Messenger*, which is a reputable newspaper, I suppose—have an awful

lot to say and a high opinion of themselves, and they must have enormous egos.

What they have done in expressing all this is, to use the hoary old phrase, shot themselves in the foot. I would not be surprised if, out of all this, the thing they dearly want to hang on to, and that is North Adelaide staying in the city, will not occur: it will be moved out of the city. It does not bother me who picks up my rubbish bin: that is of absolutely no interest to me. But, apparently to the members of the North Adelaide Residents Society or whatever it is, it is very important that they stay within the City Council.

Well, they ought to have had a little forethought. When they were up there slagging off at the Mayor for using the telephone costing \$11.20 or \$600—when they were slagging off in the way they did—they ought to have had a little forethought because, if the Mayor went, they were going too. The upshot of all this is that that is likely to be the case, and they have brought it on themselves. The quality of these people leaves a little to be desired.

One of the things that ought to come out of this is the abolition of the property vote. There ought not to be a property vote. Votes in Australia ought not to relate to wealth, property, rates or anything else: they ought to relate only to the individual human being; and, provided that person is a naturalised Australian, that person ought to have a vote in local government, State and Federal elections. There ought to be no such thing as a property vote.

Most democracies in the world do not have a property vote. They go along with the democratic principle that it is people who vote: not wealth, not property, not skyscrapers, not ratepayers, but people; and to suggest, as some do, that you ought to give these people a vote because they own property is absolutely ridiculous. I know plenty of people in Australia who own property and pay taxes yet do not get a vote at all, and nor should they if they are not naturalised Australians. On the other hand, I know an awful lot of people in my electorate who do not own anything, not a bean, and they get exactly the same voting rights as everybody else, and so they ought. The business people—admittedly it is the low quality end of the business lobby that has come out supporting the Premier—ought to be careful also, because they may have shot themselves in the foot. If out of all this the property vote is abolished, I for one think that is how it should be, and the property owners, wherever they are in South Australia, ought to be aware of that.

But, no, members of the Adelaide City Council thought that if they made enough fuss about a telephone call the Mayor would go and they would stay. Well, sorry, boys and girls, it is not going to work that way! I would say, just in passing, that I have used the State Government's telephone today for personal purposes. I have done so at least once a day, maybe more, for the past 21 years. Every time I want to telephone my wife or whoever, I pick up the nearest telephone. I do not pay for it—somebody else pays for it. I do not have business interests in the sense that many members opposite will have, but I can guarantee that every member in this place has used the telephone on the taxpayer for personal reasons, and those who have business interests have used the telephone to further their business interests or to deal with their business interests.

I would ask any member to stand up and say they do not use the telephone for personal or business reasons, but they will not do so: I can guarantee that. I also know that everybody here has used their own telephone—and a lot more—on their electorate business, so I think these things even out

fairly well. I do not know Henry Ninio very well—I know him to say ‘Hello’ to, and that is about all—but I would guarantee that he has put a fair bit of money into local government over the years, the same as has the member for Colton. It costs everyone who is elected to local government. So, if someone has used the telephone, I do not think we should get too upset. Certainly, we should not be hypocritical about it, because we all do it every day—every single one of us.

I believe that this Bill is wrong. I do not believe that Adelaide City Council ought to be sacked. If the government of the City of Adelaide needs to be examined, fine: I have no objections to that. However, I think that it is an insult to members of Parliament themselves and that a select committee of this Parliament ought to be examining the matter. Local government is a creature of this Parliament: if something is going wrong, we ought to have the wit to fix it up and not rely on commissioners. It does not bother me if the Government wants to appoint commissioners to look at it, but I do not know why it should take longer than three months. One can walk around the joint in an hour. Why do you need three years? Three months is more than enough, and that is all they should get. But it is up to the Government if it wants to keep them for three years.

I have heard from one of my colleagues on this side that the commissioners have been named. As far as I know, a member of the LGA is not among the group, and I think that is disgraceful. For the Minister, who is supposed to be promoting local government here, not to insist on a member of the LGA being appointed, it is an absolute disgrace to his stewardship of the portfolio. For reasons unknown to me, this Government acts like a bully. It loves pushing local government around. It cannot push anyone else around, but it likes pushing local government around. It believes that local government cannot fight back, so local government gets the kicking. Well, it will not be with my support. If these commissioners, or anyone else, come up with some decent rules for the Adelaide City Council, I am happy to support them. However, I will not support dismissing a group of people who have acted, in my view, childishly on a weekly basis but who, under the present Act, certainly have not acted in a corrupt or ineffectual manner. I therefore oppose this Bill.

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I did not intend to debate this matter, because I felt that it was wrong for me, as a former Lord Mayor of the City of Adelaide, to get into a slanging match with members of council with whom I had served over a number of years. But, without doing that, I feel that I can add some facts to the debate and indicate things that actually happened which will give members of Parliament a better understanding of what is happening today.

I served on Adelaide City Council for a total period of 25 years and one month, and if I had my time again I would not hesitate to do exactly what I did, because most days were enjoyable. One was making a contribution to the city which, in my opinion, must be one of the most beautiful in the world and which many people visit because of its uniqueness surrounded, as it is, in accordance with Colonel Light’s plan, by magnificent parklands. That is a unique case and one which does not exist in many other cities.

Following my election in 1987, the first three years were calm and passive and we got on well as a council. The first signs of factionalism came when the council had to decide which items to place on the Lord Mayor’s heritage list. We

appointed independent consultants to sit on a board and to identify those properties which they believed should be considered by the council in the final analysis to be placed on that heritage list. One can understand the tensions and emotions that occurred during that debate, because some people elected in residential wards were being pushed hard by people to support this heritage list, while others who were elected by the commercial sector were being pushed by property owners who had purchased properties in good faith, knowing that one day they would demolish and redevelop them. All of a sudden the people concerned found themselves having to debate the matter of possibly preserving those properties for eternity.

That caused the first signs of factionalism between the council, and it was clearly divided. In those days you were tied either to the commercial faction or to the residential faction. We went through that process and, by about the end of 1991, prior to the 1991 elections, something like 450 or 460 properties had been identified as being worthy of placement on the heritage list. That issue was debated and completed. It carried over to the first part of the 1991-92 municipal year in which it was ratified by State Government and it was then put on the list. That war was over. It was finished. The properties were identified and there were no more arguments.

Four weeks later, in about July 1991, we all went to the usual fortnightly planning meeting, including aldermen Jane Rann and Mark Hamilton, who brought forward two stacks of paper and proceeded to move a motion saying that, as well as now having put these properties on the heritage list, they had driven around the streets of Adelaide and identified some 3 500 other properties which they believed were worthy of putting on a secondary list which they would call ‘the Streetscape’. It meant that, if your property happened to be one of the 3 500 that had been included in the Streetscape, you had to preserve the facade of that building and the two side walls. The inside of the building could be gutted and modernised, but the facade had to be preserved. In other words, it was a Hollywood-style preservation: you have the front and the sides but there is nothing behind the scene at all.

The fury and anger that built up throughout the entire City of Adelaide was indescribable. I was trying to hold a council together where the commercial factions were being pressurised by the city ratepayers to preserve their financial interests in the city, while the residential people were trying to get 3 500 properties placed onto the Streetscape. To give members an example, the 5KA property in Currie Street was owned by a particular fellow who came to see me—he also saw other commercial interests in the city—and who said, ‘I have a property for which I paid \$2 million. Under Streetscape not only will I have to preserve the two side walls and the facade but also I am not allowed to develop the first 20 metres of the property.’ The property was only 23 metres in depth, so all that this person had left to develop was three metres. Suddenly his bank manager is calling him because the property, if it was listed, would be worth half the value. The bank manager asked him to please come forward with \$1 million and deposit it in the bank because his property had just been devalued by 50 per cent.

We went into another raging fury for the next two years, and that is where the factions started—it was over heritage listing and Streetscape, nothing more than that. However, I tried to keep my cool in this whole situation. I tried to mould the council. There was anger but, after each meeting and having gone through the debate, we would all have drinks in

the Lord Mayor's parlour and, while there were tensions, there was no animosity to the stage where we could not tolerate each other.

The city must develop; there is no doubt about it. Nothing can remain the same. Everything must continue to grow, unless we are prepared to see our youth move interstate to get jobs but, mind you, many of them are doing that and I am sad to see it happen. Do not think that this is something new. The Labor Party put in administrators for Victor Harbor and Stirling councils. The Labor Government did it in New South Wales: Wran dismissed the Sydney City Council. In Victoria, Cain dismissed the Melbourne City Council, and even our friend over there now, Kennett, has dismissed the Melbourne City Council and just had elections recently. I must admit that when I have visited Victoria I have been absolutely amazed at how Victoria has cleaned up its act and has the City of Melbourne looking quite civilised, which is a very rare thing to see in Victoria.

I am very proud to have worked with John Bannon during my six years as Lord Mayor, on a very friendly basis. We had regular monthly meetings. Those meetings would last between an hour and two hours. We may have had differences, but there was never a bad word spoken between us. We always got up from the table feeling that we had both compromised to a stage where we were both happy that we had achieved what we wanted for the city and never once was there a bad word between us. Quite often when I see him in the streets today I have no problems at all talking to the man. I consider him to be a friend with whom I got on well. We worked together to try to achieve things for the city and we achieved a lot together without having any problems at all. Today, we have a Lord Mayor who is constantly attacking the Premier on an ongoing basis. I must say that I was very hurt to read in the *City Messenger* today—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr CONDOUS: But he has never tried to get down to talking with him on an amicable basis. I must say that during my time as Lord Mayor—and the Labor Party was in power during that entire period—I never had a solitary argument with any Minister of the Labor Government or the Premier of the Labor Government.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr CONDOUS: No, I had the ability to sit down and talk in a civilised manner with people who wanted to compromise to achieve for the State. There was nothing to argue about; it was simply putting your point of view and achieving. We see the following statement today in the *City Messenger*:

Premier Dean Brown is a 'closet racist', says the Lord Mayor Henry Ninio... Mr Ninio repeated his claims that anti-Semitism and race were driving the Government's push to sack the council... On Adelaide's ethnic radio station 5EBI last week, Mr Ninio claimed Mr Brown, the State Government...were all 'closet racists'.

'It's the truth,' Mr Ninio said later. 'It's even worse because I'm Jewish.'

We are living in 1996 in a civilised community. I will sit down with people whether they are black, yellow, brindle, white, or whatever colour, whether they have a dollar in their pocket or whether they are multimillionaires. As long as they are decent human beings, I find it very comfortable to sit down with anyone of any race. I have Chinese friends. I have Aboriginals whom I still hug in front of Parliament House because they used to come in and have a drink with me at the Town Hall. I am proud to say that during my time as Lord Mayor the Town Hall was open to every person and every level.

Today we have a Lord Mayor who has the support of one member of his council. Every other person is totally against him. I make quite clear that there are many good people on that council. There is a problem of communication and, if you cannot communicate, you cannot achieve. The problem that we have today is that the Lord Mayor has lost support—and I do not want to bag him at all because I have known him ever since university days. The Lord Mayor has to realise that he has one supporter, Alderman Christodoulou on the council; everyone else is against him. He talks about democracy. Today on the radio he said that he would not run for Lord Mayor provided the community supported Alderman Christodoulou as the next Lord Mayor. I would have thought that it was up to the voters of the City of Adelaide to decide who will be the next Lord Mayor and that it is not for the incumbent Lord Mayor to turn around and anoint his successor.

I do not think that is right at all. I still believe that there is a major problem; that is, that the present council, instead of being able to get on with its work, is being threatened by the Lord Mayor that he will run another race. Surely, if you do not have the support of your council it is a waste of time and irrelevant to say that you want to run another term. This morning on the radio he said that he will run as an Independent for Adelaide. That is all right: that is democracy. Everyone has the right to do whatever he or she wants to do. However, it is no good threatening people. Again tonight on the Murray Nicoll Show he was on about the fact that we are all closet racists. So, there we are: we have all been branded. We all want to go out and kill anyone who is not Anglo-Saxon. I had better watch out how I go home tonight, because I will be in big trouble.

During the time I was Lord Mayor, the Labor Party never put any money at all into the city. When I spoke to Bannon about putting money into Rundle Mall he would not do it, because he said that it was the role of the council to look after its own affairs. When we decided to empty the Torrens River and to do up the northern bank, which cost us about \$1.5 million, and I asked him for a contribution because I felt that it was unfair for the city to have to do that work when the water passes through 12 municipal areas, through our city and down to the western suburbs, again he refused to put money into it. The present Lord Mayor should count his blessings that this Government has given him money to refurbish Rundle Mall. This Government has actually made a contribution to dredge the Torrens River and to allow it to be cleaned up.

In my own electorate of Colton, I stood two weeks ago where the water comes out at West Beach, when we had the torrential rains, and what was going into West Beach, Henley Beach and Grange was an absolute shame. The perception that people have of this State is what is happening in the city. When people come to Adelaide they do not go down to Mile End, up to Springfield, Burnside or anywhere else; they stay in a city hotel, and the perception they have is when they look out into Victoria Square. They see what the city looks like. They walk into the retailing areas of Rundle Mall, they go to the Central Market, they go to the east end of Rundle Street, and the vibrancy and the way it has been developed is what impresses them. That is what they go back home and tell people.

There have been some major projects that I believe the Lord Mayor should have negotiated with the Government to try to achieve. We have been arguing for a long time as to whether the Glenelg tram should travel right up King William

Street and out to the Caledonian Hotel in O'Connell Street, North Adelaide. That would be a great tourism boon, but we have not had an answer on it. We have talked about doing up the North Terrace cultural boulevard, but nothing has happened at all. We have talked about revamping Victoria Square. I have read there will be plane trees put in there, but nothing has happened at all. We have talked about the Central Market. Again, there has been plenty of talk but no action.

It is the same with the Torrens River. I say to the Labor Party that if this Bill does not get through the Upper House and the council is then convinced that there will not be an election, that we are going to leave in place the present council, what the Labor Party has to live with is quite clear. If the council decides for the last four months prior to the May elections to get back into squabbling because the Lord Mayor will not give it an assurance that he will not run at the next election, that is the consequence the Labor Party will have to cop. It is no different from any other things that go wrong. If people vote against them and do not support the Government, and the tram runs off the rails, they will have to accept the responsibility.

I am reluctant to see any local government body replaced, but I think that we have reached the stage where we have no other option. We must get behind the three commissioners, people with expertise—one from local government and one a top businessman—who can put projects into position. Let us hope that such an administration will not last for two years and is necessary for only 12 months so that the electors of Adelaide can then democratically re-elect a new council. I imagine that people already on the council will be re-elected, because the electorate is not stupid. Voters know who have been the troublemakers and who have been the hard workers and therefore will return a democratically elected council that can function properly.

The Opposition may think that this is a bit of a joke in terms of what it will do in the Upper House. The Opposition has committed all its Upper House members to vote against the measure but they may find, as Alex Kennedy identified in the press, that they rue the day they made that decision. The Opposition should think this matter through again. There are no politics in it: what is in this is what is good for the City of Adelaide and what is good for the State of South Australia. We are a city State, and the perception of what is happening in the city reflects how well the State is going. At present there are problems. There are communication problems between the Lord Mayor and the Government and between the Lord Mayor and his elected members. The Opposition should think wisely before it votes on this issue.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): In thanking members for the contributions that they made tonight I will address each member's contribution. I cannot understand why much of the debate tonight, particularly from the Opposition, was about Adelaide City Council's good planning record. How is that relevant? The whole debate from the Opposition seemed to involve a series of red herrings, because we are not taking away any planning powers from Adelaide City Council. This Bill is about a new form of governance, and the Opposition has stated that it supports what the Government wants to do in relation to the governance of the city, but then Opposition members contradict themselves. The shadow Minister said that she wanted to see the Government go in 'hard and quick'. That is what we

would like to do but, if it has its way, the Opposition will stop that.

There is absolutely no point in going ahead if we lock the commissioners into an absolutely impractical timetable. The shadow Minister stated that this should be all over by December. In other words, she is saying that we can have a full review of how we should restructure the governance of the City of Adelaide in that period, yet it took Sydney, Melbourne and Perth a long time to do it. She says we can do it in two months, but I say that a quick fix is no fix, and all we would be doing is asking for trouble. As to the shadow Minister's specific comments, she asked why the Bill is necessary. All I can say is that she must have been living in a cocoon along with all her colleagues over the past few weeks. Either that or they did not switch on the radio or television, read a newspaper or listen to any of the debate. That was an absolutely ridiculous question, and it just goes to show how far out of touch the Opposition is.

Let me look at Adelaide and why the Government is trying to pass the Bill. For a start, let us compare Adelaide with Perth. The shadow Minister said we have to ignore Melbourne and Sydney, but the only reason she wants to do that is that they have been so successful. Before we ignore Sydney and Melbourne, let us remember that it was a Labor Government in New South Wales that put in commissioners to restructure the City of Sydney. At least some Labor people have common sense, which is more than we can say about this lot. The shadow Minister also said, 'Let's ignore Sydney, because Sydney is a perfectly good example of what can happen when you put in commissioners and restructure a City Council.'

Then she said, 'Let us ignore Melbourne [another example of where commissioners were put in, turned the council around and set it going in the right direction] because they are too big and cannot be compared with Adelaide'. So, let us accept her argument that we have to ignore Sydney and Melbourne because they are too big. Now let us talk about Perth, a city very much the same size as Adelaide. But she said that we must ignore Perth, too. Let us also talk about Phoenix and Denver, two cities very close to the size of Adelaide, and let us have a look at what those cities have done—because she has said that we have to ignore these cities. She said, 'Why should we do it just because other cities have done it?'

The challenge I put to the shadow Minister is this: I can give her chapter and verse of city after city where they have sacked the council, put in commissioners, turned the city around and got it going in the right direction. However, she is saying that is not good enough for the City of Adelaide. She said, 'Let us ignore the success of other cities and not worry about that. Let us just look at Adelaide and treat it differently.' Why should we treat it differently? Why do we want to reinvent the wheel when other cities have proven that what we want to do is the way to go?

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Good question. I am very happy to answer that. Let us have a look at what the Adelaide council has and has not done. As the member for Colton pointed out so well, we are a city State. We are not alone in that.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: No, we are not.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: We are. The honourable member who is interjecting—and who is on his third warning, I understand—has no idea. If he had done a little research he would know that wherever people travel they judge a State

by its city. When we go overseas, how often do we say that we are going to California, Arizona, or wherever? We usually say that we are going to go to San Francisco, Phoenix or Adelaide. In other words, a State is judged by its capital city, and that is exactly why I am so concerned about what is going on in South Australia. This State is being judged by its capital city—and what a failure it is!

We have been asked to explain why we are critical of the council. The reason is that it shows absolutely no leadership whatsoever. I was promised, and I was given, a bundle of papers of the so-called achievements of the Adelaide City Council. What did they talk about? They talked about new computer systems, and I think they bought a dozen pens instead of one. It was absolute nonsense. There was nothing about a vision for the City of Adelaide, nothing about the future of the City of Adelaide, nothing about—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: We have plenty of vision. I am delighted. We could be here all night, because the more the honourable members interject the more answers I will be able to give them. I will come back to the honourable member who is in that back corner interjecting continuously and the nonsense that he has spoken. I have always admired him in the past, but his contribution to this debate tonight was pathetic, and I will take great delight getting stuck into the points that he made. He still believes in roads, rates and rubbish. He said that the City of Adelaide is clean and therefore is doing a great job. But what is the city doing? I challenge the honourable member to go to Perth and walk down the malls in that city, and then to walk down the pathetic mall that we have here.

We have had people here from all over the world—leaders in their area and leaders in relation to malls. And how did they describe Rundle Mall? I know only too well how they described it—pathetic. Why do members opposite not take the trouble to go to cities and have a look at what a council can do where it thinks carefully and when it plans?

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: One always knows when one is being effective in debate because the Opposition comes in like the tide. They interject because they do not like the facts being put in front of this Parliament, so they interject. I am delighted that they are doing this because it shows that I am hitting a raw nerve. I challenge members opposite to give me one example of leadership that the City Council has shown since it has been there. Who had to get the mall going? Who had to get the cameras into the mall. Who had to get the Torrens River cleaned up? Who had to get City East going? I could go on and on. I suggest that members opposite go and talk to the Perth City Council, the Melbourne City Council and the Sydney City Council; they will find out what leadership in a City Council is all about. And it is absolutely missing in the City of Adelaide.

Members opposite talk about development approvals. Not once have I raised the issue of development approvals as a reason for what I am doing in relation to this council. I challenge members opposite to come back to me with words that I have used at any time which indicate that I am doing this because of development approvals. Let us also have this clear. They are trying to tie in what we are doing now with the kerfuffle that the Lord Mayor has had with his council. I make crystal clear that the problem is not just the Lord Mayor: it is the council. Now the council have found a whipping horse. They can say, 'It is our Mayor. We will do a Pontius Pilate: we will wash our hands and will not accept

responsibility for the lack of leadership. We will say that it is all the Lord Mayor's fault.' That is nonsense. The council and—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Well, let us look at what one councillor said about the City Council. She said:

I find it demeaning to be part of such a dysfunctional body.

I could go on.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: He did it very well indeed. You don't like the facts. Here is a councillor who says herself that the council is dysfunctional, that it lacks leadership and that it is not doing anything.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Oh dear, the honourable member is pathetic. This document states:

Regrettably, members are driven by self-interest, naked ambition and an obsession with the mayoralty. I have had so many calls from people in Grey ward as well as from far and wide congratulating me. 'Thank God you got out.'

I could go on, but the point is that here we have in chapter and verse a council that is dysfunctional and showing no leadership. It is like a ship without a rudder. If it had not been for this Government, the Adelaide city would be nothing. I repeat: who instigated the Mall; who instigated the clean-up of the Torrens; and who got Adelaide East going? I could go on.

As the honourable member in the back corner would be only too delighted to say, 'Yes, but they pick up the rubbish, they get my rates, and they are doing a good job.' That idea of local government went out years ago. We now look to local government for social leadership. The Opposition is missing the whole point. Governance and representation is one issue and one issue only. It is a key issue, which we want the commissioners to address.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: It is not the only issue. That is the problem with the Opposition: it believes that the only problem is leadership. I tell the honourable member opposite for her own benefit that it is the entire council. How many votes do the councillors have? They have 16 votes. The honourable member knows as well as I that the Lord Mayor sits up the front and can do absolutely nothing about determining the outcome of the vote or the policy of the council. It is the elected councillors who vote on that. What leadership have the elected councillors shown the city? Zilch, zero, none! There is no other word for it. For them to blame their Lord Mayor is pathetic, because it is the elected council that should make the policies. What policies has this elected council shown this city? Again, I say: zilch, zero, none. And they criticise us, because we want to get rid of the council. Certainly, leadership is the key, but we cannot blame just the Lord Mayor. Leadership should be shown by the entire council.

The shadow Minister talked about centre redevelopment. All over the world we can cite chapter and verse of city after city which has overcome the problem that the City of Adelaide is facing at the moment. I suggest to the honourable member that, if she wishes, she can visit many cities which will show that what we are looking to do is exactly what they did. I have already used the example in Australia of Perth, and I will stick to that because Perth is a city the same size as Adelaide. If anyone visits Perth and tries to tell us that there is any comparison they have not used their eyes.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That has nothing to do with it. The State Government put \$26 million into the Art Gallery and two-thirds of the leadership into the clean-up of the Torrens Lake. Remember what the City Council said: 'The Torrens Lake has nothing to do with us. Everyone uses the Torrens Lake, so why should we be responsible for it?' That is the sort of attitude that we have in this City Council, and members opposite want to defend it and keep it there.

This Government has put its money where its mouth is. It put money into the Art Gallery and into Adelaide East—and so did the previous Labor Government. That is one thing I will give members opposite credit for. Yet here they are sitting back and letting the council do all it can to ruin what is one of the State's best developments.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Absolutely. I am delighted to respond to that interjection, because I passionately want to again be proud of the City of Adelaide just as the residents of Perth, Melbourne and Sydney are proud of their cities. If any member opposite underestimates my passion for getting this city back where it belongs, they are really wrong.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Don't underestimate.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No, all you want to do is roads, rates and rubbish. I know where you are coming from. This could be a dynamic city centre. That is what the South Australia Government and I want. I have already referred to examples where we have tried to get the council to the starting barriers, but it will not. It is absolute nonsense, as the Opposition suggests, to state that we should have the commissioners in place at the same time as the elected council.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Why?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Because it just will not work, and the honourable member knows it. Let it be on the record that I believe we have three outstanding candidates for—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I want it recorded that the shadow Minister and the member for Giles are rubbishing the appointment of Ian Webber as the chief commissioner—

Ms HURLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe that the Minister has misled the House as to—

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: That is not a point of order, and you know it.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I would ask the Minister, though, to refrain from reading into *Hansard* interjections which he should not respond to but interjections which—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: You did interject, just as did the member for Giles.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have to confess that it was I. Interjections are out of order; I know that. I was interjecting, not the member for Napier. I apologise to the Chair for interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. George Washington would be pleased.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: He may be a gentleman but I want it firmly on the record that both members interjected.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That is not true. There has to be some style. I seek your guidance, Sir. The Chair is here to guide members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Is it permissible for a member to stand up and tell a deliberate lie about another member?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That is what has occurred. It should not be allowed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point is that the Opposition has just been very critical of the three eminent Adelaide citizens who have been appointed as commissioners. Not one member on the other side of the House would have a record of achievements that would come within 2 per cent of Mr Ian Webber's achievements, yet they are rubbishing him. What a leader Kate Spargo is in her field and what a great job she is doing in many areas. Members opposite are rubbishing her. There is also an eminent QC.

Let us get it on the record that that is what members opposite have said, because they know full well that we have eminent citizens who are prepared to turn this city around. But can you expect those eminent citizens to sit alongside a council that is as pathetic as existing elected members? Of course they cannot; I would not expect them to. I know full well that they would not continue as commissioners if that were to be the situation, and I know that the Opposition is fully aware of that. If members opposite reject this legislation, they will reject three leading citizens of Adelaide as being worthy of the opportunity to turn this city around in the direction we want it to go.

Members opposite say, first, that we should be able to get this done by May next year, and then the member for Napier said that we should have it done by the end of this year. She says that we can get three people working alongside a dysfunctional—and that is not my word: it is a councillor's word—council and that this situation will be turned around in three months. I suggest that she pick up the phone, talk to her colleagues in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia and get some facts of life. She will find that they all advise her that what we are looking to do cannot be achieved in that time frame.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: What nonsense! This is what I like about the honourable member, who comes in from Whyalla, who is interested only in roads, rates and rubbish and who is telling us that he can turn this city around. What a pathetic load of nonsense! The member for Napier said that residents will not know which direction the council is going in if we appoint commissioners. I would ask the honourable member whether she really believes that residents of this city know the direction in which the council is going at the moment, because nobody else does. She also talked about the amount of time councillors have to spend compared with that of the commissioners. I would make a couple of points in that regard. We all know that elected councillors are there purely and simply working and, having been a councillor, I know what that entails. You have a job, and the council work is done in the evenings, on weekends and so on. I feel quite confident that, given that these three commissioners will be spending at least half their time on this—and I imagine that they will be at least 1 000 per cent more efficient than the existing councillors—they will certainly be able to achieve

far more in the time that will be available to them than is the existing council.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The proof of the pudding is in the eating. I again ask the honourable member to name one significant achievement of this council, to give me one example of how this council has shown any leadership, and to give me one example of where the council has sat down and identified the direction in which it wanted the City of Adelaide to go. Such examples just do not exist. I also point out that the qualifications of the three commissioners are such that they have expertise in a very wide ranging field. Just think of the contribution they can make to the city but, if that lot over there have their way, that will not occur.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Go ahead; you are most welcome. Then members opposite talked about the so-called power of the Minister under this Bill. Let us look at that. Had we not put in the sort of protection—that is the word I would use—that this Bill is offering, they would have been critical and said, ‘You’re putting in three commissioners and giving them *carte blanche* to do what they like: why aren’t they responsible to you?’ That is exactly what they would have said if I had done it in any other way. They talked about the Minister running the council. That is funny: I thought we were appointing three commissioners to run it, to take the place of the elected council. They would still be governed by the Local Government Act. Members opposite have introduced red herring after red herring, but at least they had the decency not to use some of the scare tactics used by the council, such as that we want to get in there to take over the parklands, sell them off, put up buildings and all that sort of nonsense. Fair go; let us be reasonable on this.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: What a pathetic question! Of course I would—but what an insult. I will make sure that that interjection gets back to the three commissioners. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has suggested that they will sell off the parklands. I can assure the honourable member that that will get back to them, to give them an idea of the sorts of pathetic arguments the Opposition is putting up. Fortunately, the member for Napier sat down and we heard from the member for Reynell. I genuinely thank her for her thoughtful and balanced contribution. She expressed some concerns and will ask some questions, which I am confident I will be able to answer.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: As I said to the honourable member before, I will be here a darned sight longer than he will be Deputy Leader. Let us get that on the record, because we all know that he no longer has the numbers; it is a matter of time before he gets rolled. Now that we are on the subject of the Deputy Leader, let us look at his pathetic contribution. He again asked why the Government is putting this Bill forward and said that we have not given any reasons. I will try to get them over in words of one or two syllables so that he can understand. What we are doing is entirely because we desperately need some leadership, direction and thought for the future. That is why we need to do this.

Just like the member for Napier, he totally ignored the cause of the problem. The cause of the problem is the council, yet members opposite want to leave the cause of the problem there as part of the solution. What a lot of nonsense! How on earth can the group that has caused all the trouble be left there

to operate at the same time as we want to bring in three brilliant leaders from the community—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Once again there are interjections.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: We have—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: You could not earn money as a lawyer out in the wide world. Michael Abbott is a QC. You have never used your law degree in any way, shape or form because you know that nobody would come if you put up a shingle; yet the honourable member criticises one of the most eminent QCs in Adelaide. When there are members like that, this place is rightly known as cowards’ castle. The honourable member named a whole heap of leading citizens—

Mr Atkinson: Yes!

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: —and I defy him to go out—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the Minister be seated, please.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I defy him to go out and make those statements—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will be seated, please. The level of debate has descended as low as it can possibly go with the nature of the interjections and the Minister’s antagonistic attitude towards members on the opposite side. I ask all members to cool it.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I make the point that since I have started speaking the interjections have been continuous. The honourable member was just like the member for Napier and totally ignored the cause of the problem. He made false statements that the reason that we are doing this is about development, and I challenge him to point out where I said that. He alleged that the only reason the Government is taking this action is because of the Lord Mayor and the Libyan connection. If he really believes that a key Bill of this type can be brought in as quickly as that shows that he has no understanding of government, and that is why he will be over there, not necessarily as Deputy Leader, for a long time.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: We will wait and see. You are not exactly No. 1 out in your area, I can tell you. I have said it before and I will say it again, that the Lord Mayor and the Libyan matter have absolutely nothing to do with this Bill. The honourable member and the member for Giles really look at councils in the way that perhaps the City Council looks at itself. That happened back in the 1950s when we spoke only about roads, rates and rubbish. The council is responsible for that, but what about leadership, what about a vision for the city? If the Deputy Leader tries to tell me that is there, I will argue that it is not.

I have also been asked why we should sack the present council. I have been contacted by developers and other investors in this city, not by one, not by two but by a number, who advised me that they will not lodge development applications for one reason, that as soon as a development application hits the floor, within 10 minutes every competitor knows about it. That is the sort of ‘professionalism’ in the Adelaide City Council, and that is one very serious problem with the council. Again, the Opposition wants us to leave in

place a council that cannot even keep the confidence of applications that come before it. Is it any wonder that developers are very suspicious about lodging an application?

The Government certainly wants to change the governance of the council. Members opposite referred to the city of Adelaide, but I would also refer them to North Adelaide, and they were very happy to talk about North Adelaide. Let us look at Melbourne Street. Once the leading suburban street in all of metropolitan Adelaide, what is it now? I do not have to answer that rhetorical question. Let us look at Unley Road and King William Road. The Unley council works with its business people and has set up key committees to ensure that those two roads have become very attractive shopping areas. That is what I am arguing. Unley can do it but Adelaide cannot, and so can the Glenelg council in relation to Jetty Road.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: What about O'Connell Street? What about Melbourne Street? Is this not typical of the Opposition? It will not acknowledge that there is a problem. When I talked about the mall and the cameras, Torrens Lake and Adelaide east it tried to blame everybody but the council. Now, when I talk about Melbourne Street, it blames everybody but the council. It just will not accept that there is a huge problem. As long as that continues, what hope do we have?

We then heard about our wanting three years. The Opposition is well aware that I have indicated on a number of occasions that the time at which an elected body is placed back in the City of Adelaide is very much open to negotiation and discussion. We have certainly put down May 1999 as the point at which the sunset provision will come into effect. However, I say now, and I will say it again, that we would be delighted if we could get in the three commissioners, turn the city around and get in the new system of governance well before that period. It is nonsense to say that we could do that by the end of this year or even by May next year. First, the Opposition wants a quick fix, and I have never yet seen a quick fix that works. Secondly, I only wish members opposite could see the big picture and not just the roads, rates and rubbish.

The member for Mawson very ably destroyed the shallow arguments put forward by the Deputy Leader on the State's economy which had absolutely nothing to do with this Bill, but it was there. The member for Spence interests me very much, because he got up and argued passionately. However, I note that he will oppose what we are doing. I will quote the member for Spence, from a media release from radio 5AA of 24 September, as follows:

Well, first of all, I have been a public critic of Lord Mayor Henry Ninio and the Adelaide City Council for more than three years, and I actually think—

now let us take these words slowly—

that Dean Brown is on the right track in talking about sacking the Adelaide City Council, replacing it with commissioners and restructuring the City Council.

They are words from the honourable member. I will also quote the honourable member's own words in a debate in this House. He said:

You would think that I would readily support the Government's plan to sack the Adelaide City Council and replace it with three commissioners.

We should take the next words slowly:

That plan has some attraction for me...

There we have a member who at one stage was arguing very strongly that we were right. I would love to know what has happened to cause him to change his mind. I would very much doubt that—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Well, it would be a deal; a sweet deal was probably the case. I thought the honourable member argued the Government's case perfectly. He wants the governance changed. He gave all the reasons why this should occur. He agreed with what we want to do. Frankly, I look forward to the honourable member's joining us in the vote.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Again, I point out that the honourable member—and this is important—once again is slapping one of Adelaide's leading citizens. This was a name that has been put forward to the Opposition for some days, and no objections were raised. I make that point. He gave many ideas for the future governance of this city. All of these, if we have the opportunity, will be considered by the commissioner.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Spence.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Then the member for Adelaide also gave an excellent summary of the problems. I note that while he was speaking the Opposition was listening carefully, because it knew only too well that the points made were spot on. Then we come to the member for Giles. What really concerned me about the member for Giles's contribution was his idea of what local government involvement should be—roads, rates and rubbish. He said, 'All we want to do is see a clean city.' I ask him, 'What about the vision; what about the leadership?'

Mr Clarke: What's your vision?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: My vision is to have a council in place, just as they have in so many other cities, to turn this city around.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: What they will do is give this city what the council does not have: leadership, vision and a plan for the future. What three more key issues could we be looking for? The member for Giles asks, 'What's the agenda?' I can tell him: purely and simply to get a city of which we can all be proud again. If he is proud of this city, it just goes to show how pathetically easily he is pleased. At least all his colleagues have acknowledged there is a problem, but the member for Giles will not even do that.

He said, 'Councils don't do too much and they shouldn't.' Well, he is dead right with the ACC—absolutely spot on—and that is why we need to change it. Then he said, 'They shouldn't do too much; they shouldn't get carried away; they should stick to roads, rates and rubbish.'

The Hon. Frank Blevins: I didn't say that.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No, but that was a paraphrasing of where the honourable member was coming from.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the member for Giles.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Then he referred to Rundle Mall, and I have already covered that. Further, he said, 'All I know about the City Council is what I read in the *City Messenger*.' Here we have an honourable member contributing to the debate who has acknowledged that all he knows about it is what he reads in the *City Messenger*. I would have thought he would take the trouble to do just a little research.

Having said that, I believe that any points put forward by the honourable member are absolutely destroyed. He said also, 'I don't care who picks up my bin'. There were so many quotable quotes, all showing an appalling lack of ignorance of what local government, particularly in the City of Adelaide, should be about.

Then the member for Giles brought in the red herring concerning telephone calls. He even said that we should not use telephones in this place for electoral business. Well, I thought we were elected as members of Parliament to look after our electorate.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You stupid man.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: You check the words. You said—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You stupid man.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Giles is out of order.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: I said the opposite.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: You check your words.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You stupid man.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: You also said that we all do that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Giles is within an inch of being named.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Right; and the member for Giles also said—and I suggest he read his words—that we should not telephone our family from here.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: No, the very opposite.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No, he said that is what we do, and that is absolutely right: why should we not do that, because it is part of our job?

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: But what the Lord Mayor did in telephoning Arabia or wherever was nothing to do with his job. That is the point I am making. So, perhaps we do agree on at least one point. There is nothing wrong with members in here using the telephone on electoral business. There is nothing wrong in calling our families, but if we were to telephone England or the Middle East, as the Lord Mayor did, that is wrong. The member for Giles said, 'We want to fix it up...three months is plenty.' That is absolutely ridiculous. Then he said that we should have had somebody on this panel from the LGA. I make the point that the LGA is not an elected body, so why on earth does it have any more right than anybody else to have representation? Then he said, 'I will be happy to support the commissioners if they come up with some ideas.' How on earth will they come up with ideas if the honourable member is not even going to allow them to be appointed?

Finally, I thought that the member for Colton provided an excellent background to this matter. He referred to the heritage list. I will not name the organisation, but I know that the facts are absolutely correct, in that an organisation owned a building that was heritage listed. The organisation accepted that it would not be able to alter the facade of that building. All it wanted to do was put in partitions, not even to ceiling height, I stress, so it was not going to interfere with the ceiling of that building, and the council refused the request concerning those partitions because 'if anybody comes in the front door, those partitions will prevent them from being able to see the full ceiling'.

That is the sort of nonsense that people in the City of Adelaide have had to put up with. I raise that matter because the member for Colton talked about the way in which the split

occurred as a result of the heritage faction. That is an example of how stupid you can become when you get carried away with unimportant issues and do not look at what is good for this city in the future. What are their plans? Have they a five-year plan? Of course they have not: they would not know what it was. There is also the lack of leadership by not only the council but also the Lord Mayor.

If this legislation does not pass it will be purely and simply the Opposition's fault. Let us make it quite clear that every time this City Council meets, if it continues with the mess in which it now finds itself, if it continues with Adelaide looking as it does now, if it continues in the way in which it has been operating and the city continues to go downhill, then the responsibility for that will rest fairly and squarely with the Opposition and the obstructionism of the Legislative Council. I can only hope that between now and when the debate occurs in the other place it will see common sense and understand what the Government is trying to achieve and—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That is interesting, because the honourable member obviously does not even know how local government comes to be where it is: it is there purely and simply because of the constitution of the State Government. This State Government was democratically elected; it has a job to do; and, if the Adelaide City Council will not do it, it is our job to ensure that it is done. That is what this State Government is all about. If the Opposition continues with its obstructionism, it will deserve everything it gets, and it will get it in spades. North Terrace could be the most attractive boulevard not only in Australia but probably in the world, but what has the City Council done about it? Zilch!

If this Bill does not succeed it will be totally on the heads of members opposite: it will be their fault that the City of Adelaide will not be able to do what Sydney, Melbourne and Perth did. If that is what the Opposition wants as its epitaph as it goes into the next election, so be it.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—'Alteration of composition of City of Adelaide.'

Ms GREIG: Having referred earlier to this matter, I ask the Minister to give his assurance that the three commissioners will be acting as a properly constituted council and that the meetings will be open to the public.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Yes, I can give the honourable member an absolute assurance on that. The meetings of the commissioners will be exactly as they are for the elected local council, and they will be governed by the same requirements under the Local Government Act as apply to the elected council.

Clause passed.

Clause 6—'Appointment of Commissioners.'

Ms HURLEY: Clause 6(2) details the capabilities that the commissioners must have, and I understand that the Government has already announced the commissioners. I am particularly interested in each commissioner's knowledge of local government and wonder what importance the Minister places on that clause.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Of course we attach quite considerable importance to that. All three commissioners, in my discussions with them, have exhibited a very wide and detailed knowledge of local government—every one of them.

Ms HURLEY: Can the Minister say whether any of the proposed commissioners has had any involvement in local government, either as staff or as an elected representative?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I cannot see the relevance of that question because—

Mr Clarke: That is one of the conditions.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Clause 6(2)(c) provides that a commissioner must have a 'knowledge about local government'. Has the shadow Minister ever been an employee of local government? Has she ever been an elected local councillor? Yet she is representing the Opposition in the portfolio of local government. In other words, one need not have been a council employee or councillor to have knowledge of local government. I would suggest that, if the honourable member believes that people such as Ian Webber achieve their position in life without having had significant dealings with local government, it again shows a total misunderstanding of what business and local government is all about.

Ms HURLEY: If the Minister refuses to state whether any of the proposed commissioners has had any involvement as staff or elected councillors in local government, and given that it is his stipulation that the commissioners have knowledge about local government, could he explain how the commissioners in their business interests have such extensive knowledge of local government that they are able to administer the City Council of Adelaide, that they are able to report on the change in the way the City Council is governed, and that they are able to make decisions on planning and development conducted in the Adelaide City Council area?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I can answer that question easily: I am absolutely confident that the three persons I have appointed as commissioners have at least as much, if not more, knowledge of local government than any of the councillors. Just because a person is on a council does not give them any God-given right to have more knowledge of local government than other people who are used to dealing with local government over the counter, and in many other ways. For example, Mr Webber would have mixed with lord mayors, mayors, councillors and aldermen in the City of Melbourne, in the City of Adelaide, and in many other places.

As I said, I have spoken with the commissioners and I am quite satisfied that all three have an extensive, broad and detailed knowledge of local government, and the Bill states that they must have knowledge about local government. I notice that the honourable member did not mention that the commissioners needed leadership qualities, something which the present council does not have but which all three commissioners have. The honourable member did not talk about the ability to act as a representative of the City of Adelaide, something which all three commissioners have but which I have seen sadly lacking amongst this present council. The honourable member did not mention business, legal, management and other suitable qualifications or expertise because she knows darn well that in all those areas these people are pre-eminent. As I said, I am perfectly satisfied that their knowledge of local government would run rings around any member of the Opposition.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Leaving aside all the abuse and the lies from the Minister in his response to the second reading, I thought the Minister was trying to win hearts and minds today. If the Minister thinks he will win any hearts and minds by a stream of abuse at members who have a different point of view, then the Minister cannot be surprised when this legislation gets thrown out of the

window. When the Minister abuses people in the way in which he has because they have a different point of view, he should not be surprised when they do not support him.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: You do not care about that, you do not give a damn. That seems to be an attitude of the Minister. If these commissioners are to be appointed to run the City of Adelaide, whilst at the same time apparently developing a vision and recommending to Government, presumably, another way of governing the City of Adelaide, why should someone from the LGA be excluded when the LGA would certainly have more knowledge about local government than these commissioners about whom we have heard on the news tonight put together? It would do no harm whatsoever to have one of these commissioners know something about local government. I would have thought that it would have been a minimum requirement that at least one of them knew something about local government.

I would not mind if the number of commissioners was expanded to four so someone from the LGA could be on it. I would have had more respect for the Bill if that had been the case. In my view, to suggest that the people who have been appointed are absolutely superb even though they know nothing about local government is offensive. The Minister made the point that the LGA is not an elected body, therefore it is not fit to serve on this body. Who elected Ian Webber, Ms Spargo and Michael Abbott QC? I would have thought, if they are eligible to be commissioners, someone appointed from the LGA would have been even more so and it may even have calmed the LGA down a little bit. Of course, the Minister is not into that. The Minister is like the Deputy Premier, he just likes abusing—small-minded bullies, full of insecurity—

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: You don't do that?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I have never bullied anybody in my life. People take advantage of my good nature; that is one of my problems. The member for Unley interjected very quietly, Mr Chairman, so that you would not hear; but what about his eligibility to be a commissioner? Had the member for Unley been here when I made my second reading contribution he would have known that I suggested that. Local government is a creature of the State Government: if there are some problems in one of our offspring, so to speak, it ought to be State Parliament that does the investigation and sorts it out with the State. The Minister has a majority on select committees of this place and that is who ought to be doing it. My Party Room does not agree with me on that. I made that clear in the Party Room. I believe it ought to be our responsibility. I would back any six members of a select committee drawn from this House to have more knowledge about running any government than Messrs Webber and Abbott and Ms Spargo. Why not the LGA?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The honourable member has raised a number of issues. The honourable member asked, 'Why not the LGA?' I have already covered that. The honourable member did not mention any name; he just said 'the LGA.' The honourable member did not suggest any person within the LGA; neither has the name of anyone from the LGA been put forward to me by the Opposition at any time. I am perfectly happy to negotiate on the number of commissioners, provided that at the same time the Opposition is prepared to negotiate in other areas.

Mr CLARKE: What riding instructions will the Minister or the Government give these commissioners with respect to the governance of the City of Adelaide? The Minister has said

in a very general way that the present City Council is guilty of a whole range of unnamed sins and that this group of commissioners will right those wrongs. First, what are those wrongs, in specific detail? Secondly, what riding instructions, if any, will the Government give the commissioners with respect to implementing the Government's vision for the City of Adelaide—if, indeed, this Government has a vision at all?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: It would appear that the Deputy Leader has not bothered even to read the Bill. I refer the honourable member to page 13, schedule 2, 'Objectives for the new governance of the City of Adelaide'. As the honourable member has not bothered to read the Bill, I will read the objectives for him. They are as follows:

The new form of governance should enable the City of Adelaide—

(a) to represent and project the cultural and economic life of Adelaide and South Australia to growing regional markets and the emerging world of global communications;

(b) to provide a focus for the cultural, educational, tourism, retail and commercial activities of South Australia;

(c) to develop strong links between business, the community, and educational and cultural institutions, and to act as a centre for the integration of these sectors to provide new opportunities for growth;

(d) to provide for the physical development of the city, and to provide for standards of service necessary to enable the city to accommodate strong and desirable growth within the community;

(e) to attract capital investment in a competitive global market;

(f) to respond to rapid social and economic change in a competitive environment;

(g) to support the growth of educational and information technology services to the Asian region;

(h) to increase the residential population of the city and to provide for a continued level of residential involvement in the governance of the city in balance with broader interests;

(i) to maintain the social cohesion, quality of life and environment needed to attract people who can ensure that South Australia is at the forefront of developing and providing the intellectually based capital products and services of the future.

That is the charge that the commissioners will have. I only wish that they have the opportunity to do it. Will the honourable member tell me how many of those he reckons the present City Council is doing?

Mr CLARKE: The onus of proof is on the Minister to demonstrate that the City Council is not functioning and doing these things. I have read the schedule before, but I will rephrase my question for the Minister's benefit. What does the Minister expect the commissioners to do to implement the objectives in schedule 2? What does he expect them to be able to do that the City Council currently is not doing: the nuts and bolts of carrying out what he wants, detailed in schedule 2?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That is easy to answer. The City Council has not done any of that. We have only to look at the record of the people that I have appointed as commissioners. Let us take the chief commissioner, for a start. That man has proven that he can lead. He has done it in industry. He did it with Chrysler, with Mitsubishi; he did it when he went to Melbourne; and he has been on the board of QANTAS. Do I need to go through what that man has contributed? Given half a chance, he will provide that ability to this city to turn it around. I invite members opposite to make an appointment with Mr Webber and ask him why he decided to become chief commissioner. I will be surprised if the question does not come up—

Mr Atkinson: Altruism.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Yes, it very much is. Members should think about what that man can earn in private enterprise. He will give half his time for an amount of \$60 000—and he will be worth every cent of it. Please

make an appointment to talk to Mr Webber. Ask him why he has taken on this position. He will strike you with his passion for wanting to see his own city turn around. He was in Melbourne and saw what happened there. He is absolutely confident it can happen in Adelaide, and he wants the challenge of doing it.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: One voice in 14.

Mr ATKINSON: It was upsetting to hear on the news tonight that Mr Michael Abbott of North Adelaide, to whom I referred earlier in debate, has now been announced as one of the Government's intended commissioners to run the Corporation of the City of Adelaide. It was a shock for me to see that because I cannot imagine anyone more unsuitable to be a commissioner.

Mr Brindal: Why?

Mr ATKINSON: I will tell you why. Mr Abbott lives on the corner of Hill Street and Barnard Street in a mansion the size of which is obscene. He made a lot of his money on the State Bank Royal Commission where he was one of the counsel. In 1992, Adelaide City Council applied to close Barton Road permanently, that is, so that not even the buses could go through. A number of very wealthy and influential people were behind that closure, and I will name them: Mr Greg Ennis of Fenwick Ennis Real Estate, Mr Theo Maras, property developer, the Verco family—old money—and Dr Michael Hammerton, eye specialist. They appointed Mr Michael Abbott to represent them, and I appeared with him before the council to argue the case. I will tell the Committee what Mr Abbott said about my constituents:

There is a third argument that I should mention. Information I have obtained from the Police Department suggests that there was a substantial decrease in criminal activity, particularly breaking and entering, when the road was closed.

He went on to say:

...the plain fact of the matter is that increased traffic means an increased number of people in the area and that in turn leads to opportunistic and spur of the moment breaking and entering and vandalism to motor vehicles. The increased number of people, I suggest, leads irresistibly to that kind of behaviour.

The Liberal Government intends to appoint this man as a commissioner of the City of Adelaide, an area of the metropolitan area important to everyone who lives in metropolitan Adelaide. Of course, it is important to people who live in Bowden, Brompton, Ovingham, Croydon and the area I represent. Not only does Mr Michael Abbott want to use his unusual power, because of the odd boundaries and voting system in the City of Adelaide, to keep my constituents out of his area—a kind of apartheid—but on top of that, when he is asked his reasons for it, he casts these people as criminals, yet this man is to be appointed as a commissioner of the City of Adelaide.

I regard him as unfit for public office if he has that kind of attitude to the people I represent. To think that he can objectively run the City of Adelaide in the interests of everyone who lives in metropolitan Adelaide, including people who live in Bowden and Brompton, is a nonsense. He has defamed those people.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: The Minister says, 'Say it outside.' I have said it all outside: it is on transcripts and in newsletters. I have said it at railway stations and at the RSL club, and I have published what I am saying now again and again. No-one has ever taken me to court—not even the Lord Mayor—because there are defences, and the principal one is truth. The

Minister can keep pointing toward the door, but I have said it everywhere and I am saying it here. Michael Abbott is the worst possible choice the Minister could have made for this job.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I need to address a number of the points which have been made by the honourable member, the first of which concerns his standing here, as he has done, and slamming one of Adelaide's leading citizens like that. The other point is that before I named that person the Opposition was well aware that I was considering that, and at no time was I ever advised—

Ms Hurley: Yes, we did.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No. The Opposition certainly did not say it agreed with his appointment. I will acknowledge that they did not at any time say they disagreed. That is a fact. The honourable member is also adding two and two and coming up with six rather than four, because he stated that Mr Abbott is saying that his constituents are the cause of the higher crime.

Let me point out that I now live in a cul-de-sac—and this is why I think there has been a drop in crime—and I am right at the end of it. In our street we suffer far fewer problems in terms of break-ins and theft of cars than other streets adjacent, and I think that is for one reason only; the fact that there is only one exit from the street.

Mr Atkinson: Is it a street leading to the city?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Will the honourable member listen to me? I am merely saying that the drop in crime could well be due to the fact that those with criminal intent would know that if they went to that area they would have a limited choice of getting out. I ask the member where, in the quote that he read, did Mr Abbott QC say that it was his constituents? All he said was—

Mr Atkinson: They are the only ones who use it. They come up the hill.

The CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you, member for Spence.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I had better say it again more slowly. What has happened is that you have blocked a means of getting away from the scene of the crime, and it is well—

Mr Atkinson: You are getting yourself in deeper.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am not. I suggest that the honourable member talk to the police. I have been living where I am for nine years, and when I went to one of the Neighbourhood Watch meetings I asked the police officer there, 'Is there any reason why courts like the one in which I live have got a lower crime problem than other streets?' He agreed with me and said, 'Yes, it is quite clear that if you have only got one way of getting away from the scene of a crime people will avoid it and go to where there is an easy escape.'

The member for Taylor is supposed to be an intelligent person, but she seems to have difficulty following what the police are saying quite categorically; that streets with only one entrance will have a lower crime rate than those with more than one entrance. At no time did Mr Abbott say that it was the Hon. Mr Atkinson's constituents. All he said was that since that occurred there has been a lower crime rate—probably a statement of fact, for the reasons I have given. The member has got a passion about one road closure and he seems to let that colour all of his objectivity.

Mr ATKINSON: The Minister is right; Mr Michael Abbott does have experience in local government, and it is as a warlord in North Adelaide elections. It astonishes me that

the Minister could appoint someone so partisan and so tied up with decisions and factionalism in that council as a commissioner. He should be looking for someone who is detached from the City of Adelaide, someone who is disinterested as regards the contending factions and someone who can act on behalf of people who live outside the city walls. He has chosen two people, Ms Spargo and Mr Webber, who can do that. He should now choose a third who can do the same.

Clause passed.

Clause 7—'Conditions of Appointment.'

Ms HURLEY: My question relates to clause 7(2), which provides that the Governor may remove a commissioner from office at any time. Subsequent parts of this clause refer to a wide range of circumstances in which a commissioner might depart if he dies, resigns, is convicted of an offence or is declared bankrupt. Under what circumstances could the Minister imagine he might remove a commissioner from office at any time? Is the Minister seeking to allow himself circumstances in which, if the commissioners do not do what he tells them to do, he may arbitrarily sack them and appoint someone else? There has been much talk about the Opposition's agreeing to appointing the commissioners at this stage of proceedings, yet this opportunity is provided to remove any of them and appoint new ones.

In his contribution, the Minister said that by way of an interjection I attacked the commissioners that have been announced. He referred to my specifically attacking Mr Webber and Ms Spargo. The Leader of the Opposition and I have publicly supported Mr Ian Webber for the position of Chairman of the commissioners, and the Leader—and I fully concur—has spoken of Mr Webber's distinguished service in business and other spheres. In no circumstances would I attack Mr Webber's credentials for this job. I fully agree with the member for Spence that he is disinterested and is an ideal candidate.

I do not know Ms Spargo very well, but I have heard good reports of her evenhandedness and fairness. I believe that with her legal qualifications and experience she would also be an excellent commissioner. When the name of Michael Abbott QC was put before the Opposition, it raised objections that despite its support for the first two it was keen to see appointed someone with extensive experience and knowledge of local government appointed and said that Michael Abbott had no such experience or knowledge.

The Opposition has always made clear that it is concerned about the way in which the Adelaide City Council is governed. So, it is important that at least one of these commissioners has a detailed knowledge of local government, of how it works and the options that might be available. Yet, the Government has put forward a lawyer whose only experience in local government that we have been able to determine is that outlined by the member for Spence. So, I am concerned about clause 7(2) which allows the Minister to remove commissioners and appoint them again.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I acknowledge some of the points made by the honourable member. I am delighted to hear her speak in support of at least two of the three commissioners and not to attack them with vitriol as the members for Spence and Giles have done.

Mr Atkinson: I supported two of the commissioners.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I wouldn't exactly say that you supported Mr Abbott. However, I accept the point made by the member for Napier. I thought she had interjected. If she assures me that she did not, I accept her word. However,

there is no doubt that an attack was made on those people by the member for Giles. I agree that the member for Napier did express concern that Mr Abbott did not have experience directly with local government, but that was the only concern expressed to me by the Opposition in relation—

Ms Hurley: It is concern enough.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: No, because I think the member for Spence has made attacks on Mr Abbott other than that he does not have any local government knowledge, and I think the honourable member would agree with that. The point is that I think we have a very balanced group. The other point that I make quite clearly to the member for Napier is that the Government is open to negotiation and discussion, whatever she wants to call it, in terms of the number of commissioners, provided that other areas of this Bill are also reopened for discussion.

Areas which have been indicated to me today are closed, but I stress to the member for Napier that, if she is concerned that the balance with three commissioners is not adequate, I am happy to sit down with her and discuss additions to the panel, as long as at the same time she is prepared to discuss other areas that at the moment are areas of disagreement between us.

Ms HURLEY: I thank the Minister for his comments; however, the Opposition wants this finalised quickly and efficiently. We have no quarrel with three commissioners. If we are to achieve that quick and efficient solution, it is probably a good number. We just want to see at least one of those commissioners with local government experience.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I will not go over all the points I have made. Having discussed the matter with all three proposed commissioners, it is my opinion that they have a wide and extensive knowledge of local government.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: A moment ago the Minister said that I had attacked these commissioners in a vitriolic manner. Will the Minister point out where that occurred and, if he cannot, will he apologise?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: In fact, the honourable member took the blame. If we go back in the debate, we find that the member for Giles acknowledged that he interjected. I do not whether it is in *Hansard*; the comment was made by way of interjection. I will read *Hansard*. In terms of vitriolic attack, I thought the words I used related to the member for Spence.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: And the member for Giles.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Well, the member for Giles was fairly strong in his comments about the commissioners.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: For the Minister's education, the member for Giles did not attack these people in a vitriolic manner or otherwise. I do not know Mr Abbott or Ms Spargo. Mr Webber would not know me. I know him to see. I would nod to him and he would probably nod back out of politeness, but he would not have a clue who I was. I am not in a position to attack the commissioners. My point is this: if there are to be commissioners, one should be a nominee of the LGA, and I do not care who that is. The member for Unley or any six members of this council would be better to do this job than Mr Webber, Ms Spargo and Mr Abbott. It is to our shame that we are not doing it.

Mr ATKINSON: Does the Minister think that Mr Abbott could be entirely objective about proposals for governance that involved diluting the influence of North Adelaide owner-occupiers in the council?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I was of the understanding that any good lawyer would be able to practise that very well indeed.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Opposition's position is this: we will not sack a council that has done nothing wrong. As far as we are concerned, if it has done nothing wrong, we will not sack it. If the people of the City of Adelaide do not like the council, in May next year they can change it. It is called democracy. It is quite a simple concept which you ought to be able to grasp. If the Government wants commissioners to look at how the city is governed, whether it is appropriate, and so on, again, I do not think anyone here could care less. Personally, I object. I believe it ought to be members of Parliament. But if it is not to be members of Parliament, I have no problem with Mr Webber and co. If there is no Local Government Association member, I have a problem. If you are to have two residents of North Adelaide on the commission—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: It makes it worse.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: If you are to have any representatives from North Adelaide, I assume that North Adelaide society-type people, but I do not know—if they are members, and I defer to the member for Spence who knows everything about everyone in North Adelaide—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Are these North Adelaide society members types, even? If so, I would like the committee expanded to five—it is not going to replace the council—if it is going to have North Adelaide residents represented, because I favour the development faction in the council. I always have. I voted for Henry—the development faction.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I do not care whether or not he is a member of the Labor Party. I did not know for a fact until I saw it in the paper that he was a member of the Labor Party; it is certainly news to me. My guess is that Henry would tiptoe through various camps; let us put it that way. That is my guess. And like a few others on the Adelaide City Council. There was no greater tiptoeer through the daisies of who he supported and who he did not than the now member for Colton, so let us not start pointing fingers at Henry.

If the North Adelaide residents are to be represented on this commission, let us have a couple of BOMA people on it too, to balance them up. There is the dilemma for the Minister. Will he have disinterested people with some expertise? If so, I have no problems with that: I support him. If he is to appoint some partisan people, he should also appoint someone from the other side. Let my side of the debate which supports the development faction be represented on this commission as well as Mr Abbott for the North Adelaide society. Let me say this again. The member for Adelaide came in here attempting to save himself a lot of trouble at the next election, and I think it is too late for that. If we had all voted for the person the member for Adelaide recommended, the North Adelaide faction would completely dominate the council. The development faction—the one that wants to get things done—would be completely stymied by the mates, relatives, friends and confessors of the member for Adelaide.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That's dead right. So, when you are attacking Henry, do not forget that he is on

your side with regard to what you want to get done in the City of Adelaide. Henry is in the development faction.

Mr Atkinson: It will get worse after next May.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That is right. I think the members of the council from the North Adelaide faction will be dumped. I will not be crying about it; I think that eventually they will go. From what I have heard from the member for Spence, North Adelaide really should be within a residential area rather than the CBD. If that turns out to be the case, that is the way it will be, and all these councillors from North Adelaide will go. But will Michael Abbott permit that? I doubt it. What on earth is the Minister doing? Michael Abbott will put all his powers of persuasion, all his money and anything else towards ensuring that the *status quo* remains or is beneficial to the North Adelaide residents.

That is precisely what you and I do not want. Not only have you not thought this through but also you do not have a clue where you are going, because you did not know what you were doing in the first place. It seemed like a good idea at the time. Nothing was happening in the Cabinet, and somebody said, 'For goodness' sake, can't somebody think of something? They did this in Perth and Phoenix, Arizona.' Big deal. Now you are in it, you should not stop digging. Do not try for the Chair as well: you are not even capable of being the Minister for Local Government Relations, let alone Chairman of Committees. Answer the question.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I will, but before I do, the one thing I want to get on the record is that the member for Spence interjected that it will be worse after May next year. That is an indictment of the Opposition if ever I heard one, because what we want to do is to ensure that it is not worse after May next year. Once again, the honourable member has come in and stated the truth. He is dead right: if we do not get this through, it will be worse after May. I will have great pleasure in presenting the diatribe just delivered by the honourable member to Mr Webber. The honourable member has said he will not be impartial or able to make judgments because he is a resident of North Adelaide. He also said that we should have someone on there from BOMA. Mr Webber will nearly die laughing when he reads that he will be anti-development. If ever a man came to this position with expertise and skills in private enterprise, he is the person.

As I said, the honourable member seems to be waffling all over the place. We addressed the business of the LGA before and I have already said that I am happy to negotiate with the Opposition as to an increase in the number of commissioners. The honourable member said that he would prefer five, and I am perfectly happy to sit down with Opposition members and discuss four or five commissioners, as long as they are prepared to discuss other changes. It was a lot of waffle at this time of the night and there is nothing more that I can say.

The CHAIRMAN: I advise the Minister that each member is allowed to speak three times for 15 minutes each time on each clause.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I understand that, but he's not saying anything.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Mr Chairman, it may be that I need your guidance.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Giles has risen three times to this clause, so he has exercised his right on this clause. While the Chair was protecting the honourable member, the Chair is limited in the extent to which it can give that protection.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I have been threatened here, Sir.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Mr Chairman, I rise on a point of order. If the honourable member feels that he has been threatened, I should like him to take a point of order, because that is nonsense. A member cannot threaten another member.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: May I comment on the point of order that has just been raised by the Minister?

The CHAIRMAN: No, the member for Giles may not.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Why not? Standing Orders allow me to. I am willing to be cooperative. Tell me why, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Standing Orders do not allow a member to speak to a point of order.

Clause passed.

Clause 8—'Validity of acts and immunity of Commissioners.'

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: We have heard the names of these commissioners and, in addition to Mr Abbott, it was pointed out to me that Mr Webber is also a ratepayer or resident of North Adelaide.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: A very recent one.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Yes, a very recent one. I commented that, if one side of the debate was being represented, perhaps the other side should be represented also. At the time I was really thinking only of Mr Abbott, but now I see it is Mr Webber. The Minister replied, 'I am going to see that Mr Webber gets a copy of the things that you have said, that you have said he cannot be impartial.' I am not sure what is the purpose of those remarks from the Minister. Does he think that I will be frightened because he shows the *Hansard* of my speech to Mr Webber? Am I supposed to quake in my shoes? I took that as a threat, but I can tell the Minister that it is a pretty hollow threat, and I assure him that Mr Webber can take my speech to bed with him every night and he can rage and rail against it, but he does not frighten me one little bit. For the Minister to let his mouth run away with him, making silly remarks like that, suggesting that Mr Webber has to know what the member for Giles is saying because, according to the Minister, it is derogatory to him, just shows what a weak Minister we have.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Once again the Committee has heard absolute nonsense from the honourable member opposite. I just want Mr Webber to be aware of the pathetic level of argument that is being put up against his appointment.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Minister just said that he wants Mr Webber to know what I said because of my pathetic arguments. That is just what you said.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I said it was the pathetic level of the arguments that have been put up against him.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That is what you said. On the previous clause that was not what you said. You said it was because I said that he could not deliberate impartially on the problems that were before him.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: You have just changed it. You ought to get your story right.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member of Giles and the Minister: neither of those exchanges was relevant in any way to clause 8.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 11 passed.

Clause 12—'Proceedings.'

Ms HURLEY: In answer to a question from the member for Reynell, the Minister made a guarantee that meetings of the commissioners would be public. Clause 12 contains provision that a decision can be carried by two votes cast at a meeting of commissioners, and also provision is made for a telephone conference to enable that vote to be made. Will the Minister expand on his earlier reassurance and say how those sorts of decisions—two votes over a telephone—can be subject to public scrutiny?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: When I answered the member for Reynell, I made quite clear that they would be bound by the rules outlined under the Local Government Act. Just as when a council meets there are certain rules it has to abide by under the Act, the same will apply to the commissioners. In relation to the telephone meetings, we can obviously have teleconferencing. If it were necessary for commissioners to meet with another commissioner who is elsewhere, I see no reason why, with speaker phones and other facilities available, the full meeting could not still be open to the public as though it were conducted with councillors.

Clause passed.

Clause 13—‘Functions and powers of commissioners.’

Ms HURLEY: I refer to clause 13(2), which provides, in part:

The commissioners will, during the period of administration, in their administration of the affairs of the City of Adelaide, have, exercise and discharge the responsibilities, rights, authorities, powers, duties and functions conferred or imposed on the members of the City of Adelaide.

Does that mean that the commissioners will be responsible for being on every board and committee that requires or includes a representative of the Adelaide City Council in the form of a councillor?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That will be a matter for the commissioners to determine.

Ms HURLEY: If the commissioners, in their wisdom, decide not to exercise those duties currently performed by councillors of the City of Adelaide, will they perform the full functions as outlined in the clause? I am concerned that over three years, which is a fairly long period, the Adelaide City Council will not have representation on a number of these committees and boards and that the committees and boards will not have the advantage of the views of the commissioner for the City of Adelaide. I point out that these commissioners are paid. The Minister says that the chief commissioner will be paid \$60 000 a year. I understand that the other commissioners will be paid \$25 000 a year.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: No, that’s not correct. Don’t believe what you read in the *Sunday Mail*.

Ms HURLEY: I would then ask the Minister what they are being paid. In any case, we have here paid commissioners performing duties that are performed—or not performed, apparently, as the case may be—on a voluntary basis by 15 city councillors at present. I know that in a throw-away line the Minister said they would be 1 000 times more efficient, but surely, on mature reflection, he must realise that often these things are purely a matter of the time people can make available, and three commissioners simply will not be able to do the work done by 15 councillors.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Again, I would point out that, whenever a council stands for re-election and a new council is appointed, the new council immediately determines which boards, committees, or whatever, representatives of council will go to. I would expect the commissioners to do

exactly the same, and I am quite confident they will do it a darned sight better.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The sum of \$3 000 a day multiplied by 365 makes rather more than the commissioners will be paid. Once again, the honourable member is showing his absolute ignorance with that interjection, which was made out of his seat.

Ms HURLEY: I feel that the Minister has not quite answered the question fully. There are a number of small boards and committees that the commissioners might think are a little unimportant when they have the greater issues of administration and governance of the City Council on their mind. I refer to meetings of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre and various committees such as that involving the Box Factory, and so on, that these people will have a difficult time covering. Did the Minister give an assurance that these committees would still have the benefit of a representative of the Adelaide City Council?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I could say that perhaps the honourable member has not read the Bill, but I am sure she has. The last two lines of clause 13(4) provide:

...or a person appointed by the Commissioners, to be the member, representative, trustee or director.

In other words, the commissioners will have the power to appoint representatives. Again, I make the point that they will handle this no differently than when a council meets, because they appoint representatives and determine which of their members will be on the board. The commission has that power, and I can see no reason whatsoever why the commission will not be even more effective in that area than the present council, which would not be hard.

Clause passed.

Clause 14 passed.

Clause 15—‘Ministerial direction.’

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I move:

Page 8, after line 27—Insert—

(3) The Commissioners must, during the period of administration, ensure that the City of Adelaide does not enter into a contract to sell or otherwise dispose of property of the City of Adelaide with a value exceeding \$100 000 unless the Commissioners have first consulted with the Minister.

(4) However, the validity of a contract within the ambit of subsection (3) is not affected by a failure to comply with that subsection.

The reason for the amendment is that concern was expressed to me by representatives and members of the Adelaide City Council that the only reason the Government was doing this was ‘so that we could get our hot little hands on the assets of the council’. I think the Lord Mayor led the charge in this area. Therefore, subclause (3) is intended to ensure protection from that occurring.

Subclause (4) is included because members of Adelaide City Council asked, ‘What happens if the council does act against the Act and the commissioners are liable? Does that mean that the contract which has been signed by an outside party will be null and void?’ It makes quite clear that the contract will still hold; it will be the members who will be liable.

Ms HURLEY: Because the commissioners are subject to the control and direction of the Minister, will the Minister make public any directions that he gives to the Adelaide city councillors? During this debate (and also during private meetings) we have constantly asked the Government what directions it wants to set for the Adelaide City Council, what

it would like to see done and what developments it would like to see happen within the Adelaide City Council. We have received fairly vague answers, and we have begun to wonder whether there is any vision or direction coming from the Government. We have not been provided with the answers. If the Government and the Minister suddenly come up with the directions that they want the Adelaide City Council to take, it would be fair if the Minister advise all of us and not just the commissioners.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: In relation to any instruction or direction given to the commissioners, of course that would be public because at the next meeting of the commission, which is like an open meeting of council, they would be required to indicate any instructions or directions that I had given and, therefore, anything like that would be public knowledge.

Ms HURLEY: In relation to proposed new subclause (4), the Minister has made it clear that the validity of any contract entered into in contravention of proposed new subclause (3) does not affect the contract itself. However, in a later clause of the Bill, if Adelaide city councillors enter into any contracts they are then personally liable for any effects of that, whereas there is apparently no sanction against the commissioners if they act against the legislation in signing a contract.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: There is a very real difference. As far as the commissioners are concerned, they will be liable if they do not follow my directions. In relation to the councillors, they would be liable if they acted without my approval. There is a difference between the two. The honourable member may not be aware, but I am moving amendments to clause 18. I had a meeting with representatives of the council who expressed concern. I indicated to them that I would be happy to change the wording of clause 18 if they could propose wording with which I was happy and which still provided the protection I was looking for. Clause 18 will be quite heavily amended when we get to it.

Ms HURLEY: I believe that the Minister said that the commissioners would have some liability if they did not follow his directions. What sort of liabilities or sanctions will they incur?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I refer the honourable member to clause 8, 'Validity of acts and immunity of Commissioners', which sets out the applicable penalties. Clause 9 imposes a fine of \$20 000 or imprisonment for four years, clause 9(2) imposes a fine of \$20 000; and clause 9(4) imposes \$20 000 or four years imprisonment. One can see—

Ms Hurley interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Once again I indicate to the honourable member that the penalties for any breach in that area would be quite severe.

Ms Hurley interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I point out that if the commissioners did not follow my directions I would, of course, be ensuring that the Governor in Executive Council was made aware of that. The Governor, of course, has the ultimate power.

Ms Hurley: To sack them?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Yes.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I move:

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

Motion carried.

Clauses 16 and 17 passed.

Clause 18—'Rates.'

Ms HURLEY: This clause provides that the City of Adelaide must obtain the approval of the Minister before it declares general rates. Given that the Minister has given the commissioners such wide powers in other areas, I wonder why he considers it necessary that the commissioners must seek the approval of the Minister before declaration of general rates and, in particular, why the Government stipulates that the City of Adelaide must maintain the scheme for differential rates? While I do not have any particular quarrel with differential rates, as such, I wonder why the Minister hobbles the commissioners by dictating in this area only what they must and must not consider?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The honourable member has asked two questions, and I am happy to answer them both. I want the commissioners to report to me to ensure that they do not go overboard in terms of any rate increases that they may be looking to impose. Secondly, the members have said to me many times that we should not be interfering with the democratically-elected council. I believe that those two areas should be left to the democratically-elected council when it resumes following the period of the commissioners. One of those two areas is the one to which the honourable member has referred, which is the differential rate.

We believe that, if there were to be a change, it should be done in terms of, if you like, an election commitment. In other words, elected councillors should have the opportunity to make that decision on behalf of the elected ratepayers. It is one area which we believe should be retained as a decision by an elected body. That is the reason for its inclusion in the Bill. It is the same reason, if the honourable member asks later, in relation to the boundaries. Again, we believe that is a matter which should be determined by an elected body which is representative of the full city and I think the honourable member would agree with me on this point that, at the moment, that elected body is not representative.

Ms HURLEY: That is exactly the point. This elected body is not properly representative of the people of the City of Adelaide and I would suggest that the boundaries of the Adelaide City Council are one of the key problems with the structure of Adelaide City Council. I would think it is fairly crucial that the commissioners look at the boundaries and, if they do not recommend changes, provide some very good reasons why not. The member for Spence has gone through some of the reasons why we might want to widen out the City of Adelaide. There are other arguments that the City of Adelaide should be the CBD only and it could have representatives appointed from areas such as education, hospital and other people who use the city and State Government without disenfranchising residents of the area. This is a crucial issue and I find it hard to believe that the Government is not letting the commissioners look at it.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: It has been proved time and time again that fiddling around with the boundaries as the honourable member puts forward will not solve the problems of the City of Adelaide; they are much deeper than that. Again, we have a boundary reform board. As I said, I believe that they are two areas which should be left to an elected body. If the honourable member does not, then she and her

colleagues in another place have every opportunity to put forward an amendment.

Ms HURLEY: I find this difficult to believe. We had the Local Government Boundary Reform Bill in relation to which I fought extremely hard to have residents have a say concerning voluntary amalgamations when the Government was insistent that its reform board do forced amalgamations, yet now the Minister is turning around and saying that, in relation to the Adelaide City Council, it has to be the elected members. Why cannot the reform board or the commissioners at least make recommendations about what should happen to the boundaries of the City of Adelaide? I find it an amazing turnaround.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I cannot believe what I have just heard because the whole idea of the Government's approach to the boundary reform is for it to be done voluntarily.

Ms HURLEY: It is now because we amended it.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Crying down the sink. As far as compulsory, as the honourable member puts it, the only time that the board will be initiating proposals is in a situation—

Ms Hurley interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The honourable member just said that the Bill did—

Ms Hurley: The original Bill.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Anyway, the point is we have an Act in place now which makes it quite clear that we are looking for voluntary amalgamations first. Again, the honourable member would know that since I have been Minister I have been fully supportive of that approach.

Mr CLARKE: My question relates to clause 18(2). Given that at least two Cabinet Ministers have residences within the City of North Adelaide, did they declare an interest in this particular piece of legislation when it came before the Cabinet and did they withdraw their chair from the Cabinet table in consideration of this section of the Bill?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: As the Deputy Leader is well aware, any meetings which occur in Cabinet are fully confidential.

Mr CLARKE: This is a very important question. Did the Minister for Health and the Minister for Transport participate in Cabinet deliberations with respect to clause 18?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Obviously, the Deputy Leader is hard of hearing. The honourable member should check with his colleagues. He has only one colleague who has ever been in Cabinet, and he will confirm what I have said. I assure the Committee that I am not referring to any members whatsoever, but the advice that I have been given in relation to the ownership of property is that if you live in your electorate—although the honourable member does not live in his—and you do all you can for your electorate, that is not a conflict of interest. As far as owning a home in an area is concerned, I understand that many members of Parliament would be in trouble if they lived in their electorate and did anything for it. That is why the advice I have been given is that that is not relevant.

Mr CLARKE: The Minister misses the point. It is not a question of whether or not the Ministers concerned live in their electorate. I am concerned that clause 18(2) confers a financial benefit on a group of people who own residential property in North Adelaide—two of whom happen to be Cabinet Ministers who sat around the Cabinet table discussing this legislation. Will the Minister assure the Committee that there was no conflict of interest in the relevant Ministers

declaring their financial interest in respect of this clause? Did they participate in the debate and the vote on this matter when it came before Cabinet?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The question is quite irrelevant, because the point is that there was no benefit whatsoever in this. All it was doing was maintaining the *status quo*.

Mr ATKINSON: Let me just run through how the residential rate rebate works.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I know how it works.

Mr ATKINSON: I do not think you do, but I will explain it for the benefit of the Committee and not only for the benefit of the Minister, solipsistic though he is in many respects.

Mr Cummins: That's not a question.

Mr ATKINSON: That is right: it is not a question. If he had been around long enough, the member for Norwood would know that Standing Orders allow each of us to speak three times on each clause of the Bill, and it does not have to end with a question. So, the honourable member has learned something about Standing Orders tonight.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Spence has the floor. He does not need to justify it to anyone.

Mr ATKINSON: At about the time of the Great War, what is now the central business district was a very important population centre; indeed, it was a State electorate all by itself. Over the period since 1918 there has been progressive depopulation of the central business district, which is a sad thing. Here is an area that provided nearly all the West Adelaide football team, many champion footballers, yet we have seen the decline of the West Adelaide Football Club go almost parallel with the decline in population of the central business district. That decline has been going on almost continuously since 1918.

In order to reverse that, the Adelaide City Council did a very smart thing. It introduced a residential rate rebate, so that, if you moved into the central business district and you braved the crowds, the noise, the traffic, the fumes and all the things that detract from residential amenity in the central business district, you were entitled to a 45 per cent rebate on your rates.

Mr Foley: Outrageous!

Mr ATKINSON: No, it is not outrageous at all; I disagree with the member for Hart. I think it was a good policy for the central business district. But, astonishingly, this was extended to North Adelaide, where none of the privations of living in the central business district were to be found. In fact, North Adelaide is like Mira Monte, a secluded housing estate. It is a beautiful place and you need no incentive whatever to live there. So, I would have thought that one of the issues that commissioners should look at is how North Adelaide battens off the wealth generated by the central business district and uses those rates raised by people in the suburbs—working, shopping and playing in the city—to give themselves a rate discount. If you live in the City of Marion and own a \$180 000 house, you pay about \$950 in rates, but if you live in North Adelaide in a house of the same value you pay only \$523 in rates. There are larger rebates from which Mr Abbott, the Minister for Health and the Minister for Transport are benefitting.

I think the questions that the Deputy Leader asked are relevant and should have been answered. I take the view that the question of the rate rebate for North Adelaide and North Adelaide only is something the commissioners should look at. It is an important element of fiscal justice in local

government, yet here we have a Government with two North Adelaide residents in its ranks inserting clause 18, which prevents the commissioners looking at that question. Why should not the commissioners look at that question?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I have already answered that question.

Clause passed.

New clause 18A—'Approval by Minister does not give rise to liability.'

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I move:

Page 11, after line 8—Insert new clause as follows:

18A. No liability attaches to the Minister or the Crown in right of the State on account of an approval given by the Minister under this Act, or in contemplation of a provision of this Act coming into operation.

New clause inserted.

Remaining clauses (19 and 20) passed.

Schedule 1—'Ministerial approvals required after announcement.'

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I move:

Page 12—

After line 4—Insert—

'asset' means anything that must be treated as an asset for the purposes of the Local Government Accounting Regulations 1993;.

Line 5—After 'a lease' insert 'but does not include a lease entered into as a result of the exercise of a right or option to renew a lease entered into before the commencement of the relevant period'.

Line 9—Leave out 'If' and insert 'Subject to this clause, if'.

Lines 10 to 15—Leave out paragraphs (a) and (b) and insert new paragraphs as follows:

(a) enters into a contract (including a contract for the provision of professional services)—

(i) the terms of which require (either unconditionally or subject to specified conditions) the City of Adelaide to make a payment exceeding \$100 000, or payments exceeding \$100 000 in total; or

(ii) the terms of which entitle the City of Adelaide to receive a payment exceeding \$100 000, or payments exceeding \$100 000 in total, on account of the disposal by the City of Adelaide of an asset of the City of Adelaide; or

(b) enters into a lease under which the rent payable by the lessee in any period of 12 months exceeds \$100 000,.

After line 16—Insert new subclauses as follows:

(1a) However, subclause (1) does not apply to—

(a) a contract or lease entered into by the City of Adelaide to give effect to any expenditure or revenue measure approved under the 1996-97 budget for the City of Adelaide adopted by the City of Adelaide under section 159(3) of the Local Government Act 1934 by resolution of the City of Adelaide on 3 July 1996; or

(b) a lease approved by a meeting of electors under section 457(4) of the Local Government Act 1934; or

(c) a contract or lease of a kind excluded from the operation of this schedule by the Minister (on conditions, if any, determined by the Minister).

(1b) An approval granted by the Minister for the purposes of this schedule has no effect unless the City of Adelaide had, before submitting the relevant contract or lease to the Minister for approval, resolved that it would, subject to the approval of the Minister, enter into the contract or lease.

Amendments carried.

Ms HURLEY: The schedule provides that the Minister may recover the whole of the amount of the liability as debt from the persons who were members of the Adelaide City Council at the time. I know that these amendments insert provisions which do not make that quite as draconian, but I wonder why the Minister has found it necessary to make City of Adelaide councillors personally liable for any decisions that they have made as part of the City of Adelaide.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That is there purely and simply to ensure that during the period between which the announcement was made that the Government was moving this Bill and the time it was implemented the council did not take the opportunity to undertake actions which would not be in the interests of the City of Adelaide. I think that some of the actions of the council subsequent to my announcement indicate just how important this clause is. What they have done—and a lot of ratepayers are very angry about this—is spend a large amount of money on letterboxing and writing letters and postage, putting forward their arguments as to why this should not happen. The point is that the council's actions in wasting that money are exactly the reason for the clause being there.

Ms HURLEY: Then I wonder whether the Minister is going to try to recover that amount of money from the councillors for the postage and letterboxing.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The answer to that question is that it is not over \$100 000.

Schedule as amended passed.

Schedule 2—'Objectives for the new governance of the City of Adelaide.'

Ms HURLEY: The objectives for the new governance of the Adelaide City Council talk about fairly worthy objectives that are reminiscent of the Adelaide 21 Partnership language. I do not think there is necessarily any particular quarrel with them, but they are fairly broad objectives. I wonder whether they are really talking about the governance of the City of Adelaide when they do not mention crucial issues such as boundaries, the property franchise, and so on. In fact, I think in the second reading explanation the Minister talked about the objectives needing to be effectiveness, accountability, equity and voting methodology, yet the objectives for the new governance do not include anything about voting methodology or property franchise; nor do they mention the boundaries or say that the city is home to ordinary people. It talks a great deal about reaching out to the rest of the world and to the Asian region, and we all applaud that. However, I think it also needs to reach out to ordinary people in our community who shop or work or have their recreation there, as well as to the many community and social welfare groups that have their home in the city and work out of the city. Would the Minister explain the rationale behind such broad objectives and explain why those key issues are not included in the objectives.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: For goodness sake, the Bill precludes the commissioners from considering the two issues to which the honourable member refers, so how could they be part of the schedule?

Ms HURLEY: I do not think the Bill does exclude consideration of the property franchise or voting methodology; I do not think it excludes consideration of groups that use the city to shop or work; and I do not think it excludes consideration of groups that use the Adelaide City Council as the centre for their social welfare or community activities.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Unless I misunderstood her, the honourable member talked previously about boundaries. That matter is obviously precluded. The issues raised just now by the honourable member in my opinion are included in this schedule.

Ms HURLEY: I realise that it is getting a bit late, but can the Minister point out where voting methodology is included in the objectives for governance? The Minister has said often that the current Adelaide City Council lacks leadership and direction. We have been given this vague set of promises that

are almost impossible to measure. At the end of the three years, how will we measure whether the City of Adelaide represents and projects the cultural and economic life of Adelaide and South Australia? According to the Minister, we are looking for a bit of leadership and direction. There is not much hard direction in this set of promises.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Again, I think the honourable member misunderstands what these objectives are. These are the objectives. What she is talking about is the means by which the objectives will be achieved. The means by which the objectives will be achieved is exactly why we are appointing the commissioners: that is what they will determine.

Schedule passed.

Schedule 3 and title passed.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Ms HURLEY (Napier): Government members who have participated in this debate have all expressed their reluctance to vote for this Bill. More in sorrow than in anger they say that they are forced to the conclusion that they must support it. It is a very weak proposition from Government members to support a very weak Bill. We hoped for some answers in the Committee stage that would give us some idea of what the Government sees as the problems and what it sees as answers. What we got was the Minister, to use his word, being vitriolic about not only members of the Opposition but also Adelaide city councillors.

On that basis, the Minister expects us to support his position. We waited in vain for some facts to support the Minister's statement, but none was forthcoming. There were some interesting anecdotes from the member for Adelaide regarding his dealings with the Lord Mayor, and there was some interesting potted history from the member for Colton about the heritage debates of some years ago, but there was still no answer to the fundamental question: what is the Adelaide City Council doing so wrong that it must be sacked while these commissioners move in for three years and do their work?

The Minister cited interstate examples. I acknowledge that a benefit can be gained by looking interstate, but it is not simply the size of the interstate cities that matters: what matters is their circumstances, whether they are financially well managed and the political situation at the time. The Minister has not provided good answers as to why the Adelaide City Council needs to be sacked. The Adelaide City Council has operated continuously and has had a fine record over the years. We all acknowledge the apparent problems. The Opposition has acknowledged that and has offered to work in a bipartisan way with the Government. The Government says that, if we give in entirely and allow the City Council to be sacked for whatever period of time, it will negotiate on the number of commissioners. The Government went ahead and announced the commissioners while not negotiating seriously with the Opposition as to the commissioners. It has appointed people who, despite the Minister's protestations, I do not believe have the requisite weighting of people with local government experience.

I was not convinced by the Government's position during this debate, and I signal that we will move amendments to this Bill. We recognise that our numbers are such in this place

that the Bill will probably proceed to the Legislative Council. We will use that opportunity to introduce amendments, but we have no other choice at this stage but to oppose the Government's Bill. The fact that the Minister had to resort to such abuse of the volunteer councillors on the Adelaide City Council and the way that he attacked the Opposition indicates that he feels the lack of facts in his case. The Minister is not able to argue cogently and coherently as to what direction his Government sees the Adelaide City Council taking, except to say vaguely that it has worked in other places. Perhaps it has worked because New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia have booming economies where people want to start developments. Maybe those booming economies are partly due to the efforts of the Governments of those States.

But we go back to where we started. The Government and the Premier are using the Adelaide City Council as a whipping horse and blaming it for the lack of development in the city and for nothing happening when the constant criticism that the Opposition hears—and I am sure members of the Government hear—around this State is that nothing is happening in South Australia. Yet this Government is putting pressure on the Opposition to agree to something that is fundamentally wrong and anti-democratic in order to give support to the idea that it has a strong Premier who would lead the State forward if only the Adelaide City Council fell in behind him. That is not so, and the Opposition is not about to abandon its principles for such a flimsy excuse.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): The Minister quoted my remarks on radio 5AN not so long ago supporting root and branch reform of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide. I am happy for the Minister to make that quotation, because I stand by my belief that the Corporation of the City of Adelaide needs to be fundamentally changed. It needs to be changed not in 1999; it needs to be changed soon. We found out from the Committee stage that the Minister is not allowing the commissioners to look at the question of boundaries. The problem with the Adelaide City Council is that it is a rotten borough; that is its problem. It is a tiny municipality in which there is a serious political imbalance. The councillors who are elected to this rotten borough are not acting in the interests of South Australia as a whole. The Minister and I agree on that. The reason they are not ruling the City of Adelaide in the interests of South Australia as a whole is structural. It is a structural problem. If it were not a rotten borough but a normal municipality with a normal political balance between residents, industry and commerce, we would not have these problems.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: There are many examples, for the member for Hartley. For instance, a normal municipal council would not have blocked for years—until Government legislation broke the deadlock—the development on O'Connell Street known as the Le Cornu site. For years the North Adelaide snob faction prevented the development of the Le Cornu site, one of the most valuable retail sites in the City of Adelaide, until Parliament—this elected body—had to intervene with special legislation to make sure that that site was developed. That is the kind of anti-development attitude to which the Minister was referring.

Boundaries are of the first importance, yet the Minister will not allow the commissioners to report on them. At the end of three years, in 1999, they will come back and recommend changes to the Adelaide City Council but they will not involve any change in the size or the composition of the

electorate. Why not? Mr Deputy Speaker, let me tell you why not. The drama that is being played out here today in this Chamber is a conflict between the Government and the Opposition over the rather minor and trivial question of sacking. That is not the real conflict. The real political conflict here is between the member for Adelaide (the Minister for Health) and the Minister for Transport on the one side as North Adelaide residents trying to maintain their factional advantage and their rate rebate and on the other side all the rest of us, because in fact all of us ought to be on the same side about this. All of us have an interest in reforming the City of Adelaide. I did not come across this idea just recently. I went back to 1992 and, in the debate on the Local Government Bill then, this is what I had to say

Adelaide City Council is not just any council: it has a special place in the metropolitan area.

I went on to say:

What I am in favour of is the amalgamation of the City of Adelaide with neighbouring councils, including the Town of Hindmarsh.

I further said:

We should consider not only residents in the Adelaide City Council but also ratepayers, because the vast majority of Adelaide City Council's rate revenue is paid by people who do not live in the City of Adelaide. That is not so for other municipalities in the State.

The point I was trying to make is that Adelaide City Council is special and that we have to come up with a method of reforming it. I hold out a hand of bipartisanship to this Minister and this Government—and I am sure the Labor Party does the same—to change together, forever, the government of the City of Adelaide so that it will act in the interests of the whole metropolitan area and the whole of the State. We agree. Will this Minister and the Premier have the political guts to tell the member for Adelaide and his sister-in-law the Minister for Transport that it is not their interests that are uppermost in this Chamber—it is the interests of the whole State? Act for the whole State, reform the council root and branch, and we will support the Government the whole way.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I find it very difficult to add to what the member for Spence said. I agree with him almost completely, with the exception of his remark about the relatively trivial matter of sacking the council. I happen to think that sacking a democratically elected body is always something to be taken seriously and is not so trivial. Apart from that, the member for Spence spoke for me and I am sure that he spoke for most, if not all, of the Opposition.

I am disappointed with the Bill that came out of Committee. I was hoping that the Minister would have shown a little bit of leadership, vision and initiative and accepted some of the suggestions that were proffered by the Opposition in good faith. A Minister who was sure of himself and had some confidence in the actions that he was taking would have been able to make something out of this Bill; but, no, the Bill came out of Committee substantially in the same shape as it went in.

There is no question that two of the qualifications in the Bill, which were mentioned in the Committee stage by the member for Napier and others, concerned the rate rebate not being interfered with and no change to the boundaries during the period of these commissioners. That seems to be extraordinary. The rate rebate question is neither here nor there, but the boundaries question is fundamental to what happens with the government of the city of Adelaide. The reason those

two things were not touched was the powerful forces within the Cabinet—

Mr Foley: Don Laidlaw, too, I heard.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Would he ever! Don would show them who is boss. Powerful forces in the Cabinet, in North Adelaide and in the south-east corner of the city of Adelaide made it clear to the Government that, if it wanted to play around with a sudden burst of testosterone, and with a hairy chest for the Premier, it could do so by all means, as long as it did not actually do anything, because, if it did anything that would significantly affect them, they would slap the Government down.

As a matter of fact, I am not quite sure what the North Adelaide members of council are worried about. If Michael Abbott is there, there will not be much change that affects North Adelaide. North Adelaide ratepayers or residents can sleep soundly at night. Michael Abbott will see that they are definitely not interfered with too much. It would flatter the Minister to say that he made out a case in the Committee stage for the various clauses, because all he did was engage in abuse of the Opposition.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Vitriolic abuse is the description that comes to mind. Apart from two very weak efforts from members behind the Minister and what I call a thoughtful contribution from the member for Colton, everybody behind the Minister knows that this is a disgrace. All our councils have been onto them to tell them. I have correspondence from my council, the Whyalla City Council, and the Franklin Harbor Council in my electorate.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Exactly! They have made clear to me what they think of the undemocratic actions of this Government. As I said, I am disappointed that after the second reading the Minister did not refer this Bill to a select committee of this House or a joint select committee. The Minister would have had a majority on that select committee, and he could have been assured that the members on the select committee from this side of the House would have approached the matter with a completely open mind—other than the member for Spence. From his observations, it is clear that he does not have an open mind on this issue. He wants to go even further than the Premier, but he will not be a party to sacking a group of people who have done—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That's right—absolutely nothing wrong. There is plenty of goodwill in the Parliament to have a look at the Adelaide City Council. It is a pity that the Bill has come out of Committee in the way it has. It gives the Legislative Council no option but to remove the really offensive part of the Bill—the sacking of a group of people who have done nothing wrong. That provision is still in the Bill as it leaves here, and that is how the Bill will arrive in the Legislative Council. I hope that a majority in the Legislative Council, be they Labor, Democrat or Liberal—including the Hon. Jamie Irwin (and they are all honourable, thoroughly decent people)—will not have a bar of this.

All the shame-faced people behind the Minister in the Liberal Party are quite correct in what they have told members on this side of the House. We can only agree. Remove the provision regarding the sacking of the council and we will cooperate with you and with the commissioners. There is absolutely no need for it to take three years; it can take three months. New legislation can be drafted, if required, to sort it out long before the new election in May. That is

what everybody on this side of the House has been saying: do not attempt to sack people who have done nothing wrong.

Mr BECKER (Peake): This is not the finest day of the Opposition. As a matter of fact, it is typical. I have been listening to the most pathetic debate I have ever heard. The Opposition has misrepresented the facts, totally misunderstood the legislation and is not the slightest bit interested in what is in the legislation. All it has done all day and evening is misrepresent the facts. Because it is not the Opposition's idea, because it did not think of it, it took the attitude that nobody else would succeed. I have always proudly boasted that Adelaide is Australia's most beautiful city, and so it is. We all should be proud of Adelaide, the capital city of our State. It is about time we took a greater interest in the affairs of the city, as most of us want to do. Who was it that said this State needed light and vision? John Bannon. Here is the Opposition's chance to do something for its city and its State, and to be proud of what is going on in this State.

This city needs revitalising. Let us take it into the twenty-first century, because that is what it is all about. Members opposite have totally ignored Adelaide 2000 and misrepresented the facts, and it has been a quite pathetic performance. I commend the Minister. I feel sorry for him to have had to put up with the nonsense he has had to put up with here today. All we have ever heard from the member for Spence is Barton Terrace. He is too damn lazy to ride up the hill; that is what that is all about. He goes on about the snobs at North Adelaide, but he has not named too many of them. I know several who live there and who work in the western suburbs, and they are not complaining.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BECKER: Well, the person concerned will be in here tomorrow, and he will have a chance to have a talk to you. But that is absolute garbage. That is not what it is all about, anyway. It is about revitalising the city. It is about giving the developers an opportunity for redevelopment of the City of Adelaide. What about the East End Market redevelopment? How much money did the Labor Government lose over that? Was it \$38 million that the State Bank threw away? That is another of Bannon's light and vision policies for the City of Adelaide.

What are you doing to help developers like Gerry Karidis? He is one of the people prepared to put up his money to develop the city and do something for South Australia. There are others, including the Weinerts who built part of the Central Market—people who really want to do something for the City of Adelaide but who are not being given a fair go. I commend the Minister. I give him full credit and all power to him to push on with this issue. And if we have to go to a double dissolution, I am with him all the way!

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I thank the member for Peake for his contribution, and I fully understand why he feels so angry and upset, having had to sit over there, as I have had to do, and listen to the points put forward. I think members opposite would make excellent candidates for the City of Adelaide because they just do not understand what is needed as far as the future governance of this city is concerned. That is the problem with the current elected council.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: If you had been in here you would have heard me say, *ad infinitum*, that there are two

things lacking with this council: leadership and a vision for the City of Adelaide. Until we can change the governance, we will not be able to get anything. As I said, we made that point time and time again during debate, and it just has not sunk in. It really does worry me that we have a City Council that cannot see what it is doing wrong. Then we have an Opposition that cannot see what the City of Adelaide is doing wrong, and they are perfectly happy for the city to continue just as it is. We heard the word 'bipartisan' used: obviously what the Opposition means by that is, 'Do it our way and we will agree with you.' The Opposition says that we did not negotiate seriously. I put this debate back a week so that we could continue the negotiations and discussions—

Ms Hurley interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am glad to hear that interjection, because I can assure the honourable member that those names were there well and truly. She knows that I was discussing the names with her and her Leader for a long time trying to reach an agreement. The nonsense that was brought up about the economy was an absolute red herring, because it is well known that the leadership we are looking for in the City of Adelaide just is not there. Nothing is happening.

We talked again about the fact that we will have to wait until 1999. I have told Opposition members that I am happy to sit and talk with them about the number of commissioners and about the timing, yet they totally ignore that offer. I covered during the Committee stage the issues concerning boundaries and rates, so I will not go into those again.

I was also accused at the end that I did not agree to any changes. I would ask members, 'How on earth could I consider any changes to my Bill when not one amendment was put forward for me to consider?' Here they are accusing me that I will not make any changes. Not one amendment was moved by the Opposition during the whole debate.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: For goodness sake, here they are arguing that I did not make any changes and they did not make one suggestion. The Opposition did not bring forward any amendments for me to consider. The big change I made to the Bill was put forward by members of the City Council who expressed concerns when they met with me, and I said, 'Right, I understand where you are coming from. If you can come up with words that are acceptable in terms of providing the protection I am looking for, and with which you are happy, I will insert them,' and that is exactly what I did. At least in that area the councillors did come back and put forward some suggestions. The Opposition did not make one.

I believe that is because members opposite know that deep down what I am trying to achieve for this city is right. I can only hope that following consideration of this Bill by the other place it will become legislation and the Government will be able to see steps being taken to set the City of Adelaide in the right direction.

The House divided on the third reading:

AYES (30)

Allison, H.	Andrew, K. A.
Armitage, M. H.	Ashenden, E. S. (teller)
Baker, D. S.	Baker, S. J.
Bass, R. P.	Becker, H.
Brindal, M. K.	Brokenshire, R. L.
Brown, D. C.	Buckby, M. R.
Caudell, C. J.	Condous, S. G.
Cummins, J. G.	Evans, I. F.
Greig, J. M.	Hall, J. L.
Ingerson, G. A.	Kerin, R. G.

AYES (cont.)

Leggett, S. R. Matthew, W. A.
Meier, E. J. Oswald, J. K. G.
Penfold, E. M. Rossi, J. P.
Scalzi, G. Venning, I. H.
Wade, D. E. Wotton, D. C.

NOES (10)

Atkinson, M. J. Blevins, F. T.
Clarke, R. D. Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K. Hurley, A. K. (teller)
Quirke, J. A. Rann, M. D.
Stevens, L. White, P. L.

PAIRS

Olsen, J. W. De Laine, M. R.
Majority of 20 for the Ayes.
Third reading thus carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday
23 October at 2 p.m.