

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 19 March 1997

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

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) BILL

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

MEADOWS POLICE STATION

A petition signed by 606 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to establish a police station in Meadows was presented by the Hon. D.C. Wotton.

Petition received.

GLENTHORNE RESEARCH STATION

A petition signed by 1 054 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to obtain ownership of 'Glenthorne' at O'Halloran Hill from the Federal Government and develop the site for community use was presented by Ms Greig.

Petition received.

RURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN (Minister for Primary Industries)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN**: The State Government continues to support the Rural Partnership Program being run by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy. Last week I accepted the Riverland regional strategy report which hopes to target that program. The member for Chaffey first organised a community delegation in June 1996 to meet with me in seeking support for a Rural Partnership Program. The RPP provides a framework for rural communities to access a range of Commonwealth, State and regional programs to achieve an integrated approach to regional development.

The Riverland submission follows a successful outcome from the Eyre Peninsula strategy which resulted in a RPP for that region. That has brought into the EP funding in excess of \$11 million for a range of work. It also led to the approval of a \$1.8 million boost to the Minnipa Research Centre. Rural Partnership Programs when implemented help lead to long-term viability to the regions. My office is now progressing the RPP submission from the Riverland along with a proposal for the Murraylands region which followed a similar strategy released last month.

The Riverland submission was based largely on the 1994 Riverland development strategy and has used the existing local reference groups as the sounding board for community input, and I congratulate the Riverland Development Corporation and the local councils for their work. The Riverland strategy report has focussed on catering for long-term change in the region. Irrigated horticulture is critical to

the Riverland economy, contributing \$360 million gross value at the farm gate in 1995. Many initiatives are outlined in the strategy which will provide opportunities to increase the volume and quality of our horticultural produce.

The grower, industry and business support already shown in this program suggests a great degree of confidence in the future of the region, and there is a window of opportunity for continued economic development. The member for Chaffey has lobbied effectively for the horticultural industry and is keen for us to maximise the economic return to the industry and the people of the Riverland.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr VENNING (Custance): I bring up the twenty-third report of the committee, being the annual report 1995-96, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion carried.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

UNITED WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Given that United Water is contractually bound to provide the Minister with an industry development report on 28 February 1997, has this report been received and, if so, did it advise the Minister that United Water had failed the company's contractual commitments for economic development in 1996?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition has a leaked document—

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: —I am not sure which one it is—which details the requirement for United Water to provide an industry development report by 28 February each year. Yesterday the Minister told the House:

... it is my understanding that the contractual arrangements have been fulfilled and that a full report on the detail and extent will be with me in the next few weeks.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I thank the honourable member for his question. The answer is, 'Yes, it has been received.' As I said yesterday, it is being appraised by Arthur Anderson, and a report is expected at the end of this month.

HEALTH FUNDING

Mrs HALL (Coles): Does the Premier have any information on the capacity of the South Australian health system to absorb funding cuts by the Federal Government? I understand that, prior to this year's Premiers' Conference, the Federal

Government warned the States that they risk losing Federal health funding unless they improve hospital care and maintain hospital budgets.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I thank the member for Coles for this particularly important question, which was raised at the Leaders' meeting in Melbourne a fortnight ago. It would seem that most States throughout Australia are experiencing the same difficulties in the provision of essential hospital services, and this is a greater crisis in a number of the other States of Australia compared to that in South Australia. It needs to be borne in mind that the 1997 report on Government service provision states that the SA hospital system leads the nation in providing more health services more efficiently. I think the Minister for Health can take some credit for the way in which over the past three years we have positioned ourselves in South Australia.

Based on the latest results reported by the steering committee for the review of Commonwealth State services provision, South Australia provides more hospital beds per 1 000 people than anywhere else in Australia; a higher bed occupancy rate than any other State in Australia; the second shortest clearance time for elective surgery waiting lists in comparison with other jurisdictions; and more episodes of care per 1 000 people—public and private—than the national average. That is a benchmark for which South Australia can hold its head up high in the national arena. That does not mean to say that, in the negotiations with the Commonwealth, the States do not need further protection in respect of funding for the provision of essential services such as health—it is needed. South Australians, particularly our health workers in country and city hospitals, should be proud of their achievements and what that report has highlighted about service delivery for South Australians. Whilst we are heavy users of health, because we have an older population than other States, South Australia runs an efficient operation which delivers high quality health care to patients. Our health financing initiatives have played a key role in health care delivery.

I was concerned to read reports that the Federal Minister for Health had warned the States that they would lose Federal health funding unless they improved hospital care and maintained hospital budgets. Based on the performance in the reports, he must be talking more about the other States of Australia rather than South Australia in respect of what has been achieved to date. I certainly draw the Federal Minister's attention to the Government's service provision report, which indicates that South Australia has the lowest cost per casemix adjusted service of any State or Territory. South Australians are getting hospital care at a relatively low cost. Incidentally, one of the main beneficiaries of the South Australian hospital system is the Commonwealth Treasury.

Clearly, funding for hospitals in the future is a key area. That is why the Leaders have indicated that, in the Premiers' Conference and Loan Council meetings and to be listed in the COAG meeting later this year, a key feature will be health funding; the crisis that has been experienced in a number of States of Australia in relation to the provision of health services (albeit that South Australia is ahead of the ball park with respect to the other States of Australia); and identifying the growth in public hospital demand, which is outstripping the States' ability to meet that demand, as people move out of the private health system and onto the public health system, with the 2 per cent trigger to offset the cost of people shifting from the private health system into the public health system.

That, together with the need to maintain and increase the level of funding, is a key issue that has to be debated in Canberra. Clearly, we also need to look at the provision of health services into the next decade. How do we innovatively meet the health requirements of South Australians in the future? How do we do it in a way that benchmarks us ahead of the other States of Australia whilst providing and maintaining that health provision service? The Minister has undertaken a number of studies and implemented a number of policies that have enabled us to move forward in those benchmarks as the surveys and reports have clearly identified. All the carping from the member for Elizabeth will not take away from the fact that these independent reports have identified how in a number of key areas South Australia has been able to benchmark itself ahead of the other States of Australia. For that the Minister deserves credit.

THAMES WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I direct my question to the Minister for Infrastructure.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Local Government and the member for Mawson are out of order.

Mr FOLEY: Why did Thames Water fail to meet a contractual requirement of the water outsourcing contract to transfer Thames Water's Asia Pacific Procurement Division from Melbourne to Adelaide within three months as a specified key commitment in the contract; and why has the Government failed to impose the contract penalty of \$2 million for non-performance? The Opposition has received another leaked document—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want the member for Hart put off. The member for Hart has the floor.

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition has another leaked document that details a key commitment that Thames Water's Asia Pacific Procurement Division would transfer from Adelaide to Melbourne within three months of the commencement of the contract.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: From Melbourne to Adelaide; you are right.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

Mr FOLEY: I will repeat the question. The Opposition has another leaked document that details a key commitment that Thames Water's Asia Pacific Procurement Division would transfer from Melbourne to Adelaide within three months of the commencement date of the water contract. The document states that, upon the complete relocation of Thames Water's Asia Pacific operations, approximately 100 people would be employed. A further leaked document shows that the penalty for Thames Water's not complying with this contract condition is \$2 million, payable within 20 days of demand by the Minister for Infrastructure.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Obviously, in his days off the honourable member did not take the time and the effort to look at *Hansard*. If he had he would know that I answered this question yesterday.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): Will the Minister for Emergency Services advise the House on the current status of the State Emergency Service and also how he sees its future role, given that this service is one of the most important volunteer community service providers in South Australia?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Clearly, one of the most important issues in the provision of emergency services is the fact that we have now doubled the total amount of matching funds and that we have increased the budget from \$215 000 to \$422 000. This sort of increase has a very significant impact in terms of the community benefit within both the city and country areas. The emergency services area came to the forefront in the recent floods in the north of the State. The fact that all the volunteers did such a fantastic job up there highlights that more money and equipment is needed to carry out these services within the State. As I mentioned, by putting that extra money in, clearly both the city and the country would benefit.

Last year, some 59 000 volunteer hours related to the SES and some 3 603 tasks were attended to. They combined themselves with the CFS, the police, the Metropolitan Fire Service, the Ambulance Service and generally the community. It is a significant community benefit, a benefit of which this Government should be proud.

PICA ACTIVATED CARBON

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is again directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Why did United Water fail to meet the company's contractual commitment that Pica Activated Carbon would establish a \$30 million processing and packaging plant in South Australia by the end of 1996?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition has another leaked document—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to members on my right that interjections are unnecessary and unwise. The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition has another leaked document which shows that, as part of the industry development program under the water outsourcing contract, United Water agreed to establish Pica Activated Carbon Australia Pty Ltd regional headquarters for South-East Asia and a \$30 million processing plant in South Australia before—

Mr BASS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The question was asked in just about the same detail yesterday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will calm down. The Chair has just been given a copy of the question. I do not propose to make an immediate ruling on the matter. I ask the member for Hart whether he has a further question to ask, but I suggest to him clearly that it not be a repetition of a question asked yesterday. I will examine this question. The Chair has been most tolerant.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Speaker, I give you my commitment that this is not a repetition. My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Has United Water met the company's commitment to establish a major research and development facility in Adelaide by December 1996? The Opposition has yet another leaked document, which details United Water's

key contractual commitment to establish a research facility in Adelaide to undertake research in the Asia-Pacific region by United Water, Thames Water and CGE. The contract required the facility to be completed by the first anniversary of the contract on 18 December 1996. A further leaked document states that the penalty under the contract for non-performance of this key commitment is \$1 million, payable within 20 days of demand by the Minister for Infrastructure.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: A document supplied to me—and it was not leaked—states:

Research and development

Central to the creation of the Adelaide node and technology transfer from the parent companies has been the input of new resources in the form of staff secondments:

Terry Simms (T.W.) arrived in Adelaide January 1996, full time R & D manager.

Chris Bosher (T.W.) Research Engineer, arrived August 1996, full time, working on WPS, composting and running the Bolivar DAFF pilot plant.

Do you want me to go on? The document continues:

Lawrence Le Grand, Research Scientist, arrived May 1996 and spent six months running the Bolivar BNR pilot plant and input to health alert technical issues.

Slim Zegal (CGE three months in Adelaide) and Sian Hills (T.W.) based in Paris and the UK respectively, input 50 per cent of their total time to the Adelaide node.

Additionally, significant support—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Just give me time; we wrote the whole lot out for you. It continues:

Additionally, significant support and site visits from a number of technical specialists. A video conference suite has been established at Greenhill Road to enable 'face to face' discussion to take place between technical specialists. A presentation of the R&D strategic approach and visions of partnering with SA Water, developing reference sites was made to Ted Phipps at SA Water.

Presentations have also been made to the AWWA water industry conference in Sydney and the University of South Australia and the TAFE institute.

Clearly, the research and develop concept and programs in relation to this contract are being looked at with regard to the three partners.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HOUSING TRUST STOCK

Mr ROSSI (Lee): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing.

Mr Lewis: And he's not leaking around the place, either.

Mr ROSSI: No, he is not leaking either.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will ask his question and not comment.

Mr ROSSI: Will the Minister inform the House what work is being undertaken by the Housing Trust to improve areas which it developed many years ago and which no longer meet community requirements for accommodation?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: One of the great dilemmas we in South Australia face is that we have the largest component of public housing stock anywhere in Australia. We also have some of the oldest stock in Australia. Having the largest stock gives you greater flexibility, but having some of the oldest stock causes some difficulties in terms of that flexibility. As a Government, we have embarked on a whole process of change within the public housing portfolio. I would like to relate some of those changes to the House, because they are important. It is interesting to note that, in a national survey on satisfaction within the public housing sector, we finish

about second to Queensland in terms of the way people who live in Housing Trust accommodation feel about the service they are getting. So, despite the fact that it becomes difficult on occasions, there is no doubt that our tenants appreciate the level of commitment of the Government.

In terms of the stock, it is recognised that many areas are very old, where the houses have become dilapidated over a period time and where people simply do not want to live. That is recognised. We have vacancies in houses that we would like occupied. Regarding the initiatives necessary to change that profile of the housing stock, we have seen a number of important initiatives—some by the previous Government, obviously—in terms of the rejuvenation of older areas. Included in that is the Rosewood estate at Elizabeth, and Hillcrest is now being rejuvenated.

We also have The Vines development in Mitchell Park, which I was pleased to open. The total redevelopment of the area covers about 500 houses and it is an excellent redevelopment, as the honourable member quipped. The Vines redevelopment itself covers a total public and private investment of about \$12 million. Across the whole suburb, there are changes taking place over about 500 houses. I suggest that people who would wish to see what can happen to an old Housing Trust area and the changes that have taken place take the opportunity to visit The Vines.

In terms of the challenges, one of the large areas which is under consideration at the moment, which has been under consideration for some time and where we are working towards what I hope will be a good economic and social solution is, of course, is The Parks. The ingredients in these redevelopment programs are many fold, but they rely on two components, that is, not only uplifting the quality of the stock but also reducing the concentration of public housing in that stock. We believe that a concentration of three private to one public may, indeed, give a good community mix, which will be of benefit to new investors coming into the area as well as existing tenants. That is being managed, and we hope to have some announcements shortly on how we can proceed with that important development.

In addition to the redevelopment items, obviously some stock will be sold off so that we can meet our housing commitments, and that is totally appropriate. We are also looking at the relationship between the private and the public sectors, and we have seen that occur with The Vines project. We wish to see that happen with The Parks in a way which is conducive to a change of mix and which will bring about a quality outcome in the redevelopment so that people can feel proud of their accommodation.

With respect to cooperative housing and housing associations, we have been moving a number of Housing Trust houses into those sectors, because we believe that self-management means pride in ownership, not in a pseudo sense but in a real sense for people living in those houses. That becomes a very important component of maintaining not only good stock but also clientele who want to take an active interest in maintaining that stock. A number of changes are taking place. We are putting a lot of effort into getting the dollars and cents right and ensuring that we are going in the right directions. Members will see more announcements in relation to what is happening with the Housing Trust and how we must grapple with the significant difficulties we face with ageing stock.

UNITED WATER

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order taken by the member for Florey and draw the attention of members to Erskine May in relation to inadmissible questions, which include questions which repeat in substance a question already answered or to which an answer has been refused; questions multiplied with slight variations on the same point are inadmissible. The member for Hart.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY (Hart): It is your embarrassment, not mine.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want any interjections.

Mr FOLEY: If you have something to hide, that is your problem.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I will withdraw leave and call on the next question.

Mr FOLEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Did Kinhill Engineering meet the company's key contractual targets for international projects, staffing and revenue from overseas contracts in 1996 and, if not, what action has the Government taken? The Opposition has another leaked copy of the contractual commitment made by Kinhill Engineering to include projects throughout Asia and proposed infrastructure projects in West Java, Indonesia, under the United Water deal. The 1996 contract targets included six projects, 20 staff and a revenue of \$5 million. On 10 February 1997, United Water announced that it had lost more than \$20 million of export contracts and had not met export targets for 1996.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I think I can remember giving this information earlier today, but I might have to repeat it for the benefit of the honourable member. I will tell the honourable member what is happening with the annual performance appraisal. Arthur Andersen has been engaged to audit the net exports. SA Water, with Arthur Andersen, will conclude this appraisal at the end of March. The appraisal will be provided to United Water and a ministerial review meeting will take place on 24 April as required.

DOCTORS, RURAL

Mr VENNING (Custance): My question is directed to the—

Members interjecting:

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

Mr VENNING:—Minister for Health. Will the Minister inform the House of any Government initiatives to foster the recruitment and retention of rural doctors? A shortage of doctors in country South Australia has been a long-term problem and a cause of great concern in those regions.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I thank the member for Custance for his question, which raises a very important issue affecting many thousands of South Australians living in rural areas. Last week the Premier launched the Rural Health Enhancement Package, which was aimed at recruiting and retaining doctors in regional South Australia. It has started to

pay dividends already, with interest coming into the Health Commission from metropolitan Adelaide doctors who are willing to work in the country as a result of the new package. That might best be exemplified by the representative of the AMA, who was at the launch giving support to the package and who indicated that it might well influence his decision so that he might return to the country.

All Australian States have difficulties attracting doctors into country areas, as the member for Custance indicated, and South Australia is no different. The Rural Health Enhancement Package, we believe, will attract more country doctors and hence provide better health services. The package is the best in Australia and we are confident that it will attract doctors from throughout this State, potentially interstate and possibly even overseas. In general, the package provides an across-the-board increase in fee for service payments at an average of 25 per cent, an availability allowance and increased money for doctors who carry out relatively specialised services, such as anaesthetics, obstetrics and procedural services.

The total cost on an annual basis is \$6.06 million. Very pleasingly, the package has won great support from the Australian Medical Association and the Rural Doctors Association. In return for taxpayers' money, South Australians will receive commitments through a series of best practice initiatives, such as further involvement in quality assurance and hospital accreditation initiatives, doctors providing medical input to hospital boards via medical advisory committees, commitments to continuing medical education, and primary health care and preventive medicine schemes. The Government is committed to rural South Australia and the Rural Health Enhancement Package is one prime example of that commitment.

UNITED WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Has United Water met its contractual commitments to establish, by the end of 1996, an Australian-wide pipeline company based in Adelaide, what are the details and how many people have been employed? The Opposition has yet another leaked document detailing a commitment by United Water to establish a new business in pipeline inspection, rehabilitation and replacement by December 1996. The document states that United Water will joint venture with CGE and the ABB Construction and Concrete Group to form a new business with a generated turnover of \$2.6 million in the first year and employ 25 locally-based people. This was to have been done by the end of 1996.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I think it is about time we put on the record what happened in another area in which the Auditor-General was involved.

Mr Foley: Answer the question.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I will cite what the Auditor-General said today:

There are two groups of documents. One is the group of documents which was tabled in Parliament by the Premier and we are in receipt of another group of documents which were made available to us by the Leader of the Opposition.

He further said:

. . . there is no information that we have that would lead us to change the view that we expressed in the report that we tabled last year. This is the report on SA Water. There is no information that we

have got that would cause us to want to make a change to the conclusions that we reached at that time.

I think that puts into context all these leaked documents. The Auditor-General was asked:

Have you come across any evidence of any irregularities or corruption?

He replied:

No, there is nothing that we are aware that would cause us to adjust the position that we reported in that report to the Parliament in May last year.

What this purely and simply shows is that all these leaked documents have no credibility whatsoever. The Auditor-General has already said that today—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:—and I have already said that, if any of these documents relate to the appraisal, that will be done in due course. Arthur Andersen and SA Water are doing an audit, and I will receive that report on 24 April this year.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL HELIPAD

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): Will the Minister for Health advise the House of any initiatives to improve medical response to major trauma here in South Australia?

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: It is with great pleasure that I inform the House that last week the Premier officially opened the \$2 million Royal Adelaide Hospital rooftop helipad, which is now the centre for airborne emergency medical retrievals in South Australia. The Premier was accompanied by Formula One Grand Prix driver Mika Hakkinen who, of course, literally owes his life to the emergency treatment performed by the Royal Adelaide Hospital doctors on the track at the 1995 Adelaide Grand Prix. Mika Hakkinen was openly enthusiastic in his praise of the standard of care given at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Helicopters now will be able to fly critically ill and injured people directly to the rooftop helipad of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Until now, helicopters have had to land on Victoria Park racecourse and patients have been transferred on the last leg of the journey to the Royal Adelaide Hospital by road, which means transfers from ambulances, extra time, and so on. It is believed that up to 30 minutes will be slashed from retrieval times and I am informed that, importantly, it is believed that this initiative will save an additional two or three South Australian lives each year as well as leading to greatly improved outcomes for South Australians who receive the most appropriate treatment much more quickly thanks to this initiative. The helicopter will reach people from within a radius of about 200 kilometres of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This will obviously be of enormous benefit to rural patients in areas such as Loxton, Port Pirie, the Barossa Valley, Kadina, Yorketown, Minlaton, and so on.

The Royal Adelaide Hospital undertakes about 400 retrievals by air and, in 1996, 150 of those were by helicopter; the remainder were by the Flying Doctor and winged planes. It is estimated that by the year 2000 about 200 retrievals will be undertaken, so obviously this initiative is of great significance. Work on the lifts on the roofs is progressing apace, and it is understood that by the end of March the helicopter will be able to transfer the patient immediately to

the lift and the lift will go straight to the site of the emergency care for the patient.

I remind the House that the current Opposition, then Government, first thought of this idea in 1987, and it took a Liberal Government to provide this facility, which will directly affect people in the country and save their lives. South Australia has earned a reputation as the national leader in providing airborne retrieval services, and the Government is confident that the opening of the helipad will build on that record.

UNITED WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Why has United Water International failed to honour its contractual commitment that a majority of the company's directors are resident in Australia? The Opposition has—yes—another leaked document, which confirms that the water contract requires that a majority of directors of United Water shall reside in Australia. A check with the Australian Securities Commission on 17 March 1997 showed that six out of the 10 directors of United Water are residents of France or of the United Kingdom.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I was advised at the last meeting of United Water that six out of the 11 directors reside in Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The laws of this House will be enforced. I do not want to speak to anyone again.

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM

Ms GREIG (Reynell): My question is directed to the Minister for the Ageing. What impact has the financial mismanagement of the previous Government had on the provision of funding under the Home and Community Care program for older people in South Australia, carers and those with disabilities, and how does South Australia compare with the national average in relation to *per capita* spending under the Home and Community Care program? Last week the Minister for the Ageing and the Minister for Health jointly announced an extra \$5 million for the HACC program, stating that growth funds in the current year would rise by around 12 per cent, well above the funding commitment over nine years of the previous Labor Government.

The SPEAKER: Before calling the Minister, could I point out to the member for Reynell that the Chair showed some degree of latitude in relation to the asking of that question, because it contained a considerable amount of comment. That is an example of the sort of commenting that is not permitted, and I remind members and people who are preparing questions to bear that in mind. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I can assure the member for Reynell that I am well aware of the disparity in *per capita* spending in South Australia under the Home and Community Care program compared to other States. This directly reflects the legacy left to older South Australians by the former South Australian Labor Government in its disastrous 11 years of administration and financial mismanagement, which culminated in the \$3.5 billion collapse of the State Bank some six years ago. South Australians aged over 65 years now represent 13.5 per cent of the population of this State; that is nearly 200 000 people, or one in four Australian voters. The Home and Community Care program was introduced in

1984-85. In that year a mere \$14 million was allocated for the HACC program by the Labor Government, and in the next nine years it managed to increase spending by only a further \$33 million. That equates to a token \$3.7 million a year.

In comparison, in the past two years alone this Government has already pumped an additional \$14 million into the HACC program, boosting expenditure to more than \$61 million last year. This year total HACC funds are expected to exceed \$67 million: a vast difference from the \$33 million provided by the Labor Government. Yet, because we had to start from such a low base and because of a succession of low level matching commitments by the Labor Government in the early years of the program, we still only allocate \$535 per person to HACC programs compared with \$725 per person in Victoria, \$675 in New South Wales, \$672 in Tasmania and \$647 in Western Australia.

Whilst I am happy with the outcome of the latest HACC funding round, I recognise that there is a long way to go to recover from the legacy of the previous Labor Government. I hope that all older South Australians recognise that. However, this State Government and I personally have given a very strong commitment to the ageing in South Australia through the 10-year plan for South Australia that was launched in April last year, which will see a significant increase in the funding for the HACC program or, at least, will match the Commonwealth offer of some 6 per cent in growth. In the current year HACC growth will run at around 12 per cent. In 1994-95 it rose by 7.8 per cent and in 1995-96 by 6.86 per cent. Well over \$300 million in new funding is likely to be directed towards age projects and the carers of older people over the next decade under recommendations included in the 10-year plan for South Australia.

Finally, this State Government recognises the extremely important role of older people in terms of the economic and social development of this State. We recognise that they were badly let down by the previous Labor Government. This commitment will mean a greater recognition of the significant contribution made by older people in South Australia.

DOCTORS, RURAL

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Will the Minister for Health give an undertaking to the House that all of the \$6 million package announced by the Minister for country doctors will be funded with new money, and will he give health units a guarantee that they will not have to fund the package from existing budgets?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: That will become patently clear when the budget is announced.

ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): Will the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs outline to the House the benefits being provided to Aboriginal communities as a result of the State Government's commitment to improve Aboriginal health?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I thank the member for Norwood for this question, because it is a matter that is often neglected within our community when talking about Aboriginal issues. Everyone understands that there has been a fundamental problem with Aboriginal health care across Australia. In South Australia three years ago this Government set out to do something about it. First, my colleague the Minister for Health in April 1995 established the first Aboriginal Health Division (in the Health Commission) in

Australia. We had a specialist unit at executive level within the Health Commission specifically established to tackle health problems in the Aboriginal community. Secondly, another first for Australia was the agreement on Aboriginal health in July last year. That brought together those organisations with funding responsibility for Aboriginal health and, again, made sure that there was coordination overall but, very importantly, a focus on the important issues.

I highlight to the House one of those important issues, that is, to ensure that the mortality rate of Aboriginal children decreases very significantly indeed. Through the establishment of an Aboriginal health service in one location alone there was a very dramatic drop in the mortality rate of Aboriginal children. I stress that some of those mortality rates reached 28 or 29 per cent—extremely high levels, indeed, which would be unacceptable in virtually any developed country, let alone here in Australia where there are indigenous people. There has also been a coordinated effort to ensure that essential services for Aboriginal communities are improved. In particular, we are now providing facilities for the treatment of waste water and for the recycling of that waste effluent for irrigation purposes. We are also putting in wind turbines and solar power to ensure that there are appropriate energy supplies.

Another important bilateral agreement which is very close to finality between the Federal and State Governments will provide agreement on various programs to improve the infrastructure in Aboriginal communities. This will pump \$3 million a year for the next three years into those Aboriginal communities. That in itself is a major new achievement which we are close to realising in South Australia. Clearly, on Aboriginal health issues—and I must compliment the Minister for Health on what he and his Health Commission have achieved—we have brought about a dramatic improvement, particularly in some communities, in the standards of community health, although there is still a long way to go. Aboriginal health problems are still the single biggest health issue confronting the whole of Australia, particularly in terms of the standards that should apply in a developed country such as Australia. It will continue to be a major focus of this Government throughout the whole of the State, particularly in terms of helping those Aboriginal communities that do not have the adequate health and hygiene standards that we would expect in our community.

UNITED WATER

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Will the Minister for Infrastructure give the House an assurance that the Government will enforce all penalties allowed for under the water contract if and when a breach of a key commitment occurs?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition has been given a section of the water contract that details the penalties in the water contract for non-performance. The section of the contract in question states:

If a key commitment is not fully performed in accordance with paragraph 5.3 (a) then United shall pay to the Minister, by the time and in the manner specified in this paragraph, the following amounts. . .

The amounts are then detailed and range from \$1 million to \$3 million. In the section of the contract provided to the Opposition it appears that at least two contractual breaches have been identified.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Before answering this question I point out that I answered the last question by saying 'six out of 11'. The names of the directors are as follows: Malcolm Kinnaird (Chairman), Bill Alexander (UK), Ian Ritchie (UK shortly Singapore), Carey Anderson (Australia), Pat Jackson (UK), Jean-Louis Diefenbacher (Singapore), Kevin Doyle (Australia), Stephane Richer (Australia), Alain Houdaille (France), Mike Terlet (Australia) and Don Williams (Australia). I also point out that Mike Terlet was appointed to the board in March. I have also been advised that United Water will make one further appointment to the board, that it will be made within the Australian business community and that it should be announced in the second quarter of 1997, thereby making the Australian board representation seven out of 12. That is more than 50 per cent, which is more than the requirement. I also point out to the honourable member that if he had any understanding of company law he would know of the requirement to notify the Securities Commission within 30 days of any change in directorship.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It is a requirement of law that they—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader will come to order.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Why do you not ask a question, or are you incapable of doing that? Does the Leader not have any questions? Does he just sit down and listen all the time? You do not ask any questions.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Clearly, that list is the formal director list which will be updated by the inclusion of one more Australian later this year. The honourable member's question in terms of penalties is hypothetical. As the honourable member would know, we are going through an appraisal period, and it requires to be audited. I am sure that the honourable member understands that that is the process we must go through.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I would like the House to take a few steps back. Members had a late night last night and perhaps they are lacking a little sleep. However, that is no reason to become agitated. The member for Hart obviously did not have that problem, but if one or two other members keep interjecting they will be made aware of the consequences.

DISABILITY FUNDING

Mr WADE (Elder): Will the Minister for Disability Services advise the House of the impact on the disability sector that will occur as a result of the recent HACC funding announcement?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I thank the member for Elder for asking me this question in my capacity as Minister for Disability Services. In a major victory for South Australia's disability sector and for the aged people of South Australia, the State Government has secured \$5 million extra for those people. I am delighted that the disability sector will receive an additional \$2.4 million, which brings the total new money in the disability sector this financial year to \$5.4 million. That is the first new money that has been invested in disability services for many budgets. When the

previous Government was in office, it basically ignored people with a disability and there was no new funding.

The \$5.4 million of new funding will provide services in addition to more than \$6 million of new services which have been generated through efficiencies within the system. South Australians will receive vital care and services following State negotiations with the Commonwealth to receive this extra funding. I announced in the last budget that the Liberal Government had made a \$3 million commitment of new money, which as I said was the first money released for five years. Half of that money was released and the other half was retained, to be matched under the HACC program. If we had not done that, we would not have received any extra money. By lobbying hard for extra money, we have secured the additional \$2.4 million. That is not simply \$2.4 million in cash; that is \$2.4 million each year indefinitely.

In what I found to be completely surprising, on the day after the announcement of this great victory for people with disability in South Australia, the member for Elizabeth condemned the Government's strategy, claiming that people with disabilities could not afford to wait for the extra funding. Let us be clear about the implications of the honourable member's criticism. The member for Elizabeth is saying that the needs of the group who receive support from the \$1.5 million which we used to procure the extra Federal funding are so great that we should have ignored the needs of those people who will benefit from the \$2.4 million.

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member for Elizabeth says that she did not say that. I know that the member for Elizabeth did not say that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson. I suggest that the member for Elizabeth cease her running commentary.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: —but that is the only implication that one can draw. It was a quick draw, shoot from the lip response, and the implication is that the people who will benefit from the extra \$2.4 million should have been ignored. That is both silly and naive. The Government considers that its position has been completely vindicated because of the extra \$2.4 million and, in the process, it is my contention that the member for Elizabeth has absolutely highlighted the fact that the Opposition is not ready for the sometimes difficult and responsible task of being in Government.

CROYDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Why has the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs refused to meet a delegation from Croydon Primary School to allow it to make representations about the Government's plan to close the school at the end of 1997? Croydon Primary School, with 218 enrolments, has pupils from 11 ethnic minorities, principally Aboriginal, Greek, Italian, Bosnian and Albanian. It is the location for an out of hours ethnic school. Nearby Croydon Park Primary School, with substantial Vietnamese and Cambodian enrolments, is also being closed at the end of 1997. It is also a location for out of hours ethnic schools. The Minister has refused to meet a delegation from the Croydon Primary School.

An honourable member: That is comment.

Mr ATKINSON: No, it is a fact.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I have not met with them for all the reasons contained in the correspondence communicated to every person who has written to me or requested a meeting in relation to the Croydon Primary School, and I will give the honourable member a copy of the letter, although no doubt he already has one.

WORKPLACE PARENTING FORUMS

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): Will the Minister for Family and Community Services explain any new initiatives designed to make workplaces more family orientated? Will he say how these initiatives may help strengthen families while boosting morale and productivity in the workplace?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am very pleased to be able to inform the member for Kaurna of some of the latest initiatives—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Chaffey.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am pleased to be able to inform—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Shut up, will you!

The SPEAKER: Order! The ministerial bench should not assist or encourage the Minister.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am pleased to be able to inform the House—those members who are interested—of a new program launched today by the State Government and Relationships South Australia. I hope that the program will be the forerunner of many others. It has come about as a result of a lot of discussions that have taken place between the Department for Industrial Affairs and the Department for Family and Community Services, and I commend the former Minister for Industrial Affairs, the now Deputy Premier, and the present Minister for Industrial Affairs for the support they have given this program. Last year, the State Government launched its Parenting SA campaign in an effort to boost—

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: It is very good.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: It is a very good campaign, and it is interesting to note that, when the member for Elizabeth was asked for a comment about that program, she was quoted as saying that the initiative was absolutely offensive. This program is designed to help parents in South Australia, yet the member for Elizabeth was quoted as saying that it was 'absolutely offensive'. So much for the Labor Party's commitment to family and parenting initiatives! The Parenting SA campaign includes the distribution of more than 1 million information sheets—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Mr Speaker, there might be some people in this House who are interested in this answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! Some people are being exceptionally rude to the Minister by continually—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! They are continually muttering, talking and carrying on. I suggest that they listen or leave.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Parenting SA program includes the distribution of more than 1 million information sheets that have been welcomed by many parents, the relaunch of the Parent Help Line, the distribution of grants to help encourage community based parenting programs and networks, and the provision of information on a range of parenting issues through the Internet.

The newest initiative, workplace parenting forums, was launched this morning at David Jones, and I was pleased to

be able to launch that program with the David Jones staff. These forums will be staged by Relationships SA to help provide advice and support to develop parenting skills, to give parents greater confidence and to help promote the role of parenting in general. Employers taking part in this trial program include David Jones, Studio 2000 Photographers, the South Australian Police Department and the Royal Adelaide Hospital. It is vital that this House realises that any effort to promote positive parenting is an investment in family and economic stability, and hopefully in our children overcoming issues such as childhood neglect.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Deputy Leader probably would not know what this is all about. Surveys have repeatedly shown that many parents in our busy world can feel isolated and lack confidence in dealing with a number of parenting issues. This program has been introduced not to intervene but to provide information when parents want it and to provide help with probably what is recognised as the hardest job that anybody can have, and that is to raise children appropriately.

It is important to recognise the amount of community support that was generated when this proposal was first raised. Twelve months ago the *Advertiser* quoted the South Australian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry as saying that the concept could reduce the cost of work absenteeism and family related stress. The United Trades and Labor Council said that the concept was assured of union support. Anglican Community Services and Centacare Catholic Family Services also supported it. So much for the member for Elizabeth's comments in regard to this initiative. I am delighted that there is overwhelming support for this Government initiative, which is designed to help parents carry out the responsible task of caring for children in this State.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): As members would know, I am a member of the Social Development Committee of the Parliament. Last year that committee handed down a report on prostitution in which three positions emerged. One position was supported by the Hon. Dr Bernice Pfitzner, a Liberal member of the other place. It involved State recognition of brothels and their placement in the industrial and commercial suburbs of Adelaide: the idea of creating red-light districts. The second proposal, from the member for Hartley and me, was designed to crack down on the employment of prostitutes—

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It relates to the subject matter to which the member of Spence is referring; namely, the report of the Social Development Committee inquiry into prostitution. As members would appreciate, it is listed as item 15 under Orders of the Day on the Notice Paper. I seek your ruling, Sir, concerning whether the subject being canvassed in this House is in order.

The SPEAKER: The member for Spence is aware of Standing Orders. I will listen very carefully to ensure that he does not go outside Standing Orders.

Mr ATKINSON: There were three positions on reforming the prostitution law in South Australia. As a result of my involvement in that process over a number of years, I was invited by the Liberal Women's Network of South Australia to address its meeting on the prostitution issue. I received a letter from the President, Helen Sanderson, which said:

Dear Michael

Re: Liberal Women's Network March meeting—Monday 17 March 1997

The Legislative Approach to Prostitution—the Alternative Proposals.

Ms Sanderson goes on:

I understand that Amanda Lynch spoke with you a few weeks ago about participating on a panel to discuss the alternative proposals for legislation on prostitution and you indicated that you would be happy to participate.

That is correct. The letter continues:

On that basis, I have taken the risk and included your name on our panel in the hope that you would be available. However, if you cannot participate on the 17th I will apologise for not confirming the date with you personally.

As it happens, I confirmed that I was willing to participate and I prepared a 10 minute speech on the approach of the member for Hartley and I to reforming the prostitution law. Ms Sanderson goes on:

Presentations would be for 10 minutes to present your case for the nature of your legislative approach to prostitution. We will provide the opportunity for discussion and would welcome your participation.

We will also involve Bernice Pfitzner, Joe Scalzi and Stewart Leggett.

Bernice has arranged for us to use Old Parliament House for the meeting with barbecue and drinks in the Old Parliament House garden from 6.30 p.m. at a cost of \$10 a head.

I have included a copy of the newsletter I sent to members yesterday. . . I hope that you are able to participate.

It is signed by Helen Sanderson as President of the Liberal Women's Network. Indeed, Ms Sanderson did courteously supply me with a copy of the program. I was happy to attend that meeting. Last year I was to be invited to a regional council of the Liberal Party to talk on the prostitution law.

I am sufficiently bipartisan to participate in those deliberations because I think they are valuable to the State. What happened is that, as soon as the Hon. Dr Bernice Pfitzner found that I was to participate in the Liberal Women's Network discussion, she demanded that the forum be cancelled and said that she would no longer participate if I participated. So, that is freedom of speech for you! I am willing on a bipartisan basis, free of Party politics, to talk to any Liberal Party unit about the prostitution law. In fact, my dissenting report was a co-report with the member for Hartley, but as soon as the Hon. Dr Bernice Pfitzner—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: Yes, it has been cancelled, and that was done on the orders of the Hon. Dr Bernice Pfitzner because she does not have sufficient learning and sufficient self-confidence to stand before a gathering and argue her case. What the Hon. Dr Bernice Pfitzner wants is only one side of the argument. The honourable member cannot bear to stand up to me in a radio debate or a public debate on prostitution. It is a weak performance by the honourable member. I have to say, 'Eight more years of her in the Legislative Council—the Liberal Party is welcome to her!'

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Today it is time that Labor's misleading information was qualified and the real facts revealed. I say that on the basis of a headline which appeared on the front page of today's *Southern Times Messenger*—'Inquiry call into police levels in the south'. One of the candidates in the south, John Hill, has been claiming for some time now that documents have been leaked from what used to be called the Christies Beach Police Station and Division (now known as the South Coast Division). On two occasions in this Parliament I have called on the Leader of the Opposition to have the guts to table the so-called leaked documents. He has not done that. The fact is that those documents, like so much else in which the Leader of the Opposition is involved, are absolutely fabricated. There is no official document whatsoever—and I have checked with high sources. It was doctored as a political scam by some Labor supporters in the south, and it is not even signed off by any police officer with operational authority.

Let us look at the facts: John Hill and the Labor Party tried to mislead the community of South Australia and in particular people in the southern region about policing numbers. Whether or not they like it, it is our initiative to spend \$11.4 million to build a state of the art police centre (the best in South Australia) at Laffer's Triangle. It shows our support, and it is part of the strategy for policing for the whole of Fleurieu Peninsula, which includes all the residential areas of the south. That \$11.4 million plus what has happened at Christies Beach (now South Coast Division) has seen a minimum increase of 85 additional police officers, including five CIB under inspector Bill Newman, a shopfront at Colonnades, a shopfront at Aldinga (thanks to the member for Kaurna), *bona fide* transit police officers and a southern response group.

Mr Hill has claimed that he is writing to the Police Commissioner, Mr Mal Hyde, to ask that police staffing levels be investigated. The fact is that Mr Hill is a candidate, so he will never be able to achieve additional policing. He is merely grandstanding for political points, and it is unnecessarily alarming to some southern residents. John Hill is a Johnny-come-lately. It is the elected State Government members who will lobby for additional resources and, because we are members of the Government, we are the only ones who will achieve those additional resources. We are not candidates. We are working our butts off every day for the people in whom we believe. The fact is that we are already well down the track in relation to reviewing policing in the south, and it was one of the first commitments made by the Police Minister on the appointment of the new Police Commissioner.

Already far more has been done with respect to policing, law and order, community preventative policing and initiatives than ever was done under the previous Labor Government members when they represented the south for all those years and neglected it time and again. Mr Hill is trying to make out that the police should not bring in the Southern Response Command Group to sort out a problem when it occurs. What is Mr Hill on about? These very fine police officers came down, made over 50 arrests and cleaned up a problem. That is good policing, and it is using resources appropriately. John Hill is only trying to mislead and misinform the people of the south. He does not want extra support to clean up the issues that we have cleaned up—and that is clearly stated in the way he has manipulated his reporting to the Messenger.

Like John Hill I have also been doorknocking extensively, but I have been doing it for six years. The main issues in the south are about jobs—and we are succeeding—getting a fair go for the south (which it did not get under 11 years of Labor) and fixing up the absolute Labor mess and debacle. We are doing all those things, but we realise that we have to do more and more in relation to law and order. I congratulate the police officers on their efforts and strategies. They are working and working well. The overall crime rate in the south has dropped. The police are doing a good job, and they have the absolute support of every Liberal member in that area. There will be more announcements and initiatives in the near future—not as a result of John Hill and his misleading claims and grandstanding to get into a seat (which he will not achieve) but as a result of four years of strategic effort and the many additional resources already provided but with more to come. I say to the people of the south, work with us, as they are doing, and we will continue to improve their safety, together with the police.

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

Ms HURLEY (Napier): A third constituent has now come to my office with a complaint about an expiation notice they received for not keeping to the left when travelling along Peachey Road, which runs more or less down the middle of my electorate. Peachey Road is very wide, but no lanes are marked and there is a relatively wide median strip down the middle. The relevant legislation provides that the offence of failing to keep to the left involves the intent of trying to stop head-on collisions and allowing vehicles approaching from behind to pass.

Mr Meier: What is the speed limit?

Ms HURLEY: It is 60 km/h. The people who have been picked up by policemen have all said they were obeying the speed limit, and that has not been in question. They all said that there was not heavy traffic, apart from the police car, and that no-one was in danger. Peachey Road is fairly well used, accidents and collisions occur along that road and buses use it. In fact, it is arguably safer to travel in the middle of the road because of the buses pulling into and out of stops and because of parked cars along the road. There are three schools along the road, and lots of children live in houses along it, so one has to be very wary of children darting out from the footpath.

One of the constituents went to the extent of making a police complaint. I supported the constituent in that because, when I see and hear of some of the appalling behaviour in traffic of motorists who are not caught, when I see the sort of speeding offences that occur and people are not caught and, more frustratingly, when I go down Main North Road and sit behind someone in the right hand lane doing 60 in an 80 km/h zone and there is no obvious police presence there, I fail to see why police are picking up people on Peachey Road for this offence when it does not seem to have caused any complaint that I have heard about or any danger or problem for traffic travelling along that road.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Ms HURLEY: That is exactly my point: it does raise revenue for the police. I wonder what is happening when people are being picked up for this sort of innocuous offence and are having to pay a quite steep fine and lose demerit points as well, when one would think that the police would be out there dealing with more serious traffic offences or

indeed some of the violent offences that occur in our community. I do not think we can claim to be over policed in our area, which is one with significant problems with violent crime, yet police are spending their time idly, it seems to me, picking up motorists for this totally unnecessary offence.

Three constituents have been to my office to complain about this issue. I do not know how many others have been picked up for this offence. I do not imagine that many people would have thought to come to me to complain about this: they would have just grumbled among their families and gone in to pay the offence, as have all my constituents. It was not the payment that offended them but their being picked up for such an inconsequential offence when they were not causing any problem to the people behind or beside them. If it is revenue raising, it is a complete disgrace that police are spending their time doing this sort of thing when there is much greater need. They could even be out in our schools helping to educate students. They could certainly be out on some of the major roads, controlling some of the worse traffic problems around the area.

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): Today I want to put on the record some matters relating to Riverland policing. I have certainly shared and supported concerns expressed by community leaders and others in the Riverland over recent weeks and months about some aspects of policing in the region. After addressing a meeting of the Riverland Local Government Association in February, I offered to take a delegation to see the Minister for Police, which I did last week. I am very pleased to report that I believe that the outcome of that Riverland mayors delegation to the Minister for Police regarding resources for the Riverland was very productive and positive. The comments from the mayors I took along indicate that it certainly satisfied their major concerns.

The major concerns revolved around current staffing levels, the opening hours of police stations in the region and the filling of unfilled vacancies. I am very pleased to report that the delegation was satisfied with the undertaking given by the Minister to maintain the full complement of police currently allocated to the Riverland, which is more than 70 uniformed, sworn-in police officers, and a number of other support staff. Secondly, the Minister endorsed the local requirement for the police station at Renmark, in regard to which there has been specific concern, and others to remain open during normal business hours so that they can provide practical services to people from out of town, who will know that those stations will be open. Thirdly, he gave a commitment to fill the existing vacancies in the region as soon as possible, two vacancies to be filled in April and the remaining vacancies to be filled by the end of June.

I also sought and achieved a further commitment that I be informed and further updated with accurate statistics on specific crime levels in the Riverland. This is very important to objectively assess the real level of crime and law and order in the region. From discussion with the delegation afterwards, I also understood that they felt very understanding of the explanations given by the Minister, particularly with respect to this Government's inheritance of the State Bank debt and its effect in terms of attrition levels not being maintained over the past couple of years. Also, because of the Government's very successful, positive and appropriate financial performance and management of this State, new police training courses are now under way and we will restore this balance as soon as possible.

The issue of outsourcing of non-policing staff duties—for example, the use of prisoner escorts and administration responsibilities going over to non-police staff—was also explained. It was pleasing to hear other positive suggestions in terms of the strategy of the Minister for Police, which strategy will include the use of special squads. For example, in the Riverland this will involve using the drug squad to more strategically assist local police.

After obtaining the appropriate approvals two weekends ago, I also had the pleasure and opportunity to spend two shifts with the local police at the Berri police station. It was a very valuable opportunity to experience and understand what was happening in the community and certainly gave me an accurate impression of the policing responsibilities and the activities that police had to perform in the early hours of the morning. Unfortunately, however, the most striking impression for me was the lack of respect and consideration for law and order among some of the younger members in the community. The police do have an important role in this area. However, there is no doubt in my mind that family and community values and standards are fundamental in determining the activities of the youth in our community at these late hours of the night.

I thank the police for their cooperation and endorse the tremendous job they are doing in our area. I underline that by indicating that this week is Drug Awareness Week, which the police are carrying out in the Riverland. Police officers will be providing public information in all the major towns, and we will also continue with a public forum. I am pleased to assist the police with that and chair a meeting in Berri in the near future after Drug Awareness Week: we will have a range of specialist speakers in the Riverland. This will involve contributions from the local Chief Inspector and the South Australian Drug Task Force Chief, Detective Superintendent Dennis Edmonds. We will continue the local campaign and the local cooperation, which is obviously very positive and cohesive in the region, to make sure that we continue to address the issues and problems of illegal drug use in our local community.

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

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): Last week, I raised the issue of health and surgery waiting lists, and I will continue in that regard. It appears that the post acute community care service through the Modbury Hospital will be in danger of ceasing if it does not receive a fresh injection of funds. Last week I referred to a 63 year old constituent who was forced to go to Berri or face a long wait for surgery. Whilst experiencing a most unfortunate and regrettable set of circumstances through the lack of care services available to her, she was nonetheless fortunate in this instance that there was, thankfully, still some funds left under the Adelaide Central Mission Outreach Service.

The other issue of major concern is the total isolation, fear and danger to health experienced by my constituent. This was an absolutely appalling advertisement for health care in South Australia. Why is it, for instance, that an organisation such as Eastern Domiciliary Care is not given adequate funding for program support structures with patients being informed that they are too young at 63, even if they are in receipt of an age pension? Why is it that the social work services in the Riverland Regional Hospital are unaware of the fact that they are receiving patients from Adelaide in order to avoid the

long surgery waiting lists apply at present in Adelaide hospitals?

Surely, it should be a very basic and necessary procedure that patients are interviewed to find out what post operative acute care home services are required or whether post operative residential care services are necessary. In the case of my constituent, post operative residential care should have been organised prior to her leaving the hospital. My experience with this whole case indicates that sections of our health service are in a state of utter shambles, where communications are limited or non-existent and where follow-up, as in the case of my constituent, is also non-existent.

The case concerning my constituent did have a favourable ending, but it could have ended in disaster. I am hoping that the Minister has taken note of the issue I have raised in the hope that this situation is never faced by another South Australian. I want to make perfectly clear to all members in this place that I was not criticising any organisation which I have mentioned or which offered assistance to my constituent. Indeed, I thank the individual officers, who were extremely helpful in identifying and providing the assistance necessary. In some cases, this was reinforced by staff supervisors. I am hoping that the Government will not pass the buck on this matter and transfer the responsibility back to community organisations. A problem has been identified, it needs to be addressed and it needs to be resolved in order that no citizen in this State suffers the same problem again.

Once again, I most sincerely thank all the staff from those organisations, which are extremely valuable and valued within my community. I place on the record the thanks of my constituent as well. As I said, during that extremely hot weather, for days at a time she was unable to shower or dress herself, and so she was in a most difficult and distressing situation.

Ms GREIG (Reynell): I draw to the attention of the House an interesting article in the February edition of the *Kingston Times*. For those members who do not know the *Kingston Times*, it is the propaganda medium of the Kingston Branch of the ALP. After siphoning through the editorial drivel, I came across an article by David Cox. It caught my eye, because it talks about an issue about which I am very passionate. The title of the article is 'Campaign to save Glenthorne steps up'—not a bad title. I was pleased to see he was on side. However, as much as I appreciate David Cox's making people aware of the issue—even his own Labor branch members—I wish he would tell them the truth. Yes, Mike Rann and his troops have come out in force to save Glenthorne, even after his shadow Minister said that housing could possibly be sited on some areas of Glenthorne. However, the article paints the picture of the Leader of the Opposition being the good guy in green who is there for the environmental cause.

The article states that the State Opposition Leader supposedly sent State Liberal members into a frenzy with his 24 November television stunt. However, what has been overlooked is that there was no frenzy. The member for Mitchell and I have been working for some time with the Trott Park-Sheidow Park Residents Association to look at the overall picture in their community. On behalf of the residents, I had put together a motion to be moved in State Parliament calling for the retention of the Glenthorne Research Station at O'Halloran Hill for metropolitan open space and, whilst I was doing this, the Residents Association—not the Kingston

Branch of the ALP—had put together a petition to address their request at both State and Federal Government levels.

Our work as a local community coincided with the initiative of the Federal member for Kingston regarding a steering committee to examine all issues pertaining to the future use of the land. I am sure that all in this House would be aware of the passion of the Federal member for Kingston for the environment. Ms Jeanes' committee is made up of a broad cross-section of the community who are working to ensure that we get the best possible outcome for Glenthorne Farm, and also for those of us who are part of the community surrounding the farm. I am sure that we are all aware that Glenthorne Farm—or the research station, as it is known—is federally owned land, and I do not have to remind members of the under-handed way in which the former Government tried to dispose of the land, first, for housing and, secondly, as a cemetery. Fortunately for us, the member for Fisher was keeping a close eye on what was happening.

On this occasion, our Federal member for Kingston, Ms Susan Jeanes, is determined to ensure that all issues pertaining to Glenthorne Farm are closely examined and that the community is part of and fully informed of the issues being addressed. The Trott Park-Sheidow Park Residents Association is also a key player in the future of Glenthorne. I give credit where credit is due: it is not due to the Kingston Branch of the Australian Labor Party or to the Leader of the Opposition but to the local communities of O'Halloran Hill, Trott Park, Sheidow Park and Woodend, and the Residents Association, the Hallett Cove Progress Association and all those people who have a genuine interest in the Glenthorne site.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PAY-ROLL TAX AND TAXATION ADMINISTRATION) BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Payroll Tax Act 1971 and the Taxation Administration Act 1996. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill seeks to amend the return provisions of the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971 and the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to facilitate the provision of taxation relief on a more timely basis.

In recent years, the Government has implemented a number of administrative pay-roll tax incentive schemes for exporters, trainees, and most recently young people. Due to legislative impediments, this assistance has taken the form of a rebate of payroll tax actually paid and is usually refunded to the taxpayer at the end of the financial year.

This process does not achieve three important objectives, namely immediate cessation of tax liability, transparency to the taxpayer in the provision of relief and a reduction of red tape for the taxpayer.

It is proposed in this Bill that the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971 and the Taxation Administration Act 1996 be amended to permit the Commissioner of State Taxation to vary the procedure for the lodgement of returns in such a manner as to create the administrative flexibility necessary to enable the rebates to be claimed immediately in a more timely and efficient manner than is currently the case.

The provision of immediate and transparent relief with a minimum of red tape will more quickly deliver assistance to targeted business areas and will be welcomed by business.

As the Bill amends the Taxation Administration Act, the opportunity has been taken to correct a technical deficiency that has been identified in the secrecy provisions of the Taxation Administration Act 1996.

It has become evident that the secrecy provisions of the Act as they stand could result in the Commissioner of State Taxation having to disclose confidential taxpayer information to third parties without the taxpayer's consent. This outcome was never intended.

The amendment to the secrecy provisions is essential to ensure that taxation information remains confidential to a particular taxpayer and is not able to be accessed by other individuals without proper authority.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

PART 1 PRELIMINARY

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

The measure is to be brought into operation by proclamation.

Clause 3: Interpretation

This clause is the standard interpretation provision for Statutes Amendment Acts.

PART 2 AMENDMENT OF PAY-ROLL TAX ACT 1971

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 15—Returns

Under section 15 of the Pay-roll Tax Act 1971 returns of wages are required to be furnished to the Commissioner by employers on a monthly basis. Section 19 of the Act requires payment of pay-roll tax within the time within which the employer is required to lodge the return of the wages in respect of which the tax is payable, that is, on the same monthly basis.

Subsections (2) and (3) of section 15 allow the variation of the time for lodging monthly returns of the variation of the monthly cycle. This variation can only be made when the Commissioner considers it would be unduly onerous to require compliance with the normal time limit or the normal monthly cycle for lodging returns.

The clause replaces subsections (2) and (3) with more flexible provisions which do not require a decision of the Commissioner that compliance with the normal rules would be unduly onerous. The new provisions also allow variation of the monthly cycle in relation to specified wages so that, for example, annual returns might be required for some wages and monthly returns for others. A variation under the new provisions may be made by notice in the *Gazette* or by notice to an employer.

It should be noted that Part 6 of the *Taxation Administration Act 1996* will, when it comes into force in relation to the *Pay-roll Tax Act*, allow for such special return arrangements. At that time, the *Statutes Amendment (Taxation Administration) Act 1996* (which contains amendments consequential to the *Taxation Administration Act*) will strike out subsections (2) and (3) of section 15 of the *Pay-roll Tax Act*.

Clause 5: Transitional provision

The clause ensures the continued operation of a notice given under section 15(2) of the *Pay-roll Tax Act 1971* and in force immediately before the commencement of this measure.

PART 3 AMENDMENT OF TAXATION ADMINISTRATION ACT 1996

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 35—Approval of special tax return arrangements

Section 35 of the *Taxation Administration Act 1996* provides for the Commissioner to approve special arrangements for the lodging of returns and the payment of tax under a taxation law.

The clause amends the section so that an approval may relate to specified classes of taxpayers as an alternative to individual specified taxpayers and so that an exemption forming part of such a special arrangement may be a partial exemption as an alternative to a complete exemption.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 38—Variation and cancellation of approvals

Under section 38 of the *Taxation Administration Act 1996* the

Commissioner may vary or cancel an approval by notice in writing.

The clause removes the requirement that such a notice must be served on the taxpayer or agent to whom it relates.

This amendment is consequential to clause 8.

Clause 8: Insertion of s. 38A

Clause 5 allows notices approving special tax return arrangements and notices varying or cancelling such approvals to be either published in the *Gazette* or served on the taxpayer or agent.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 39—Effect of approval

This clause makes an amendment consequential on the amendment to section 35(1)(a) allowing an approval to be given to a class of taxpayers.

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 78—Permitted disclosure in particular circumstances or to particular persons

Under the clause, disclosures of information obtained under or in relation to the administration or enforcement of a taxation law would be allowed—

- (a) with the consent of the person to whom the information relates or at the request of a person acting on behalf of the person to whom the information relates; or
- (b) in connection with the administration or enforcement of a taxation law, the *Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989*, the *Petroleum Products Regulation Act 1995*, the *Tobacco Products (Licensing) Act 1986* or a law of another Australian jurisdiction relating to taxation; or
- (c) for the purposes of legal proceedings under a law referred to in paragraph (b) or reports of such proceedings; or
- (d) to a prescribed office holder or body under a law of this jurisdiction or another Australian jurisdiction; or
- (e) as authorised under the regulations.

New paragraph (a) differs from the existing paragraph (a) of section 78 by removing the limitation that a consent or request can only relate to information that has been obtained from the person to whom the information relates.

New paragraphs (b) and (c) together replace the existing paragraphs (b) and (c). The new paragraphs extend the permitted disclosures to those made in connection with the administration or enforcement of the *Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989*, the *Petroleum Products Regulation Act 1995* or the *Tobacco Products (Licensing) Act 1986*.

New paragraph (d) corresponds to the existing paragraph (e) but allows disclosures to prescribed bodies as well as prescribed office holders.

New paragraph (e) allows disclosures as authorised under the regulations. This replaces the existing paragraph (d) which allows any disclosure as required under an Act.

Clause 11: Substitution of ss. 80 and 81

Prohibition of disclosures by other persons

The new section 80 makes the prohibition of secondary disclosures (that is, disclosures by persons other than tax officers or former tax officers) clearly apply to information gained properly or improperly or directly or indirectly from a tax officer or former tax officer. It also provides for permitted secondary disclosures—

- (a) that correspond to those that a tax officer would be permitted to make (see *clause 10*); or
- (b) by a prescribed office holder or body under a law of this jurisdiction or another Australian jurisdiction if the disclosures are made in connection with the performance of functions conferred or imposed under such a law or for the purpose of legal proceedings connected with the performance of such functions; or
- (c) with the consent of the Commissioner.

Restriction on power of courts to require disclosure

The new section 81 makes it clear that a court cannot require a disclosure contrary to the above provisions.

Mr FOLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

CASINO BILL

Cognate Bills:

GAMING SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY (ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURING) AMENDMENT BILL

LIQUOR LICENSING (ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURING) AMENDMENT BILL

GAMING MACHINES (ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURING) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 5 March. Page 1141.)

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

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable, forthwith, in relation to the Casino Bill, the Gaming Supervisory Authority (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill, the Liquor Licensing (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill and the Gaming Machines (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill—

- (a) one motion to be moved and one question put in regard to, respectively, the second readings, the Committee's report stage and the third readings of the Bills together; and
- (b) the Bills to be considered in one Committee of the whole.

Motion carried.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): May I say how pleased I am to be back with you all after a short absence. The Opposition will support the Government's moves with the Adelaide Casino and the accompanying legislation and will thus support the second reading.

I flag from the outset that the Opposition has a number of questions it intends to put to the Treasurer relating primarily to some industrial issues and conditions of employment. The Opposition wants to ensure that the conditions of employment, as far as they can be addressed in a piece of legislation, are mindful of the needs of the employees. Following detailed consultation with the Secretary of the Australian Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union, Anne Drohan, I will raise some issues with the Treasurer during Committee. I flag that, as a result of the Treasurer's answers, there may (or may not) be a need for further discussions and perhaps even some minor amendments in different areas when the Bill moves to the Upper House.

I clearly reserve the Opposition's right to so amend the Bill if it feels that that is appropriate, but that in no way detracts from our commitment to support the sale of the Casino and the consequential arrangements which the Government wants to undertake. That should not be seen as criticism of the Government: it is simply trying to determine whether or not the Bill needs further work. Through the questioning process we may also discover other areas that require slight amendment. It would be remiss of me if I did not make some comments about the ASER project.

One would like to treat quickly some projects that occurred over the life of the former Labor Government but the Treasurer, of course, will take every opportunity to remind the former Labor Government of some failings. It is important at times that the new Labor Party also make comment on some of these issues. Things are never quite as easy or as simple as they are put. ASER is not necessarily the

financial drain on the taxpayers' purse as the Treasurer would like us all to believe. It is not something that has seen losses accrue to the Government *per se*, although I acknowledge that there have been write-offs in terms of the former State Bank and, in that, are losses to—

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: —yes, I am getting to that—the former investors with the State Bank, as there are losses—as the Treasurer quite rightly points out and to which I intended to allude—in write-downs in terms of the investment put forward by the South Australian Funds Management Corporation (previously known as SASFIT). They are substantial losses which, in the best of times, should have been avoided. At the end of the day SASFIT was run by its own board. My point is that ASER is not quite in the same league as certain financial disasters we saw with some of the trading enterprises over which the former Government had control.

Having said that, it would be fair to say that the ASER development has many questions hanging over it. My brief assessment of the ASER development is that it raises some very serious questions about the practices Governments employ to bring about developments, and about the potential to put at risk not just the investments of those who choose to invest within it but also the State's credibility image as an investment opportunity. ASER delivered the Hyatt Casino, which no-one would argue is anything but a substantial landmark building in South Australia; and it has delivered the Convention Centre, which I am sure even the Treasurer will acknowledge has been a very good piece of State infrastructure, albeit at a cost to the taxpayer.

Clearly, those who support casinos—and there would be many in this Chamber who would have their own conscious view about that—would acknowledge that the Casino has generated thousands of jobs. It has generated hundreds of millions, if not thousands of millions, of dollars of turnover; and it has provided very healthy and consistent income streams, if perhaps not as high at times as some would like, into the Government's coffers. As we acknowledge the downside, let us at least be prepared to acknowledge the upside.

Mr Acting Speaker, allow me some indulgence, if you will. Did that short contribution to which you were listening sound familiar? It should because, during a hearing of the Economic and Finance Committee, I heard a similar argument put forward as to why the taxpayers of this State should be investing in a building on North Terrace for EDS. It is a little ironic that, at the same time as we are unwinding what is clearly a very complex and questionable structure and putting on the market a hotel and a licence for a Casino, we are constructing an 11-storey building across the road, fully underwritten by the taxpayer of South Australia. The Premier—on the very day I was thrown out when making great moment of this issue—announced that, at the very minimum, the project will cost the State between \$5 million and \$15 million, but it will cost many more times than that when one takes into account issues such as lack of occupancy, opportunity costs if Government agencies have not been able to be housed elsewhere, and the simple pitfalls that office building developments will find.

That building over the road may well be this Government's ASER in 10 or 15 years. I see Roger Sexton in the gallery. Roger, we may well have to call you back in 10 years to help us out of that one. It will probably be my job to clean up that one in 15 years. I apologise, Sir: I probably should not

make mention of people in the gallery. However, I wanted to illustrate that things seem to go like merry-go-rounds: early 1983, silly investments; early to mid-1983, the Government getting itself involved in property developments; the Government intervening in the marketplace; and the Government trying to engineer outcomes that eventually cost taxpayers many dollars.

As the Treasurer says, perhaps I was being a little cute but, at the end of the day, the investment made by SASFIT, particularly, and others may well have cost money. Here we find, 10 years later, the Government's undertaking a project that will bring about very much the same criticisms that this Government has directed at this ASER development. I simply make the important point that the Government needs to explain why it wants to get into a deal that is so reminiscent of the deal from which it is presently trying to extricate itself.

When Government officers and the Minister's office showed me the corporate and legal structure of ASER, I noted that it was certainly an interesting arrangement and one that I am sure tested the minds of the public servants involved at the time. It was a fair effort, I might say. It is a fairly complex arrangement and one that significantly identifies many of the problems associated with this structure. I understand that in the weeks and months ahead we will have other pieces of legislation that will further break up this arrangement, so that we can have some separate titles for the Hyatt and for other assets associated with that arrangement.

The reality is whether or not we choose to support this legislation—although it would be very cumbersome and hard to work out how it would occur—clearly Kumagai Gumi is able, I would have thought, to exit from the process, as would no doubt the State Superannuation Funds Management Corporation, which we have been advised is quite supportive of this legislation. Without wanting to goad the Treasurer to identify just what losses may have occurred with the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation, I indicate that, clearly, it is keen to rid itself of this particular investment.

Let us move away from the fact that we are making some real estate arrangements. There are clearly some important fundamental issues concerning the licence itself. As stated by my colleague the member for Giles (and former Treasurer), who I understand was the sponsor of the successful Casino legislation some time ago, an arrangement was made at the time for the Lotteries Commission to hold the licence. That was done for a variety of reasons, which I do not think we really need to canvass now or are at all relevant now. Clearly, to have something to sell, there is the need to remove the licence or to cancel the licence held by the Lotteries Commission and issue a new licence. Some may have asked the question: why not continue to allow the Lotteries Commission to hold the licence? In response to those people I would ask: for what purpose? Why would the Lotteries Commission want it? What protection does it offer the Government? Given that we own the real estate and are offering a lease, unless we are selling a licence I suspect that at the end of the day we have very little to sell. So, the Opposition is quite relaxed about that. We understand that the critical issue will be who buys the casino licence.

I am satisfied at this stage with what appears to be a fairly rigorous process put down by the Government in assessing who the suitable applicant would be. That is something that is well removed from Government. I understand that an independent body will be formed with possibly a former Supreme Court justice or someone similar to head it up, together with representatives of the Funds Management

Corporation, Kumagai Gumi and also a Treasury officer to assess the bids as they come in. I understand that that will then be reported to the Gaming Supervisory Authority, which will no doubt undertake appropriate due diligence and probity checks and the appropriate police arrangements to ensure that the person, persons, body, corporation or whoever buys our Casino is of good character and someone with whom this State can be comfortable doing business.

I am comfortable with that process. That will then be recommended to the Government and, as the Government would expect the Opposition to say, we want this selection process to be very much apart from Government. What we do not want is political involvement, although I am not suggesting that that will occur. I think what the Government has quite rightly done is put in an arm's length structure to assess that. As we know, there have been many allegations surrounding the Victorian Casino process, with which I am not overly familiar, but there would appear not to have been as rigorous an assessment process or a process removed from executive Government as is being proposed here. Again, we will monitor that carefully, and who purchases the licence will be a matter of great interest to the Opposition.

We can speculate now and for many months ahead. I know that this will be of great interest to you, Sir, as you have a great interest in issues of economic development in this State relating to the Casino and other such important institutions. But it is important that we get a good person. There was talk of Tabcorp, but we will have to wait and see. We will need to wait and see whether it will be other national players in the gambling industry, a Kerry Parker, a Crown Casino or another body. It may well be an international body. Let us wait and see. But at the end of the day, provided that we can agree on issues relating to employment, to staffing issues, that probity checks are undertaken and that these people are of good character, it will perhaps be an exciting time for South Australia, as we may well see a major corporate player come into our State. That is important. We are a State that has lost much business, particularly since this Government came to office, but it would be nice to see investment coming back. I look forward to that and to what will be an interesting process.

The issue of transferability of the licence caused some concern to some of my colleagues, but I feel reasonably satisfied, again—although I am yet to test it with the Minister during the Committee stage—of the need to have transferability. I think it is only logical and sensible to give a prospective buyer the potential—and I say only the potential—ability to remove the licence to another venue, for a variety of reasons. Let us be honest about it: there may well be some quite legitimate reasons at some later stage why the operator of the day may want a different venue for the Casino.

Of course, for that to occur there must be a very detailed, open, public consultation process where the operator or owner of the Casino licence has to demonstrate the need to do it and the community value of doing it. That then has to go to the Gaming Supervisory Authority, which also has to agree to it, and then it is referred to the Government for its agreement. A number of checks are in place but also, importantly, the person purchasing the licence for the Casino is taking over the existing lease of the railway station building. Anyone making a decision to shift has to bear in mind that they will be breaking a lease. I feel reasonably satisfied with the precautions put in.

Issues such as the ability for the licence to be renewed are sensible. Clearly, that will be a negotiating point, but that will

give the Government of the day the ability to assess the situation, when the licence expires, as to where we go with the operator of the Casino. That is a worthwhile clause. It is clear that, as stated, there will still be only one Casino licence, and that is important, because there had been concerns on the Opposition side of politics that some purchaser of the Casino may have wanted to transfer the licence or to 'sub-license' to another venue in Adelaide without reference to Parliament. Clearly, that is not possible under this Bill. Should another Casino operator wish to operate a licence, that would be a matter for this place to decide. That is as it should be.

Whether or not that will be a conscience issue is not for me to decide, but it is something that this place would have the rightful opportunity to debate. That is a good piece of security for the State built into this legislation. A strong disciplinary framework has been retained, including power for the Gaming Supervisory Authority to suspend or cancel the licence if events so require. It is clear that, following the Gaming Supervisory Authority's review of the Casino, many of its recommendations have now been put into legislation, and it would be fair to say—although this is not meant as criticism, merely a fact—that the former Casino legislation was a thinner measure than what has been proposed here.

The State gets a degree of comfort from this, with a number of the Gaming Supervisory Authority's powers now put into legislation to provide a better regulatory framework for the Casino. The Treasurer, no doubt, will negotiate the level of duty to be paid by the licensee. Again, my colleagues were concerned to ensure that we maintain a strong income stream from the Casino licensee; that the State taxpayer base receives a reasonable return from the Casino.

I suspect that in any negotiations the Treasurer of this State—be it this Treasurer or whoever—would not seek a situation whereby the State receives less tax. I am confident that the present level of taxation would be a minimum position, although I acknowledge that there might need to be some adjustment. Clearly, if in negotiations with a new operator the Treasurer gets less income, he will have to find it somewhere else. No doubt, the Treasurer will ensure that where possible in this process the State's taxation stream is protected. I acknowledge that he needs a degree of flexibility. The Opposition supports the Treasurer and will provide him with that flexibility. We do not want our negotiating position compromised by putting unnecessary restrictions on it.

Gambling on credit will be prohibited, except under conditions approved by the GSA. Again, this is a sensible provision and it will allow flexibility. If the new operator wants to access the high rollers of the market, the operator may wish to provide some sort of credit facility—appropriately supervised by the GSA—but it will not be open to the general public. I have a criticism with respect to the provision of EFTPOS at the Casino. I do not know how it occurred. It may have been instituted by the former Government, but for the benefit of the debate I will assert that it occurred under this Government. What is the difference between credit and access to EFTPOS in terms of the Casino? I am not a great user of EFTPOS, but I assume that one can run up debt with EFTPOS, or just withdraw cash.

Mr Wade: You can only withdraw cash.

Mr FOLEY: It is much of a muchness. EFTPOS gives a punter immediate access to his or her money. I assume that we did not originally provide credit at the Casino to prevent a situation where someone who loses \$50 cannot utilise that facility and lose another \$100. I am not sure how different

that is from allowing someone to enter the Casino with a credit card and use the cashier to access \$50 or \$100 via EFTPOS.

Mr Wade: One is cash they do not have and the other is cash they have.

Mr FOLEY: Not necessarily. EFTPOS will work on overdraft. If you have an overdraft facility you can access cash via EFTPOS. I know; I do it. I am being a bit semantic, but we have made it easy for patrons to obtain cash at the Casino. Of course, there are teller machines to your left-hand side as you enter the Casino anyway. As one of my colleagues suggested, if the facilities were not within the boundaries of the Casino but were up the street, people would only walk up the street—and at 2 a.m. in that part of Adelaide that may not be desirable. I am not trying to be difficult about this, but those issues are worth raising. Of course, the AHA and licensed clubs would argue that they are not allowed the same EFTPOS or credit card facilities that the Casino has in place. As prevails with poker machines in the Casino, there are differences. I am not arguing that we should put EFTPOS into clubs and pubs—that may be a good or a bad thing—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I do not think EFTPOS is available in outlets that have gaming machines.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: We took them out of the gaming rooms.

Mr FOLEY: That is the ludicrous nature of the debate: EFTPOS is in the gaming room of the Casino, but it is not allowed in the gaming room—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You are right; it is ridiculous.

Mr FOLEY: That is what I am saying. That is not what we are debating, but it is interesting to highlight that the Casino has different rules to the clubs and pubs. That may be something we will raise at another time in another piece of legislation. Anyway, they are minor points. A number of sundry Bills are to be passed with this Bill—a Bill to amend the Liquor Licensing Act (there is very little that we need worry about in that) and a Bill to amend the Gaming Supervisory Authority Act 1992. I refer to the expiation notices that are being made available. I understand that this will also affect gaming establishments as well as the Casino where the issuing of expiation notices up to \$10 000 is an option as against taking a matter to court. Again, we will support that.

With respect to the Bill to amend the Gaming Supervisory Act, I refer to the Gaming Supervisory Authority's ability to swap information with relevant bodies in other jurisdictions and in New Zealand and to maintain the fact that freedom of information does not apply and that the Ombudsman's jurisdiction does not extend to this authority. We will support those provisions, but there will be one or two questions during the Committee stage that we will need to put to the Government. All in all we will support the Government on this measure.

As I said in a speech yesterday to the Property Council, with respect to a lot of the legislation with which we deal—and despite the tension, debate, arguments and theatrics during Question Time between the two Parties—this is yet another example where we work in the main in a bipartisan manner to pass constructive legislation. Again, it is another example of a responsible Opposition doing the right thing in respect of legislation. Despite the Government's constantly saying that we are a carping, negative, criticising Opposition, we are very much removed from that. We are constructive when we need to be and critical when we have to be.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I also support the legislation. I do want to go through the Bill in detail. The member for Hart has done that quite adequately. I have never found much need to say essentially 'me too' and to take 20 minutes to do so. The Government is to be congratulated for trying to tidy up this area. It was always a very messy area for a very good reason—you had either a messy area or no area at all. That was the reality given the Opposition we had at the time. The history of the matter is quite interesting, particularly for me as a backbencher who, being somewhat bored, thought that to establish a Casino in Adelaide would be an interesting exercise. I was assured that it could not be done. Don Dunstan tried, Michael Wilson had tried, and I believe that Norm Peterson tried—and all failed.

On this issue I thought that I was better than the three of them put together. I put together a Bill which, with amendments, was ultimately successful. One of the prices that we paid for that success was a Bill which did allow for a casino but which in terms of legislation was somewhat scrappy. The reason for that is very easy to explain. I cobbled together all the previous speeches and previous attempts where people had said 'I am not voting for this Bill; however, if it . . . and I would.' Well I put all the 'if it's . . .' in. It made for a Bill that I am sure historians looking at it would ask, 'What does that have to do with anything; why on earth is that in?' I can tell them that such provisions were included in the legislation purely to get a vote from members who said that they would vote for a casino only if a certain provision was included.

The most significant factor was the inclusion of the Lotteries Commission. It figures in the Bill but, apart from being named as holding the licence, it has no role, and nor should it have a role. However, some people felt that there was something important about the Lotteries Commission holding the licence. Because they thought it was important, I was happy to accommodate them, provided they voted for the Bill—and they did, even though the Lotteries Commission's role was meaningless. That is the history of the Lotteries Commission being involved. I am happy to see that the commission is no longer included in the legislation, but I was never game to bring the Bill back into Parliament to tidy it up, given that we had an utterly irresponsible Opposition.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That's true. Many members were utterly irresponsible and totally opposed to gambling, but there was nothing in the Bill that made entry into the Casino compulsory. Nevertheless, now that they are in Government, those people have seen the light, and apparently all the evils of gambling have gone away. They are now in favour of it all, because they have done nothing in the past three years to discourage it, and they are raking in the money. I am very pleased that they have seen the light, even though their reasons were not founded on principle or on a recognition that people have the right to do what they want with their own money. Their reasons are purely venal: they just want the tax. Nevertheless, a convert is a convert, and we welcome them all.

As I said, the legislation was nothing to be proud of. Parliamentary Counsel was absolutely appalled with it, as has been everybody who has tried to work with it since. Nevertheless, the Casino kicked off in 1985 and it is still going, and we will see it go on for ever. However, after all the effort I went through to get the legislation up to establish the Casino, I was always very disappointed with the Casino itself. I am not a gambler and I am not interested in going to the Casino

to gamble. I occasionally went there with guests from interstate or elsewhere to show them through, but that was the limit of my interest.

I always thought that the operators of the Casino behaved fairly poorly. They had a monopoly, and it should have been a licence to print money. Everybody should have been happy, but that was not the case. I am trying to be kind, but I can only say that, given the monopoly they had, they certainly did not use it to their best advantage. A lot of them were basically incompetent. Their industrial relations were always atrocious, and members should bear in mind that they were dealing with the Liquor Trades Union, whose reputation for cooperation is extremely high. However, the Casino management managed to get even the Liquor Trades Union off side, which is pretty hard to do.

I thought that some of the Casino's advertising was pretty crass and did not add a great deal to the tourism industry or bring any credit on the Casino. I remember one group of ads that astonished me. I opened the paper to see little Johnny Schoolboy, with an invitation to readers to come into the Casino and win his school fees. I thought that was pretty poor advertising. I was always disappointed with the Casino's operators, and I always suspected that there was a bit of a gravy train for a few people and not very competent management.

However, that was sorted out relatively recently with the appointment of John Frearson as Chairman. That was an inspired appointment by the Treasurer, just as it was an inspired appointment of the previous Government to have John Frearson as Chairman of the State Bank after the departure of Mr Simmons. Just as an aside, let me say that I have often wondered where all the John Frearsons of the world were in the years since 1983. Those who chose the Chairman and the other members of the board did not choose wisely, but obviously there were a lot of good people around. Unfortunately, those who did the choosing did not find them until it was too late. The appointment of John Frearson as Chairman of the State Bank and then Bank SA, when it changed its name and role, was inspired and, having played some role in that, I have given myself a pat on the back, just as I give the Treasurer a pat on the back for appointing him to the Casino.

The arrangements that were made for the operation of the Casino were relatively simple but, as for all the paraphernalia around the site, when I first saw the flow chart of who owned what and who had a slice of what, I was absolutely bemused by it, and I admit that I never quite got my head around it. Fortunately I did not have to: it was someone else's problem.

The only part of it for which I had any direct responsibility was through the SASFIT legislation. The SASFIT annual reports, which I always tabled in the House, showed that it did extremely well out of the whole scheme. Unless that agency lied and its annual reports were printed lies, I never had any reason to doubt that it did well out of the ASER complex. The Treasurer might have a different view on that, but I could give to the House only the information which was given to me and which was printed in the annual report. SASFIT was never unhappy with the amount of money it made out of the ASER complex during that period.

The Casino has been a success to the extent that it has employed about 1 000 people. It has contributed about \$1 million a month into general revenue, which has been very useful, and it has provided an awful lot of pleasure for an awful lot of people. A lot of people get some pleasure out of the activities that are offered by the Casino, and to all those

people who have had that pleasure, again, as the architect of it, I am quite pleased that that has occurred.

It is time that somebody tested the waters here for more casinos in South Australia. I always thought that one casino was insufficient: I always thought it was unfair. I do not like monopolies, and the Casino is a classic example of the dangers of having a monopoly, and we have seen some of the down side of that with regard to the slack administration—not slack in any dishonest sense—because it did not fulfil the Casino's potential. I see no reason why other casinos should not be allowed to operate. It has been suggested that the investors in the development down at Wirrina might build a casino. If they do, good luck to them—that would not bother me in the slightest. I do not see why they cannot have an appropriately sized casino at Wirrina, and I would say the same about Kangaroo Island, Coober Pedy or Bowden and Brompton.

I have no difficulty with the number of casinos being sufficient to meet whatever the market requires, provided the necessary planning provisions are adhered to and that they keep the noise down. I must admit that I am crooked on noise. However, I have no hassles with that proposition. People can bet on horses, and so they ought to be able to. People can go to the dogs, and so they ought to be able to, if they wish. It is not something that I choose to do, but—

Mr Atkinson: So you are better than the rest of us.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: No, I am not better at all. I will not tell the member for Spence my sins, but they are not—

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I may tell the member for Taylor, but I will not tell the member for Spence. Spending money in the Casino certainly is not one of them—or at the Angle Park dogs for that matter. It just does not appeal. Many other things appeal. I manage to get through my money and I am sure I have as many bad marks against my name as anyone else, but not at the Angle Park dogs. I do not know whether anyone will take up the challenge to have the number of casinos increased in South Australia. I suspect something is going on at Wirrina. I have a suspicion that a nudge and a wink has been given and that perhaps after the next election we will see some activity in this area. I will not be here to assist the process, which is unfortunate for the process but not unfortunate for me: I will be happy not to be here. I will be in spirit with anyone who takes it up, if not physically.

The question of signing the licence again gives me no real concern. Why should not the Government sell the licence if someone is willing to give something for it? They have to comply with all the conditions on which the Parliament insists. It gives me no concern, if it wants to sell the licence. The Government cannot charge more for the licence and the Government's taxation regime than the market will bear: people will not pay. I say to the Government, 'Go for your life. Get as much as you possibly can and good luck to you.' I have no quarrel with the Bill in that regard at all. I do not see it as privatisation. It was the absolute intention of this legislation—and I said it repeatedly when I was dealing with it all those years ago—that it be run by the private sector. It was not meant to be run by the Government sector. The regulatory regime would be very tight and run by the public sector, but we did not want the public sector involved in dealing cards and all that sort of thing.

I remember at the time saying, 'No, it has to be run by the private sector as far as I am concerned', because we wanted it to be run profitably. No-one picked me up on that at the

time, but that was my approach to it then and it still is. Again, good luck to the Government. I hope it gets heaps for it. I congratulate John Frearson and his team for what he has done with the Casino. I am only sorry that we did not have someone of his calibre right from the start, but nevertheless it is never too late to have the Casino meet its potential. I say to all those who come after me: have a go, try to broaden it and try to get some casinos that are appropriate for our neighbourhoods, our resorts, our outback towns and cities so that people can invest in them and get some pleasure out of them if they choose to do so.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I thank the members for Hart and Giles for their contribution to the debate. I will not spend much time on the history, but I point out that what started out as a brave adventure into gambling turned out to be something of a disaster. The reason why it turned so bad was that the cost of building the structures on the ASER site almost doubled on what was perceived to be the appropriate cost of those developments.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: It was a somewhat different project as well.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The member for Giles points out that the project was somewhat different. To the extent that changes were made during that project, the honourable member is correct, but it should be clearly pointed out that, if we eliminated the money spent on the Convention Centre—if we deducted it on both sides of the ledger, both on the estimates and the final cost—we would still finish up with a development on that site the cost of which was almost double the original estimate. From my memory—and we will have to go back through the record as I suspect the figures changed almost monthly—the original concept did not include the Convention Centre but it certainly did involve a hotel. I do not think it originally included the Riverside Centre, but I would have to go back through the record to determine what was planned for the site.

Before anyone started digging turf, the general cost was originally estimated at some \$85 million. When the total concept, including the Convention Centre, was re-estimated, my understanding is that the cost was about \$160 million and, by the time the complex had been completed the full cost, including the interest cost during the development, was some \$345 million. I do not think any lay observer would believe that it was a great success: in fact, it was quite the opposite. Instead of meeting the dues on \$160 million, the partners in this venture—namely, the South Australian Superannuation Fund Investment Trust (SASFIT as it was then known) and Kumagai Gumi—were responsible for and paying bills on some \$345 million. There is a huge difference about the capacity of any business to survive under those circumstances.

The complex was weighed down with debt as a result of the lack of capacity of the then Government, and indeed the builders on the site, to constrain bad practice and to deliver on time and within the standards required. There is a whole litany of little disasters on that site—time delays, deals done with the union hierarchy, crates of beer delivered, a few other favours done and intimidation. All those things were part and parcel of the development of ASER. If anyone wanted to look back into a part of South Australia's industrial building history, they would assume that there was complete dominance by the union movement at the time, to the extent that South Australia suffered badly as a result.

The same thing happened on the Myer-Remm site. If members reflected on the enormous cost blow-outs on the Myer-Remm site, they would remember that exactly the same thing happened. The pattern was preset and the same deals were in place. Whatever rort you could get into was almost allowable under the former Government. The builders themselves did not seem to be too interested in taking any pro-active action or calling in people who could assist meaningfully to ensure that that project was delivered on time and cost. I am not here to debate the merits of whether the buildings are good, bad or indifferent: I simply reflect that, if the buildings had been delivered on time and at the cost that was reasonably estimated at that time, we would not have a problem today.

I only hope that we learn by the mistakes of the past and we do not allow that sort of anarchy to prevail in South Australia again, although I suspect that the building unions tend to lie low during periods of low activity but, as soon as activity increases, they begin flouting the rules and exploiting the circumstances. To a large extent, that probably explains much of the difficulty experienced by the two partners in this development. The facts of life are that it was too expensive and that no-one could afford the bills that had to be paid as a result of the explosion in the cost of the development.

With regard to the history of the Casino, it was the first on the mainland, from memory. As the member for Giles points out, the legislation was a bit messy. When it came to the point of determining what new legislation we required, we went through the old Act again, and I think anybody looking at it would be quite amazed that such a scant Bill has guided the operations of the Casino. Sometimes it may be judged that it was only through a lot of luck that we did not have further difficulties as a result of that inadequate legislation.

The member for Giles quite rightly recalls that the Casino debate was considerably heated; I can remember it well. That debate took place for well over 30 hours. One can always assess the results of that sort of debate as being inadequate. It was introduced as a private member's initiative. Under those circumstances, the vagaries of the Parliament prevailed. It was not professionally prepared and reflected the member for Giles's desire to establish a Casino. We were not too worried about the details at that stage. The Parliament finally succumbed and allowed the Casino Bill to become law, and the ASER development was the final result of that parliamentary debate.

Anybody looking at the legislation would quickly realise that it was totally inadequate for a casino but it was a product of the times and, as the member for Giles has pointed out, he was too scared to bring it back before the Parliament in case the Government suffered further difficulties—and, frankly, I can understand that. Not only was the legislation inadequate but also a number of uncommercial agreements were made prior to the building of the Casino. Again, I will not spend much time on the circumstances that prevailed at the time but, if anybody wants to go back, read the books and assess some of the information in the parliamentary debates over the past 12 years, they will certainly realise that it was put together in a way that was uncommercial. In fact, worse things have been said about the origins of the Casino and the ASER development.

A very high cost was paid for the ASER development and we had inadequate legislation and inadequate people running the Casino at the time. Nevertheless, because it was a monopoly the Casino thrived and started to return quite significant dividends to the State Government. It did not

necessarily pay its way, because there was an accumulation of losses on behalf of the under-performing hotel and arrangements were in place that, when those returns improved, there would be certain write-backs of the moneys owing. So, we had an uncommercial development even though, if we isolated the \$25 million spent on the building and put a ring fence around it, we could say that the Casino itself has remained profitable and would continue to be profitable in the future. However, the whole ASER complex was built on the Casino revenue, and no Casino can afford to prop up a hotel of the size and quality of the Hyatt or the whole complex that constitutes that area. So, it was the debt burden associated with that development that has caused the two partners involved an extreme level of difficulty.

It also reflected on the returns of the superannuation funds, and there have certainly been considerable write-backs of that investment as a result of the downturn in profit. Kumagai Gumi has suffered as well, because it has had to provide additional support to the Casino or the ASER complex simply because the returns from ASER were not good enough to meet the interest bills.

I am pleased that the Opposition has agreed to accommodate the change in the licence renewal procedure. It could be said that it is quite fundamental. It probably should have been fundamental in the first place that the Lotteries Commission not be the owner of the licence. However, a level of paranoia prevailed at the time so that at the time Parliament thought fit to place the licence in the hands of the Lotteries Commission, as you would class it as the honest broker in the system. Therefore, there was some suggestion that the operator's licence would have some capacity to impact on the operations, should they not be up to the required standard.

The facts of life are quite different from that. Every casino in Australia of which I am aware has its own operator's licence; it normally goes with the operator, and that is sensible. There are not a number of organisations adopting a watchdog role. In this case, we had the Liquor Licensing Commissioner, who was the watchdog itself; we had the Lotteries Commission, which might have been the body of last resort but which provided inspectorial services at the Casino; and we had the Casino Supervisory Authority. They were all there to keep the place honest. Ultimately, of course, there was the Minister.

In terms of taxation issues, the Government clearly recognises that the sale of the Casino and the whole complex either separately or in total will very much depend on the capacity of the Casino to perform in a competitive marketplace. Most people now recognise that casinos attract a local population primarily. If anybody wants to look back at the record, they will see that the analysis of the clientele of the casino in Hobart showed that, despite the very strong tourist trade to Tasmania, well over 70 per cent of the casino's revenue came from the locals. We were probably kidding ourselves that it would be any different here in South Australia.

The rise of the Adelaide Casino and its increasing profitability had much to do with its almost monopoly status not only in this State but also in relation to other opportunities for casino playing around Australia. It was the best of its type. Melbourne, Sydney and Queensland had not provided casinos at that stage, and Melbourne and Sydney in particular went through very rocky paths in order to get their casinos up and running. So, not only did we have a very interested local population who had never had much to do with casinos and saw it as a form of entertainment but also we had a very

strong interstate and overseas clientele base. We did not necessarily rely on the local population to provide the major form of income, as it does today.

Two major events have affected the Casino's operation and called into doubt all the valuations of the total ASER complex and particularly the operations of the Casino. The first has been the proliferation of casinos around Australia, which affected us quite dramatically, but even more significant has been the provision of poker machines in pubs and clubs.

Anybody who had done the sums at the time would recognise that there would be a shift in the gambling pattern away from the Casino (as the only major gaming venue in town, other than racing) to the comfort and proximity of local hotels and clubs. The introduction of poker machines has had a devastating effect on the profitability of the Casino and, therefore, a devastating effect on the profitability of the whole ASER complex. I am sure the member for Giles, who was the initiator of the poker machines, would have recognised that at the time the poker machine legislation was brought before the House.

However, when certain venues or operations have a monopoly status, we all know that over a period that will change with new venues and ideas coming into the marketplace. The world is not static and, at the time, no risk analysis was undertaken on the capacity of the ASER complex to depend on the Casino when the other casinos came into operation or when poker machines were introduced in this State. If it had been undertaken, we would have been on the sales path of the Casino much earlier than we are. There have been some missed opportunities prior to that event. If somebody had an even half good crystal ball, it would be nice to think that the ASER complex would be around that early.

The way in which the various bodies that make up ASER have been constructed has complicated the issue to the extent that any wind-out or quitting of that project was almost impossible without some major restructuring of the companies concerned. Those changes are taking place. This legislation is intended not only to fix up the 1984 legislation but also to make sure that whoever buys the Casino is well aware of what they are getting and their responsibilities. Regarding the issue of taxation, we obviously want the South Australian Casino to be an attractive venue. We want the ASER complex to be as attractive as possible to any investor. The major revenue earner on the ASER complex is obviously the Casino. We wish to have the flexibility to test the marketplace to ensure that the best price possible is obtained for the Casino.

Members should be well aware that there have been significant write-downs of the ASER investment by the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation. We would like to think that some of that money can come back, albeit not in large amounts, and the attractiveness of the investment is, therefore, obviously a prime consideration of anyone who has an interest in casinos or any other part of the complex. I am pleased that we will have some levels of flexibility in terms of the taxation regime. Obviously, the member for Hart would be aware that Treasury does not give away money easily. If the taxation rate changes, the honourable member would be aware that that would only be because we believed that we would get a better price more than commensurate with the loss of revenue to the taxation base.

It is a fact of life that hotels and clubs provide EFTPOS facilities. A number of hotels and clubs put them in the gaming area to make sure that, if anybody ran out of cash,

they could get some more out of the machines. However, their accessibility caused us some concern. At the Casino, my understanding is that you have to work on an account which has a credit balance. I am not sure whether that has changed—I have not checked in recent times—but that was the always the situation, so you could not run yourself into debit in the process. Of course, outside the Casino you have the normal bankcard facilities, so there is not an uneven playing field.

I can assure the member for Hart that the taxation regime relating to the gaming machines in the Casino will remain at the same level as that prevailing within pubs or clubs. So, a significant advantage will not be given to the Casino over pubs and clubs. That may be some level of comfort to the member for Hart. Of course, as we have recognised from some of the profits, a greater percentage of profit is coming from those machines to support the operations of the Casino. This is a debate on which I could spend some hours. I acknowledge that there has been a brief summary of the history of, and indeed support for, the general provisions in the legislation. I appreciate that support. There are some questions to which the Opposition would obviously wish to know answers, and I will certainly do the best I can to answer those questions during Committee.

Bills read a second time.

In Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee of the whole will now consider the Casino Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—'Grant of licence.'

Mr FOLEY: This clause provides:

The Governor may, on the recommendation of the authority, grant a casino licence to an applicant for the licence.

I will take this opportunity to tease through some of the process, much of which has been well briefed to me. I want to be doubly sure that I have the facts right. I understand that the Government will be putting in place an independent body: what is the likely membership of this body? I understand that, once that body has been appointed, it will make a recommendation to the Gaming Supervisory Authority. Who will make up the body? Who is likely to undertake what tasks? As to the committee established by the Minister to review the applicants for a casino, who undertakes the due diligence process, and who does the investigation?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is planned that there will be the normal sales process to which both the SFMC and Kumagai Gumi have committed themselves, and that has a steering committee associated with it. The Chair of the sales process will be Roger Sexton, and there is a steering committee made up of people with interest from the Government, SFMC and Kumagai Gumi. SFMC has translated its interest back into the Government's interest, so that there is only a peripheral involvement by the SFMC.

The steering committee has been involved in much of the process to date, in terms of what needs to be done prior to our embarking on a sales process. We have said that, provided there is no difficulty with the legislation, the start of the sales process is likely to occur some time in June, at which stage an information memorandum will be issued and people and organisations will be invited to submit a bid for either all or part of the ASER complex.

One aspect of our restructuring process is to ensure that the ASER complex can be sold either as a whole or as individual units thereof. Bids can be submitted for the

Riverside Centre, the hotel, the hotel and the Casino, or for the whole complex. We will receive a variety of bids and it will then be up to the team that has been formed to assess those bids. Quite clearly that team will represent the interests of the shareholders, namely, Kumagai Gumi and the Government, as a proxy for SFMC. That team will assess the best bids that come across the table in relation to either the whole or part of the ASER complex.

Even when a preferred purchaser is found, there must be a process of due diligence. In this case, not only must there be due diligence to ensure that any prospective buyer is getting what he or she pays for, but the preferred buyer will need a big tick from the Gaming Supervisory Authority that it is a fit and proper organisation to operate the Casino. The GSA will receive an application from a preferred purchaser, if there is a preferred purchaser, and it will then put that preferred purchaser through all the required due diligence checks. Obviously, during the deliberations of that small group of people, if someone has put in a spectacular bid but does not appear to have a particularly good history that would have to be taken into account.

It is important to bear in mind that the group itself will be mindful of not only the price and economic outcome but also the fact that whoever receives the preferred purchaser status will have to pass the final test with the GSA, which involves security checks around the world, as the member for Hart would be aware. We can request information from a number of jurisdictions, and we have previously done that with respect to individuals involved in casinos and with gaming machines. The GSA would need to go through a process in order to give not only a tick to the organisation but also a tick to the directors of that organisation who would serve South Australia.

We intend to have a person on top of that system (hopefully someone in a legal, judicial capacity) who will perform an overseeing role as well as someone involved in the matter of probity. A probity check will be a part of the process as well as oversight by a person of some eminence. The member for Hart can be assured that selling a casino will probably be a very difficult task in that the industry is very fluid, quite dynamic and the subject of interest by people we would not wish to see in this State. The team will require a great deal of wisdom to work through the process. A number of steps must be followed. The preferred purchaser will then submit an application to the GSA, and it could fail the test because either a director or the organisation could be found not to be appropriate. If the organisation in question is found to be inappropriate, we will then go down the list. If a director is not appropriate then obviously there would be an insistence that the company concerned change directors. That is basically the process.

Mr FOLEY: The Minister has certainly given us a number of answers for which we would be looking. What is Executive Government's role in this process, given that, as much as we may want some people not to come to the State of South Australia, there will obviously be some who may have a view as to who should come to this State? I assume by all of this—and officers have given me this assurance—that not you personally, Minister, but Executive Government will be out of the loop and that you will not be a part of the process until you receive a recommendation. I would like that commitment on the record.

I also assume that you would not be briefed in any ongoing basis as to who are the likely bidders, given the furore we saw in Victoria when a number of people were

involved in other casinos. I want an assurance, Minister, that you will be very much out of the loop.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The honourable member can certainly have that assurance. That is the way we have run the sales process in South Australia. If anyone wants to see the Treasurer during the sales process of any asset they are firmly told that I am not interested. We have always kept an arm's length relationship. It is only when the Asset Management Task Force, as a committee, has reached its conclusion that that conclusion, together with the strengths and reasons for it, is conveyed to the Treasurer. I normally have a very full briefing on the recommendations, and I can assure the member for Hart that we have not departed from the recommendations.

Either the Treasurer is easy to please or the Asset Management Task Force has got it right each time. We believe that it should be an arm's length relationship. The intervention we have seen in the other States has reflected poorly on those States and obviously led to some considerable delays. I am not necessarily saying that this will be easy, but I believe that the cleaner and more transparent the process the more likely we will get a beneficial result for this State. Yes, Government will be well away from this process.

Mr FOLEY: I take it, then, that when the Minister is at one of those Liberal Party fund raisers and Ron Walker walks into the room the Minister will give him a wide berth. I say that flippantly; I am not making any accusations. I have no doubt that Crown Casino will look across the border. The Minister is telling me—and it is probably stating the obvious—that he will be given a recommendation from the GSA; Executive Government does not have to do anything, and his intention is to agree to the recommendation. The Minister will be acting on the recommendation of the Asset Management Task Force or its committee, at least through the GSA, to Government?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I will be acting on the recommendation of the task force, in this case the ASER task force, in terms of the acceptance of the preferred bidder. That preferred bidder will then have to submit an application to the GSA, which is independent and which will assess that bid. If the GSA rejects the person or company concerned, the State has a problem and we will have to rethink the process.

Clause passed.

Clause 6—'Casino premises.'

Mr FOLEY: I will use some licence in asking this question: what is the future of the Hyatt? Does the Hyatt Hotel, as the badge name of the hotel, remain, or can a potential purchaser be free to renegotiate this matter?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Obviously, the Government wishes to sell the Hyatt. In place is a management arrangement that was put there by the former Government. Should a buyer have some interest in other than the Hyatt Hotel's being on that site, obviously there would need to be negotiations.

Mr FOLEY: Is the Treasurer suggesting that the Hyatt's continuance is under some question?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I am saying that during the sale process there may be bidders who are more than happy to see a hotel and Casino sale, and more than happy to have the Hyatt as the headliner. Other purchasers may see a benefit in having their own badge on the Casino and on the hotel. If that is the case, there is an agreement in place, and that would have to be subject to the negotiations. All contracts are there to be honoured or renegotiated, depending on the circumstances. I remind the member for Hart of some of the

contracts we have had to honour and renegotiate because they have been particularly bad—although I am not saying that this one is bad. We have found how difficult some of those contracts have been for Government.

I can only reflect that we do renegotiate contracts on a continuum throughout government, as the honourable member will readily accept. There may well be players or organisations skilled in hotel management who have a very strong profile. I will not suggest names, but I am aware of some interests of equal status to the Hyatt, should they wish to pursue that interest. The matter of the Hyatt is subject to what comes out of the sale process.

Mr FOLEY: I will preface my third question with a supplementary to the last one. No doubt the Treasurer will have found that he has had a need to renegotiate some contracts that may or may not have been the best possible contracts. From some of the leaked documents that are consistently coming to the Opposition, I suspect that on my appointment as a Minister of the Crown I will have a similar job to undertake with the many contracts that we are starting to see the current Government entering into. By then the Treasurer may be long retired, but he can expect a phone call or a letter from me as I am unwinding, renegotiating, developing grey hairs and whatever with some of the outsourcing contracts that this Government has entered into.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: Time will tell

Mr FOLEY: I suspect that it probably will. To any public servant who reads *Hansard*, I ask them to keep those documents coming: they help us in our task. Just to clarify that, is the Treasurer suggesting that, if a body such as a Crown Casino or Darling Harbour wanted to purchase both the Casino business and the accommodation, that body may want to be able to put in a bid for the lot, which would then require the Treasurer to weigh up the commercial issues about whether or not we pay out the Hyatt for the remaining term of its contract? The Treasurer is saying that that will be part of the negotiations. That was one point.

The second point is the issue of transferability of the Casino premises. I understand that should the Casino require other premises at any point, and I do not think that is an unreasonable thing to negotiate, a detailed public consultation process must be undertaken, in which all interested parties will be able to put their views. It will then go to the GSA, which will make a recommendation to the Government. Will the Treasurer expand a little on that process?

The Hon. S.J. Baker: One of the important facets of this legislation is that, should something unfortunate happen to the site the Casino is sitting on—and we can never say that that site will be immune from any catastrophes—obviously, the way the legislation is framed it would be very difficult to transfer the site. It is easy when the Government is one of the major players, as we have been through the SFMC, so we could immediately amend legislation. However, should some unfortunate circumstance arise on that site, any new buyer would wish to have the comfort of knowing that the licence is not site specific to the extent that, if circumstances overcame them in whatever form, they would not suddenly lose their operations. If they could not operate their licence there, we could allocate another licence elsewhere. It is a level of comfort for a potential buyer. There is no change in the site. We believe that it is probably one of the best sites anywhere around Australia. In my view, the process would be run by the GSA itself.

Clause passed.

Clause 7—‘Restriction on number of licences.’

Mr FOLEY: I am not saying this as a criticism, but if commercial reality changes in 15 or 20 years and there is an argument for a more commercially attractive venue for the Casino within the city, that is an issue that the licensee could raise with the Government or the GSA and there might be another use for the present Casino site. I assume that that flexibility is also there.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: It is not envisaged that way. This issue is really about the capacity to operate should some circumstance prevent them doing it on that site and there is a need for a temporary casino or another venue. That is the whole reason behind this. We had not envisaged moving the Casino around South Australia, quite frankly.

Clause passed.

Clause 8 passed.

Clause 9—‘Term and renewal of licence.’

Mr FOLEY: I see that the length of the licence to be granted is an issue subject to negotiation. Can the Treasurer give any indication, or is that something that he would rather not comment on at this stage?

The Hon. S.J. Baker: I would prefer not to speculate on the length of the licence. Conceivably, a minimum of 10 years would be the sort of ballpark from which we would start negotiating.

Mr FOLEY: I take it from clause 9(3) that there will be no commitment at the time of signing off that they have any automatic right to renewal. I assume that at that point the Government of the day will have the ability to assess the current operator with competitive bids from other operators.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: That is certainly our intention, although I do not have enough personal experience in the wider world of casino operations to know what effective arrangements should be in place. That is why it is good that I am not involved in this process. But there are people who can give us guidance as to the best practice in which we can involve ourselves here in South Australia. The unfortunate part about the previous operation, because it was so open-ended, is that it could have rolled on forever. The technical operators’ arrangement was 25 years with right of renewal. If you looked at some of the previous practices, you would say that you never wanted that to happen again. I assure the member for Hart that, in principle, I agree with what he is putting before the Parliament; however, should the advice be otherwise, the Government will take it.

Clause passed.

Clause 10 passed.

Clause 11—‘Transfer of licence.’

Mr FOLEY: I understand that there is an ability to transfer the licence. Obviously it is designed so that if at some future point the operator of the Casino has some difficulty with the business, or wishes to relinquish the licence, they can do so. Clearly, there is a defined structure as to what would then occur if that event took place. Can you expand on that?

The Hon. S.J. Baker: The honourable member is right. This has happened with the sale of a number of businesses over the past five of six years. If one looks at the holding companies that have changed hands and their structures, one will find that in terms of their intercompany relationships they may have changed dramatically once, twice or three times. The business world is very fluid. You could have a different owner. As a result of the purchase of the company a different owner would hold this as a subsidiary company. A whole range of things could happen. Effectively, it may be that simply through commercial changes at another level this

could change. It may be that someone has exceeded their capacity within the Casino and, therefore, need to quit the business. There are a whole range of reasons.

We would normally expect that it would be as a result of a change of business relationship rather than an incapacity to perform. There are large and wealthy companies that have an interest in casinos, but they also have an interest in a whole range of other areas of business. They may wish to divest themselves of a casino business or a whole range of businesses. We do want any potential purchaser to say suddenly, 'If I want to rationalise my business, I do not have any value left in the licence.' Obviously, should they wish to go through that process they need to be aware that any new purchaser must pass the test. There are real risks associated with a licence transfer that they have to clearly understand before they enter that process.

Mr FOLEY: If a certain party purchases the licence, operates the Casino and the process of a proper probity check and due diligence is undertaken, with the directors and so on being of good character, what will happen in a hypothetical scenario where that company is then taken over or purchased by another company at a later time and that company has undesirable directors, business practices and ethics? It may simply be a company with which we as a State have some difficulty conducting business. I do not want to raise examples, but I am sure there are the obvious companies with which we would not want to do business. What happens if that situation occurs?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I have thought about 'what ifs' on these issues. Clearly, if someone cannot pass the test they cannot get the licence—end of section. Whatever ownership arrangements are in place are irrelevant. If someone wants to sell the licence to another company and that company, because of its directorships or whatever, fails to pass the test, it cannot operate the Casino.

Mr FOLEY: But at that point there would be issues of compensation and so on. What happens if a company which is deemed to be of good character is taken over by a larger company or another company that has questionable practices? It could be argued that there are companies in America which have links to organised crime but which still operate legitimate businesses. What happens if such a company takes over the Casino in South Australia? I would not have thought that you could extricate yourself from that without issues of compensation being raised. If the Treasurer is saying that if that happens we can withdraw the licence without compensation I would be pleased, but I would be a bit surprised.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I will seek further advice, but I understand that if they cannot pass the test and if they have purchased the business unwisely then they suffer the loss. Should we reach a situation where the licensed operator cannot perform for whatever reason, we can put our own temporary management in place. We can forfeit the licence, and there shall be no compensation.

Clause passed.

Clauses 12 to 14 passed.

Clause 15—'Surrender of licence.'

Mr FOLEY: I accept that there are a number of criteria under which an assessment would be taken if the licence had to be surrendered. I assume that subclause (2) provides that we do not take over any of the debt or liabilities incurred by the licensee. The issue of compensation is the question. I assume from what the Minister said in answer to the previous question that under these powers we are not subject to

compensation if we so choose to withdraw the licence under legitimate criteria.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: That is my understanding.

Clause passed.

Clause 16—'Approved licensing agreement.'

Mr FOLEY: As I indicated earlier, I shall discuss some issues relating to employment conditions. I refer to clause 16(1)(a) in respect of the approved licensing agreement between the Minister and the licensee. We could include a catch-all provision that includes the operation of the Casino. Is it possible to determine what might be included in this agreement which, on the face of it, could be modified at will?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: In terms of the agreement, it is supposed to contain only the major heads of agreement. Obviously, the GSA would have some difficulties if we put some detail in that agreement which would affect its capacity to oversee the Casino. Clearly, that would be a repudiation of the GSA's role in ensuring that the Casino operates effectively. The Government would seek to ensure that the major issues for a commercial operator are contained within that agreement. The remainder would simply then be subject to the rules that prevail when the Casino is purchased. Those rules have to be capable of changing, because the nature of the gambling industry changes almost weekly. New games are invented that people have not even thought of.

Therefore, if those head agreements are not kept very tight with the major principles, we will have an unworkable situation. It is the Government's clear intention that we contain within the agreements those items such as the terms and conditions associated with the licence that relate to the term, exclusivity and all the things important to the operator. If we go too far with any agreement, we then transgress on the grounds of the overseer, and obviously that is not the sort of thing that we want to do.

Clause passed.

Clause 17—'Casino duty agreement.'

Mr FOLEY: Next to the sale process itself, the issue of the Casino duty agreement is probably as important as it gets. What is the current level of revenue the State receives from the Casino by way of taxation?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The Government gets \$18 million to \$19 million out of the Casino operations in the form of duty tax.

Mr FOLEY: As the Treasurer indicated earlier, and stating the obvious, the Government is not about to enter into an arrangement where the State would receive less than that amount, although there might be some differences in the margin and the Government might have to give a bit in one income stream to pick up the sale price. I will take the Treasurer on good faith that the Government wants to ensure that we have an adequate income stream, but I would like a commitment from him that, where possible, the income stream will be maintained and that we will not forfeit future income to get the benefit of a better sale because, at the end of the day, this is a long-term income generator for the State.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: As I pointed out to the member for Hart, for competitive reasons, we would get sheer aggravation from a large number of hotel and club operators if we were to change the gaming machine taxation regime. In terms of table games, the taxation rate averages out at about 13.5 per cent, so ours is probably a higher taxed casino than others overall, although it is sometimes hard to draw the right conclusions because some licence fees are very heavy in other areas whereas they are much lighter here. There might be trade-offs between licence fees and duties which the

operator might find useful and which the Government might find commercially appropriate.

We would say that, overall, our Casino duty is on the heavy side and therefore we would look at potentially forgoing certain revenue to make those rates more competitive. I assure the member for Hart that we are not about to lose a lot of money out of the taxation regime, but there must be some flexibility and, if by being more competitive in our rates we attracted business into this State specifically for playing the Casino, it could be with a lowering of the rate that we got more revenue. The member for Hart is well aware of the equations that we are talking about. They will be a matter for judgment again when we see what is put on the table at the time.

Clause passed.

Clause 18—'Agreements to be tabled in Parliament.'

Mr FOLEY: The issue of accountability to Parliament is an important question for the Opposition, and clearly the Government feels likewise. It appears that sufficient public disclosure is outlined in this clause. Will the agreement be tabled in Parliament?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: That is correct, so there can be no beg your pardons about it.

Mr FOLEY: I am surprised, because I thought that the Government might have held that back a little in terms of its negotiating position.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I think it is better that they know before they start.

Mr FOLEY: That is a fair point. We probably would have ended up with a copy of the agreement anyway, given the way the Government is leaking at present.

Clause passed.

Clause 19 passed.

Clause 20—'Applications.'

Ms HURLEY: In a situation where the Casino licence might be transferred between operators, what would be the position in terms of the lease on the building? Would it be feasible under this legislation for a company which held the Casino licence to lease the building but transfer the licence, or are the two inextricably linked?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Practically they are, but technically they are not, and I will get some further advice. A lease arrangement will be put in place because it is on public land. As the honourable member would recognise, even though it is the railway station, it is on the parklands. A leasing arrangement will be put in place and, under other negotiations, there might be an arrangement for the Government to take over a lease and then transfer the lease at a price to a potential buyer, or it might be that there is a direct relationship with the buyer and, for example, the transport authority.

The operator's licence relates simply to the Casino's operations, and there will be a separate lease. It is held currently by the ASER property trust and it will be transferred to the new buyer. Technically they are separate, but they are inextricably tied. One without the other is not worth too much at all. In fact, you do not have value.

Ms HURLEY: I appreciate that at this stage it might seem that no-one would want to lease the Casino site unless they had the Casino licence, but things might change. If that were to happen, when considering the fitness of a licensee to hold the Casino licence, would the Gaming Supervisory Authority be able to take into account whether or not they hold the lease to the Casino site?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I would have thought that, if they did not have the premises, they would not get the licence.

Mr FOLEY: I will use this clause to deal with part 3 and the applications for grant or transfer of the licence. This part provides a clear procedure for the making of applications, assessment by the authority, investigations by the authority and the costs of the investigation. Clearly, there is a well-defined process in the legislation as to what must occur for the transfer or grant of the licence. In the end, division 6 applies. Clause 25 provides:

The Governor is not bound to act in accordance with the authority's recommendation.

Is that clause saying that, at the end of the day, whatever the authority recommends, the Government reserves its right whether or not to agree?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The authority has to recommend positively that a licence be given. So, it would only be the Government's saying, 'I know a little bit more about this and, there being a problem, we say the licence shall not be given.' The GSA has a particular responsibility and that does not then flow into some other relationships with which the Government may or may not agree. I cannot imagine, if the Government has given a preferred purchase status to a particular body and then the GSA gives it a tick, that suddenly the Governor will say, 'No, that is not right.' There are some processes. I will check to see whether there are any other ramifications. I am sure it is the right of the Governor to say 'No,' should certain circumstances come to light. It is as I stated. It is important to understand that we cannot instruct the Governor, as we know with our system.

Mr FOLEY: I appreciate that. I am someone who is a believer that, at the end of the day, Governments make decisions. We can have all the bodies in the world recommending things to Governments, but my own personal philosophy is that they who wear it should make the ultimate decision. So, I am not necessarily uncomfortable with that: I just wanted to ensure that there is an understanding that the recommendation of the authority, in the main, is what Governments would agree to and they would not allow a political process to subvert that at some later stage.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The GSA does not recommend that someone do not get a licence: the GSA has to recommend that this person is a fit and proper person for a licence. That would be the recommendation that comes to Government.

Clause passed.

Clauses 21 to 27 passed.

Clause 28—'Obligations of the licensee.'

Mr FOLEY: As I indicated earlier tonight in my second reading contribution, the Opposition consulted with the Australian Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union as well as the AHA and other interested parties both from the business sector and the union movement. A number of issues have been raised. In relation to classification of officers and positions, I am advised by this union that this is an area of concern to the members at the Casino. At present, all employees of the Casino must undergo a police background check and complete a form on initial employment that requires disclosure of any contact with police in their history, including juvenile history, to the extent that being questioned by the police on an issue must be disclosed. It is their view that under this Bill their members will be regarded as being in a sensitive position by virtue of the employment contract. However, there appears to be an ability for the authority to classify positions as non-sensitive. What criteria will be used to classify and, once the criteria is set, how may it be

changed?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Again, I will seek further advice, but obviously there is a degree of sensitivity depending on where you are in the security system and where you are in the fundamental operations of the Casino compared with those people who may be occasional visitors to the Casino for whatever reason, or those people on contract providing service to the Casino, for example making deliveries and a variety of other things.

It is as I indicated to the member for Hart. A number of people enter the Casino who have nothing to do with the business of the Casino and who are not risky people. They provide the Casino with particular services, whether the provision of napkins for the dining room or whatever. They may be air-conditioning repairers or tradespeople. As soon as they enter the Casino, they are part of a very highly regulated establishment; therefore, there is a differential. The normal Casino employees are not affected.

Mr FOLEY: I am not fully conversant with the procedures. I readily accept the need for strict probity checks and criteria for anyone working within the Casino. However, I am aware of one or two instances where perhaps the question of how far you go back with Casino employees arises. Whilst I accept that at a Casino you have to be more diligent than perhaps you would be in other areas of employment, one example which was given to me—and I have to be careful how I phrase this, because I do not want to identify the person—involved someone who knew another person who might have been a criminal or undertaken criminal activity.

There might be guilt by association without that person knowing what the other person did. I illustrate that: I do not expect a debate about it, because it is not an area in which I necessarily have the expertise to debate. The point is that there is a feeling, at least by the union, that perhaps that rule has been over rigorously applied. Again, that is an issue on which both the Casino and the union will have views. That is a matter that needs to be debated and sorted through between the union and the Casino operator. I seek an assurance that there may not be any further tightening of that issue in terms of this legislation.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is a practical relationship. I am not aware of a situation where a friend or associate of a person has placed that person's employment at risk, but there must be circumstances where management may deem that there may be associations that are not in the best interests of the Casino. I cannot comment on those matters and I would not wish to know the circumstances because they go through management and that is the way they should be handled.

Mr FOLEY: Clause 28(2) prescribes a position of responsibility that the authority may classify. What other rules might apply to these positions and what criteria might apply to classify sensitive positions as positions of responsibility?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The positions of responsibility are divided into classes determined by the authority. The authority determines the general levels of responsibility. The most obvious case is who is operating the security system, which would have to be high on the agenda in terms of responsibility. The lower end may be catering facilities or whatever. In terms of what prevails today, I will take the question on notice and provide the honourable member with the information.

Clause passed.

Clause 29—'Applications for approval.'

Mr FOLEY: If the Minister wants to take some questions on notice instead of giving incomplete answers that is acceptable to the Opposition. Subclause (1)(a) provides that a person employed in sensitive positions must be approved as a suitable person. What does 'suitable person' include or preclude, and how will approval be obtained?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thought I had explained that the definition of a 'sensitive position' takes into account everybody who is functionally operating at the Casino. Those people must go through a procedure administered by the Liquor Licensing Commissioner, and obviously the Commissioner of Police undertakes checks on their backgrounds. This is a well used process: full information has to be provided for scrutiny by the police, including fingerprints and other details. So, this is a well worn procedure for granting the approval, and I do not suspect that it will change at all.

Mr FOLEY: Subclause (1)(b) provides that a person in a position of responsibility must also be approved as a suitable person. Given that a sensitive position requires the approval of the authority, does this mean that additional approval must be sought from the authority for placement in a position of responsibility?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: This can be done concurrently: that would be the normal course of action.

Mr FOLEY: If that is the case, what will the authority require from a person seeking approval to obtain a position of responsibility?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Obviously, the authority would have to believe that the person concerned was a fit and proper person. That would be the first test and would be applied in the normal processes through the Commissioner's and police checks. They would first have that assurance, and that would be fundamental. I am not aware of any other information that would be required, unless for some reason it was felt that the person concerned was not capable of dispensing his or her responsibilities. I will draw a parallel here. A certain person known as 'Wobbly Bob', who was associated with the technical supervision of the Casino, passed the probity checks for the position he was filling, even though he had never had responsibility, knowledge or experience in that area. I would have thought that, if someone had passed the credibility test in terms of personal honesty and ethics, the GSA would still need to be satisfied that the person concerned could do the job. If there is any other change I will get back to the member for Hart.

Clause passed.

Clause 30—'Decision on applications.'

Mr FOLEY: Subclause (2) relates to the Commissioner's revoking approval. As I said, currently employees who are threatened with having their approval revoked are notified of the general nature of the reasons, as are the Government inspectors. However, the employer is not. In the view of the union involved, this is appropriate given that some employees are threatened with having their licence revoked after having been employed for several years and the nature of some of the complaints have in the past been dubious, to say the least, in the view of the union. From their point of view, it would seem unfair to expose an employee to potential loss of their job by notifying the employer of a threatened revocation of licence when it can provide statistics revealing that the Casino Authority has rarely revoked an approval when the issues were investigated. Will the Minister expand on that?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The Commissioner is the person who stands above the system. I cannot understand why the member for Hart is questioning that role. The person who

feels aggrieved as an employee has a right to express that point of view to the Commissioner. I would not have thought that the Commissioner had any personal interest in the outcome of the Casino: his job is to make sure that the probity checks are appropriate.

Mr FOLEY: One issue involved the category of employee. As I said, these are questions that I had discussed with the trade union involved. What category of employee is likely to be subject to this clause? Does it involve all employees?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It relates to anybody involved in the Casino, as far as I am concerned.

Clause passed.

Clauses 31 to 34 passed.

Clause 35—‘Operations involving movement of money etc.’

Mr FOLEY: Is the Bill’s intention to retain Government inspectors in their current role?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: We must have inspectors. The Government must provide an inspectorate to the Casino to make sure it is getting its tax and to make sure that the Casino’s integrity is maintained. So, there will be inspections relating to the security of the premises and also to the operations.

Clause passed.

Clause 36 passed.

Clause 37—‘Exclusion of children.’

Mr FOLEY: We are aware of some of the practices occurring in Victoria where people have left children in cars, and there has been talk about the provision of child-care facilities at casinos (which I think would be a problem from the point of view of customers). I have no doubt that, in negotiations with a potential buyer of the Casino, the Minister will be mindful of those sorts of issues that have put something of a blight on the early days of the operator in Victoria.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I appreciate the point made by the member for Hart. For example, we concede that people may have fewer reservations if the Casino becomes a total entertainment venue. We have seen more of that coming into the flavour of the Casino, and an operator may wish to have a child-care centre associated with it. A large number of people would question whether that is appropriate. The GSA would certainly make up its own mind as to whether or not that was appropriate, where it was positioned and the circumstances that warranted it. So, it could be conceivable that, as times change and the nature of the operation changes, it is appropriate to have a child-care facility provided within the precinct itself, or it may be decided to have it somewhere across the road, out of sight out of mind. I cannot predict what will happen in that regard. However, the press has reported on the situation in Victoria, where considerable on-site parking is provided, rather than customers having to find a parking station. The incidents we have seen in Victoria have not been repeated often in South Australia. There probably have been a few examples, but we have not seen a problem of the same magnitude as that in Victoria, and I would not expect it to reach those proportions.

Mr FOLEY: On the issue of the exclusion of children, in the union’s view the penalty—at least on members of the liquor trade union—in this clause seems particularly harsh: is it the intention that a defence against a charge will also be provided to employees rather than just a licensee?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I cannot judge the merits of that; it would depend on the circumstances. Obviously, employers take a lot of responsibility for their employees. Obviously, if someone who looks 18 or 19 years of age walks through the

doors and is not challenged, the judgment would be that it was inappropriate or impossible to do anything about it. If they had card checks at the Casino requiring everyone on the way through to show evidence of their age, that might be another matter. The employer would then be regarded as being negligent because that person had not been picked up. There has to be some flexibility involved. If the person on the door has allowed someone through who obviously looks and proves to be under age, there would be action by the GSA against the employee concerned. I would presume that the GSA would also take action against the employer. I cannot judge the merits of the situation; they would have to be judged on the occasion in question.

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

Clause passed.

Clauses 38 to 56 passed.

Clause 57—‘Powers of manager.’

Mr FOLEY: I assume that a person acting as an official receiver or an official manager would be appointed from outside of Government, or is it intended to appoint someone from within Government?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: My understanding is that that decision is in the hands of the authority. Logically, a person would be appointed from outside Government.

Mr FOLEY: In that instance, if the authority appoints an official manager to operate the business, then clearly the Government of the day would have a direct financial interest in what occurs. No doubt the authority would consult with Government to appoint an appropriate manager to oversee that operation.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The honourable member’s point is taken. Not many people are skilled in that type of operation. It is expected that the GSA will consult with the Government to find a suitable person. Obviously that manager would also have to pass the probity test.

Clause passed.

Clauses 58 to 61 passed.

Clause 62—‘Confidentiality of information provided by Commissioner of Police.’

Mr FOLEY: I have reconciled my questions with the official copy of the Bill. Concern has been expressed that information deemed confidential to police may jeopardise the future employment of some staff of the Casino. Experience has shown that issues raised by the police that threaten the continued employment of Casino staff quite often are minor. It comes back to how far we go back and the extent to which we drag up the past of employees. Again, I accept that those issues are very difficult. Concerns have been raised by the union that the police have very broad parameters that may cause some future employment difficulties for staff.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Again, I refer to the previous clause. Some checks and balances are in the system and, if anyone feels aggrieved that they have been treated badly, they can go back to the Liquor Licensing Commissioner. I understand the situation if the union has given the honourable member a briefing. I am not aware of any circumstances where someone has suffered as a result of the current arrangements but, if particular concerns have been raised that can be substantiated and are not just a matter of hearsay, I am sure that the GSA and the Liquor Licensing Manager would be more than happy to be informed of those matters.

Clause passed.

Clause 63 passed.

Clause 64—'Annual report.'

Mr FOLEY: I accept that the commissioner must prepare and present to the authority a report on the administration of the Act during the preceding financial year. Clearly, as much information as possible will be made available to the Parliament through the provision of the agreement and any consequential arrangements in respect of that agreement. In terms of the public information that we have about the operator of the Casino, clearly it is a public company and there will be ways in which we can access that information. Has any thought been given to having a reporting function for a particular entity?

The statutory requirements of the Casino operator to report through the authority to the Parliament will be fairly obvious, but do we need a mechanism whereby we can obtain more information? It is a bit like the water contract, whereby a major operator would have previously provided all the information we need in terms of the operation of a particular business but now does not have that same requirement. A private business running the Adelaide Casino will not need to provide the same level of information that would otherwise have been the case. How can we access particular information about the running of the Casino?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is probably the situation that prevails at the moment. If the honourable member has ever looked at the Casino's annual report, he would know that it is one of the briefest annual reports. In fact, in terms of a trading enterprise it has to be the thinnest, least informative document the Parliament has available to it.

There are issues of commerciality, and they are important. However, the GSA has authority to get whatever information it needs to ensure that the operations are conducted appropriately. In terms of what information is provided to the Parliament, obviously the Parliament will have information on tax issues; it has received, and I expect it to continue to receive, the monthly figures on turnover; but, in terms of all the other information, I would not expect that the Casino would necessarily wish to place itself at a financial disadvantage with other casinos if they are doing something special. The important thing is that the GSA feels confident that the material is correct, that it is getting the right amount of tax out of the Casino and that it is being run well. Beyond that, the Government does not have a great deal of interest, quite frankly.

Mr FOLEY: Are there restrictions on the number of casinos a particular operator may own?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The answer is 'No,' but the ACCC may take a view on that issue. It has made some unusual determinations, and I can remember the cold store incident down at the airport where the ACCC refused to allow a sale to a particular vendor, much to our distress, and for very strange reasons. We impose no restriction. There may well be some advantages to that. We may get people who have never been to this State before or we may be excluded from those. I cannot believe that it would be a disadvantage, because we are simply not getting any high flier traffic at all into Adelaide and do not have any of the junket trips, because we discontinued them.

Junket trips are high risk, and the Casino could not afford to take a large hit. Kerry Packer sometimes wins more in one night than we make from our Casino in a year. So, the junkets were high risk. The International Room has been a loser for the Casino. A lot of money has been spent attracting people, but it has not been commensurate with the return. There has been a negative return from the International Room over the

years, although that has changed as a result of the change of management. Each part of the Casino has been assessed for its profitability and its performance and, under the leadership of John Frearson, we have seen some changes that have been beneficial to the Casino. I do not believe that the State would wish to restrict any particular operator.

There have been suggestions that if a particular operator had other casinos it may wish to close down the Adelaide Casino. I cannot perceive that it would but, if it should, then it would no longer operate a licence, so we could issue a new licence. There are various brakes on the system. However, if the whole Eastern Seaboard were dominated by one or two casino operators, which is feasible, the ACCC may step in and say 'Hang on: we believe that this is a restraint of trade or there is concentration', and it may wish to disagree with the Government. I cannot believe that it would, but that is always a possibility.

Mr FOLEY: I suspect that if John Frearson or the manager of the Casino saw Kerry Packer walking towards the Adelaide Casino, they would probably utilise their discretionary powers in terms of the operation of the Casino and lock the front door. Finally, if I could have the indulgence of the Committee—which I am sure I will receive, being such a constructive and cooperative member of this Chamber who never transgresses—

Mr Evans interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: You've missed me for four days.

Mr Leggett: You got more than Wanganeen.

Mr FOLEY: What did he get?

Mr Leggett: He got one game.

Mr FOLEY: I got three for interjecting against a former Premier and Wanganeen got one for grabbing an umpire by the throat! On the issue of what income we receive from the final process, whether the Casino is sold as a single entity or as a package deal, I assume that Kumagai will get its share, the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation will get its share and what is left over the bad bank will pick up. Obviously, there will be proportional distribution back to the shareholders. Can we be sure that the Treasurer is not pocketing the lot?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: We would like to think that the proceeds will cover the Westpac loans, but there are obligations in terms of responsibility for those loans. We trust that we can raise sufficient moneys to offset those loans. There is a formula whereby, once it reaches a certain point, there shall be some sharing by the South Australian Asset Management Corporation, which will be retained as an entity well into the future.

Clause passed.

Clause 65 passed.

Schedule and title passed.

The CHAIRMAN: We now move to the Gaming Supervisory Authority (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill.

Clause 1—'Short title.'

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition does not need to scrutinise this Bill other than to say that the only real issue is the sharing of information throughout the Commonwealth and New Zealand. The issue of access to freedom of information and the Ombudsman's jurisdiction do not extend to this authority. The Opposition normally would be very concerned about any Government instrumentality that does not have the legislative requirement to be applicable to freedom of information. Clearly, the Ombudsman has been kept very

busy in the past three years of Government. However, we accept the fact that, given the specific nature of this authority and the very important role that it plays, whilst freedom of information may well be tempting, dare I say, in this agency the Opposition is of the view, consistent with the Government, that it should be kept apart from it in this instance. I simply make the comment that we would expect the authority to respect the fact that it has been given some very extraordinary powers and that it should continue, as it has in the past, to exercise those powers with great caution.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Obviously, it is the membership of the Gaming Supervisory Authority and the information that comes to hand that is affected in these circumstances. It is actually acting as the umpire. Given the nature of the industry and its oversight arrangement, we would all judge it inappropriate for either the Ombudsman or the Freedom of Information Act to apply.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (2 to 6) and title passed.

The CHAIRMAN: We now move to the Liquor Licensing (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill.

Bill taken through Committee without amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now consider the Gaming Machines (Administrative Restructuring) Amendment Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—'Insertion of ss. 36A and 36B.'

Mr FOLEY: It was pointed out in the briefing session I had with Government officers that this is an amendment which primarily involves the activities of the Casino but which, given that we are amending the Gaming Act, has a consequential flow-on to all licensed pubs and clubs. I have had discussions with the Australian Hotels Association and the Licensed Clubs Association, which have indicated that they would prefer this clause not be in the Bill but they accept its inevitability. The Labor Party supports the Government on this measure.

The issue of expiation notices in lieu of court action is a mechanism by which many of these issues can be dealt with in a more rapid sense and without the necessity of going through the courts. With respect to annual reports, the Bill provides that the Commissioner must, on or before 30 September each year, submit a written report to the authority. Our only concern is that clubs will use the expiation process rather than go to court. Clearly, repetitive use of expiation notices will be picked up by the authority. We want to be sure that there will be at least a public record of those expiation notices. I take it from that clause that that is what will happen.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is a very delicate issue as to when you prosecute or when you demonstrate your dissatisfaction. When we deal with this area, we often find that a number of young people try to beat the system for a range of reasons. The problem is the extent to which these people continually try to beat the system, the licensee being caught in the process. We believe it appropriate that a fine be paid if someone has not been quite vigilant enough. A defence to that might be that some young people look 18 or 20 but are actually 16 years. We acknowledge that there are strains on management and on the security people in identifying those people.

We have to balance these matters. We do not need court cases which are highly expensive and intrusive and which

sometimes achieve very few positive outcomes. However, if there are serious breaches, they will be pursued all the way. It is always a matter of judgment in terms of getting a licensee to do the right thing. Occasionally, they will transgress. If there is good reason, an expiation notice will be issued. Obviously, if there is no good reason and if the act is unconscionable, prosecution will be appropriate. We are talking about people who are very skilled in terms of making proper judgments on these issues, and the Commissioner is required to report on it.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (6 and 7) and title passed.

Bills read a third time and passed.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION (COMMENCEMENT OF REGULATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's message—that it had disagreed to the House of Assembly's amendments.

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

That the House of Assembly insist on its amendments.

This matter has been well debated. I do not wish to delay the Parliament. I understand that a conference will be convened on this matter.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON YUMBARRA CONSERVATION PARK RE-PROCLAMATION

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Minister for Energy): I bring up the report, together with the minutes and proceedings of evidence of the committee, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

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

That the report be noted.

I trust that members of Parliament appreciate the amount of effort that has been put into this report by the committee that has served this Parliament for almost a year. The committee was formed on 10 April 1996 and met on 16 occasions over 11 months. It received 249 written submissions and 236 telephone calls and it heard detailed evidence from 20 individuals and groups. The committee visited the park on 16 May 1996 to examine its flora, fauna and topography and held eight public meetings, including one in Ceduna on 8 August 1996, which was attended by more than 80 persons.

The committee took evidence from a wide range of people who have shown an interest in this matter. There has been a great deal of interest in what for me has been an interesting and fulfilling exercise. I thank all members of the committee for their diligence and for their preparedness to adjust their timetables to meet the needs of the committee. Overall, it was a very constructive committee.

In terms of the task that was set by this Parliament, we had to review the issue of re-proclamation of Yumbarra Conservation Park. I will touch on but a few of the many important issues that arose during that consultation period but I will make important observations. It is clear from our visits and from the information provided to the committee that the area with which we are dealing—the area close to Ceduna—is in need of considerable economic uplift. Over time it has suffered some level of economic decline, principally because

of the situation facing the rural industry. Whilst the residents of Ceduna and surrounding areas, including the Aboriginal populations, are resilient people, I think that almost to a person they believe that the area of Ceduna is in considerable need of increased economic activity. We understand that; there are high levels of unemployment and there are significant social problems associated with that area. I am not trying to downgrade Ceduna: I simply tell it as it is. The people of Ceduna, as I said, are very resilient and good people in terms of their commitment to their area but they are worried about the future of their children, and they expressed those concerns to the committee. They look forward to a Government determination which provides the opportunity for mining in the surrounding area, particularly in relation to the Yumbarra Conservation Park or that area affected by the magnetic anomaly.

Most members of the committee were impressed by the potential for mining in that locale. It is fair to say that the aeromagnetic survey identified the most significant anomaly of any area in South Australia: it appeared as a beacon. The members of the committee were more than just impressed by the capacity of that area to show some prospective mineral product, which, should it be of considerable value, would be of benefit to not only Ceduna and surrounding areas but also the whole of the State. It was the aeromagnetic survey which identified this area, which may just simply indicate that it contains an ore body with a strong ferrous content, in other words, an iron ore type content, or that it may be something much more significant.

Committee members would also agree—and we agreed on most points—that in order to understand whether there was a find of some potential there or simply a matter of concentration of iron ore, it would be necessary to explore that area. An existing exploration licence application over the area covers some 37 900 hectares, of which 26 650 hectares lies within Yumbarra, covering some .65 per cent of land within the Yellabinna association. It is important to understand that the Yellabinna association covers some 4 million hectares, which is mainly sand dune and mallee, and this is part of the total Yellabinna association.

The Yumbarra Conservation Park itself covers approximately 327 589 hectares, or 3 276 kilometres or 8.2 per cent of the Yellabinna association. The area under consideration is a much smaller part of the total Yumbarra Conservation Park. It is fair to note that the area that was observed by the committee does not have a lot of growth in it because it was affected badly by fire in 1994. It is largely devoid of vegetation but new growth is emerging.

One of the important findings of the committee was that the area is pretty resilient. It goes through these stages of fire and regeneration over time and, because it is not cropped and because there is no animal husbandry on the area, there are no natural pressures on the land as there are in other farming areas. However, the committee concluded that a number of predators have diminished the natural wildlife of that area, and there was evidence of dingoes, dogs and cats which have entered the area.

It can be said that this is a fairly desolate part of South Australia. If people want to draw a conclusion about wilderness, I think we can talk about wilderness in the biblical sense rather than paralleling it with the Daintree forest. I can assure members that even the Lord himself would not have survived for 40 days out there such was the nature of the territory.

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: He might have had to catch the mallee fowl. We found a nest where a mallee fowl had been some 10 or 20 years earlier.

Mr Quirke: What about the flower?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: We saw a flower growing, too. I assure the House that, as to the amount of specific vegetation that was of an appealing nature or unique to that area, I do not know that we as non-experts could draw a conclusion. However, the biological survey quite clearly showed that, whilst this area is important, it is not unique, and again I think that the members of the committee would agree with that observation.

Although the area was devoid of life when the committee visited the park, I am assured that at times of high rainfall a lot of plants regenerate very quickly and wildlife appears in much greater proportions than we were able to observe. It fluctuates with the seasons. We observed that, given the nature of the predators in the park and the incapacity to provide care for that park, there is a need to ensure that, if it is to remain a conservation park to which the principles of conservation apply, it is sadly in need of a management plan.

It may well be that many of these areas have a capacity to survive the ravages of nature, and there is no doubt that was evident, and that the extent of intrusion will govern the extent of depreciation of the area. However, it was also observed by the committee that a large number of tracks in the area had been created by visitors to the park. There were a number of areas where we could see quite plainly that people had used it for visitations and, whilst members can reflect on whether that is good or bad, if the area is to be enjoyed there needs to be a better profiled access to the park, keeping people to more conventional tracks, and, importantly, something must be done about the wild animals that cause great harm to the species that were identified in the biological survey.

If we want to keep it in a pristine state, one of the issues to be dealt with is management, including visitation access. I do not believe that there are many national or international visitors to the area but some of the locals go out there for a picnic, and that is probably the extent of visitation to this conservation park. It does not have a high tourism profile and we could understand that once we visited the area. There is no doubt that, if there were a major mineral find and it was capable of being mined, it would be of significant benefit to the area and to the State of South Australia, and I do not know that anyone would disagree with that observation. Indeed, it is almost tautologous.

Importantly, there is no doubt that there is overwhelming local support for a re-proclamation to allow exploration and, potentially, mining in the area. That came through very strongly, almost to a person. There were one or two dissenters but the vast majority, probably 99 per cent of the people who communicated to us and who live in the area, were strongly supportive of exploration and mining activity in the area. They believe that it would be good for the area, that it would not depreciate the park if it was managed properly and that it would provide employment opportunities in an area that is generally starved of additional activity. I know that the Aboriginal populations and the leaders who communicated with us were also enthusiastic about the potential to provide much needed job opportunities in the area.

The biological survey, which the committee used as a benchmark in terms of what had already been found, was a very useful and highly readable document, and some of its findings were obviously reinforced by members of various conservation groups. Most of those who came before us to

present the conservation point of view were highly articulate and particularly well read, even though a number of them had never been to the park to see its value. So, some conclusions were being drawn from afar. I can understand people who have a real love for the area saying, 'This area is of such value that no matter how people perceive it this is prime wilderness, and therefore it should remain untouched.' The only problem with that comment is that the area has not remained untouched: it is subject to predators. Indeed, there could well be some value and some improvement in park management. The park could be enhanced if it had some revenue capacity whereby it could receive more sound management, which could well come from any mining royalties should mineral exploration and then, ultimately, mining take place.

One of the important issues raised involved potable water. The committee concluded that there seemed to be no useful water sources in the area, and therefore any future activity would have to take account of that fact. One person presented evidence that some fairly salty and brackish water had been obtained from a nearby well, but without drilling it can only be assumed that there is no natural or useful water supply in that area. In terms of re-proclamation, there was some difference of opinion among members of the committee concerning the ultimate outcome of this report. The delays in bringing down the report were due to some attempt on my behalf as Chairman and the willingness of all members to achieve a closer result in relation to the outcomes.

Whilst I am personally of the opinion that this offers great opportunity and enormous potential for the State, until we find out what is there we will not know what that potential is. A counter point of view was put that this is a conservation area and shall remain as such and untouched. That was the great dilemma for the committee. The committee's recommendations took account of the sensitivities expressed during the course of the proceedings and deliberations, and the recommendations provide a more measured approach to this issue than perhaps I envisaged at the time when the select committee was set up. We tried to accommodate each other's point of view. Given that it had formally been regarded as a conservation area—which is just an accident of time because it happened in 1968 when no other resources were available to ensure that farming was excluded, so it is lost in a time warp—nevertheless certain members believed that it was important to recognise the principle.

A number of important findings were made. The committee believed that the area is highly prospective. However, if re-proclamation occurred, there would have to be a limitation. Re-proclamation would be allowed only for exploration and it would be for a limited period, such as for three years; that it would be under the Government's care and control in terms of the Director of Mines; and that there would be full consultation with the Aboriginal communities. However, the committee also agreed that prior to any attempt to re-proclaim this section evidence must be presented to the Parliament on a number of issues which the committee believed were important.

Before the Parliament took or denied that decision on re-proclamation, further information should be sought on management and access issues, including procedures and measures to minimise impact on the environment. By this means the Parliament could be assured that the environment would suffer minimal disturbance and that Aboriginal interests and exploration work programs were taken into account prior to considering a motion for re-proclamation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister will also have the right of reply subsequently. The member for Playford.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): All those who were involved in this inquiry—the research officer, the secretary of the committee, the Minister's own secretary from Mines and Energy South Australia—ought to be congratulated on the professional work they performed in connection with this committee. I must also say that I thought the people involved in the writing of the report did one of the best jobs of any select committee of which I have been a member so far. Mines and Energy South Australia and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources both submitted very good and accurate evidence and also provided an invaluable service to the committee.

Quite frankly, this was an issue that not only tugged at the heartstrings of a number of groups in South Australia but also brought forth to the committee a number of passionate responses from various organisations and individuals on both sides of the ledger. It would be appropriate for me to say that most, if not all, of the witnesses who appeared before the committee made out a very good and succinct case. They put forward a number of positive suggestions and made out their case very well. Obviously, when you have a task such as this, the job of assessing the matter and writing a report is very difficult, and it is one over which we as a committee have struggled during the past few months.

I thank the Chairman of the committee who was very diplomatic in the way in which he dealt with all sorts of issues and who did an extremely good job. I commend him for being sympathetic to many of the things which we on this side of politics put forward and an indication of which can be seen towards the end of the findings. Indeed, speaking for myself in this particular exercise, a good job was done by all members of the committee.

Whether or not to re-proclaim any park is, indeed, a very vexed question, for a number of reasons. We have known for some three years now, from the information gleaned from the aeromagnetic surveys, that there is a very serious magnetic anomaly right in the middle of this area. It may have been easier for all of us if that anomaly had been somewhere else in an area that was jointly proclaimed so that exploration could take place. However, that was not the case: it was right in the middle of the conservation park. That was why a number of organisations interested in this park looked very closely at the proceedings of this committee.

The first two issues were mineral development for the State and, balanced with that, proper conservation. The third issue was the view some of us took that we must be very careful that, once we grant a particular status to a piece of ground, its status as a conservation park is not devalued, the argument being that, if we do this on the basis of such an anomaly, we might do it somewhere else for whatever reason or whatever technology comes to the fore at some stage in the future. I found the inquiries we held very educative; I certainly learnt a lot from this process, and I think it was an extremely useful exercise. Obviously, the issues—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

Mr QUIRKE: There were not lots of flowers there; there was only one. I am sorry to answer interjections, but the honourable member knows that I took the trouble of getting out of the truck to kiss that flower so that the member for Custance could take a photograph of me with my green credentials. When the Minister wanted to turn back after 90 miles of seeing nothing, I demanded that we go through to see

the abandoned mallee fowl nest. So, I will not have anyone in here saying that I did not have proper regard for what was out there. However, the honourable member should not have started me on this. We even met the two kangaroos that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had taken out earlier in the morning and picked up late in the afternoon to prove that something was alive out there. It was an instructive trip out there, because either a number of people driving four-wheel drive vehicles are going in there from Ceduna and chucking out a large number of beer bottles or a Southwark brewery truck got lost at some stage and tipped them out there.

When we were listening to the evidence it was slightly gilded. I remember that one day a number of conservationists told us that really they were miners in disguise and that their objection was that they just did not want to mine in this place but they actually liked mining. I thought that was all right, but then the mining industry came in and showed me a slide photograph of what looked to me like a mouse. I was told it was something else, but it looked like a mouse to me. They told me they were willing to stop the whole \$100 million mining project so that they could find where this thing lived and make sure that it got home properly. I looked at the audience and suggested that maybe the mouse had had its neck wrung shortly after the photograph was taken, or perhaps they waited until the film was developed to make sure it was in the photograph, for which I was roundly criticised—and probably should have been—for being such a cynic.

The exercise we went through was extremely useful and raises a number of issues, one of which involves proper management. I want to have a serious debate on this matter, because when we went over there we found only three personnel responsible for the whole area. I was told by a number of people, who had never been out there but who gave evidence to the committee, that those beer bottles that I saw were illusory—they did not exist—and that the four-wheel driving tracks and so on were simply not there. They are there, and one of the problems is that the place is not properly managed.

Until more money is put into the whole system from whatever source, whether it be from mining or general revenue, this area will never be properly managed. That is an issue which I think we will have to take up. The area itself is probably reasonably pristine, given the number of four-wheel drive visitors in there. I concur in some of the Minister's arguments that not too much has happened out there. The penetration of weeds and feral animals is probably at a fairly low level, although I do not know whether it will stay that way in the future; it may not.

One issue on which I want to concentrate is the fact that this area needs proper management. A group of people there are prepared to provide those services, but they will not do it for nothing, because they are not registered as a charity. I am talking primarily about the indigenous people on the Far West Coast who made out a very compelling case before the committee. They argued for mining (and I will come back to that in a minute), because they said, 'We want real jobs. We can do this work; we can manage this place. We can sort out some of these issues, clean up the little bit of degradation that exists there (at this stage it is really only a few beer bottles) and supervise the entry and access into these parks, but we need to be paid for this work.' Wherever the money comes from, I was very receptive to that call. It seems to me that they are the obvious people to manage that area, and I

believe they would manage it well, under the umbrella of DENR and any other source of the funds required.

Another issue I want to discuss has perplexed our side of politics, and in this inquiry we have taken a position against re-proclamation, because we believe quite strongly that once we start re-proclaiming parks the process never stops. In fact, there are a number of mining opportunities in South Australia, most of which are being pursued now. We have a problem with re-proclaiming this park. Obviously the Government has come around to this position, but the honourable member on the other side ought to look at the report, particularly findings 28 and 29, which indicate that there are many problems with re-proclaiming this area *vis-à-vis* the sanctity of every other national park in South Australia.

The honourable member mentioned the Australian Workers Union, some of whose organisers would no doubt like to sign up potential explorers and miners. However, that organisation's Secretary here in this State has made it crystal clear to a number of people that he does not support re-proclamation of this park. The honourable member has raised this matter: I can only go by what the Secretary of that organisation has said, namely, 'We don't want the members: we want the sanctity of this park retained.' That is my understanding of his position. If I am wrong I will be very happy to acknowledge it here, but that was certainly the information communicated to me from that source.

A number of things should be said about the crossroads we now face with mining in South Australia. Obviously, some five or six years ago, mining in South Australia had slipped well behind that in Queensland and Western Australia in particular. I do not believe that that is the case any more. The 1992 decision to conduct aeromagnetic surveys to step up the exploration initiative here in South Australia will see a number of projects come on-stream, particularly what we now know as the Gawler Craton projects within the next three to five years.

Certainly, the current royalty level of \$66 million that comes from mineral exploration in South Australia is a much smaller figure than it was 100 years ago when mining was the lifeblood of this State. We have now reached a stage where mineral royalties are probably the lowest proportion of State outlays they have ever been. Some 150 years ago this State was saved by mining at Glen Osmond, Kapunda and Burra. By the time of the Kapunda mine of 1842, South Australia's position was cemented. Had the Kapunda mine not been found, it would not have been necessary to find Burra, because that did not occur for some 18 years later. The Moonta mines, which came after that, contributed to the State's economy until 1922 when they were closed, and again when they were open from 1932 to 1938. They made a large contribution to the coffers of this State. I am told that most of the copper component of the brass shell casings that were used in the Great War predominantly came from Moonta and, to a lesser extent, from Burra. They were large copper mines in South Australia. With new mineral extraction technologies, it is possible that these mines will open again.

Having weighed up the issues, the Opposition finds that it is not in a position to argue for the re-proclamation of the park, because of what it would mean to all the other parks in South Australia. There are also members of our community—and they are not inconsiderable in number—who use these parks not only for recreation but see them as a real South Australian asset which, under no circumstances, should be degraded. This report involved a piece of land that has not

been explored. The next stage, should a re-proclamation take place, is the exploration of this anomaly to see what mineralisation exists and whether or not that mineralisation is of a commercially viable quantity. I am told that the figures go all around on this topic. However, the chances of mineralisation being present in commercial amounts are quite small.

One of our problems involves the remote sensing technology we use now. We can talk about the possibility of any serious mining there really by physically exploring it in the way that we have done for many decades. Of course, to do that we need to re-proclaim the park, and that is something that we on this side of politics will not support. However, the one thing this exercise has brought out in my mind is the necessity for environmental protection and management in areas such as this. I hope that those issues will be redressed either out of consolidated revenue or out of mining leases elsewhere, where the problems are nowhere near as remote as they are here.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): The select committee has been extensive and exhaustive in the way it has conducted its business. Before getting into the nitty-gritty of the recommendations and the summaries of the findings, I would like to say that I appreciated the input, both written and orally, to the select committee by a diverse group of people. One thing that was clearly evident early in the hearings was that fundamentally the two groups that were primarily interested—the conservation movement and the mining industry—were absolutely polarised in their attitudes. That is a disappointment to all South Australians, because there is clearly a need for this in this State. Most of my colleagues would know that, as a farmer and someone who is interested generally in the environment, I am a strong supporter of protecting our environment. However, in doing so, we have to be able to work together with all economic opportunities, whether it be mining, manufacturing, services or agriculture.

When you read the submissions from the mining industry, you could argue that these days it is becoming far more environmentally aware. From some of the evidence that was given and the slides that were shown, it was apparent that mining companies can go into a piece of country and, when they finish mining, they can reinstate that country in some cases to a better ecosystem than it was when they went in. On the other hand, I can also understand why the environment movement is so fundamentally opposed to any opportunity of re-proclaiming the Yumberra Conservation Park. I would be, too, from the point of view of the argument about setting a precedent.

When the findings are handed down, I hazard a guess that there may be some special argument for some consideration for doing something in Yumberra. As my colleague the member for Playford said, when all the aeromagnetic survey work was done, it was found that this was by far the most intense anomaly in the whole of the State. A lot of the evidence that was given to the select committee strongly supported the fact that there is a good chance that this could be another Roxby Downs. As was pointed out during the select committee, when they went about exploring Roxby Downs they had nowhere near the technical information they had when they wanted to explore in this area. Evidence given by the mining industry suggests that this may be a wealthy anomaly for South Australia.

The committee travelled to Ceduna and listened to the people who have looked after this country—including indigenous Aborigines and some whose families go back well

into the 1850s. From their evidence it was apparent that they have been the private caretakers of the whole of the environment on Eyre Peninsula for a long time. I congratulate them on the way they have utilised their farming techniques while still being prepared to protect and enhance their environment. Whilst it has been stated that there were a few beer bottles, feral cats and animals, by and large I did not see much in the way of beer cans or feral animals, and I believe it is a pristine wilderness.

Mr Quirke: Perhaps you were in the wrong truck.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: As the member for Playford points out, perhaps I was in the wrong truck. I saw a pristine environment. It is a real wilderness. Some of my colleagues may be just naive when it comes to understanding the ecosystem, or they may be used to living in areas where there are huge redgums, but I believe the Mallee country is the best and largest example of untouched Mallee in Australia. We can compare it to a tropical rainforest. In fact, its ecosystem is as valuable as the tropical rainforest on Cape Yorke Peninsula, because Australia is made up of a diverse range of vegetation.

I was particularly impressed with what I saw. I would have to say that it is some of the best mallee scrub I have seen in my life, and I have had the pleasure of travelling through a very large section of South Australia, as well as other States; and, of course, we all know that South Australia has the largest area of mallee in Australia. Returning to the problems at Ceduna: Ceduna is almost dying.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The fact is that this is a very important issue. I have put a lot of time into this issue, together with my colleagues, and I will spend the next 15 minutes talking about it because of my interest in it. It is an issue that economically could be very important; but it is also a fundamental issue that needs to be examined carefully because the environment is equally important in this State. I will spend the next 14 minutes—whether or not some people like it—talking about this report.

The people in Ceduna are struggling like members would not believe. They are struggling because they do not have the diversification available to people living in the city with its bases in manufacturing, services, information technology and agriculture. The people of Ceduna primarily rely on two industries only: fishing and agriculture. We all know what has happened to commodity prices in agriculture over the years. We saw what happened in New South Wales recently with the oyster scare, and I can understand why people living on Eyre Peninsula in particular badly want to see another sustainable economic opportunity created for them. Many people moved to Roxby Downs because they were not making enough money farming. Once their families had grown up they could see the opportunities that Roxby Downs provided to them.

Aboriginal people understand, protect and enhance the land. When one goes a little further west to the head of the Australian Bight one will see what the Aboriginal community is doing, particularly its young generation, who are now receiving TAFE education and who are very keen to become park rangers. I went out with one young Aborigine who really knew his stuff and was committed to protecting and enhancing the environment. We know that we do not have the funds at the moment to suddenly employ another five or six park rangers, but I believe that opportunities could be created, subject to the environmental checks and balances that have not yet been completed.

If it is proved that this will not be a precedent and that it is a very special case, it is likely that money could be put forward to protect that wilderness and to create jobs and give those Aboriginal people the opportunity to continue to look after that land. Nearly 70 per cent of this State is either national park, conservation park or Crown land. When you have only 1½ million people and that much land to look after, for which the Crown is ultimately responsible, clearly you will have a lot of management problems. Some people argue that perhaps we have too much of this type of land, and that we would be better off looking after a smaller amount properly.

An argument I would put to the House for consideration is that, if you can work the environment with such an opportunity, it may be that you can have a win-win in a one-off situation. That is why, under recommendation six, I argue that should mining proceed a certain proportion of mineral royalties from mining operations in the Yumberra Conservation Park should be used for management and protection and research into the mallee environment in the park and the Yellabinna region. I believe that that could be a win-win situation. My colleague the member for Torrens will tell the House that she also strongly supports that, but I will let her tell the House. I am absolutely adamant on that matter because, if we are going to take from a conservation park, in my opinion we must be able to get a percentage of those royalties—

Mrs Geraghty: How much?

Mr BROKENSHIRE: How much is yet to be determined but, in my opinion, a significant proportion of those royalties must be put back into looking after conservation parks, not only Yumberra but in the general Eyre Peninsula area. Other parks are located in that area, such as the Unnamed Conservation Park—one of the few parks I have not had a chance to visit. I am told that the Unnamed Conservation Park is even more pristine and precious than Yumberra. Quite simply the bottom line is that, at this point, I do not believe that, as a member of the select committee, I would be responsible if I were to support a recommendation to re-proclaim.

I believe that more homework needs to be done on issues concerning the environment and the rights, heritage and culture of Aborigines, as well as other issues, and that is mentioned in the summary of this report. The report states that only when more homework is done will the Parliament have enough information to make a decision one way or the other. When one looks right through this report—and I would encourage members to read all 146 pages—one will see a lot of gaps because, as I said, there does not seem to be a lot of common ground between the two groups. As a member sitting on the committee day in and day out I could almost guess what the mining fraternity would say and then what the conservation fraternity would say.

When one reads the report, one will see that, despite the questions that were asked and the cross-examination, the answers never really varied very much. On the one hand, we had the fundamental position on behalf of the environmental groups that we must stop re-proclaiming because enough is enough—we are running out of wilderness country such as this and we must not impinge on the pristine ecosystem; and, on the other hand, we had the argument put by the mining companies that their equipment is such that they could go in and explore without doing any damage whatsoever. It has been mentioned that, if re-proclamation were allowed for a maximum period of three years, a significant environment impact assessment would have to be prepared.

If mining were to proceed, after all those checks and balances, I believe it would be done with the best technology available (and it is currently available) to ensure that the least amount of land is disturbed. Water is a problem and, when you start looking at bringing water into an area such as this and it has to be transported many miles, you either lay pipes across some of this country and potentially damage it, or perhaps you look at water salination. It probably means bringing in more heavy vehicle transport but, the minute you do that, it impacts on the environment. It is not like driving down the road to Clare. You are not travelling on a hard, red-brown earth over clay with a rock base: you are travelling on a very fragile, sandy area with many sand dunes that, in themselves, create a lot of difficulties, unless you get in and do a lot of cutting and scarring of the landscape. I can understand why the Conservation Council and others were so concerned about that.

Some people will say that the members of the select committee have not had the guts to make a final decision. People have spoken to me about this issue but they do not say, 'When will the Government do something about it?' They know that the Government is doing everything it can to reinvigorate the State of South Australia, to lift the economic wealth, to fix the debt and to create new industries. The member for Playford was quite right when he spoke about the significant increase in mining exploration that is now occurring in the State. People know the only thing that will stop additional economic opportunities will be the Parliament, because whether it is something like this, a smoking Bill, or whatever, it does not matter what the Government wants to do—if you cannot get it through the Parliament in the format decided by the Government, things either get lost and left behind or they are so much disjointed from the original intention of the Bill or the issue that you find things do not work the way they should.

I can understand why some of my constituents have lobbied me heavily, saying 'Let's get Yumberra up. I have family who are already working in Roxby Downs, and I want to see more jobs for some of my other kids who have not had the opportunity. Do not stuff around. Get on it with and get Yumberra going.'

I know that I will get a belt around the ears from those constituents for not coming out more strongly in the report and saying 'Let's just get on with the job.' On the other hand, many people in my electorate understand a lot about the environment. You have only to look at the Friends of the Onkaparinga National Park to see the commitment they put in on a daily basis to protect and enhance that recreation and conservation park. They are the people who have a better understanding of how easily you can destroy your ecosystem if you are not careful. They are the ones who were saying to me that I need to be very careful if I am going to support any recommendation for re-proclamation.

In summary, therefore, after hearing all the evidence I believe that the six recommendations are carefully balanced. All the findings, particularly Nos 28 and 29 on page 10 of the report, sum up just what the committee had to work through. Clearly, we do not have all the answers. I believe that, as members of Parliament, we would all be derelict in our duty if we were to recommend proceeding further until we do have all the answers. After all, if you look at issues such as the State Bank, Remm, SGIC, the purchase in Collins Street and so forth, you see that mistakes were made which cost this State a lot and which we will be paying for for many years to come.

The same could be argued about Yumbarra but not from an economic point of view initially as with those other issues I have just highlighted. If we go into Yumbarra and do it incorrectly and damage part of an ecosystem that is millions of years old, we will never be able to repair that. Some people say that the country has had fires through it naturally and it quickly revegetates and, after a while, even if you took the army through there with its Leopard tanks, you would not see where they had been. I am not convinced of that, and I believe that much more work needs to be done. Also, whilst many members of our Aboriginal community said that they wanted to see jobs for their young people, just as the rest of the people on Eyre Peninsula did and as people in my electorate and in other people's electorates do, some Aborigines stated that they had some concerns about a few of the areas that might potentially have come into that re-proclamation, and we have an obligation to them to make sure that their wishes and concerns are also investigated fully.

In summary, as a member of the select committee I believe that the right decision has been made thus far and, whilst it will probably be some time yet, given the further work that needs to be done, I look forward to seeing that work being completed and then some good, sound debate being put forward in the Parliament on a bipartisan basis regarding whether the opportunity of exploration is given a tick or whether it is decided that it is too fragile, too sensitive and best left as it is.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION (COMMENCEMENT OF REGULATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council requested a conference, at which it would be represented by five managers, on the House of Assembly's amendments to which it had disagreed.

The House of Assembly agreed to a conference, to be held in the Plaza Room at 10 p.m. tonight, at which it would be represented by Messrs Atkinson, S.J. Baker, Clarke, Cummins and Wade.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON YUMBARRA CONSERVATION PARK RE-PROCLAMATION

Debate on motion resumed.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): The member for Mawson said that we do not have all the answers, and we are certainly far from it at this stage. Serving on this committee has been a most difficult task, not in the sense of onerous duties but in the sense of evaluating and assessing all the information provided by the witnesses. I could not, however, accept that re-proclamation of the park is in the long-term interests of this State or the nation as a whole because of the precedent it sets. There is no tradeable area to replace the park; in other words, there are no surrounding areas that have been so protected that we can use to replace it. Having considered all the information presented to me, in light of the environmental impact of the mine, I do not believe that sufficient and sustained environmental impact studies have been done, commensurate with the findings of a report entitled 'A biological survey of Yumbarra Conservation Park of South Australia', commissioned by the National Resources Group of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. After outlining the various mineral impact studies for mineral exploration at Yumbarra, the report states:

If encouraging results were still being obtained at this stage and the economic significance of any mineral discovery was becoming apparent, further much more detailed environmental studies would need to be undertaken leading to a full environmental impact assessment.

I am not aware that a full environmental impact survey has been done, and I am extremely concerned about that. The Minister for Mines and Energy forwarded a letter to Mr Malcolm Byerlee, Chairman of the Northern Regional Development Board, on 3 April 1996, in which he said that further testing for mineral exploration 'under stringent environmental controls overseen by officers from the Department of Mines and Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources must now be considered'. Here we have, on the one hand, the Minister explaining his concerns for stringent environmental controls yet, on the other hand, the Government now appearing to want to go ahead with this mining project without taking heed of one of its own studies commissioned by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which calls on the need for a full environmental impact assessment.

I cannot support the continuation of this project when the Government, it seems, is not serious about complying with its own studies with regard to environmental impact audits. To blindly go ahead at the expense environmentally of this unique park, and without the full data being available as to the impact a mine would have, would be foolhardy and reckless. I am not anti-development and I do sympathise with the people of Ceduna and the surrounding areas. The loss of income to the townsfolk and farming families and the subsequent loss of children to the metropolitan area or other rural areas because there is insufficient income to support the family is a tragedy. But I do not believe that allowing exploration and subsequent mining in Yumbarra will cure that. A few jobs may be created but not the masses that have been mooted.

It will not swell the numbers of the sporting teams nor will it raise the ailing economy of the town. What we do not want to see is a development that will be a five minute wonder, delivering few jobs and false prospects for economic development within the town. Eco-tourism is a very natural fundamental resource for our State, national and regional economies, and will offer a great deal more infrastructure development to promote unique areas such as Yumbarra. Eco-tourism, according to statistics from the report titled 'Two way track', from the Biodiversity Unit of the Department of Environment, Sport and Territories, shows that expenditure from tourists amounted to \$26.2 billion or 5.5 per cent of the GDP in Australia in 1991-92. In 1993-94, foreign exchange earnings from tourism were \$10.6 billion. By the year 2000, the tourism industry will have a projected annual turnover of \$15 billion to \$21 billion.

On a national scale the report shows approximately 467 000 people, or 6.1 per cent of the total work force, are employed in the tourism industry. By the year 2000, an additional 210 000 to 270 000 new jobs will be generated by the industry. Therefore, eco-tourism is not a Mickey Mouse industry: it provides real jobs, added economic growth for our gross domestic product and environmental sustainability. However, as is the case with the mining industry or other significant industrial developments, it needs infrastructure support, both private and Government, to get it off the ground. Eco-tourism has the capacity for a long, sustained life, unlike the quick fix developments which eventually leave communities looking for alternatives, as is the case with

some mining communities at the moment, not to mention environmental damage and negative impacts on eco-tourism.

I have more statistics which are quite sobering and which relate to the strength and impact of eco-tourism in dollars and population volume. For instance, the average expenditure by people on holidays from overseas is \$157 000 over an average of 25 nights. To date, international visitors to the Flinders Ranges, Wilpena Pound and Arkaroola total 24 000. Interstate travellers to South Australia visiting the Eyre Peninsula total 91 000, with 736 000 overnight stays. Interstate visitors to the Eyre Peninsula total 225 000, with a total of 885 000 overnight stays. Based on four year averages (1991-94), tourism expenditure from the outback adds \$1 156.6 million to the GSP, or \$176.4 billion. These figures were obtained from the South Australian Tourism Commission travel data cards.

As I have said, it is not that one is against exploration and mining. In fact, as I have said, my father was a miner, and we survived on his mining income because without it we would not have survived. The issue is the re-proclamation of the park and the setting of a precedent that could have disastrous implications for all so proclaimed wilderness areas in the future. Much has been said about Yumberra, for example, that it has no wilderness value. Such comments are simply not true. It may not have the beauty of the rainforest, but it has wilderness value and status. We have an area of largely untouched mallee, in fact, one of the largest areas of protected mallee in the world. It is mallee so fragile that when lightning strikes and creates fires it takes many years to regenerate. We saw that when we flew over the area. The slow progress of such regeneration was obvious. We saw about 30 years of growth, and it was still nowhere near its normal state.

There is no doubt that it is a fragile area. To have mining vehicles and equipment invading the area would place a further burden on the park, with the possibility of permanent damage. It is a fact that there is a large question about the water supply within the region. From evidence given to the committee, we learnt that there are no known natural underground water supplies. That being the case, it is obvious that water would have to be transported or piped, as the member for Mawson said, to the drill site. This would create further disturbance. There was discussion concerning the availability of desalination plants. It is well recognised that the Israelis have made tremendous progress in that area, but desalination plants are incredibly expensive. Even the installation of one of those on the site would not resolve the problem.

Why must we mine every identified anomaly? We do not need to do so now. Our mining industry is not floundering by any means. We know that because of the expansion of Roxby Downs. There are other regions that are available for exploration and mining, yet the Government chooses to re-proclaim the park even though there are established facts supporting the wilderness value of this region. I understand that, with the other anomalies in the area, the Gawler Craton is as big as Victoria and two-thirds the size of New South Wales, yet we are not looking to work in those areas: we are looking to work in this area because we say that there is an anomaly of major size here. Let us look at all the others first. There is no essential reason at this stage to work in Yumberra: there are plenty of other areas to explore and to mine.

We have little land set aside as protected regions for future generations. Once we have used that land for gain, we lose it. We lose the flora and fauna because we have disturbed the

habitat and we add species to the endangered list. Those lists are growing at an extremely disturbing rate. I have heard that the number of creatures that have been seen—

Mr Venning: We didn't see them.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I know; I heard that all the way through. My friend the member for Playford said that the pets were out there. The fact is that those creatures and that flora are able to survive in an area that has incredibly low rainfall. I agree that there were tracks through the area and, yes, I saw a couple of beer bottles, but it looked far from the Wingfield tip. Wherever you go you will see one or two reminders of human beings, but the area is fragile. That was indicated by the few species that we saw. In fact, we all know that, if we drive through regions where species are not used to human beings, they bolt the other way. There was no reason to expect to see kangaroos and mallee fowl lining up to wave to us as we drove through.

We once believed that the country could ride on the sheep's back, but we have seen that industry struggle for survival for a long time. Now we want to jump onto a new wagon, which we seek to use as a fix for all our problems. But at what cost to the environment will we do so? There are many other avenues to explore, yet we choose to take the easy way out. Many other options are available to us which would be of great benefit to our communities as a whole.

I refer again to the tourism industry. Ceduna and the surrounding area could be developed into a thriving industry. Eco-tourism is not new but it is so little explored. Long-term benefits to the families in the community could include the creation of jobs and a great boost to the economy of the town. It is a beautiful place. Why do we not encourage South Australians and the tourists who visit Australia to go there and look at it. We have never encouraged people to go there. We want to send them to—

Mr Venning: The Minister would die out there.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Yes, indeed; it was a struggle to continue to the mallee fowl nests. But it would greatly boost the economy of the town. Children would no longer need to move away. Their future could be within the community in which they grew up. It is obviously the community they know and love and it would most likely be the one in which they would prefer to raise their children. It seems that the Government wants to take the easy way, but at what price? Too little emphasis is placed on alternative methods of employment.

We can use the land for many things, but the use ought not be to the detriment of the integrity of the land, which has happened all too often in the past. In fact, it continues to happen today. We simply cannot continue to do this. This presents us with a chance to be serious about protecting our fragile areas, about saving them for the future yet creating employment at the same time. Re-proclaiming Yumberra will not do that and it will open the gate for all other unprotected areas to be used for practices that steal from future generations an opportunity to view untouched regions and destroy the species that live there. I cannot support recommendation 1A. I do not believe that it will save Ceduna or the families living there from the struggles they currently face.

Mr Venning: It will help.

Mrs GERAGHTY: The honourable member says that it will help but he gives them false hope. What if we do go in there and explore the area? I could see it and feel it when I spoke to the people. They think that this will save them. We will have given them false hope, and if it does not happen we will march away and leave them with nothing. We must look at something that is an alternative, that is sustainable and that

will benefit them. I find it absolutely amazing that the honourable member does not take a genuine interest in these people.

If the Government is serious about the problems of the people in Ceduna, it should assist them by creating job opportunities in a positive way, which will enhance their lives and protect the wilderness, and use those opportunities to create an industry which will not destroy the park but which will provide permanent jobs, real jobs, for generations to come. Do not give people false hopes that may never come to fruition.

Too little importance is placed on the environment. We rape it for greed and sometimes, sadly, we do so in ignorance, but it is worse when we do it deliberately. Here we have an opportunity to set a precedent for others to follow. We can say that we value our wilderness areas and we will protect them; yet the Government chooses to go the opposite way. It wants to send a message that no area of wilderness has anything other than a monetary value. It is a message that other Governments will follow, citing the decision that we make. The Government wants to exploit it in a way that has potential to destroy it. However, it could exploit it through tourism and create an industry that would have great benefit for the whole region, that would be lasting, and would save the integrity of the park.

Having listened to the contributions so far, I do not believe that the emphasis is on the environment. In closing, I make the point that the key in this debate is to identify appropriate long-term and sustainable industry and job development. I do not want to thwart job development but merely to identify that which is most appropriate and that which will deliver long-term developments to the people of Ceduna. Ecotourism is a much better option. As I said, within the Gawler Craton region there are many other options for mining. It does not have to be this one today.

Mrs Penfold: It doesn't have to be that big a park, either.

Mrs GERAGHTY: But the park was proclaimed to protect an area for future generations. The one thing to which I have not had an answer is why this anomaly is so important today. What about all the others?

Mr Venning: What others?

Mrs GERAGHTY: There are others within the—

Mr Venning: Not as significant as this one.

Mrs GERAGHTY: But you want to go into this one right now.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: It shines like a diamond.

Mrs GERAGHTY: It shines like a diamond, but when it is expended and the diamond is gone what will we have left for the future? Surely we would like to leave something.

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

Mr VENNING (Custance): I cannot believe what I have just heard from the member for Torrens, given that she was also a member of the select committee. As a country member, I believe that her attitude is totally unacceptable, because I know what this sort of development would do for South Australia, particularly Ceduna. We should at least allow exploration in this area so that we can assess what, if anything, is there. The honourable member's mindset just leaves me cold.

All we know is that there is a significant geological anomaly in a certain region covering a small area in this huge Yumbera Conservation Park, which itself is only a portion of the massive Yellabinna Regional Reserve. It is a huge area

of rolling sandhills and low mallee scrub, which is often very sparse in places. It was extremely interesting to fly over the site and note that certain areas of the park had been ravaged by fire. As to that portion of the park that may be subject to exploration, we calculated that at least 60 per cent of the area under discussion had suffered a fire 18 months to two years earlier.

The landscape was particularly denuded, apart from a few sticks, so any damage caused by a few light vehicles driving through it, which local tourists, environmentalists and the local yobbos do now anyway, would be minimal compared with the devastation by fire, which usually occurs by natural means. It is a natural phenomenon, and I am the first to admit that such fires are started by lightning, but they take everything out: there is nothing left. The honourable member could hardly complain about a couple of light vehicles going in there to drill a few holes.

The vast majority of witnesses supported this point of view and I was pleased to note that some of the Aboriginal people did, as well. They certainly want to be part of the action if this initial exploration proves positive and we decide to mine at a later date. If the committee decided on a stronger recommendation, the Opposition and the Democrats would have defeated it in another place, and that is totally unacceptable. The member for Playford knows that, yet he sits on the back bench smiling, because it does not really affect him now. On our visits to the area, I appreciated what he had to say. The honourable member and I found one flower and I took a photograph of him posing by it because it was the only one we saw all day.

Mr Quirke: I kissed it.

Mr VENNING: He kissed it. That was a short time after we found the one and only mallee fowl nest. That happened after we had driven for an hour and a half into the heart of the park. That is all we found. I did not see a solitary bird. I did not see anything, so why do members opposite want to keep this small piece in such a huge area?

Mr Quirke: What about Darby and Joan, the two kangaroos?

Mr VENNING: The member for Playford mentions Darby and Joan, the two kangaroos. I think that the pets were taken out there the day before but they had to take them back in so that they would not suffer from dehydration. The member for Playford knows that this is a pretty sad joke, because some people out there will get cross with the Government and the Opposition because of the recommendation of the select committee. I am totally at a loss to know why.

It is totally unacceptable that the Opposition and the Democrats would stop this measure in the other place, and it is totally unrealistic, to say the least. This is political dogma at its worst. I am aghast because I thought that we had consensus but, when it came down to tintacks, members opposite told us that their Party would not allow them the independence to speak their own mind. They are locked into it. What a farce, what a complete waste of time! I remind the House that the recommendation is only that permission be given to allow exploration, not to mine at this time. If—and only if—the exploration finds something significant will the question be asked whether we will allow mining to take place, and that is a decision for another time.

This whole process has a familiar ring to it. I refer to the parliamentary political antics of the Australian Labor Party and the Democrats before the original Roxby Downs indenture was eventually agreed to by this Parliament. We

now see the results and the Labor Party hiding from the stark reality of its record in this case. Roxby Downs and the Olympic Dam operations have been an unparalleled success in this State.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr VENNING: The member for Spence says that they have changed their mind.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Now the honourable member says that some members of Labor Party always supported it. I am so pleased that Norm Foster did and had the courage to cross the floor, which immediately cost him his political career. I am sure they would like to find another Norm Foster within their ranks in the other place. It is sad to see the Opposition locked into this situation by powers outside this Parliament, irrespective of the evidence which came before the select committee or any arrangements made with the Government and all the Parties involved. Again this proves my point about the obstructionism of an Upper House, the franchise of which will always be obstructionist to the governing majority Party in this place.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am not pre-empting anything because the honourable member told us straight out during the process of the select committee that her Party would not allow her to vote a sensible line—and we knew that the Democrats would not support it—so it was a waste of time. So, we have just backed off and saved our ammunition for another day. Again this proves the point concerning the obstructionism about which we will have to do something in the long term. If ever South Australia needed more development, and therefore the economic boost which would mean jobs for South Australia, especially in rural South Australia, it is now. Rural South Australia has been haemorrhaging from this rampant decentralisation that has been happening for a long time, and our regional economies have suffered.

Ceduna would be one of the worst of these areas, and any possible project resulting from this exploration would be a tremendous fillip to Ceduna and its surrounding communities. I reiterate that I am not someone who rapes and pillages our natural environment: I am a farmer, and I understand exactly. We need to be reasonable. I was hoping for a bipartisan approach to this issue. The select committee inspected the site from both the air and the ground. I would not be unfair in saying that we saw very little evidence of wildlife. In fact, we saw only one mallee fowl nest which we were told to look out for before we visited the area—and we found it. The member for Playford and I were most jubilant when we—

Mrs Geraghty: The honourable member really ought to be ashamed of himself because we went on a track straight down the line and never deviated.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Torrens has spoken.

Mr VENNING: The member for Torrens is proving exactly what I am saying. We went down the track to find the one and only mallee fowl nest, and we found it. I do not think the mallee fowl had been in that nest for at least two or three seasons. We saw no other evidence of life—no birds, nothing—because it is such a barren, dry place. It is an interesting wilderness, and I am the first to say that, but it is a vast wilderness. To save the small portion where the anomaly exists and to say that it cannot be explored is totally ridiculous. It is taking politics to the ridiculous extreme. As I said, I was hoping for a bipartisan approach to the issue. We

saw this one fowl nest and I thought we would see more than that but, no, not a thing.

I was hopeful that commonsense would prevail over political partiality and dogma. I certainly welcomed the input of the two Labor members, John Quirke and Robyn Geraghty. I enjoyed their company and thought we had general consensus until it came to decision time. I also enjoyed the cooperation of my colleague Rob Brokenshire. The committee was capably chaired by the Hon. Stephen Baker. However, it appears that in the end political intransigence has won the day.

Mining can and will play a significant part in the rejuvenation of the South Australian economy, if we let it. South Australia has great mineral potential, but politics is ensuring that we leave it in the ground. Other States without an obstructive Upper House are leaving us behind, despite the great efforts by Mines and Energy South Australia and the Minister. Yumbarra should always have a part to play in environmental protection in our State, but the park has not been managed at all up to this point—and it looks like it. We all accept that, if after an exploration period we find something, and if then we decide to allow mining, royalties will be earned and part of these moneys would be put towards managing this resource.

Yes, I know what my constituents will say about this. We knew we would get rolled in the other place, but I would have taken the opponents on, unlike the committee that finally resolved to go soft and wait until another day—and I hope it is not too far away. I feel we have let people down. I wonder why the select committee made this gummy-mouthed recommendation, which I am sure all members would agree it is. The witnesses who came along and gave evidence to support this recommendation will wonder what happened.

The member for Torrens said, 'We don't know the answers', and we do not but, if she had her say, we never will. We do not know whether or not anything is there, and we will never know what good management would do for the park. During the questioning of witnesses I asked several people who opposed the re-proclamation whether they had ever been to the park. I have to say, as the honourable member knows, most said 'No'. Even the chief protagonist said, 'No,' he had never been to the park. How significant is the area if they had never been there? If this park were so important and significant in the natural environment of South Australia, why had they not taken the trouble to visit it?

I am disappointed in the findings of the select committee, especially recommendations 28 and 29. It is a total sell-out. Even then, we still had trouble convincing them that they had won. I could not believe it when I read it. At meeting no. 16 I was becoming heartily sick of it: the last four meetings had been dragged out and Labor members had not even attended one meeting. They were even going to argue about it: they had not realised they had won the debate at the end of the day. I ask members to read the report and then read the findings and recommendations and make up their own mind. It is a sell-out—a cave-in. Again, I ask all members to read the report—and I mean read it, because it is very worthy of a read—and they will be as amazed as I was to see the findings and recommendations. I believe that 90 per cent of the people who took the trouble to appear before the committee—and many came considerable distances to Ceduna—will be absolutely amazed at the final findings of the select committee.

I was angry and I am still angry. On the last day it was the intransigent Labor members who reminded us that their Party

would not allow them to make a conscience vote on this issue, irrespective of the overwhelming evidence contained in this report.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The honourable member has made many comments that are highly questionable and has attributed statements to members of the committee—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr VENNING: I apologise to the member for Torrens. I did not intend to defame her or do anything else, because I certainly have enjoyed her company on the committee, but the honourable member has to realise that I am disappointed. I am sure that this is not the end of the issue. All is quiet at Yumbarra at the moment, and I am sure we will revisit Yumbarra in more ways than one. I enjoyed the 16 meetings we had, the two visits to Ceduna, the trip over the park and company of the other members. I thought they had to be seeing what I was seeing but, when it came to the crunch, no way. The member for Torrens said that we should not give people false hopes. I cannot understand her saying that. No doubt, the honourable member has been to Roxby Downs. People see Roxby Downs and Olympic Dam as an example of what can happen when a very rich ore body is found and development takes place under very strict environmental controls.

That area is a credit, because a very barren area has been opened up. It must be preserving a lot of the wildlife because, unlike the situation previously, much of it now has water to drink. To say that the people of Ceduna have false hope is patently ridiculous. It has to mean jobs. If there was mining after that, it would have to have a life of at least 20 years. In fact, it could even be bigger than Roxby Downs. What will that mean for the local people of Ceduna, the young people who cannot get jobs and the Aboriginal population? If the member for Torrens gets her way we will never know, because we will never let them try.

In her contribution, the member for Torrens asked why this anomaly should be significant, and what about the others? I ask the honourable member to look at the aeromagnetic map on the front of the report. She can see for herself why this anomaly is significant: it is because the anomaly shows up as a bright colour on the magnetic surveys, and that tells us that there is something significant here. We ought to at least look at it and see what it is. We are jumping at shadows. The question is whether anything is there. I do not know, the member for Torrens does not know and none of the members of the select committee know. I thought it was plain commonsense to go in and find out and then discuss the real issue.

Mrs PENFOLD secured the adjournment of the debate.

GOODS SECURITIES (MOTOR VEHICLES) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 18 March. Page 1292.)

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): The Bill extends the vehicle securities register which has been established in South Australia since about 1986 to a number of other States, so all States except Western Australia and Tasmania will cooperate with this vehicle securities register. What is registered on this

vehicle securities register are leases, liens, bills of sale and mortgages over motor vehicles so, if one is contemplating buying a motor vehicle in, say, Victoria and the motor vehicle was originally from South Australia, one could inquire of the register what financial encumbrances were on the vehicle. I gather that there is cooperation with the police in placing the identity of stolen vehicles on the register. However, if one buys a stolen vehicle, nothing can remedy the defect in title; the title is held by the person from whom the car is stolen so, even if one buys the stolen vehicle in good faith and for value, the title remains with the original owner.

The advantage of the register is to discover what encumbrances exist over the title of the car. I gather that in the spirit of private enterprise the Government hopes that eventually private sector dealers and financiers will be able to register, amend or cancel their own entries on the register from their own computer. The Opposition thinks the idea is sensible; one hopes that eventually it will be extended to Western Australia and Tasmania, and we wish the Government well with the register.

Mr VENNING (Custance): I will speak briefly in favour of this Bill; I certainly welcome it. I am a little amazed as a buyer of many second-hand vehicles over many years that the security system we had in place was not nation-wide. I assumed that if you bought a vehicle that had a clearance you had some surety that it was not stolen. When we realise that it was only a State clearance and given how many stolen vehicles come over the border, I am amazed that this legislation was not introduced many years ago. I welcome it, and certainly those in the trade welcome it, because you buy a car in good faith. Of course, the con man is always the sweetest talker. You may buy a car from a sweet old grandmother down the road and then find that she was working for a stolen vehicle racket and that you just spent money on somebody else's vehicle. As a result, you lose the vehicle and your money.

I commend the Bill. Anything in this area has to be supported, and we hope that now people buying a vehicle will have the surety that it is not stolen. At another time I will support the random checking of the ownership of vehicles, particularly the vehicle identification plates. As the ERD committee investigated a number of years ago, there should be on-the-spot checks on motor vehicles, not only for roadworthiness but also their ownership, particularly on a change of ownership. I certainly support the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I thank members for their support for the Bill. I think Australia is finally coming of age in terms of the capacity to interrogate information that is of import to the security of homes, vehicles and whatever. The Goods Securities Bill provides an assurance that when a vehicle is sold it is clear of any encumbrance or indeed it has not been stolen, borrowed or whatever and that, in fact, it is the owner of the vehicle who is selling it, has a right to sell it and that no encumbrances may result. The Transport Ministers have met on a number of issues, and this is one of them. Agreement has been reached, and obviously much work needs to be done to ensure that information that gets on the register is timely and accessible. I suspect that it will take two or more years to ensure that the register works properly.

There are other proposals. People have suggested that the register can be further extended to take in car parks but, obviously, they would be additions rather than the fundamen-

tals. The fundamentals are, basically, to know that when you buy a car you can do so without suffering some loss in the future as a result of illegal ownership or some level of liability attaching to the car. I am pleased with the support from members of the Parliament.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

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

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Mr Acting Speaker, the—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence is out of order. I ask that the member for Unley be heard in silence, as will the member for Elizabeth when it is her turn to speak.

Mr Meier interjecting:

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

Mr BRINDAL: I wish to address the House on a matter which has been perplexing me of late—the matter of open spaces as they pertain not only to the electorate of Unley but generally to the electorate within South Australia. The Goodwood Orphanage has been the subject of much debate within my electorate, and rightly so. Before I was elected—

Mr Atkinson: You have no alternative; you have to listen.

Mr BRINDAL: That is correct, because the electors of Unley are the people who put me there as their representative, and they are the people to whom I owe my living and to whom I must listen.

Mr Atkinson: The people of Warradale were the first to elect you to this place.

Mr BRINDAL: That's true, and there is a thread between the two. If he ever bothered to listen to anybody beyond himself, the member for Spence would recall that my earliest speeches in this House were directed towards such issues as the retention of the Somerton Park sandhills, which are the last vestiges of sandhills along the foreshore in metropolitan Adelaide, the rest having been obliterated by a succession of Labor governments.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Spence shows his ignorance. If the member for Spence had any brain at all, he would realise that the electorate of Hayward bordered the sea in the area of Somerton Park and took in Minda Home, and those sandhills were part of the electorate. However, the member for Spence, as usual, flaps his gums and says very little—a lot of noise, filled with sound and fury, signifying nothing, to paraphrase some poet. I also spoke at length to this House in those early years as the member for Hayward on the issue of linear parks as they pertain to the Sturt Creek. I am most proud that this Government was elected on a policy such that, as far as possible, in the long term the waterways of Adelaide will be returned to a series of linear parks as part of a green space vision for the City of Adelaide. The Government can claim to have at least started to initiate the policy. The water catchment levy and the water catchment authorities are our first serious step in that direction. For that initiative, for that development of policy in the catchment boards, the Government needs to be congratulated.

Before I was elected as member for Unley, I fought the good fight with the assistance of the then local member, Mr Mayes, in the retention of the open space pertaining to the Goodwood tech site. Mr Mayes and I both agreed on that matter, and in the end the Government saved the green spaces that were left. The housing development was put on part of the open space, and a good compromise was arrived at for the electors of Unley. Before that election, I said to the then shadow Minister (Mr Lucas) that I considered the green spaces at the orphanage of prime importance, and there was no way I wanted to see them go—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Ross Smith wants me to make some green space on the seats, I am quite willing to comply.

Mr BRINDAL: I wanted to see them go for some sort of medium density housing development. Some time after the election, the Minister said to me, 'I think we can solve the problem of the orphanage.' He suggested a compromise, and the compromise was the Tabor proposal. I consistently argued with the Minister for the preservation of green space and was told—and I still believe that is his right as a Minister of the Crown and as the custodian of the property—that was not the negotiating point. The negotiating point was the proposition he had, because he seeks to enhance the site for the benefit of the teachers by the provision of the auditorium.

I consistently maintained that, while my first preference was the maintenance of all open space, if I had to work within those parameters I would. Increasingly, my electors have told me—very vociferously and stridently—that is not good enough, that they expect all the open space to be saved. Unlike some of the arrogant members opposite who seem to believe that they are a law unto themselves, I am like you, Mr Acting Speaker, in that I happen to listen when my electors tell me something, and if lots of them tell me something I am capable of admitting I was wrong and/or changing my mind.

Mr Venning: I can count.

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Custance says that he can count. That is indeed true—though it is a little unfair. As I said to the House, I have always maintained that the preservation of the open spaces at the orphanage was an important issue. In my stance with the Minister, I have always maintained that we should protect as much as we can.

Mr Clarke: Would you stake your political career on it?

Mr BRINDAL: More so than you have the guts to stake your career on it. I said to the meeting last night that the honourable member's Party was irrelevant. My capacity to argue with the Minister and the Premier is what will either save or sink this issue. Frankly, the only choice for my electors is to take out my success or failure on me at the next election. I tell the member for Ross Smith that I am standing up to be counted, and I am putting my political career right on the line. I have never seen him take a stance on anything that required him to have courage or to go to his electors. They do not even know what he looks like. They certainly cannot say that in Unley. He is better known in Unley than he ever has been in Ross Smith. As the member for Unley, one of my problems is that I have more resident Labor and ex-Labor politicians than any other member in this House. They flock to Unley in droves and, to my consternation and horror, I do not think they vote Liberal.

Members interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: Retired Labor and present Labor politicians. They could not prise the member for Gilles out

of Unley to live in his own seat. He spent four years living off Unley Road, because he preferred Cafe Paradiso and the nice places of Hyde Park and King William Road to those in his own electorate.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

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

Mr BRINDAL: If the speech reads like a dog's breakfast it is because the dogs opposite keep interrupting.

Mr ATKINSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. If one scans Erskine May with regard to unparliamentary language, one will find that it is always unparliamentary to refer to members as animals, and I ask the member for Unley to withdraw.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I believe it is inappropriate and ask the member for Unley to withdraw.

Mr BRINDAL: I do apologise, Sir. My eyesight is suffering a bit and I thought I heard yapping opposite.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Unley to continue with his speech.

Members interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I thought I heard snorting then; I must have been mistaken. I hope that my credibility on the issue of open space is on the public record. Politics is not always about reality but about perception. In the electorate, I accept that often I will be judged on the perception of the electors and not on reality. I hope that in this place my colleagues and the Opposition will judge the reality of my speeches as I will theirs.

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): This afternoon in Question Time, the member for Elder asked the Minister for Health a question in relation to funds for the disability sector—the funds that, just last week, were released by the Minister for Health and the Premier. In his inimical way, the Minister for Health made some quite outrageous statements in his answer. I would like to spend this time tonight putting right some of his statements.

First, we need to revisit where this all started. In May 1996, the then Premier, the Hon. Dean Brown, announced with great fanfare at a disability expo that this Government would release \$3 million of new money to meet urgent priorities in the disability sector. This news was received with great thankfulness by a great many people in our community who had been campaigning strongly to receive these funds in order to alleviate some pretty critical situations in which they found themselves. That was a great announcement and a great press conference, but nothing happened.

As the months went by people kept asking, 'Where is the money?' and there was no answer; and there was no answer until November last year, when the Minister for Health announced that half the money would be allocated, and that he would keep the other half in order to attract HAAC funding. This is where the trouble started with respect to the rest of the money. I refer members to my speech of Thursday 5 December when I moved a motion in this House, as follows:

That this House—

- (a) notes that the \$3 million from the gaming machine levy promised by the former Premier on 3 May 1996 to meet urgent priorities for people with disabilities has not been distributed;
- (b) condemns the Minister for Health and the Minister for Family and Community Services for the bureaucratic wrangle that

- has delayed this program in the face of an ever-growing number of disabled people in critical need of support; and
- (c) urges those Ministers to take immediate action to deliver the former Premier's commitment.

I spoke to that motion in the House on Thursday 5 December. As part of my speech, I made the point that I could understand the tactic of trying to use half this money to attract Federal matching money to increase the pool of funds. I said that I felt it was very important for the Minister, understanding the critical needs of those families, to advance \$1.5 million so that the total \$3 million could be spent immediately in the provision of those much needed services. The Minister for Health could have advanced that money; he had already advanced money to another worthwhile project, the Healthplus Coordinated Care Project, while waiting for the Commonwealth Government to forward funds that were due to the State.

The Minister could also have done that in this case. That is what I was saying and that is what I was very critical about at the time. In November, when announcing that only half of that money would be forthcoming, the Minister said that it was okay for those people to wait, but it was not okay. Those people had been waiting for many years. He mentioned again that this was the first new money for the disabilities area for many years. I would like to remind the Minister that his Government and he, as Minister, have been responsible for this sector for more than three years. If he cared that much, why were those funds not made available earlier? Today in this House the Minister again misquoted me—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: The member for Mawson is out of order.

Ms STEVENS: —as he has done on many occasions. When the Minister for Health feels that he must make a political point and feels that he needs to rescue himself from a situation into which he has usually got himself, he likes to selectively misquote, and that is what he did today. In his answer this afternoon, the Minister said:

In what I found to be completely surprising, on the day after the announcement of this great victory for people with disability in South Australia, the member for Elizabeth condemned the Government's strategy, claiming that people with disabilities could not afford to wait for the extra funding.

What I said was that people with disabilities needed \$3 million, and that they needed it in May last year when it was first promised by the former Premier; and that the Minister for Health, if he really cared and understood the extent of the pain experienced by these people, would have done what I suggested and advanced that money, knowing full well that, if he got more from the Commonwealth later, he could fix it up and, if he were not successful in negotiating extra HAAC funds from the Commonwealth, at least those people would have had the \$3 million they were promised.

I note that the Minister in his answer today said that my statements were both 'silly and naive'. A statement such as that from this Minister is quite amazing. I would like to simply say that the Minister for Health, as the Minister responsible for disability services, has shown little care and concern for the people who will finally receive the benefit of this money. I remind members that as of 5 December last year Project 141 (which lobbies on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities) had on its books 245 people with disabilities aged over 50 years still being cared for by elderly parents.

If the Minister had one shred of concern about those people, that \$3 million, which was promised in May last year, would have been delivered if not in May then very soon after. Instead of that, it was not until 12 March, last week, when the Minister finally got around to making the announcement. To cap it off, the final sentence of the Minister for Health today is worth thinking about. He said that what I had said absolutely highlighted the fact that the Opposition is not ready for the sometimes difficult and responsible task of being in govern-

ment. If we all pause for a few moments and think about the mess we are in at the moment regarding the legislation before this House at the hands of the Minister for Health, we see that perhaps the Minister for Health has never been ready for the sometimes difficult and responsible task of being in government.

Motion carried.

At 10 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 20 March at 10.30 a.m.