

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 25 February 1997

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

FLOODS

The **Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. J.W. OLSEN**: As I reported to Parliament two weeks ago, tropical rains and thunderstorms over the past weeks have caused severe flooding in the Far North and flash floods in the mid north-east of the State. The areas affected range from Mount Dare, on the Northern Territory border, south-east through Oodnadatta, Anna Creek, Maree and Hawker through to Yunta and Olary on the Barrier Highway. There have been no deaths or serious injuries. However, people in the Far North were evacuated during the floods and 213 people were evacuated from the Indian Pacific near Olary. Many properties have been devastated, including a small number of families who have lost most of their household and personal possessions.

Over the past two weeks the South Australian Farmers Federation in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Primary Industries SA have conducted a survey to assess the extent of flood damage to farm properties across the State. In addition, an information telephone 1800 hotline was organised and 87 properties across a wide area of northern South Australia have provided responses. More information is still coming in to provide a complete picture of the extent of the damage.

This information is based on estimates, but it does give a good indication of the extent of the damage. Preliminary figures indicate that:

- 682 kilometres of fencing requires replacement at an estimated value for materials only of \$1.023 million.
- 1 490 kilometres require repairs with an estimated value of \$745 000.
- There has also been extensive damage to floodways.
- 30 kilometres of pipelines need replacing and 60 kilometres need repairing, at a cost of about \$73 500.
- Internal roads and tracks have also suffered significant damage, with over 1 400 kilometres requiring repairs.
- 55 bores and/or wells require repairs.
- 39 sets of sheep and/or cattle yards have been damaged.
- In terms of stock losses, overall figures indicate the loss of at least 8 200 sheep and 35 cattle.
- Estimated repairs to accommodation total \$45 000 and \$23 000 for shearing sheds so far.
- Early indications show that at least 26 kilometres of the dog fence is in need of replacement or repair as a result of the floods, with an estimated cost for materials and labour of \$151 000.

The damage to the unsealed roads network has been considerable and it is estimated that it will take at least six months to repair the damage. In some instances sections of the existing station access routes will have to be abandoned as it will be several years before they can be reinstated to their current routes. The damage to the sealed road network was limited to scour damage of roadside shoulders and

damage in the vicinity of bridge and culverts. The most serious damage was on the Barrier Highway where an embankment behind a bridge abutment was completely washed away.

The damage estimates are as follows: sealed network, \$3.1 million; unsealed network, \$2.8 million; total to date, \$5.9 million. The Barrier Highway has been repaired and is open to all traffic. The Department of Transport has 21 grader patrols deployed throughout the flood affected areas. Their priority is to restore a basic level of access to all homesteads (initially four-wheel drive), to allow for resupply before embarking on the longer term restoration. It is anticipated that most homesteads will have a basic level of access (four-wheel drive) by 28 February. Two thirds of all reported damage occurred in the Barrier Highway area.

The current estimated total cost of all major damage reported by primary producers amounts to \$3 021 800. Meetings have been held in affected areas, and Family and Community Services at Port Augusta has arranged for the Peterborough mental health nurse and community nurse to work as a team and support discussing their individual situations and needs. In addition, information is being forwarded to properties identifying counselling and support services available.

Generally, health issues have been considered. Action has been taken in regard to mosquito control. The Australian Defence Force, at the SA Government's request, has undertaken an exercise to reduce mosquito nuisance at Oodnadatta. Advice on preventive measures has been distributed to properties in the affected area.

Australian National reports that it has as many contractors as possible in the area working on the railway line. More than half of the contractors are private. Repairs are progressing on target and the whole line may be reopened within three weeks. The Indian Pacific, previously stranded, may be able to return to Adelaide by Saturday. Pasmenco's supplies are at present being freighted by road from Broken Hill to Mannahill where they are loaded onto trains and railed to Port Pirie. AN has ensured that the line from Mannahill to Port Pirie was reopened by building a deviation around the most damaged bridge.

With respect to assistance schemes, many people in the country are reluctant to request financial assistance for day-to-day living. The majority of questions about assistance have been about long term financing assistance. The Government provides support for families and individuals to obtain essential personal needs and household essentials. This includes emergency grants, temporary living grants and a re-establishment grant.

As to financial assistance for infrastructure, that is primary producers and small business, this Government has decided that the use of grants is the most direct, appropriate and effective mechanism to provide assistance. The flooding has been declared an 'eligible disaster' under the National Disaster Relief Arrangements. This means that assistance will be provided to primary producers and small businesses through a 75 per cent interest rate subsidy for up to three years on new borrowings related to flood damaged property. New borrowings must be taken out prior to 30 December 1998.

In addition, a replacement building has been promised and is being sourced for the Royal Flying Doctor Service's regular clinic at Wiawera Station. This has been welcomed in a letter received yesterday from the Broken Hill section of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The Government is also

matching funds raised in flood appeals on a dollar for dollar basis. This includes a fundraising appeal launched by Ian Doyle of the ABC, which has commitments of \$52 000 so far, and a locally well-supported fundraiser event at Mannahill which I understand has raised approximately \$18 000.

In summary, the State Government will continue to monitor the situation and difficulties arising in the northern areas as a direct result of the recent flooding. In some cases, I am advised that property owners have not been able to fully assess their losses as much of the area remains inaccessible or still remains under water. To those affected by the floods, I commend the strength of character and commitment to accept their circumstances and simply get on with the job. The State Government is endeavouring to provide support where it is needed.

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 28 and 32.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Rates and Land Tax Remission Act—Regulations—
Amounts of Remission

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

South Australian Harness Racing Authority—Report,
1995-96

South Australian Thoroughbred Racing Authority—
Report, 1995-96

Racing Act—Rules—Racing Industry Development
Authority—Variations

By the Treasurer (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Liquor Licensing Act—Regulations—Dry Areas—
Barmera

By the Minister for Housing and Urban Development
(Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Development Act—Regulations—Marion Regional Centre

By the Minister for Industrial Affairs (Hon. D.C.
Brown)—

Harbors and Navigation Act—Regulations—Swan Reach

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. E.S.
Ashenden)—

District Council—By-Laws—Renmark Paringa—

No. 1—Permits and Penalties

No. 2—Dogs

No. 4—Streets

No. 5—Cemeteries

No. 6—Taxis

No. 7—Lock 5 Marina

No. 8—Park Lands

No. 9—Bees

No. 10—Moveable Signs

No. 11—Garbage Containers

No. 12—Libraries

Public Parks Act—Report—Disposal of Park Land—
Simcock Street West Beach and at the Henley Oval
Annexe

By the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. R.G.
Kerin)—

Regulations under the following Acts—

Branding of Pigs—Fees

Fisheries—Fishery Management Committees.

GROUP 4

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Correctional Services): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: In May last year, the Public Service Association challenged the legality of Government contracts with Group 4, which manages the Mount Gambier Prison. I am pleased to report that the PSA challenge was dismissed by the full bench of the Supreme Court last Friday. As most members would be aware, Group 4 Correction Services has been managing Mount Gambier Prison since 1995, and last December it also won the contract to transport prisoners around the State and manage them in most courts. The challenge by the PSA not only failed but the court also awarded all costs against the union. The judgment supported the defence that the contracts were lawful and that all staff members had been appointed officers of the Crown by the Governor. The PSA now faces a sizeable bill for proceeding with this action.

Since the first moment that the Government announced its intentions to outsource the management of Mount Gambier Prison we have heard nothing but criticism and allegations from the PSA, the Opposition and the Australian Democrats, which have waged a constant campaign of malicious misinformation. This Supreme Court decision vindicates the exhaustive processes undertaken to ensure that the outsourcing of Mount Gambier Prison and the movement of prisoners in South Australia resulted in proper and lawful contracts. I trust that all the detractors accept the umpire's decision and now let the prison management get on with the job it has been contracted to do, and doing it very well.

QUESTION TIME

JOHN MARTIN RETAILERS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Given the threat to the employment of 550 John Martin Rundle Mall staff, what action or negotiation—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: They don't care about them. These are workers, you know, with families.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: With your protection, Sir, I will repeat the question.

Mr Matthew interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.D. RANN: They don't care.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I would like to hear something positive, if I could have your protection, Mr Speaker, to ask the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has the call. He is entitled to be heard in silence.

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections on my right. It is obvious that I will need to make an example of someone in a moment.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Given the threat to the employment of 550 John Martin staff in the Rundle Mall store—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: And it could be the member for Custance.

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—what action or negotiation is the Government pursuing with David Jones executives to minimise redundancies, to assist staff with retraining, and to ensure that staff are given priority in respect of the filling of vacant positions within the David Jones group or the proposed new development?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Here we go again. This Opposition will not countenance any good news at all for South Australia. What we are seeing—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: What I care about is the creation of 1 000 permanent jobs on site post this development and the 2 000 jobs that will be created during its construction stage. That is what we are concerned about. The company has already indicated in circulars to staff that priority will be given. Everything that the Leader has posed in his question is contained in the communications and the verbal presentation that have already been given to staff members. The Leader could not even construct a new or different question. He is relying on the communications in a variety of forms from the company to staff at John Martin.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has been given a fair go.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: This Opposition will not countenance rebuilding confidence in South Australia. And we know why that is: it is because confidence equals expenditure, and expenditure equals the creation of jobs. In this election year—and I will come to that in a moment—the Opposition wants to put down every new investment. It does not want prosperity, hope, certainty and confidence to be rebuilt in South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Just look at the track record of members opposite. The Housing Industry Association recently published figures which indicate that housing approvals increased by 57 per cent in January. There is also some good movement in the unemployment figures that were released a week or two ago. There is more needed, but it is a pointer in the right direction. We are starting to attract new investment. City West today opened the largest single capital investment in this city for a number of years. We have received a commitment from a company to spend \$300 million, and that will create permanent construction jobs. But what does this Opposition want to do? It wants to pull all that down, to look at the negative, to carp, criticise and yap. The yapping dog is at it again. It wants to nip away at any renewal of confidence in South Australia.

For some time, members opposite have attempted to destroy confidence in South Australia. They have disclosed commercial in confidence material before a committee. Why did they do that? Why have they relentlessly pursued the recalling of witnesses before select committees of the Parliament? I will tell the House what this is about: it is designed to dissuade people from thinking that South Australia is a good investment location. They want to dry up investment dollars and job prospects for South Australia. Let me say to the public of South Australia: it does not matter

what members opposite say. Their carping, negative criticism will be disregarded, and we will get on with the job of rebuilding the economy of South Australia. How much reliability can you put in the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr Venning: None.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Exactly, because it was the Leader of the Opposition who went to a fundraiser at Haddington House, MacPherson Street, Clapham and the notice that went out stated, 'Come along and hear the State Labor Leader, Mike Rann, talk. (He'll give a response to the announcement of the next election.)' This was last Sunday. He actually put out a flier. If people are talking about election speculation, there is one person who is fuelling this speculation and it is the Leader of the Opposition. Every Sunday the Leader of the Opposition goes out and says, 'They are about to announce an election.' I have news for him. One day this year he will get the date right but in the meantime I give a bit of advice to the Leader of the Opposition: if he takes a Bex, has a good lie down and waits towards the end of the year, we will call on the election campaign.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Giles is normally better behaved than that. Both sides have had the opportunity to clear their lungs. I point out that members have the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered, otherwise I might have to make a couple of examples.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr WADE (Elder): Will the Premier report to the House on small business confidence as a result of today's release of the Yellow Pages small business index for South Australia?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am delighted to respond to the member for Elder's question. Here is another indicator that we are rebuilding confidence in South Australia and moving in the right direction. The policies of the past three years in fixing up Labor's mess and that debt it left—we did not create it but we accept responsibility to clean it up—suggest that we are on track to clean it up. We will maintain the integrity of the budget and clean up the mess that Labor left for us, but in the process structuring the economy so that, when a recovery takes place, it is a sustainable recovery for South Australia in the future.

I mentioned a moment ago some of the indicators that are good signposts to economic recovery in South Australia. The release today of the Yellow Pages index for small business is another signpost pointing in the right direction, encouraged by a degree of lift in confidence in the small business sector in South Australia. I hasten to add that is encouraging, but we have much more to do to revitalise and rejuvenate the economy as we would want in South Australia. But we are going in the right direction. The HIA and unemployment figures reinforce that economically there is confidence in the Government and some of the policies we are putting in place, and it indicates that there is change ahead. We need to be cautious. There is always more to be done to lift an economy and we acknowledge—and I certainly acknowledge—that more must be done. To have a significant percentage of small business proprietors establishing greater confidence and greater prospects in the future underpins the creation of jobs. The engine room of the economy is small to medium business. Small businesses in South Australia are the engine room. If they are developing confidence and you dovetail that with our youth employment strategy of reducing the cost of employing a school leaver of last year, or someone who has

been unemployed for two months, the foundation is laid upon which we can build a better economy for South Australia.

I repeat that it does not matter what the Opposition says: it is irrelevant to this because, despite the fact that the Opposition keeps calling on an election, it is not prepared to put out policies upon which it can be judged. To that extent it has not learnt any of the lessons of the 1980s, and the electorate at large will not give it a chance to have a go again.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Mawson has experienced being named and I am sure that he does not want a repeat exercise.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education advise what action the South Australian Government has taken to convince the Federal Liberal Government to reverse its funding cuts to universities in light of the University of South Australia's consideration of closure of its Underdale and Whyalla campuses? Today the Opposition received a copy of the University of South Australia's document entitled 'Corporate Planning', dated February 1997, which contains options, including the closure of its Underdale and Whyalla campuses.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I thank the honourable member for her question. Since 1994 all universities have received a per student capital grant as part of their operating grant and all universities, including the University of SA, have a capital development plan that is constantly updated. The University of South Australia has been planning the staged development of City West for several years and, as part of the same capital planning process, made the decision to close Salisbury campus several years ago. I believe that the Leader of the Opposition was on that council at the time.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: As the Federal Labor Government was also in power at the time, it is a shame the Opposition Leader did not have much sway with the Federal Labor Government. The campus was closed. In answer to the honourable member's question, I suggest that she would be well aware that the decisions made within these areas are made strictly by the universities themselves. The administrations of the universities will decide the staged developments they wish to plan upon and will also decide what facilities and resources are required in South Australia. It is entirely up to the administrations of those universities.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the Deputy Leader will not be here to do anything.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: If the member for Taylor, having asked a question, listened to the completion of the answer, she might have a better indication. I advise this House and the member for Taylor that at this time I have not received any indication whatsoever from the universities that any other facilities are to be closed.

Ms White interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Taylor.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Obviously, it is of concern to all members in this House and to all South Australians when we lose facilities, but I am prepared, as we all are, to have discussions with the universities. I can only reiterate that at this stage there has been no indication of any intention to close the universities.

CITY WEST CAMPUS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Premier advise the House what changes the City West campus will bring to the City of Adelaide following its opening today?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The opening of the City West campus is another positive step forward for South Australia, the CBD and education in South Australia. It is part of putting the infrastructure in place so that over the next 10 or 15 years we can establish ourselves as the education city within Australia. The amount of work that has been undertaken by the three universities to attract overseas fee-paying students is an absolute credit to it. Some 1 000 students at the University of South Australia are now overseas fee-paying students and that is the right direction for us to be pursuing. It is a matter of marketing our credentials. The opening of City West gives us a further basis upon which to market the credentials of South Australia as a university or a learning city. Indeed, the general safety of the city, the way in which people can move around the city and the relatively low cost of housing in the city all add up to a conducive investment for young people, particularly people from the Asia-Pacific region, to come here to study.

This is an important week for the architect, Guy Maron. He not only saw City West opened but on Thursday he will see another of his icons opened. I might point out that after 14 years of inaction by a moribund Labor Government we will actually have something at Mount Lofty. For 10 years this Labor Opposition had a chance to do something about it, but could not move it or deliver it. Over the past couple of years it has taken a Liberal Government to bring about the change.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Just because the member for Hart has come onto the front bench he does not need to get hairy chested about his approach.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Well, at least he has got some. There is striking architecture at City West. This development will bring about a rejuvenation of the City West area for small business operators. Only today I saw someone painting on the back wall down there the name of his company and the services it supplies so that the 5 000 students can identify it. What we have seen with this Government over the past three years is tens of millions of dollars invested in the North Terrace cultural arts precinct and now in City West. This Administration has put in place significant support and backing to enable City West to proceed. Let it not be misunderstood: this Government has backed that project substantially with some guarantees.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: This Government has been here for three years—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:—and it will be here for a lot longer: I assure you of that. It is the rejuvenation of the CBD, and this is bringing about some fundamental change. In terms of picking up the confidence of South Australians, the visual impact of these developments taking place is a clear indicator, as some of the statistics are showing, that South Australia is at last starting to move forward after 10 years of stall mode under the former Administration.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Why did the Premier, as Infrastructure Minister, give a personal assurance to the head of South Australian Water Services, Mr Pierre Alla—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. I will start my question again, if I may.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

Mr FOLEY: Why did the Premier, as Infrastructure Minister, give a personal assurance to the head of South Australian Water Services, Mr Pierre Alla, that he would receive a full debriefing as to why his consortia, involving Lend Lease Australia, lost the \$1.5 billion water contract, and then withdraw that commitment last month? Last Friday Mr Pierre Alla told a parliamentary select committee:

John Olsen committed to me that we would get this debriefing and I expected the debriefing to happen. Only a few weeks ago we were told we would not be receiving a debriefing. . . The South Australian bid is the only case where we were told and where we got written evidence that we were going to be debriefed. . . and, after several requests, were told there was no point.

He also said that he wrote to the probity auditor but was told that they were under instructions not to debrief his consortium.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: This is the oldest of old news stories that have been around Adelaide for a long time.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: This whole process started 17 months ago, and the Opposition, Mr Alla and South Australian Water Services have done nothing about this issue for over 17 months. We have had a Solicitor-General's report and an Auditor-General's report. As a matter of fact, the probity auditor has been through this whole process with South Australian Water Services. This is the oldest of old news. I would have thought that the member for Hart could get something new, instead of going back 17 months and bringing up old news that is of no interest to the South Australian public.

FIREARMS

Mr BASS (Florey): Will the Minister for Police inform the House when the South Australian firearms buy-back scheme ends and say what the community's response has been to date?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: About 57 000 firearms have now been handed in in what has been a very smooth South Australian scheme in taking totally out of the community all these unregistered and registered firearms.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I accept that the previous Minister set up the whole scheme. Because of the efficiency of this Government and the Minister, we are the first State in Australia to end the compensation scheme.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: The scheme finishes on Friday: it will be slowly wound up then. This week we expect a large number of collectors to come forward and we are prepared and organised to take all those registered firearms out of the system. It is also important to note that after Friday

an amnesty will be in place for those who do not take up the compensation scheme—although I encourage all of those gun owners involved to do so—and that amnesty will be in place until 30 June 1997 to complete the whole process. This sound program has taken 57 000 firearms out of circulation, and I think that the whole community will be glad to be rid of them.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I would hate to see what they would do to you, Steve, if you did a bad job.

The SPEAKER: Order! For some reason the member for Hart decides to have his own set of Standing Orders. I suggest that he asks his question and does not engage in side comment; otherwise I will withdraw leave.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir; your counsel, as usual, will be taken, wise counsel that it is. My question is directed to the Premier, as Minister responsible for the largest outsourcing contract in this State's history. Why were confidential details from one of the three bidders for the water contract leaked to a union—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will continue.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. Why were confidential details from one of the three bidders for the water contract leaked to a union 18 days after the first bids were lodged on 8 August 1995, and what action will the Premier take to investigate this very serious claim? Mr Pierre Alla from SA Water Services told the select committee:

We were quite surprised that a few people in the union knew very confidential information about us, because they put it to us.

Mr Alla said that this information could only—

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I refer to Standing Order 339, which is headed 'Evidence not to be disclosed' and which states:

The evidence taken by any select committee of the House, and documents presented to that committee which have not been reported to the House, may not be disclosed or published by any member of that committee or by any other person.

This is the second question where the honourable member has transgressed the traditions of this House.

The SPEAKER: Order! First, the Chair is not aware whether or not that is evidence. Secondly, the select committee is not a committee of this House and, therefore, the Standing Order does not apply. The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. Given that disruption, may I repeat the question?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: No. The member for Hart will proceed.

Mr FOLEY: All right, Sir, I will make the explanation; that is good enough.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable member will proceed.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Pierre Alla from SA Water Services told the select committee:

We were quite surprised that a few people in the union knew very confidential information about us, because they put it to us.

Mr Alla said that this information could have come only from the negotiating team.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: This whole issue concerning union links and any other allegations was investigated by the probity auditor back on 4 October 1995, and he said that there was no issue to be taken up at all.

POLICE SERVICES

Ms GREIG (Reynell): Will the Minister for Police advise the House of the results relating to the South Australian community's confidence in police as compiled in the recently released national COAG report on State services?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I am delighted to be able to report—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: The COAG report clearly set out that the Police Force in South Australia is recognised as having the highest public satisfaction rating of all police services in Australia. The average was 78 per cent in terms of public support, compared to the national average of 70 per cent. This places in perspective the general community's view of how our Police Force operates and indicates all the values that we believe a Police Force should have. The whole area of awareness and support for our police in the community is a very important issue in developing the overall policy for how law and order is run in this State, and the fact that a national group has recognised the value of our Police Force is important to the South Australian community.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Is the Premier concerned that the head of one of the bidders for the \$1.5 billion water contract, Mr Pierre Alla, revealed to last Friday's water select committee that it would have taken 'two minutes' to change the final bid documents submitted to SA Water on 4 October, and what action will the Premier take to investigate this claim? SA Water Services head, Mr Pierre Alla, told the select committee that the final offer was not complicated. Mr Alla said:

People could have prepared the document and left the table open and put in the figures at the last minute.

He added—

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Standing Order 120 deals with reference to debate in the other House and states:

A member may not refer to any debate in the other House of Parliament or to any measure impending in that House.

Surely, the report, when it finally comes forward from that committee, will be impending before the other House. It is completely out of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair has heard sufficient of the point of order. The Chair cannot uphold the point of order. A great deal of this material, so far as the Chair is concerned, is public knowledge. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable member will be on television.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Mr Alla said:

People could have prepared the document and left the table open and put in the figures at the last minute.

He added:

Within the time frame it would be very easy to make a change in one line.

The Auditor-General's report states that United Water made several telephone calls to SA Water during the 4½ hour delay—and after the hapless probity auditor had left for the day.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: This whole exercise is 17 months old. We have had reports from the Solicitor-General and the Auditor-General. This whole exercise should be put in the context of one issue—this company was a losing bidder.

ROXBY DOWNS HEALTH FACILITIES

Mrs HALL (Coles): Will the Minister for Mines inform the House of the Government's commitment to provide adequate health facilities at Roxby Downs? Western Mining Corporation's \$1.2 billion Olympic Dam expansion is expected to lead to a significant increase in the population of Roxby Downs and, therefore, an increased demand for health services.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Yesterday, Cabinet agreed to a submission to provide a hospital facility at Roxby Downs.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The cost of that facility will be \$4.7 million and it will be subject to the scrutiny of the Public Works Standing Committee. That represents another page, if you like, in the history of Roxby Downs. An agreement was signed originally by the former Government for the provision of hospital facilities. We are now meeting that commitment. There are some very good reasons why we should meet that commitment. First, the expansion of the mine will lead to a significant increase in jobs and population in that area.

I remind the House just how important Roxby Downs has been and will continue to be well into the future for the people of South Australia. By the year 2001 we expect to be mining 200 000 tonnes of refined copper as well as associated uranium, gold and silver. The total investment for Roxby Downs, including the most recent amount of some \$1.25 billion, is \$2.3 billion—money that has been spent on the plant and its facilities. It is expected that the plant will have a lifetime well over 100 years.

In terms of the output of the mine, \$270 million is currently being produced from Roxby. That is expected to grow to \$600 million by the year 2001, and the current royalties of some \$12 million will more than double over the period. Roxby is quite an oasis, as members would reflect when they visit the area, and the extent to which people can live in reasonably good conditions in such an outback area is a tribute to Western Mining and the Government.

Importantly, the town has not had the full provision or even reasonable provision of health services on site, and the Government has determined it should now do so. We are pleased to announce that people will no longer have to travel the long distances that have been necessary in the past to receive health services, including the birth of children. We can talk about facilities that will allow minor obstetrics procedures to be performed on site, which will mean that, with the surgical skill of some of the doctors from Port Augusta, Whyalla or even Adelaide, treatment will be provided on site. For more serious cases, patients will be transported to Port Augusta or Adelaide. So, we are pleased to announce that the Government has met the commitment made many years ago by the former Government. We believe that it will add to the quality of life in Roxby; and, for the people of South Australia, as I said, it is another chapter in a very good book for this State.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I direct my question to the Minister for Infrastructure in the absence of the Premier. Why was one of the bidders for the water contract told during the bidding process that, according to the bidding rules for the water contract, repatriated dividends were not eligible to be counted as economic development, and was that bidder disadvantaged by this advice? The Solicitor-General's report states:

United Water increased its economic development price by \$255 million in the final stages of negotiations for the water contract by including repatriated profits and dividends.

However, water contract bidder SA Water Services, headed by Mr Pierre Alla, told the water select committee last Friday that the increases in United Water's economic development price was, '... an amazing figure by which to increase an offer. I have never seen that before.' Mr Alla further told the select committee:

The only fact that I can say that in regard to the repatriated dividend, we were not told the same story as United Water.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: If the member for Hart goes through all the evidence of the select committee and all the answers given by the then Minister for Infrastructure Structure, now the Premier, he will find the answers he seeks in that evidence.

HOSPITALS, PUBLIC

Mr EVANS (Davenport): Will the Minister for Health inform the House whether the Government needs to maintain ownership of hospital assets to ensure accountability in public health?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: This is a particularly interesting question, because it goes to the nub of the way health care will be provided in the world over the next decade or two. The answer will indicate to the House that this Government is always interested in learning through the experience and knowledge of other people. Earlier this month I indicated my great interest in the British Labour Party's growing acknowledgment of the fact that public good can be created through private investment. I was fascinated to read recently another publication which is a discussion paper entitled, 'Accountability, not ownership; Labour and the NHS.' The paper is published by the Fabian Society. The Fabian Society, it could be loosely said, is not a Tory lackey. In fact, it is a socialist group committed to gradual change. The Fabian Society is a leading engine of socialist thought in Britain.

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Indeed, as the Treasurer says, John Bannon and, I think, Paul Keating and maybe the Leader of the Opposition are members of the Fabian Society. The paper makes interesting reading. I would like to quote one part, as follows:

While Labour voters strongly support the NHS [National Health System], there is no automatic majority for the proposition that hospitals must remain in the public sector. The public makes a distinction that Labour does not between public control and public ownership.

That is a quotation, I would suggest, that the South Australian Labor Party might look at.

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Of course not. The writer goes on to point out that none of the key elements of accountability requires public ownership. In addressing the

issue of whether profit-making bodies should be involved, the writer states:

In my view, if a private sector provider can meet quality criteria, pay equivalent wages and still be cheaper than the public sector, then it deserves to keep its profits. Indeed, taxpayers should ask the more expensive public provider what it is doing with their money.

That is the element that the Labor Party in South Australia for over a decade refused to acknowledge. The Labor Party thought that, because its philosophy was being identified in the way the hospital and health services were being provided, it was okay. Well, it would be wise to look at the Fabian Society in England, because it says that taxpayers should ask the more expensive public provider what it is doing with their money. That is the question that the electors of South Australia are asking. If the Liberal Government can save tens of millions of dollars in health expenditure, and at the same time—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Elizabeth say we have not saved it. That unfortunately is the fallacy upon which their policies will be built for the next election, and everyone in South Australia knows that it is wrong because not only have we saved tens of millions of dollars but we have also increased hospital admissions by 10 per cent, and we have reduced waiting lists by 20 per cent.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, this is not a matter for the television—this is a matter for the Labor Party to come to grips with. If we have saved tens of millions of dollars, and we have increased hospital admissions by 10 per cent, and we have decreased waiting lists by 20 per cent, what was the previous Labor Government doing with the taxpayers' money for 13 years? The answer is obvious: it was wasting it.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Will the Minister for Infrastructure inform the House whether SA Water compromised the independence of the probity auditor when the CEO, Mr Ted Phipps, instructed him not to meet with one of the bidders to discuss the opening of bids on 4 October 1995, and what action will the Minister take to investigate this serious claim? SA Water Services head, Mr Pierre Alla, told last Friday's select committee that the probity auditor had denied a meeting to his consortium after he had complained to the probity auditor about the early opening and distribution of water bids. He stated:

The reason he gave us was that he was instructed by SA Water that there was no matter for having a meeting, which was very strange for him to get such an instruction.

Mr Alla further stated:

I would have expected that we would bring our expressions of concern to the probity auditor. Otherwise, why was he appointed?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: At no time was the probity auditor instructed by SA Water to meet with SA Water Services. That information has been placed on the record for all to see. I wonder why we are going back in this history? I wonder why the member for Hart is not asking me about the \$3.2 billion Riverland project in Manilla, which is about jobs. That project is run by the Riverland company, which is building 10 filtration plants for us in the close country areas. I wonder why he is not asking those positive questions to help us to do something good for the State instead of just knock, knock, carp, carp. It is typical of the member for Hart.

We have all the positive things which have been happening in SA Water. Savings of \$10 million per year have come from the United Water contract—\$30 000 a day. We are asked no question about that. Why do we not get some of those positive questions? Instead of that, we have information which is 17 months old from a company which did not win the bid. The managing director is complaining because his company did not get up. That is what it is all about.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Will the Minister for Industrial Affairs advise the House whether employers in the South Australian construction industry have been able to reduce their long service leave costs since December 1993, and whether these costs have had any impact on jobs for existing or new employees in this industry?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The answer to the question is 'Yes.' In fact, if I can do a comparison, when the Labor Government set up the long service leave scheme for the building industry there was an immediate across-the-board compulsory levy of 2.5 per cent. Under this Liberal Government, that is now down to 1 per cent. In 1995 we introduced significant amendments to the Long Service Leave Building Industry Act and, as a result of that, the costs of the compulsory levy have been dropped. As a result of dropping the levy to 1 per cent under this Liberal Government, there has been a significant saving to employers within the building industry: they have saved over half a million dollars. In fact, there are about 1 700 employers who have been able to make that sort of saving. I highlight the fact that this is a voluntary scheme for subcontractors and, because of the drop in the levy rate, the number of subcontractors who have joined the scheme on a voluntary basis has increased by 300.

I bring to the attention of the House the number of employees now covered by this long service leave building industry scheme. Since we came to Government it has increased by 1 038 (13 per cent) from 6 800 to 7 884, which shows that there has been a significant increase in the building work force in South Australia since this Government came to office. In addition, we now have the Deposit 5000 scheme, an increase in building approvals in January alone of 57 per cent and the stamp duty reductions. Therefore, the building industry in South Australia is now facing better employment opportunities than it faced when we came to office more than three years ago.

I highlight the fact that we have lowered the costs of long service leave in the building industry. The Federal Liberal Government has lowered the interest costs for the building industry. We have put in new demand for investment in the industry, and we are creating employment growth in that industry. So, that is good news for the industry and it shows what this Government has achieved.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Will the Minister for Infrastructure advise the House whether opening, photocopying and distributing bids by two companies before United Water's bid for the water contract was received breached a confidentiality agreement signed by the Premier when he was Minister for Infrastructure, and will the Minister now table this agreement in the House? Head of SA Water Services, Mr Pierre Alla, told last Friday's water select committee:

SA Water and the Minister for Infrastructure signed a very comprehensive confidentiality agreement in regard to what both parties were undertaking in respect of protecting the confidentiality of the bids. The fact that the bids were opened is a breach of this agreement. The confidentiality agreement was part of the rules.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: These sorts of issues have been taken up by the Solicitor-General and the Auditor-General—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: They have also been taken up by the probity auditor. They are old issues. The Solicitor-General and the Auditor-General have been through this whole process. I have been in this place now for 13 years, and I do not understand why the Opposition—particularly the member for Hart—cannot get on with looking at the positive side of this contract and forgetting about this issue. The Solicitor-General and the Auditor-General have been through the whole process.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is also very vulnerable at the present time.

Mr Foley: Thank you, Sir.

The SPEAKER: You came very close.

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL HORSE TRIALS

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Will the Minister for Tourism inform the House of the State Government's involvement with the Adelaide International Horse Trials to be held at Victoria Park later this year and explain what impact this event will have on the State's economy?

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am delighted to answer the question of the member for Unley, because this morning I was fortunate to be able to launch the event in Adelaide. There was tremendous interest from the media—and rightly so—and the State Government can be very proud of the role it has played to ensure that this major event, which will attract international interest and international competitors, is to be conducted in the centre of Adelaide. Mr Michael Creber, who is the course designer of this event, and has excellent credentials—he has been designing courses for three day event for years, is a past competitor and is known throughout the world for his knowledge about three day eventing—stated that without any shadow of doubt this will be the best course that has ever been provided anywhere in the world. He stated quite categorically that it will be far superior to the Badminton Horse Trial Event course in England, which is the one which is probably the most widely known. It will be an event that will host competitors in the three star level of eventing. There are only four of those events in Australia and only 13 in the world.

So, at the end of October we will have an event that will attract international competitors, international interest, and which will be conducted virtually in the centre of the city of Adelaide in delightful surroundings. A lot of initiatives have been brought forward. For example, one of the jumps is going to be a cafe table, and this jump is going to be set up just outside the eastern section of Adelaide, where we have so many restaurants. This morning a dual Olympic gold medallist, with her horse, hurdled that jump to show us one of the significant events that—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: This is what I like about the Opposition. We hear the member for Hart saying, 'Oh, wow.'

We have an event of international significance and here he is being as sarcastic as he can be because, once again, the Opposition does not like any good news about South Australia. We have been able to bring to the City of Adelaide an event that will attract international interest. It will be combined with food and wine with alfresco dining throughout the course, and the course will be constructed in such a way that from many points people will be able to sit and watch at least eight of the jumps. This is good news, something which the Opposition does not like, but the residents of South Australia will be right behind it. We anticipate a crowd of at least 50 000 on the main day of the event. It will be televised throughout the world through international news services. Despite the fact that the Opposition is down playing this event, as a member of the Government I am proud of the role that this Government has played in ensuring that this event comes to South Australia.

WATER OUTSOURCING CONTRACT

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Is the Minister for Infrastructure satisfied that the bid for the water privatisation contract by SA Water Services was assessed fairly in the light of new evidence heard by the Upper House water select committee last Friday? Mr Pierre Alla told the committee that the company bid on the understanding that penalties would be enforced for non-performance of the economic development part of the contract. The Premier, as Infrastructure Minister, told the House on 22 November 1995 that United Water was under a contractual and non-negotiable obligation to deliver \$38 million worth of exports during the first year. United Water has since told the media that it delivered only \$3.6 million worth of water industry exports in 1996. Mr Alla said:

I am not sure whether we bid for the same contract.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I am flabbergasted. The Solicitor-General, a very important person in this State, and the Auditor-General, a very important person in terms of auditing the accounts, looked at the process and ticked it off. As far as this Parliament is concerned, the member for Hart should accept that, and that should be the beginning and the end of the whole process.

AIR QUALITY

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources advise what new steps are being taken to maintain Adelaide's superior air quality and say in what way these efforts will benefit South Australia's emerging environmental industries and assist in the creation of environment based jobs?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am pleased to be able to advise the member for Colton of a significant new initiative, a major air monitoring project—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader has received his final warning. It would not worry the Chair one bit to name him.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I appreciate the support from the other side. I refer to a major air monitoring project, which is being organised by the Federal and State Governments, the Office of Environment Protection and Flinders University, which will provide the first conclusive air profiling over the city from Gawler to Port Noarlunga and from the Adelaide Hills to Gulf St Vincent. In addition to general air monitor-

ing, this survey will help to determine the causes of air pollution in South Australia. It will differentiate between levels of vehicular and industrial pollution and determine the localities where most pollution comes from. It will also help to formulate patterns of pollution movement.

Apart from helping to safeguard the quality of Adelaide's air, this project will help the Government, through the Office of Environment Protection, in its bid to develop Adelaide as a centre of excellence for air quality monitoring. That is now being recognised internationally. The project also has a strong focus on technology exports. For example, Flinders University is now at the leading edge of air quality work having undertaken similar projects in Kuala Lumpur and Perth.

In addition, a South Australian firm, Scantech, has now installed on behalf of the Government five state-of-the-art Airtrak monitoring stations throughout the metropolitan area, representing the most advanced air survey technology in Australia. This firm is now looking to overseas and interstate markets to promote environmental technology developed in this State, and it has the very strong support of this Government. Both the Airtrak system and the aerial survey will continue to provide the most comprehensive information ever available in this State on issues of air quality.

As another initiative, the Office of Environment Protection is also finalising details for the outsourcing of air quality monitoring, allowing new opportunities within the private sector. These projects will mean that South Australia will be well placed to exploit the growing awareness and concern internationally about air quality issues. The bid to develop Adelaide as an air quality centre of excellence will not only help in the development of new technology but also attract overseas and interstate people to our tertiary and private institutions and position South Australia as an international class, leading training centre on issues of air quality.

In conclusion, I make the point that that is good news for the environment and for job creation. It shows once and for all that environmental initiatives not only help to maintain the State's quality of life but bring with them investment and trade opportunities for South Australia that are worth many millions of dollars.

THAMES WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure.

Mr Brindal: You don't give up, do you?

Mr FOLEY: Absolutely not.

The SPEAKER: Order! Do not answer interjections. The member for Unley will be next on the list.

Mr Cummins: Losers never do.

Mr FOLEY: The member for Norwood, Sir.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will ask his question.

Mr FOLEY: Yes, I'm a dobber.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will ask his question.

Mr FOLEY: Why did the Premier in a media statement on 31 December last year say that one of the highlights of the year was the relocation of Thames Water's Asia-Pacific head office and staff from Melbourne to Adelaide when this has not occurred? Thames Water's office in Adelaide at present has only seven staff and the Melbourne office employs 120.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: In discussions with the Managing Director of Thames Water the other day, I was advised that they are in the process of shifting their company over here.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to certain members that, if the House does not come to order, the Chair will exercise its discretion and not bother to have a grievance debate, so that members then may have some time to reflect upon their behaviour.

MURRAY-MALLEE TASK FORCE

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries. What steps will now be taken to address the recommendations contained in the report of the Murray-Mallee task force?

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Playford might not be here for long, but he might be here for even a shorter period of time if he keeps interjecting.

Mr LEWIS: The House will recall that, at my request, the Minister established a task force to consult with communities in my electorate to look at a rural partnership program. That process, ably chaired by the Hon. Jamie Irwin from another place, reported to the Minister last week.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I thank the member for Ridley for his question and for the way in which he has kept this issue on the boil for a long time. As the honourable member said, last week I had the pleasure of opening the Karoonda sheep fair in 42 degree heat. At that fair, I officially received the Murray-Mallee strategic task force report from the Hon. Jamie Irwin, who did a terrific job in chairing the committee that looked into the matter. Upon becoming Minister in December 1995, one of my first jobs was to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Eyre Peninsula strategic task force.

While that report was reaching a satisfactory outcome, the member for Ridley was pushing continually for a similar process to be carried out for the Murray-Mallee. This Government is keen to ensure the continued growth of the Murraylands area and therefore we established a similar task force for the Murray-Mallee under the able chairmanship of the Hon. Jamie Irwin. The task force concept was built upon the findings of two rural debt audits and Dr Bernice Pfitzner's report into rural poverty in South Australia, and it was also based largely around what was achieved on EP—findings which the member for Ridley has continued to raise on behalf of his electorate as many of them concern his people.

The pleasing thing about this report is the amount of input that was received. There was extensive community consultation which gave everyone an opportunity to put their point of view, and the committee of 26 prominent and successful local people spent a great deal of time in putting the document together. The report focuses on the positives of the Murray-Mallee and the potential opportunities which, if supported, could assist in revitalising the region. The future policy for the use of underground water is one of the 28 recommendations in the report, which canvasses some 50 ideas. The report will now form the basis of a submission to the Commonwealth Government for a rural partnership program to be set up in the Mallee. Once again, I compliment the member for Ridley for the hard work he has put into this over a long time, the Hon. Jamie Irwin for chairing it, and all

those involved in looking at opportunities for and needs of the Murray-Mallee.

VON EINEM CASE

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I lay on the table a ministerial statement relating to the Von Einem case made earlier today in another place by the Attorney-General.

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

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill

The SPEAKER: The Chair would like to point out to the House that, when a message is being delivered from His Excellency the Governor, it is the height of bad manners and discourtesy to that office when members continue to skylark and make interjections across the Chamber when the messenger is at the bar of the House. Any further repetition and I will enforce Standing Orders.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I would like to report the changes to Henley Square as of late. I can remember, having been elected as the member for Colton in December 1993, speaking to the then Mayor of Henley and Grange, Kay Bennetts, and telling her that I believed that Henley Square was being wasted. I could never understand why, on the northern side, it should consist of a very lowly patronised delicatessen and two shops—one being used as a billiard hall and the other as a drop-in centre for the unemployed. I reiterated to her that I thought one of the State's most valuable assets was going to waste and that the council should be turning the centre into an area of quality restaurants for people to enjoy in the electorate—to go out to wine and dine at some of the best restaurants available in South Australia.

We very soon went along that path and encouraged people to take over those shops, and in a short time we created not only three new restaurants in the square but also five new restaurants in the area. The latest is the Evida which opened six weeks ago and which is world class in terms of alfresco dining, providing some of the most captivating views of the western suburbs beaches on both levels as well as quality food. Henley Square now houses some 11 top class restaurants which serve Thai, Greek, Italian, health and vegetarian foods, seafood and so on, and some of the best South Australian wines, all of which are enjoyed by constituents in the area. But, more importantly, we have retained all heritage buildings, all shop facades and the historic hotel in the square. My vision has been that Henley Beach must retain its village atmosphere and never be allowed to approve any high-rise development or take on any resemblance to the glitz, glamour and superficial look of Glenelg.

I am very proud as the local member to have made a submission to Sensational Adelaide on behalf of all Henley restaurateurs so that they could take on sponsorship of the Henley Square Food and Wine Festival when the previous sponsors decided to drop sponsorship. I invited the Premier and Mrs Olsen to dine at the festival with my wife, my daughter and me, and he commented that such a significant

food and wine festival was worthy of Government sponsorship and should continue to be supported in the interests of the local community and tourism in South Australia. As a member of the Government, at the last meeting of the Henley and Grange Council I handed over a cheque for \$50 000, which has been used to further upgrade the square. But that is not where it ends, because I am now being inundated on a continual basis and two of the best restaurateurs in Gouger Street have come to see me wanting to go into Henley Square and increase the numbers. I am now negotiating with the new Charles Sturt council administration to accommodate those two new restaurants.

I have already held talks with the Singaporean owners of the old Henley shopping centre, which is badly run down and needs refurbishment: we are really talking about its demolition and the rebuilding of shops to service the community, with good quality residential development above. It is my personal belief—and has been since I was elected in 1993—that Henley Square is the jewel in the Crown of not only my electorate but also the State of South Australia. Because of its importance, I believe that my Government and the City of Charles Sturt should look at joint funding to continue improving the village atmosphere of Henley Square, with full consultation with the community to tell us their vision for the future of the square and how they would like to see it develop in the future.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order! The honourable member's time has expired, and I remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Spence that they are out of order.

Ms WHITE: Today in Question Time I asked the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education what she would do and what action this State Government would take in light of the revelation that the University of South Australia, through the funding cuts imposed by the Federal Liberal Government, is being forced to consider its options, those options including closure of the Underdale and/or Whyalla campuses. In response the Minister said, in essence, nothing. She merely said that it was up to the university. Late last month, as the *Advertiser* reported, when asked about the hundreds of staff cuts across our universities, the Minister again said, 'It is up to the universities.'

The Minister has a role to play in this and she should be playing that role. She is the South Australian Government spokesperson on higher education. In universities set up under State legislation she has a role. Her Government, her Federal Liberal colleagues, have imposed these funding cuts and restraints on universities that are forcing these outcomes. Not only are students having to jump higher and higher hurdles through the new arrangements under HECS charges, making it harder for university students to undertake courses, but now the Minister is saying, basically, that it is not her problem. Well, it is. It is a problem for this State; she should be taking an interest and she is not.

Mrs Kotz interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Ms WHITE: Today I mentioned the corporate plan put out by the University of South Australia, entitled 'Corporate Planning' and dated February 1997, which talks of options to dispose of the Underdale campus and the Whyalla campus. Under the topic 'Option 2: Disposal of Underdale Campus', it states:

The land and buildings are owned by the university, so the site could be sold or leased under unconstrained market conditions, but subject to the approval of the Governor if sold or leased for a period in excess of 21 years.

It also states:

The capacity to relocate activities displaced from Underdale to other metropolitan campuses is good. Moderate capital costs would be incurred and the displaced activities could be spread between Magill, City West and The Levels.

I remind the Parliament that not so long ago the Salisbury campus of the University of South Australia was closed and its students were relocated, some moving to Underdale. Now the consideration is that they be moved again. Under the topic 'Option 3: Disposal of Whyalla Campus', it states:

The relocation of displaced activities to the metropolitan campuses would be readily accomplished.

Maybe so, but what does this mean to those students who attend those campuses? Whyalla, the only truly non-metropolitan campus of any university in this State, is under threat of closure, obviously due to the cuts imposed by the Federal Liberal Government, and all that the Minister can say is that it is up to the universities. She does have a role in this matter. On page 35 of the document, the summarising comment is:

Closure of either Underdale or Whyalla warrants further investigation.

How much clearer does the Minister need it to be before she lifts one finger or says one word of protest to her Federal colleagues—the Federal Liberal Government, which has imposed this situation on South Australia? She has been silent since she became Minister. She has a duty of care to the educational opportunities in South Australia. This affects the outcomes and educational opportunities; it affects access to education in South Australia and the Minister is silent. I call on her to stand up, make some noise and carry some weight, if she has any, with her Federal colleagues. Say something, Minister!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's times has expired. The member for Coles.

Mrs HALL (Coles): As we all know only too well, South Australia has recorded its longest and hottest spell in 50 years, from 11 to 20 February, and that resulted in a record demand for electricity. As demands soared, our long distance transmission lines brought in power purchased from Victoria and this, together with our own capacity, adequately met the demand. However, three consecutive days of record demand did stretch a normally adequate system and did produce a number of problems that understandably irritated people who were interrupted at work or inconvenienced at home. Naturally enough these incidents and the resulting media coverage gave in my view an unbalanced picture of ETSA's performance in serving the South Australian public in exceptional circumstances.

ETSA recognises that any customer interruptions are of concern both to the State Government and to customers, who are entitled to an explanation. There is no doubt that last week's power supply interruptions were more frequent than normal conditions, but severe storm conditions often result in greater numbers of interruptions. For example, the unseasonal stormy weather conditions in Adelaide on 18 January caused more system interruptions than occurred during the recent heatwave.

It also needs to be stressed that the reliability of South Australia's electricity system is approaching best practice and

compares favourably with other States. This is supported by the independent measure of 'system average outage duration' (SAOD), which measures the average time a customer can expect to be without power over a full year. In South Australia it is 116 minutes for ETSA compared with 365 minutes for Victoria's PowerCor, 315 minutes for New South Wales' Illawarra, 144 minutes for Western Australia's Western Power and 162 minutes for Tasmania's HEC. While this shows that South Australia has one of the most reliable electricity distribution systems in Australia, it does not address all the specific problems experienced over the past fortnight.

The single most significant event during that period was the loss of supply to one-third of the CBD on 18 February. This was caused by a transformer being taken out of service at the East Terrace substation. The reason for the interruption appears to have been human error, which resulted in equipment failure and system overload in extreme weather conditions. Long periods of extremely hot weather causes electricity equipment to overheat, which stresses its capability. Transformers that normally cool down overnight cannot do so in these circumstances.

Interruption to supply in the Salisbury area occurred on 20 February, but in this case it was not the hot weather that caused the problem but white ants eating into an underground feeder cable from the Salisbury substation. ETSA information shows that, despite media reports of catastrophe, the actual performance was commendable during the heatwave, with the worst problem occurring on 18 February with a 'system average outage duration' of 2.1 minutes.

Despite this relatively good performance, ETSA has identified some areas in which it can and probably will make improvements. I understand that ETSA management will report to the board on problems of the past weeks as part of its normal processes and ETSA management will review systems performances and identify any specific areas that may need further improvement. Despite mischievous and inaccurate political claims, the problems over the past week were not associated with staffing levels and/or maintenance and/or infrastructure expenditure. The expenditure required is being committed. In 1995-96, \$3 million was spent on substation upgrades; \$6 million was spent on general distribution systems improvement; and \$54 million was spent on capital works on the power system.

The magnificent work of ETSA employees—many of whom worked in horrible conditions, extreme heat and sometimes around the clock—deserves our plaudits and not our criticism. ETSA has learnt some lessons during the past week and these will be used to further improve the world-class electricity supply reliability that this State enjoys. I reiterate: South Australia does not have a major infrastructure problem. During this last heatwave on no occasion did demand exceed our generation capacity. It was the longest hot spell for more than 50 years and there were three consecutive days of record demand and, therefore, stress on the system. All those factors considered, ETSA's highly skilled workers deserve our thanks and not unwarranted criticism.

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

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Like my colleague the member for Coles, I would like to put on the record how much I appreciate the efforts of the ETSA staff who did a great job under extremely difficult circumstances. I declare my personal involvement as a dairy farmer, because twice

during that hot period power to my farm was cut off for three hours and two hours respectively, both periods occurring around 5 o'clock and 6 o'clock in the late afternoon when the cows were already in the yard. When cows are locked up for two or three hours it has an enormous impact on one's income, not to mention the stress caused to the animals.

Because of what occurred on Ash Wednesday, when it has a power fault ETSA has in place a system to recheck the fault before it reinstates the power. I hope that the senior executives of ETSA can do something for areas such as those involving dairy farming when it has a problem with supplying power. It was not that ETSA did not get the problem fixed quickly—I congratulate the workers in that respect—but the rigid requirement to check is a matter of concern. Between 5 o'clock and 7 o'clock in the afternoon is not like the period from 8 o'clock to 10 o'clock in the morning: whilst it is still very hot, the danger of potential fires is not as high as it is between 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock in the morning.

I would like to see a procedure implemented whereby ETSA can fast track the checking of transformers and insulators after it has found the fault so that it can reinstate the power and help farmers. My neighbour, who has a large strawberry farm, needs to keep the water going on hot days. I felt that certain people referred to in the *Advertiser* had unreal expectations and were probably sitting comfortably in Adelaide and became a bit upset when their air-conditioner went off for a while. Rather than the hype that was beat up by those people, they ought to be thinking about the wonderful job that the ETSA Corporation does for South Australia. At the same time as it has been undertaking a lot of capital infrastructure, it has been able to lower the costs of supplying power to South Australian businesses, and that is very important.

I get sick and tired of hearing radio commentators giving temperature forecasts for Mount Barker and Elizabeth but never for the south. There seems to be a culture throughout South Australia that you can talk about Elizabeth and the Adelaide Hills but you cannot talk about the south. This Government has done a lot since we have been in Government to ensure that the south is well and truly on the map. If one looks at the economic opportunities being developed in the south on a daily basis, one can see that it has a significant part to play in the economic wealth and job creation of South Australia—but we cannot yet get a mention on the daily weather forecast.

These reports highlight and promote what is happening at Elizabeth and Mount Barker to the detriment of the south. We used to be known as the 'forgotten south', but I am pleased to say that under this Liberal Government we are no longer the forgotten south. The Opposition runs around with furrphies, but the fact is that most people in the south recognise that a lot has been done. I acknowledge that still more needs to be done to make sure that more effort, support and opportunities are put into the south.

Why is not the Bureau of Meteorology fast tracking the opportunity to put a weather station at either Noarlunga or, perhaps preferably, McLaren Vale? If one were established at Noarlunga, at least it could be promoted on radio as a weather region. However, if we are to capitalise on tourism opportunities let us put it at McLaren Vale, so that we can remind people that there is a great tourism opportunity in the southern region.

I intend to send a copy of my contribution to this grievance debate to the Bureau of Meteorology. I have heard rumours that it is in the process of organising a weather

station so that it can report on the weather in the south around Noarlunga and on the Fleurieu Peninsula, but I believe that it has taken far too long—and that has been to our detriment. It is about time all organisations and agencies in this State realised that there are areas other than the north and the central part of Adelaide and that key areas such as the southern areas—the Fleurieu Peninsula—should be given a fair go. To that end, I think that we will see a fair go over the next few weeks with respect to our wine industry.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Today I rise to make a short contribution involving the continuing saga of the Government's \$1.5 billion water contract. On Friday, before the parliamentary select committee on this matter, some startling new evidence was given concerning allegations and serious claims by one of the bidding companies that lost the contract. The Government can dismiss it as a sour grapes issue, but let us look at this issue very seriously. Mr Pierre Alla is the head of one of the largest companies in France operating multi-million dollar contracts in South Australia and dealing at the highest level with Governments in Australia.

Part of that consortium is Lend Lease Australia—I doubt whether there is any bigger property development company in this nation—which has a track record and history that I am sure that all members would acknowledge: it is a fine Australian company. Part of that consortium is an organisation with which I have crossed swords on a couple of issues but which in this respect is a very sound undertaking and one of which we in South Australia should be proud: the Hickinbotham group of companies.

Those three companies were the SA Water Services consortia. I point out that 17 months later, after it had attempted to get a debriefing from the Government, after it had requested briefings from the probity auditor and after it had requested meetings with Ministers and departmental officers, that consortium finally agreed to come before the parliamentary select committee and give evidence. It did not do that in a pique of anger or in some emotive form because it was angry it lost the contract: this was 17 months after it lost the contract.

As Mr Pierre Alla said on Friday, his organisation wins and loses contracts every week and every month throughout the world. It is used to losing big contracts. But never has it lost a contract under such bizarre circumstances as occurred in Adelaide. Never before has it had its bid documents opened and distributed to tens of people, many of whom should not have had those documents. Never before has it had a bid come in four hours after the due time, after its proposal had been circulated and copied; never before has it been confronted with a security camera which ran out of videotape at the crucial time in the secure room; never before has it confronted circumstances where the probity auditor—the very man charged with overseeing the probity of this contract—knocked off at 6 o'clock and never came back—he went home and had tea. When the final bid came in some three hours later, it just happened to be a little cheaper than North West Water's bid.

These are bizarre circumstances; these are very odd happenings. If Government members do not find that concerning, they really have bought the Party line; they really have bought the Government line. I will stand in here week after week, month after month, year after year—for as long as it takes—to pressure this Government. The Minister for Infrastructure can stand in this place and give the pathetic performance that he gave today in batting off the question

without attempting to answer the substance of it. Never has a contract so large been let in this State. Never has a contract been more important to the fundamental delivery of a service by Government to the community as this contract. I, the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues will continue to pursue this matter.

Today I will be making contact with the Auditor-General's office and requesting that he investigate the matter further. I look forward to sitting down with Ken MacPherson and walking through these issues, because Pierre Alla's evidence on Friday was of such serious moment that I believe it requires further investigation. It is not fair, not right and quite damaging to this State to have allowed a consortium involving Lyonnaise des Eaux, Lend Lease and the Hickinbotham company to go to the lengths that it went last Friday. That group has lost confidence in this Government and this State because this contract was bungled at the critical moment.

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Today, I further refer to surveys undertaken in my electorate. On education, I asked, 'Should the Australian flag be raised and the national anthem sung in State schools?' In response, 80 per cent said 'Yes', 10 per cent said 'No' and 10 per cent did not know. I then asked, 'Do you believe the standard of education in public schools is high enough?' I asked that question because most teachers in public schools say how good they are and how education standards have been excellent in the past. In response, 20 per cent said that public school standards were high enough, 60 per cent were not happy with the education standard and 20 per cent did not know. Basic skill tests have been introduced in State schools. I asked, 'Do you believe that testing should be part of the education process by which students are assessed as to their knowledge and skills?', and 29 per cent said 'Yes', 2 per cent said 'No' and 6 per cent did not know.

I then asked, 'What four subjects do you feel should be compulsory for students of public secondary schools?' Most respondents—with one exception—answered with maths, English, science and history. I asked, 'Do you feel that there is too much violence on television?', to which 74 per cent said 'Yes', 14 per cent said 'No', and 12 per cent did not know. I asked, 'Do you feel that the effects of violence on television affects the way young children behave?' To this question, 100 per cent of respondents said 'Yes'. I now refer to a letter that I received from a St John's volunteer in the Port Adelaide area. The letter states:

Dear Joe,

Following a telephone conversation of last week, I am writing to request your help, please, to introduce more severe penalties for crime and vandalism, particularly for juveniles. As a St John's volunteer of more than 30 years with the Port Adelaide Division, we in the past 12 months have been the victims of ongoing attacks of graffiti and vandalism at our centre located at Swan Terrace, Semaphore. Our adult division consists of 50 members, and our two cadet divisions in excess of 60 children. We are a group of caring and dedicated people trying to provide a humanitarian service to the community and we are beginning to feel very disheartened.

Port Adelaide Enfield Council spent \$150 000 last financial year repairing graffiti and vandalism, the highest of any council, this would be the tip of the iceberg—most of our damage was claimed from insurance. Our building is on council land alongside a reserve and playground with the Port Adelaide City Band hall at the rear so the area is open to the public. The Port Adelaide City Band has had far more graffiti and vandalism than us, with graffiti being cleaned off weekly and their insurance refusing to pay out any more on the continuous broken windows.

Damage to our building and contents included graffiti to the three colourbond roller doors at the front of our garage, one rear door, the demolition of a solid brick barbecue, ripping out of an electrical

panel board which housed remote controls for the roller doors, climbing on to the roof—damage resulted in the roof leaking and causing heaters to fail and two break-ins. Our garage houses a first aid caravan, an XF Falcon first aid unit and a Ford Econovan first response unit which is on call 24 hours a day with a crew of five persons.

Port Adelaide Enfield Council installed a large floodlight on a street pole at the rear of both buildings which for a short time stopped the problem for us and slowed it down for the band but it has again returned. The first break-in resulted in every office and our hall being trashed and the side panel of our XF first aid unit being kicked in. Fingerprints resulted in the arrest and charging of a 17-year-old.

On Saturday 29 December around midnight the premises again were broken into from a high up window after sensor lights had been smashed and globes removed. After a small amount of property being strewn around the hall the window of the XF first aid unit was smashed, the vehicle hot wired and taken for a 20 kilometre joyride—the flashing red light on the roof the only other damage. The ambulance service received phone calls in the early hours of the morning to say—

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON YUMBARRA CONSERVATION PARK RE-PROCLAMATION

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

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee be extended until Thursday 6 March 1997.

Motion carried.

SUPPLY BILL

Adjourned debate on the question:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for consideration of the Bill.

(Continued from 12 February. Page 968.)

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): In supporting the Bill I wish to speak on the important issue of the clean-up of the Patawalonga. I was interested to see that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Ross Smith, was very active during the Christmas break voicing his opinion in television interviews and press statements on what should happen with the Patawalonga. However, what he failed to tell the public during those interviews was that Labor did nothing in the 11 years prior to our coming into office concerning the problems of the Patawalonga and the Torrens River. Nothing is registered at all—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr CONDOUS: But you did nothing.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is out of order and will remain silent.

Mr CONDOUS: The Labor Government made no attempt to address the problems of the Torrens River, from which Henley South was copping all the rubbish every time there were heavy rains. It all came down and went straight to the beach at Henley South, yet we find at every public meeting the Labor Party has all its stooges from Trades Hall in the front asking all these superficial questions, driving the whole meeting. However, when I approached them and asked, 'What did your Government do in the 11 years it was in Government to address the problems of the catchment of the Sturt Creek, the Patawalonga and the Torrens River?', they

hung their heads in shame because they know the Labor Government did absolutely nothing at all.

During the Christmas break we had the Deputy Leader of the Opposition telling everyone in the western suburbs what the present Government is doing wrong. Not only did the previous Government handball us a \$9 billion debt but it was also generous in giving us the most polluted waterway in South Australia. The former Labor Government did nothing, except allow the Glenelg council to open its gates every fortnight so that the black sludge could travel north and pollute West Beach, Henley Beach and Grange. Since December 1993, the catchment's progress has been remarkable, no thanks to the Labor Party. However, we all acknowledge that there is still a long way to go. The Opposition did not set any goals because it knew the issue was too controversial and it was easier to let sleeping dogs lie. The Liberal Party has mapped out a plan. We know where we are going. We have set up two catchment boards—one for the Torrens River and the other for the Sturt Creek Patawalonga catchment.

We have established about 14 trash racks along the entire catchment; silt traps have also been installed; and, as a result of my constant pressure as the member for Colton, this winter we will see the operation of the Urrbrae wetlands on Cross Road. So, millions of litres of water that would normally flow out to the Gulf St Vincent will be retained for use at Urrbrae College. My lobbying of members of the Adelaide City Council resulted two weeks ago in the endorsement of a proposal to create a stormwater basin in the south parklands of the city. The council is further considering the option of injecting stormwater underground and tracking it into the aquifer, enabling it to be stored for later use on the south parklands. Additional wetlands are going to be established at Science Park near Flinders University, Morphettville Racecourse and the Glenelg Sewerage Treatment Works.

These are responsible environmental actions that will clean up the Patawalonga. These, together with the diversion of treated effluent from the Heathfield Sewage Treatment Plant to the National Park at Blackwood, instead of putting it into the Sturt grid, are responsible actions. This also will play a significant role in the clean-up of the catchment. Removing the concrete channels around the Morphettville-Marion area to create natural wetlands will continue to send cleaner water into the Patawalonga.

The Leader of the Opposition tried to create panic in the electorate. In one article, he said that John Olsen had been a long time supporter of the West Beach open channel proposal. That is quite untrue because, before he was Premier, he made it clear to me some 15 months ago that he could never support an open channel as an option to cleaning up the Patawalonga. For the member for Ross Smith's information, nothing was done by the Labor Party in the clean-up of the catchment. In this year alone, arrangements have been made to dredge the Torrens River, with the State Government pledging one third of the cost, one third coming from the Torrens River Catchment Authority, and the other third pledged by the Adelaide City Council.

During my term as Lord Mayor, the council spent some \$1.25 million to empty the Torrens River and restore with jarrah supports the northern banks of the river between the City Bridge and the weir, including the upgrading of the weir gates and the landscaping of the northern side of the Torrens River at that location. At that time, I approached the then Premier, John Bannon, asking him to provide 25 per cent

financial support for the upgrading of that area, and I saw nothing—not one cent towards it.

This Liberal Government is committed to cleaning up the stinking black mess that has been polluting the western suburbs beaches for the past 25 years. Through constant lobbying and pressure on members of the Government, I intend to deliver that goal to my electorate as a lasting legacy to the young children of South Australia. It is a goal worthy of achieving and a goal the Labor Party failed to address.

In the 11 years that Labor was in office, it did nothing but put the problems of the Patawalonga and the Torrens River in the too hard basket. In those 11 years, whenever the Patawalonga issue was raised, Labor failed the public of South Australia and the community of Colton. Whenever the Torrens River issue was raised during those 11 years, Labor failed the public and community of Colton. Let me put on record, so it can be raised during the election, that Labor had a partner in Bob Randall, a former defeated Mayor of the Henley and Grange Council. He also failed his community. He failed to pressure the Labor Government of the day to address the issue and take responsibility for the continual pollution of the beaches of Henley and Grange from the Torrens River outlet.

This pollution continually destroyed the seagrasses of Gulf St Vincent and the breeding grounds of marine life which are vital to the supply of seafoods to the public of South Australia. It was interesting to note that Mayor Nadilo of the City of Holdfast Bay had a shot at the Government, saying it was worried about the political liability in diverting stormwater through a channel at West Beach. I find it unbelievable that a member of the Patawalonga Catchment Board, and who has a vested interest, should try to pressure the Government into building an open channel and diverting it straight out to West Beach, when the board has yet to make any decision on what it will do with the Patawalonga.

I believe that Mayor Nadilo should step down from that board, because I do not think he has the interests of the public of South Australia at heart. At a meeting some 15 months ago, when members of the Henley and Grange Residents Association were present, Mayor Nadilo said he was opposed to an open channel. Now he wants to see one built immediately. He is being environmentally irresponsible and only concerned with his own backyard. He says the pollution comes down from the Sturt Creek. What he fails to tell the people of South Australia is that, every time there is a heavy downpour, all the rubbish, leaves and cartons, etc, that sit in the gutters at Glenelg, are fed into the stormwater pipes and directly into the Patawalonga. I imagine that he would also want those stormwater pipes fed into the diverted channel away from his city so that it can pass further north towards West Beach, Henley and Grange.

I ask Mayor Nadilo to consider the coast as a whole for all people, because why should the people of Colton cop his garbage? Responsible environmental action to clean up the Patawalonga is simple. The continuation of the installation of trash racks, the establishment of five wetlands to act as the kidneys for the catchment, the diversion of the Heathfield treated effluent, and a tidal flushing system, similar to that at West Lakes, would win the praise of the Government from the environmentalists and the support of all political Parties.

Finally, with respect to my good friend the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who I know likes to stir things up, let us hope the shadow Minister for the Arts does not go on holidays next Christmas, because I do not want to hear him commenting on ballet and opera during the break!

Mr VENNING (Custance): I support the Bill. In doing so, I want to remind the House how much the Barossa Valley is booming. A change of Government, more than anything else, has meant a new direction for South Australia's jewel. At the moment, the change in this region is absolutely phenomenal. Everybody wants to be part of the action. Confidence is our greatest attribute, and we certainly have plenty of that. The wine industry is booming. We all know that, after a time of boom, we always have a downer, and in this instance no-one can forecast when that downer will come. We have already had six years of fantastic prices, and we cannot see the end of it. It has been an absolutely fantastic success.

The tourism industry is also enjoying great success, and the Barossa is really an international tourism icon for Australia. In fact, it is now the second most popularly visited area in Australia, with the Gold Coast and the Great Barrier Reef being the most popular. The restaurant, food and wine industry is really on a high.

The passenger rail trial was a great success, and I hope this will be implemented on a full time basis in the near future. I know that a survey is being done at the moment, and I hope that survey brings it about. I was a passenger on one of the trains, and I certainly had a great time, as did all the other passengers on the day. The last two trains were booked out. The building of the new Tanunda Primary School will commence next week, when the oval and trees will be planted. We will have filtered water in the Barossa, a promise from this House for over 30 years which will be delivered, and work on that site has started. I will visit the site shortly.

On 30 May we will see the opening of the Barossa Convention Centre, a fantastic project! I congratulate the Government yet again on its involvement by providing \$1.5 million over five years—the catalyst that made this fantastic project come about. The Barossa is really on a roll, and we need to maximise our opportunities as the time is certainly ripe. Everybody wants to be part of the action in the Barossa in every way. But, as soon as people apply for permission to build or change the land use, they are confronted by planning regulations. In my opinion, the interpretations of the Development Commission are certainly far too rigid.

The fabric of the Barossa Valley review, which is the Planning Act in relation to the region, has to be protected at all cost, because we need to protect the valley floor for our greatest asset, and I refer to the vineyards. However, existing business has to be allowed to expand and change its land use, and we have to establish new and more attractive areas. I refer to a business that was processing corks. A French immigrant, currently successfully processing corks, wanted to go into barrel making, with new technology, making veneer barrels, including a wire element inside the veneer so the barrels could be heated to assist premature ageing.

I was quite taken aback by this technology. He was not allowed to build the barrels because it involved a change of land use, even though he had a shed and was working with corks. I had some difficulty with that, because the plan is quite restrictive when it says that there shall not be a change of land use. Also, if you want to expand your shed or your business, you are allowed to expand only up to 25 per cent, as long as the operation preceded a certain date. If it was after that date, you are not allowed to expand at all. I find this restriction intolerable and I have had many people come into my office wishing to be a part of the confidence in the valley, only to be disappointed with these restrictions.

We have to establish a new and more attractive industrial area in the region. This should certainly not be in the valley floor, but it must be in the close environs, so that some of the industry can harness the related tourist potential. For instance, barrel making has a tourist potential, and the operation should not be too far away, otherwise people would not be able to see you or know where you were. Plenty of industries want to be part of the action, and the answer should never be 'No.' We should say, 'Yes, we welcome you, but there are restrictions on the vineyard ground, although we have good sites nearby that will suit you.'

This is a very emotive issue in the Barossa region at the moment. I inadvertently had an article on the front page of the local paper last week, and nothing I have done before or since has created so much interest. The Barossa Valley region is certainly divided on the issue. When I went about the valley on the weekend on social functions, I certainly ran into a hot argument. Some people supported me and patted me on the back, whereas others met me with a very sharp tongue in relation to the same comments that I am making now. I never intended my comments to make the front page: I merely made comments in relation to a phone call from a local journalist and thought I was adding a couple of paragraphs to an article he was writing. To see all my comments taking up half the front page certainly made me refocus in a great hurry. As I said, this is a very emotive issue, but I am confident that the new Barossa council will take it in hand, address the problems and review the Planning Act in relation to the Barossa.

I would be the first to agree that the review document is a living document and, as such, should be regularly revisited as circumstances arise. We have seen many people involved in wine related industries wishing to increase their activities in the Barossa Valley. In fact, there is a phenomenal potential for increase there. We have to facilitate that and make the most of the opportunities, because the confidence and popularity will not last forever. As in any business, there is a rapid rise, there is a bubble, but we know what comes after a boom: there is a bust. This will not be a bust but purely a plateauing out of the activities. So, when wine related industries such as barrel making, corks, stainless steel tanks, plumbing, label making and glass make inquiries, they have to be encouraged to come in.

I have also had problems with the Development Assessment Commission (DAC), the Native Vegetation Council and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Unjust restrictions apply to legitimate sustainable development, particularly with wood harvesting licences. Ever since I have been a member—which is seven years—particularly over the past four years, there has been a problem relating to Mr And Mrs Hugh Sobey from Blanchetown—Mr Lewis would know these people—who wish to renew a wood harvesting licence, and for four years they have been given the run around. These people own thousands of hectares of native mallee and they are forbidden from having any licence at all, just to harvest a small portion of it. I have brought up this matter with the Minister over the past four years, and we do not seem to be getting any closer to fixing it. It is not the Minister's fault at all: I believe it is more the fault of his department—his bureaucrats. We have to get through—

Mr Clarke: Who is in charge of the department?

Mr VENNING: People who you left there. Maybe you did; I am not sure. However, I am certainly very concerned about it. Further, a young man who wishes to build a house on the family farm in the Barossa region is not allowed to do so because the land is not contingent, that is, joining. There

are enough acres there. All agree that the intent of the Act would apply and that there is enough land but, because it is not contingent, he has been refused permission, even though the Barossa council has agreed that he should be allowed to continue. These are the things that frustrate people. These are the issues that make it hard for local members, and the member for Ross Smith would not have to encounter issues such as this. However, I do, and I get pretty cross.

Also, the non-policing by DAC of illegal moorings on the Murray annoys me. Certain people up there in financial difficulty are trying to do the right thing. Because the policy is not policed—because it is said that there is not time—certain people are in financial difficulty. Much of this started when Labor was in power, and I do not believe we have done enough to lift these unfair restrictions.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): I take up where I left off during the course of my remarks on this measure when we were last debating it in the House and refresh members' memories of the situation in which we find ourselves. I would like to draw members' attention to the tables which I previously incorporated—and, of course, I cannot reincorporate them—in the remarks I made between pages 923 and 928 of *Hansard* of 11 February. What I have provided for members are tables which set out the statistical information enabling us to develop a better understanding of our potential markets for things we grow and things we make and sell to the East Asian area, and how that compares in trading terms with other States and countries to illustrate that point—and in other countries I include the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Pakistan and what used to be called the USSR, which is now loosely referred to as the Commonwealth of Independent States (the CIS, in our abbreviated form).

I pointed out that our best market for products that we make and/or grow is prospectively in Korea, and the statistics show that to be the case. Our best market for visitors (tourists), in terms of potential, is Korea, and the growth from there has been huge. There has never been a tourist growth from one country to another as great as has been the growth in recent times from Korea to Australia, yet South Australia has missed out on that. There has been over 1 800 per cent—that is an 18 fold—increase in a very short space of time in the number of visitors from Korea to Australia, yet no such comparable increase in the number of visitors coming from that country to South Australia.

We seem to be ignoring the huge expansion taking place. Yet, what we have to offer is what they seek, and I proved that, in spite of the scurrilous, ridiculous, outrageous, deceitful and malicious statements made by the *Advertiser* about the research which I did into Korean visitors and what they seek when they come to this country, when it attacked me, saying that it was making members' overseas travel more accountable. For God's sake, if you take a group of people in market research across this country and invite them to indicate to you in an objective fashion as you assess their responses what they like about what they are doing and what they are seeing, I cannot see what that has to do with an MP spending money on overseas travel. The travel I was doing was coincidental to the research and it was within this country.

I will mention in passing a couple of other facts about visitors. South Australia had a reasonable share of the Indonesian market in 1990. It was about 10.7 per cent of the total number of visitors from Indonesia. Yet, in spite of the fact that we had someone in an office in Jakarta advocating

for us, over the five year period on record since that time the figures dropped dramatically to 2.9 per cent of the national share. The national figures from Indonesia to Australia are the fourth highest. For us, it is abysmal: we have gone backwards. In terms of our potential for growth, it is clear that Korea, Taiwan and Thailand are the main contenders, but the most outstanding is Korea because of the kind of experience a Korean tourist seeks. It is very different from the Japanese.

The number of visitors to South Australia during the past five years from East Asian countries (as cited in the tables) has increased by 2 643 whilst the national figure has increased by 913 000. South Australia's growth is .3 of 1 per cent of that increase. This has resulted in a dramatic collapse of South Australia's overseas tourist share. South Australia is suffering: there is something wrong with our overseas marketing strategy. Our share of the overall national number of East Asian visitors has fallen from 5.2 per cent in 1990 to 2.4 per cent in 1995. That is what Francis Wong, the Managing Director of Encounter Australia, said in the *Advertiser* recently. He went on to say:

If South Australia were able to attain a 5.2 per cent share, we could more than double our current amount of 39 275 to 84 140 visitors.

That is a reasonable figure to expect, and that is what it should be now, given our infrastructure and our capacity to absorb and look after those people when they come here to visit. East Asia is a huge market, and if we cannot increase our share of it we will lose millions of dollars. East Asia is becoming more prosperous, and more and more East Asians are coming to Australia every year, as is shown clearly in these tables. They are spending more and more money during each visit, as the Australian Tourism Commission's research reveals. South Australia needs to respond now to this situation. The potential for a huge increase in extra earnings in this industry is very high, and we need to take advantage of it. I point out that the South Australian Tourism Commission's budget for promoting South Australia in Asia is only \$1.014 million. What a pity!

I refer now to the third category of exports, the one to which I refer as 'the students'. They bring money to spend here in the process of getting their education. There are great benefits in that for us, because once they have lived here they get to know our products, they make friends, and they make contact with our businesses. Not only do they continue to spend money here but they will order and re-order from businesses and suppliers of goods and services (related to the profession or trade that they have acquired during the course of their education) with which they had contact while they were here. They will come back to see their friends, and they will be advocates back home for us. We need to do more about making sure that they know, first, that they are welcome, more particularly and, secondly, that we can provide high quality services in much the same way as the Premier referred to earlier today in answer to a question about the opening of the new campus of the University of South Australia and, thirdly, that they enjoy cost savings from coming here. It is a cost-effective place to visit. We have high standards with recognised world-wide qualifications provided by our institutions, whether they be secondary, post secondary or tertiary, and those qualifications are obtainable at a lower cost than from our overseas or interstate competitors. Yet, we do not package or market them as well as we could.

I am most anxious to ensure that we understand the prospects we have of attracting more of that money to South

Australia. At present, the number of East Asian students who come to Australia is 63 285 but South Australia's share of that market is only 4.6 per cent. Indeed, 85.8 per cent of the total number of overseas students who come to Australia are from East Asian countries. In 1995, in only two cases South Australia had a share of over 5 per cent, and they were students from Malaysia and Vietnam. In each case, the figure was slightly over 8 per cent. The numbers of all overseas students from selected East Asian countries to Australia have experienced significant growth since 1989, apart from China, which for obvious political reasons is diminishing rapidly. Tiananmen Square and the way in which the administration dealt with that situation indicates that China does not want its people to go overseas to study and pick up ideas of democracy.

The largest number of overseas students came from Hong Kong with 12 143; Singapore, 9 400; Malaysia, 11 100; and Indonesia, 8 500. Korea is the big market and looks to be the next expanding market with a 215 per cent growth since 1989. There are now about 6 000 students in Australia from Korea, yet South Australia received only a 2.5 per cent share (236 students) of the total number of students who came to Australia from Singapore in 1995.

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

Motion carried.

Bill taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Yesterday, I was privileged to be one of the speakers at the On Farm training scheme which was conducted by the Spencer Institute of TAFE and which was held at Maitland. The On Farm training scheme has been very successful over a number of years. It consists of a two year course. On this occasion, some 24 students have enrolled, most of them being aged between 18 and 30 years. In fact, I would say that they are all significantly less than 30 years. From what I could see yesterday, they are a keen group of young farmers, and in many cases their parents were also present. I could not be present for the whole of the day, but I spent a rewarding morning there.

The President of the South Australian Farmers Federation was the guest speaker. I would like to compliment the President on the speech he gave as I am sure that these young farmers would have gained considerably from it. Cheryl Thomas, a representative from BHP, was also present. I was pleased to see that BHP is making available raw steel products for any young people who want to participate in a competition being run by BHP regarding the construction of an item that will be useful to the rural community. We will hear more about that as the year progresses. Judging will take place in about July-August, and the winner will be announced shortly after. I congratulate BHP and I thank the company for its encouragement of young people in rural areas and for its very real monetary contribution. It is almost certain that many tonnes of steel will be provided by BHP free of charge for those persons who wish to enter the competition. Any person who wishes to ascertain more information should contact BHP at its premises on Greenhill Road.

The On Farm training scheme provides farmers with the opportunity to pick up various farming skills. The participants come from all over my electorate—in fact, from all over Yorke Peninsula and beyond. I met people from Snowtown, Warooka, Yorketown and throughout that area. The reaction from students in past years has been, without doubt, very positive. I compliment the Spencer Institute of TAFE for the enthusiasm with which this course is conducted and, in particular, the key lecturer, Mr Doug Greig. Doug seems to have that ability to impart the various skills necessary, yet allow students a sense of freedom so that they do not feel they are completely tied down. At graduation ceremonies I have attended, it is really something to see the humour that comes out as the students look back over two years of work.

I also compliment the Minister for Primary Industries for having recently made training grants available to boost farm skills. In fact, the young people undertaking the On Farm training scheme will be eligible to apply for an individual grant to help offset the cost of this scheme. As members would appreciate, a needs criterion applies to these training grants. However, I am given to understand that maximum flexibility will be applied. The Government is seeking to assist the farming sector so that those farmers experiencing financial difficulty in meeting the costs of this training program will not have that difficulty. I would be very surprised if any farmer who genuinely had some financial problems were knocked back. In using the term 'farmer', I understand that some young female farmers are also undertaking this On Farm training course.

The training grants are only part of what the State Government is currently offering farmers. Members would be aware that the farm plan grant of up to \$3 000 has been available for some years now, enabling farmers to obtain independent, detailed property planning advice plus technical advice. I am very pleased that many farmers in my electorate have taken advantage of this. We also now have a group training grant which provides up to 75 per cent of the cost to farmers who wish to undertake a group training activity. The maximum level of support is \$50 000 in any one year and the cost per group member shall not exceed \$3 000. Again, it is an opportunity for those farmers who believe they would gain from a group training scheme.

It has been interesting to follow the rural adjustment scheme over the years. There is no doubt that it progressively changed during the 1970s and 1980s with long-term concessional loans being replaced by interest rate subsidies, training grants and on farm advisory grants. In addition, re-establishment grants are available to those farmers who do not have long-term prospects and who wish to leave the industry. But let us hope that those people will be few and far between as we, hopefully, come out of the rural recession that hit South Australia very hard between 1990 and 1993. There was a combination of factors, including high interest rates—some farmers paying as much as 26 per cent on some of their loans—and low commodity prices. Commodity prices for grains reached a low during this period, the price of wool collapsed dramatically and, likewise, the price for mutton.

It was a very depressing period, a period that I hope South Australia will not have to go through again during my lifetime. It caused immeasurable harm to the rural sector, and it is very clear even today that we have not come out of that recession. Whilst there have been two relatively good years for many farmers, there is no doubt that, by and large, it has been a consolidating period. Certainly, money is now being spent but it will take a considerable time before we see the

rural sector bounce back. If we also tie in the financial situation of this State due to the State Bank debt and other financial mismanagement, we can understand that the combined effect has been far from positive on the rural sector: in fact, it has been very negative.

Time does not permit me to highlight the many other things that this Government is seeking to do and is doing for rural people, ranging from export development in Asia through to industry development boards and crop improvement centres, including a new development program for the lamb industry as well as the Shandong beef project. I compliment the young people who have undertaken the On Farm training scheme and I am pleased that the Government in its own way is able to assist the rural sector as is currently being done.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): The issue I want to raise today is something that quite a few of my constituents who reside along the banks of the Torrens have brought to my attention and, in fact, having walked along the Torrens on many occasions, I certainly concur in their concerns. Constituents who often walk along the pathways have become increasingly appalled at the environmental damage and the dangerous situation that has developed as a result of erosion along those banks. The problems have arisen since the commencement of the public works in 1988 and the Government's acquisition of private land for the linear flood park mitigation scheme. Work was undertaken to dredge the channel at the bottom of Pitman Road and lay back the banks to establish the present path on the eastern side. Very little work was undertaken on the western side. Some non-native vegetation, including a large poplar tree and some olive trees, a pumphouse and an even older pump were removed but banks were not realigned and the pine trees were left.

In December 1991 the Torrens River flooded, and within 12 hours six enormous pine trees were swept away along with a great deal of acquired land. Other portions of the river have also suffered damage. Farther upstream at Lagonda Drive, Windsor Gardens, the banks were not repaired and the orange plastic warning fence is still there from the December 1991 floods.

My understanding is that the then EWS undertook to repair the worst of the damage. The repair consisted of covering the banks with a type of fabric and dumping huge quantities of rocks on top. The western bank was the last section to be done and when residents queried why they were doing only some of it they were informed by the workers that they had run out of rocks. In October 1996 the river was again very high and the current round of further damage occurred. The water level rose for a couple of days and the banks were again undermined, this time to within approximately two metres of the bike track at one point adjacent to a residential property.

As the banks are quite steep this is becoming a compounding problem with both public safety and private property being threatened. In addition, many of the rocks dumped last time in the name of so-called repair are now lying in the middle of the channel further disrupting the water flow. This situation continues to have a negative impact for residents in both aesthetics and property value terms as well as creating further environmental damage. Clearly the initial work on the old river did not take into account the fact that, if one bank is recontoured and the other is not, something has to give.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that there is a large outfall pipe on the opposite bank which plays a part in

redirecting the flow to the western bank. Prior to the old scheme the outfall was surrounded by undergrowth and set well back into the bank. The realignment took away the bank and the rocks were placed in front of it. The water hits the wall and is deflected towards where the damage is occurring. The river has shifted an alarming amount in the past five years—so the people who reside along there tell me—and that can be witnessed by the build-up of sand on the other side. Some 50 metres of river bank have eroded since the 1991 floods. Another flood will sever the pathway and expose underground public lighting cables.

The Walkerville council's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ron Wallace, outlined in a letter to me the concerns of his and other councils at the lack of progress to fix up the damage and complete the linear park project. In outlining his alarm at the current damage to public safety he said:

I submit that in some areas the situation is dangerous and urgent maintenance and remedial work is required in the interests of public safety, and we believe that SA Water is responsible for ensuring that this work is carried out as soon as practicable.

Residents are also concerned about having paid a levy to assist in the linear park flood development scheme, but as yet they have seen very little if anything for their money. They want to know what has happened to the capital levy already extracted from ratepayers. We know that work is being undertaken in areas along the river, but I point out to members that the area around Windsor Gardens is in a particularly fragile state; the bridges across the walkways are being damaged and it will not be long before they will disappear as well.

On behalf of the residents who have approached me I ask the Minister to take seriously the need to immediately take some action to remove the dangers and hazards related to this flood damage. We look forward to seeing something done along this stretch of the river. My constituents are most anxious and many are concerned about loss of property if something is not done soon.

Motion carried.

At 4.38 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 26 February at 2 p.m.