

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 11 December 1997

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)** took the Chair at 10.31 a.m. and read prayers.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (PUBLIC OPINION POLLS) AMENDMENT BILL

**Mr ATKINSON (Spence)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Freedom of Information Act 1991. Read a first time.

**Mr ATKINSON:** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

The year before last, the Government privatised the management of South Australia's system of water and sewerage. A contract was signed for an Anglo-French consortium, United Water, to manage the system. The decision was one for which the Liberal Party had not sought a mandate at the 1993 general election because it knew that such a policy would be unpopular. After Cabinet made the decision in 1995, it commissioned an advertising campaign to promote United Water's management of the system and an opinion poll to sample the public's reaction to the water contract and the advertising campaign.

When the Opposition asked about the polling, the Government denied that it existed. The Government then conceded that it existed but denied access to the polling on the grounds that it was a Cabinet document vital to Cabinet's consideration of the water contract and ought not to be released lest Cabinet confidences be breached.

Owing to continued Opposition questioning, we now know that the polling was arranged by the Liberal Party's Mr Ian Kortlang, and consisted of telephone sampling and focus group sessions and that, until 6 September 1995, it cost \$46 000. The polling continued into December of that year. The results were sent by Mr Kortlang to the chief of SA Water, Mr Ted Phipps, and he, in turn, delivered the results in a brown envelope to the Cabinet subcommittee on water, although the envelopes were never attached to the Cabinet submission.

The Opposition asked the Ombudsman to look at the polls and rule on whether it was right to release them under the Freedom of Information Act. To stop the Ombudsman's deliberations, the then Deputy Premier issued a certificate under the Act deeming the polls to have the Cabinet exemption mentioned in the Act. The Opposition has appealed against that certificate in the District Court, but discontinued the action when the polling was leaked to us, along with evidence that the boss of SA Water, the then Premier and the now Premier were all conscious of the discrepancy between the existence of the polling and denials to Parliament that the polling had occurred.

The Act defines a Cabinet document in the schedule but clause 1(2) of the schedule provides:

A document is not an exempt document by virtue of this clause if it merely consists of factual or statistical material that does not disclose information concerning any deliberation or decision of Cabinet;

It is the Opposition's contention that the opinion polling in

question is not by that definition an exempt document, nor could opinion polling ever fit the exemption.

To put the matter beyond doubt we propose by the Bill to include in the schedule to the Act after the words 'if it merely consists of factual or statistical material' the words in brackets 'including the result of public opinion polling'. We propose a similar amendment later in the schedule to the same effect. The nub of the Bill is that after polling has been completed for the Government it should be available to the public if a request is made under the Freedom of Information Act. We are not seeking to compel the Government to release immediately and publicly every poll it commissions. We are saying that the taxpayers of South Australia fund Government opinion polling, and that opinion polling is in all material respects factual or statistical material and that is not exempt under the Act. Members of the public are entitled to have an avenue by which to view the results of that polling after it is read by the Government. By what reasoning can this be denied?

Let me give the House an example that more experienced members of the Government such as the members for Stuart and Hammond will readily understand. During the second Bannon Government the then Minister for Health (Hon. John Cornwall)—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr ATKINSON:** Yes, he was one of ours—ordered opinion polling on matters in his portfolio and added to the polling a question about his performance as Minister. I would have thought, leading with your jaw! When the Opposition heard of this it disapproved, as it should have. If we had had a Freedom of Information Act at the time, the Opposition would have asked for the results of the polling—and I notice the member for Stuart nodding in agreement. I ask the gamekeepers on the other side to cast their minds back to their 11 years as poachers between 1982 and 1993 and I ask them to be fair-minded about the issue before the House.

The former Premier during the 1993 general election said that a Liberal Government would:

... insist the public is at all times fully informed about Government decisions and activities. A Liberal Government will ensure that freedom of information legislation is fully effective in providing access to Government information.

*The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:*

**Mr ATKINSON:** As the member for Stuart said, that was a promise made when they were in Opposition. On what principle could Government members vote against this Bill?

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN** secured the adjournment of the debate.

### NATIVE VEGETATION

**Mr HILL (Kaurana):** I move:

That the regulations under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 relating to exemptions made on 4 September 1997 and laid on the table of this House on 2 December 1997 be disallowed.

Sometime earlier this year I believe a number of regulations were laid on the table as a result of a process of consideration by the former Minister for Environment and Natural Resources. Prior to those regulations being laid on the table I understand the Native Vegetation Council and elements in the now Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs had gone through a process of review of the regulations and spent a considerable amount of time looking at ways in which the current Act could be strengthened. At the

same time I understand a backbench committee of the Government was also looking at alterations to the regulations that might be considered.

The then Minister, as I understand it, promised various environmental groups, including the Conservation Council and the Nature Conservation Council, that there would be proper and extensive consultation about the regulations before they were introduced into this House, and indeed the Nature Conservation Council had some of its own proposals to put to the Minister.

When it came time to produce the regulations, the draft regulations that had been produced by the Nature Conservation Society and by the Native Vegetation Council were rejected by the Minister. In fact, the department's suggestions, which were to strengthen the Act, were rejected, and the only regulations that were brought forward were those which, as I understand it, were produced by the Minister's own backbench committee. It is those regulations which are currently on the table and which I seek to have disallowed. The objections to those regulations are extensive.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kaurna has the call.

**Mr HILL:** Three kinds of exemptions are sought to be introduced by way of these regulations. I will briefly explain them to the House. The first type of exclusion relates to specific types of native plants.

*The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kaurna has the call.

**Mr HILL:** If these species are growing on your property, you will not need to seek permission from the Native Vegetation Council to have them removed. In the opinion of the Nature Conservation Society, the largest species to be exempted has not been justified, and the basis of their selection appears to be peculiar. I will not refer to the whole list of plants but just to a few. For example, *acacia victoriae* is, I understand from the Nature Conservation Society, the habitat of a nationally rare plant species, *maireana rohrlachii*, and it is also the habitat of *lithochroa blue*, a rare butterfly, and another rare butterfly, *icilius blue*. There are six or seven species which will not require permission to be removed from a property, just general *carte blanche* permission.

The second area of exclusion relates to pest, animal and plant control. The exemption allows clearance 'where it is not reasonably practical to comply with an obligation under the Animal and Plant Control Act. . . without clearing native vegetation.' In other words, if there is an obligation to clear pest plants and some of these native species are in that area and if it is not practical in the opinion of the Native Vegetation Council, the landholder can clear the whole piece of land up to an area of 100 square metres. Unfortunately, no measure is included to prevent this regulation being used cumulatively. So, presumably, an area of 100 square metres could be cleared on one day and another such area on the next, and so on.

The third area deals with fire prevention. Obviously, this matter is of concern to people in both rural and metropolitan areas. The new exemption allows clearance 'to protect a dwelling or other building from the threat of fire'. In the opinion of the Nature Conservation Society, the definition of 'building' is critical to this regulation. Does it also apply to a mobile building such as a caravan which could conceivably be moved about a property from place to place to allow unspecified clearance of scrub so that large tracts of land

could be cleared? Three exemptions are suggested in these regulations to allow clearance. These are three loopholes through which a bulldozer could be driven to clear large tracts of land.

So, I reject the regulations as they currently stand. Some might say that these are reasonable regulations, that they allow sensible land management practice, but one must look at the *bona fides* of this Government regarding the issue of the Native Vegetation Act and practice over recent years. I will cite some figures to indicate the trend line in terms of land clearance.

In 1992, 2.2 per cent of applications to clear land were approved by the Native Vegetation Council; in 1993, 7.7 per cent were approved; there are no figures for 1994; but in 1995, 86.6 per cent of applications for clearance were approved. This is a Government that definitely wants to undermine the correct application of the Native Vegetation Act and is looking for loopholes, exclusions and exceptions to allow more and more land to be cleared, so that—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the parents supervising children in the gallery to ask them to sit down and stop hanging over the balustrade.

**Mr HILL:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for protecting me from falling children. The trend shows that the Government's practice in land management is such that more and more land is being cleared. These loopholes and exemptions would give greater opportunities for those who wish to clear vegetation to do so.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable the member for Hammond to move four motions without notice forthwith.

The four motions are identical to those standing in the name of the member for Mawson, who does not intend to proceed with them.

Motion carried.

## PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: STURT HIGHWAY

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** I bring up the fifty-ninth report of the committee on the Sturt Highway upgrading, Mickan Bridge to Truro section, and move:

That the report be noted.

The Sturt Highway has become one of the State's principal transport routes. That section of 8.2 kilometres from Mickan Bridge to Truro is a vital part of the link between Adelaide, the Barossa Valley and the Riverland regions and forms part of the link from Adelaide to Sydney in the national highway grid. The proposition from the Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts is to upgrade that 8.2 kilometre section. In addition, an east-bound overtaking lane will be provided near Stockwell and a west-bound auxiliary lane near Truro.

The estimated cost all up is \$6.5 million, and it is expected to be completed before the end of next July. In summary, the works for this project include major changes to the geometry of the road, additional lanes for overtaking, safer placement

and design of side road junctions and better and safer local access both to and across the road. The Public Works Committee agrees that this section of the Sturt Highway has poor alignment on the pavement and that it is too narrow. It contains inadequately designed junctions and, worse still, there are large sections of structurally unsound parts in the pavement. That is to say, the footings are insufficient to carry the load. In addition to the foregoing, the committee notes that the opportunities for overtaking on this stretch of road are limited. This has led to traffic delays and an above average crash rate.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Fisher will either go into the gallery and have a conversation there or move out of the Chamber.

**Mr LEWIS:** Further, the traffic volumes are very high for a two-lane rural road that has a high commercial vehicle component and steady growth rate. It is worth noting that it was designed originally as a two-way rural road and sealed at that time but it is now part of the national highway grid. The committee members understand that the proposed upgrade will fix the problems and deficiencies and provide a more efficient, safer and expanded traffic carriage facility. In particular, the project is expected to improve transport accessibility and to assist regional economic development by increasing the attractiveness of this route for tourists, both regional and long-distance traffic.

The economic benefits include: the provision of more efficient travel times; a reduction in vehicle operating expenses; improved fuel consumption; and a decrease in the incidence of accidents and crash severity. So, there will be not only a decrease in the number but a decrease in severity and consequence. Furthermore, other benefits, such as greater driver comfort, enhancing environmental pollution control and overall improved access to the road, are also expected as a result of our undertaking the work. The Public Works Committee endorses the Department of Transport's proposal to upgrade this section of the Sturt Highway from Mickans Bridge to Truro and recommends the proposed public works.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I have much pleasure in supporting this motion, as the Sturt Highway passes through my electorate, in fact dividing the electorates of Schubert and Light. The Sturt Highway, as the member for Hammond just said, is a major regional link between Adelaide and the Barossa Valley and, of course, the Riverland. It is a road that many of us, including me, use a lot. I was aware of the previous condition of the road, how dangerous it was, and the very high accident rate it had the dubious honour of having. Of course, it is now also the major route to northern Victoria and Sydney. The road has grown into a major freight and tourism route and was declared part of the Adelaide-Sydney national highway in 1992, just after it became part of my electorate.

I am personally delighted with the Daveyston bypass, which has just been completed and joins this part of the highway that we are discussing now. This has been a pressing need for residents for a long time. No longer will they need to put up with the large trucks constantly travelling through their towns, particularly on the exhaust brakes as they come into the speed zones. I could hear these massive trucks on the exhaust brakes from the other highway some 10 kilometres away, so members can imagine what it was like to live there. The project involved the realignment of the Sturt Highway with the provision of a 1.6 kilometre climbing lane for traffic travelling east; improved junctions with the Freeling to

Daveyston road and Seppeltsfield road; an overpass at Hempel Road; and landscaping.

I want to congratulate the people in charge of the landscaping: it is magnificent. Our highways today are almost a work of art because they are landscaped so beautifully. Before the \$7 million federally-funded bypass was built, the Daveyston-Penfolds Hill section of the Sturt Highway had a number of deficiencies, such as the poor alignment and the level of service; a low speed environment through Daveyston; and an accident rate higher than the State average. The Sturt Highway at Daveyston carries some 5 200 vehicles per day and 20 per cent of those (or 1 040) could be classed as very heavy vehicles. The Federal member for Wakefield (Neil Andrew) and the Minister for Transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) attended the recent opening of the road. Mr Andrew said that the 4.5 kilometre by-pass would complement other federally funded works on the Sturt Highway, in particular the Sheoak Log bypass—of which the member for Light is very aware—and the adjoining Sheoak Log to Daveyston sector, which was upgraded in early 1993, again with Commonwealth funding.

The Federal Coalition Government will provide \$93.86 million for the national highway system in South Australia in 1997-98—an increase of \$35.4 million or 60 per cent more than in 1996-97. I pay the highest tribute to the Federal Government, because these sort of moneys are making a big difference to our State's transport infrastructure. The previous Federal Labor Government certainly was not funding adequately and, apart from the Port Wakefield dual carriageway highway, for which I gave the previous Government all credit, I do not know of any other major road projects of which both State and Federal Labor Governments can be proud. That is a disgrace, because we are running low our infrastructure in South Australia.

Bardavcol was the construction company for the Daveyston by-pass and is to be congratulated on the project. It is a great asset and I was pleased to be there on opening day. There was a waterhole and trees in the path of the highway, and it has done a beautiful job of preserving the waterhole. On opening day it actually had water in it with a duck or two: it was picturesque. I am not a rabid greenie, but I appreciate major works such as this which have some sympathy with and which seek to preserve the natural assets of the land on which they are sited. It is a reflection of the whole community's attitude.

I drive on this road a lot and appreciate it very much. The previously poor condition of the highway caused a lot of problems with people getting from the Barossa to Adelaide. We had a serious problem in getting from Tanunda to Adelaide. You could go down the Barossa Valley Way from Lyndoch to Gawler, and everyone knows that that is a terrible road. It is bitumen, but the lovely trees are close to the road and it has one of the highest death rates in the State. I avoid that road at all costs except when on business or going for a tourist drive. If I am in a hurry I do not travel on that road. These are the alternative roads. The other alternative was to go north to Nuriootpa and get onto the Sturt Highway. We had a bottleneck at Daveyston, which has been solved.

The third option and now the highest priority is to put a third link into the Barossa, which has to come off at Sheoak Log, go across through Gomersal and link in just south of Tanunda. This has been talked about for years. It is now the Barossa region's highest priority. Now that this project and the Morgan-Burra Road are finished, this is my highest priority. I am pleased that the road is now open; I am pleased

with the standard of the work; I am pleased that the Government put the work together; and I am pleased with the work of the Public Works Committee. My last concern is whether the main road will be sealed through Truro while they are there. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: BURBRIDGE ROAD**

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** I move:

That the sixtieth report of the committee on the Burbridge Road widening and streetscaping be noted.

Burbridge Road is the most direct link between the Adelaide International Airport and the central business district of the capital city. It has been a central part of the Adelaide Arrive Burbridge Road master plan. It is a key gateway to the city. Consequently, the road must provide an efficient and safe access to the city and create a good, visual positive image of Adelaide and the State as, when the many people visiting this State hit *terra firma* at the Adelaide Airport on arriving by air, their first impression is the one they receive driving along that carriageway.

I know that many such people consider that we have outstanding advantages in South Australia, but were previously unimpressed and indifferent about what they saw as the approach to the city from that readily accessible amenity, the airport. The Department of Transport, accordingly, in conjunction with the City of West Torrens has proposed to widen and streetscape the section of Burbridge Road between Brooker Terrace and South Road at a cost of between \$8.02 million and \$8.57 million with the final amount contingent upon land acquisition negotiations.

To summarise, then, the works for the proposed upgrade include a central median strip with a protected right-turn slot arrangement, two traffic lanes in each direction, bicycle lanes, paving of the footpaths, semi-indented bus bays at the kerbside, indented parking lanes, undergrounding of power lines, feature lighting, planting an avenue of plane trees and provision of banners, flags and street furniture to enhance the amenity and aesthetics of the area.

The Public Works Committee notes that the proposed works complete the Burbridge Road upgrade. They will also fulfil the Government's commitment to develop Adelaide as a vital centre for corporate business, as well as to maintain its attractiveness as a tourist destination—and that is particularly important, as I said before, for overseas visitors. The committee acknowledges that this section of Burbridge Road is currently impaired by the existence of shared kerbside parking lanes, the complete absence of an appropriate central median strip in this area, the lack of suitable facilities for cyclists and the non-existence of indented, sheltered loading and unloading zones for bus stops.

The motor vehicle accident rate on this road is high in comparison with the average for similar sections of other metropolitan roads with similar traffic densities. Members will understand that the proposed works will alleviate these problems and generally improve road safety; they will enhance transport efficiency, reduce road user costs and help the council to achieve its objective of attracting business to this part of its area. The committee considers that the proposed works will provide a number of direct economic benefits for the community which include the provision of more efficient travel times, a reduction in vehicle operating expenses, improved fuel consumption, a decrease in the

incidence of accidents, a decrease in crash severity (as measured by the cost of repairs) and a decrease in the severity of injuries sustained by people involved.

There will also be a greater measure of driver comfort, enhancement of environmental pollution control, better facilities and access for cyclists, and an overall improved access to the road which will arise from this work. The Public Works Committee endorses the proposal to widen the road and streetscape the Brooker Terrace to South Road section and recommends the proposed work.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: BIRDWOOD NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM**

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** I move:

That the sixty-first report of the committee on the Birdwood National Motor Museum—New Exhibition Pavilion be noted.

The National Motor Museum at Birdwood was established in 1965 at what was the Birdwood Mill, which had for many generations belonged to the Pflaum family. It was, therefore, a flour mill and originally a private business acquired by the State Government in 1976. The museum is the third oldest major museum in South Australia and is one of the largest and most prominent in terms of the numbers of visits made by people to it and the profile it has in Australia. It is the National Motor Museum.

The History Trust of South Australia proposes to construct a new exhibition pavilion at the National Motor Museum on the existing site. It is expected that the new pavilion, which will be known as the Hall of Australian Motoring, will enhance the museum's tourist appeal and address the inadequacy of the present structure and the run-down nature of those buildings which in the main were a bit like Topsy—they just grew. The estimated cost is \$5 million and we expect the project to be completed by the end of July next year.

The work for this project includes: the construction of a 3 500 square metre display area for accommodation of material displayed all on a single level; erection of an environmentally controlled special exhibition area of 300 square metres; a ceiling height sufficient to allow for commercial vehicle displays and movement, with provision for appropriate landscaping in the message; and expansion and upgrade of the car parking and other vehicle parking facilities, with the removal of existing dilapidated prefabricated buildings which were all part of the Topsy syndrome. There will also be construction of new fences to the west and north boundaries of the car park to secure the area and an upgrade of the existing services for the people who visit and work there.

The committee wishes the House to note that this new construction will double the existing museum's display area and allow up to 10 interpretive exhibitions incorporating approximately 40 cars, 40 motorcycles and 40 commercial motor vehicles. The committee acknowledges that during the past decade the National Motor Museum has emerged as an institution of national standing and has become increasingly an outstanding and successful tourist attraction, for people coming not just from interstate but also overseas. Indeed, it is one of the most comprehensive collections of motor vehicles anywhere in the world. In addition, the museum's significance is linked to several areas of key economic importance to us here in South Australia in our tourism product, particularly the Barossa Valley tourism strategy, the

automotive industry strategy and the State's evolving events strategy, all of which helped to generate those obvious economic benefits for us.

In addition, we understand that currently the museum's exhibitions and its collection of 400 or so vehicles are housed in inadequate accommodation which fails to meet internationally accepted standards for museums or to provide adequate shelter and protection for many of the extremely rare if not unique and therefore valuable items stored and displayed there. It is severely restricted in its present display area of all existing collections because of this limitation of space, and that has prevented appropriately significant displays being mounted, such as commercial vehicles and so on, which are then stored out of public view.

The committee has considered that the new pavilion will provide many additional advantages, including an improvement of the museum's ability to display key elements of its collection, the attraction of special exhibitions, a boost to its capacity to attract sponsorship for those exhibitions, the events associated with them and any other programs associated with the museum itself. It will make it possible to display the collection of historic commercial vehicles, and it will provide improved facilities for visitors and the events they attend, and other functions. It will increase the attractiveness of the museum to those who donate and lend it significant items of motoring heritage material and upon whom the trust depends significantly.

The committee agrees that the provision of the new facilities at Birdwood will enable the museum to retain its pre-eminent position in Australia against its existing and potential rivals. We need to be careful of the Kennett factor in that respect. It is the National Motor Museum, but it is not beyond his ken to try to gazump us on that. It is understood that the redevelopment will provide a number of social and economic benefits to this State, including the creation of more jobs at the museum in Birdwood, and extend the facilities to both associated catering and accommodation providers and local suppliers of the goods and services to that amenity. The Public Works Committee endorses the proposal to construct the new exhibition pavilion on the current National Motor Museum site at Birdwood and recommends the proposed public work.

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Schubert.

**Mr Atkinson:** It's not in your electorate!

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** Excuse me. Birdwood is in the electorate of Schubert. If the honourable member were half as knowledgeable as he thinks he is, I am sure he and the Parliament would be much more enlightened.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** No, it was not in the seat of Custance. I was very pleased to get this area at the last election along with the change of electorate name. I have represented the Birdwood community since the October election in my new electorate of Schubert.

I have much pleasure in supporting the motion. I note the funding for the new exhibition pavilion, and I look forward to meeting people at the National Motor Museum in the next few days to note progress and to look at the plans, etc. I understand that the project will cost \$5 million. That is a massive amount of State money which is going towards this project. I first visited Birdwood Mill shortly after it was opened in 1965, as a motoring enthusiast—nothing to do with politics in those days. I was still young and bushy tailed in those days, and an old car enthusiast, as I still am. This was

acquired in 1976 by the State Government and it now has a national profile.

I am pleased that we have a national facility in regional South Australia, particularly when we recall the debate we have just had about the wine centre. I believe that the wine centre probably could be in the region, but I understand the debate and did give way to that. I am pleased we have a national facility in regional South Australia. It is very popular. I note the Hall of Australian Motoring. It will have a magnificent presence, with a theme like that. I know that the museum has a fine collection of cars made in Australia, particularly the unique Summit and pieces of a car called the Australian.

**Mr Atkinson:** Do they have more than you?

**Mr VENNING:** I have not counted their collection. The display area of 3 500 square metres on one level will be fantastic. I will be pleased with the removal of the temporary buildings, because they have been a blot on the lovely landscape, particularly with the upgrading of the existing facilities and the landscaping that will go with it. All this will double the space available for displays. What they have now is a little restrictive, but they have done a good job with what they have had. I believe that \$5 million is recognition by the Government and by the people of South Australia of the importance of the Birdwood National Motor Museum. Trying to get money out of Government is difficult, but \$5 million speaks volumes.

This is a vital link to the Barossa Valley strategy. It is a lovely drive through the hills to visit the museum and then through to the valley in the afternoon, which completes a very pleasant experience. I declare my interest in that I am a vintage car enthusiast—as the Hon. Frank Blevins used to remind this House, very disparagingly, when discussing motor vehicle registrations, etc. I have visited this museum many times over the years and spent many hours there before being dragged away by my wife—I certainly had not taken enough in, but she had had enough. I look forward to visiting there in the future, which I will be doing shortly, to discuss the plans. I support the motion.

Motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL**

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** I bring up the sixty-second report of the committee on the Royal Adelaide Hospital master plan and move:

That the report be noted.

Stage 1 is the section about which I speak. The Royal Adelaide Hospital was established in 1840. It was the first hospital in South Australia to provide acute and community patient health care services. It is one of the State's largest employers and is also a major university teaching hospital, supporting undergraduate and postgraduate education in medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, medical laboratory sciences and pharmacy. The South Australian Health Commission proposes to undertake Stage 1 of a four-stage redevelopment of the Royal Adelaide Hospital to meet the future health needs of the community without substantial addition to the current size or the number of public hospitals in the State. The hospital has prepared a master plan for the progressive development of existing and new infrastructure within the North Terrace and Hampstead

Centre campuses.

It should be noted that, due to the hospital's financial and operational needs, the project works have been staged over a seven-year period, at a total estimated cost of \$121 million, with an estimated \$16.59 million allocated to Stage 1. The works to be conducted in this stage involve four main areas. The first is the Eleanor Harold building, which will be refurbished and converted to a teaching facility, with a new library and lecture theatre complex to be constructed within its present structure, and services such as air-conditioning, electrical, lighting, water supply, plumbing and fire control facilities to be upgraded to meet current regulatory and statutory requirements. The second of the four main areas is the Margaret Graham building next door. That is to be refurbished and upgraded. Its air-conditioning, electrical and fire services will also be upgraded to meet current standards. The existing voice and data cabling will be replaced—'voice' meaning telephone, 'data' meaning computer.

The third part is the Women's Health Centre Building, which is to have its air-conditioning and fire systems upgraded and its voice and data cabling system replaced. Finally, there is the Hampstead Centre on that campus, where a new building will be constructed, together with all associated infrastructure works.

The Public Works Committee acknowledges that currently there is a large body of students in both medical and paramedical disciplines doing their hands-on training in the hospital, with the location of many of the educational functions adversely complicating the flow of patients and the level of patient care being provided in the complex of buildings available in the hospital. So, to address this and other deficiencies, Stage 1 of the master plan proposes to relocate and consolidate those amenities—that is, the hospital's educational research and administrative functions—to the precinct along Frome Road, which specifically includes the buildings that I have mentioned: Eleanor Harold, Margaret Graham and the Women's Health Centre building.

The committee has been told that an overall review of the existing hospital facilities undertaken as part of the master plan process revealed that the Royal Adelaide Hospital is in need of significant infrastructure upgrade in its wards and equipment, as many of those buildings in the hospital no longer provide the standard of accommodation amenity and technology required to meet both the public and the clinical expectations in the delivery of that health care service. Committee members note that current problems also exist with the emergency department, the ambulatory care and the outpatient facility at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and acknowledge the necessity of Stage 1 works in facilitating the subsequent upgrade of these departments.

Further, the committee considers that the development strategy contained in the master plan for this project will facilitate the progressive upgrading of the hospital, as well as address its current physical and operational limitations, with minimal disruption. It also identifies the opportunities for future private sector involvement in the financing and delivery of health-related services. As is pointed out, while the committee recognises the importance of the entire project, the committee gives approval to Stage 1 works only, and all subsequent stages are required to come before the committee prior to their commencement. The Public Works Committee endorses the proposal for Stage 1 and recommends the proposed public works.

Motion carried.

### CRIMINAL LAW (SENTENCING) (VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

**Mr ATKINSON (Spence)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988. Read a first time.

**Mr ATKINSON:** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

The right of a victim of a person who has been convicted of a criminal offence was introduced in 1988 through the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act. Section 7 of that Act was introduced by the then Attorney-General, the Hon. C.J. Sumner, who had a particular interest in enhancing the rights of victims. That section provides:

(1) Subject to subsection (2), the prosecutor must, for the purpose of assisting a court to determine sentence for an offence, furnish the court with particulars (that are reasonably ascertainable and not already before the court in evidence or a pre-sentence report) of—

- (a) injury, loss or damage resulting from the offence; and
- (b) injury, loss or damage resulting from—
  - (i) any other offence that is to be taken into account specifically in the determination of sentence; or
  - (ii) a course of conduct consisting of a series of criminal acts of the same or a similar character of which the offence for which sentence is to be imposed forms part.

(2) The prosecutor may refrain from furnishing the court with particulars of injury, loss or damage suffered by a person if the person has expressed a wish to that effect to the prosecutor.

(3) The validity of a sentence is not affected by non-compliance or insufficient compliance with this section.

That was a most innovative move by the then Labor Government, one which lawyers and judges were not wholly happy about, because it marked such a break with the normal adversarial custom of criminal trials whereby the prosecution and defence lawyers go hard at it—the prosecution to obtain a conviction, the defence to avoid one—and the victim is largely forgotten.

I believe that there is still some resistance by the judiciary of this State to the written victim impact statement. I do not say that it is widespread, but a survey which was mentioned to me at a seminar that I attended during Victim Awareness Week stated that at least one senior judge in this State had told the surveyor anonymously that he took no notice whatsoever of a victim impact statement when passing sentence. That judge, whoever he may be, is merely representative of the feeling of a great many lawyers in this State who resent the intrusion of the victim impact statement into the traditional criminal trial process.

The Bill before us gives the victim the ability to make an oral statement to the court of the effect of the crime on him or her after conviction of the accused but before sentencing, and in the presence of the accused. I do not think that many victims will want to take up this right, but for those who do I think their participation in the trial in person will be most therapeutic. It would be a stronger, more dignified intervention in the trial by the victim and it would give the victim a sense of having played a real role in the trial. The victim would be able to tell his or her story. Of course, the accused would be present in the dock during the oral submission by the victim.

Under section 7 of the Act, some victims can probably now make an oral statement but only at the discretion of the trial judge. I think that would be granted only if there were some reason, perhaps a lack of literacy, which made it difficult for them to write a victim impact statement. Earlier this year it came to light that prisoners at Yatala were

gloating about the effect of their crimes on the victim and that they had pasted on the walls of their cells copies of the victim impact statements submitted during the course of their trial. I am sure that the House would be revolted by such a practice, and I understand that the prison authorities suppressed it, but it seems to me that is another reason why a victim may well prefer to make an oral submission to the court rather than a written one.

I must mention to the House what the Bill is not. It is not an ability for a victim to make a submission as to the appropriate sentencing of the person convicted. It would be wrong in principle to lead victims to believe that by making an oral submission they could suggest to the judge what they think the appropriate sentence would be, that they could enter intimately into the sentencing process. The purpose of my Bill is to give the victim the ability to tell his or her story, to apprise the court of the effect of the crime on him or her. It is on the basis and on that basis only that I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr MEIER** secured the adjournment of the debate.

### EDUCATION (GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CLOSURES) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second reading.

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** Given that the time is 12.35 p.m. and I have only 25 minutes for this debate, I will give the shortest second reading speech in history. I can do so because I have debated a similar Bill, and a comprehensive second reading speech can be found in *Hansard* of 4 December. This Bill is an attempt to enshrine in law a safeguard to deal with an appeals mechanism for the situation where a Minister for Education acts against the recommendation of the review for a school closure and decides to go ahead anyway and close that school. The urgency of this Bill is that some schools have been nominated for closure this year and, if this Parliament does not deal with this Bill within the next 25 minutes (and of course the Parliament has the ability to extend debate beyond that if it so desires), those schools—the Croydon, Croydon Park and McRitchie Crescent Primary Schools—will close and there will be no recourse. That is the reason for my urgency.

I understand that there will be an attempt to adjourn this matter so that it is not completed today, and today is the last chance for those schools. That is in the hands of every member of this Parliament. The Labor Opposition signals that it will vote against an adjournment, and it will come down to the Liberal and Independent members to act in accord with their conscience about whether they will give those schools a go or whether they will close them. Let us not be in any confusion about that.

I conclude my second reading speech. I appeal, particularly to the Independent members of this Parliament, who have the balance of power in this House, to vote to deal with this Bill—we can progress this Bill to its final stages today—and to give Croydon, Croydon Park and McRitchie Crescent Primary Schools a chance. We have just gone through an election campaign during which the Croydon closure in particular was a significant issue. We have had the people vote astoundingly, telling the Government of this State that they are not happy with the way they have been treated by this Government. They gave a clear message that they want this Government to listen and respond to their views. The

community clearly wants this school be given a reprieve, and it is up to all members of this Parliament to vote accordingly to allow this legislation pass through the final stages today. That is what we will be voting on. If there is a vote to adjourn this matter, the issue is whether we close these schools or give them a reprieve.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

**Mr ATKINSON:** Sir, I was on my feet to speak on the Bill.

**The SPEAKER:** The custom is for the call to go to the other side, as the honourable member is aware. It has been the custom in this House in the 18 years that I have been here.

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (23)

Armitage, M. H.	Brindal, M. K.
Brokenshire, R. L.	Brown, D. C.
Condous, S. G.	Evans, I. F.
Gunn, G. M.	Hall, J. L.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L.	Ingerson, G. A.
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Lewis, I. P.	Matthew, W. A.
Maywald, K. A.	Meier, E. J. (teller)
Olsen, J. W.	Penfold, E. M.
Scalzi, G.	Such, R. B.
Venning, I. H.	Williams, M. R.
Wotton, D. C.	

NOES (21)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Breuer, L. R.	Ciccarello, V.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
De Laine, M. R.	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K.	Hill, J. D.
Hurley, A. K.	Key, S. W.
Koutsantonis, T.	McEwen, R. J.
Rankine, J. M.	Rann, M. D.
Snelling, J. J.	Stevens, L.
Thompson, M. G.	White, P. L. (teller)
Wright, M. J.	

PAIRS

Buckby, M. R. Hanna, K.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable the member for Hart to move forthwith that the report of the Auditor-General be noted, and that the time allotted for the motion be 30 minutes.

Motion carried.

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** I move:

That the report be noted.

A couple of weeks ago South Australians were treated to an unedifying spectacle of the Premier threatening to bring on a no-confidence motion in his own Government and voting against himself. It was a bizarre twist that confounded commentators and the public alike.

*There being a disturbance in the gallery:*

**The SPEAKER:** I send a clear message to the gallery that if we have any more interjections or disturbance the Chair will be forced to clear the gallery and you will not have the opportunity of being present to hear the rest of the debate.

**Mr FOLEY:** The Premier was described in the *Financial Review* as being the loser of the century who had caused such carnage in the Liberal Party and was threatening to do it all again. Had the Premier learnt nothing from the 11 October State election? It was yet another example of his stupidity which assures us that John Olsen will not be Premier at the time of the next State election.

Just days after the Premier said he might in future vote no confidence in himself and his Government, the Auditor-General beat him to it. The report of the Auditor-General is a massive statement of no confidence in the Premier and the Government he leads. On page after page of the audit report real and serious issues—

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** On a point of order, Sir, I bring to your attention the rules relating to the televising of this Chamber. The television camera must be focused only on the person addressing the Chair. I understand that this camera currently may be used for purposes contrary to the rules. I ask for your ruling.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. I direct my remarks to the gallery. It has been a long established custom of this House that the television cameras will focus only on a member when he or she is speaking. The cameras also will not focus on others in the gallery, and any film that happens to be in that camera this morning that has been taken at any time other than whether a member on the floor is speaking cannot and will not be used for any other purpose. The member for Hart.

**Mr FOLEY:** On page after page of the audit report real and serious issues are raised about this Government's competence, honesty and ham-fisted attempts to avoid being accountable for its actions. The Auditor-General has held up the light to the dark corners of this Government's waste and extravagance and in so doing has shown that the priorities of this Government—

**Mr LEWIS:** On a point of order, Sir, under Standing Orders 75 and 76, I believe you should order the removal of the video film from that camera to ensure that it does not contravene Standing Orders nor be used for any purpose other than that which would otherwise have been authorised.

**The SPEAKER:** The Chair notes the honourable member's point of order. I would appreciate the indulgence of all members in allowing me to deal with this matter in my own way. If the offence was continued after my warning to the press gallery, certain other actions will be taken. I trust that those involved with the various television channels and the camera persons concerned will take careful note of my ruling of a few minutes ago. The member for Hart.

**Mr FOLEY:** There is no Minister of this Government whose actions come in for more criticism from the Auditor than the Premier himself. The Auditor has not only questioned the overall direction of policy under this Government (and I shall say more about that later) but also found that the agencies under the Premier are among the worst administered in the entire Public Service. The Auditor-General has found that within the Premier's own department more than \$1 has been spent on employing consultants using processes that were in many instances outside the law.

The Auditor found that in many cases there was no record of consultants employed, the cost of employing those consultants or the purpose of those consultancies. He found

no evidence to support the decision of the Premier's Department not to use open competitive tendering. That would come as no surprise from a Government that made such an appalling mess of issues such as the water privatisation contract, the EDS deal and the EDS Building on North Terrace; from a Government which, according to documents leaked to the Opposition, is about to do it all over again to our State's water systems.

The Auditor-General found no adequate documentation supporting why a particular consultant was appointed. He found no effective monitoring of outcomes. He found that consultants were able to change the terms and conditions of their contracts to suit themselves, and also that contracts had been signed by individuals without the legal status to do so. What a disgrace!

There is more. The Auditor found serious problems with the Economic Development Authority: persistent problems of inadequate controls and little accountability over the years during which the Premier was the Minister responsible. In 1995 the Auditor-General raised his first concern about the fact that industry assistance money was being provided to private companies without adequate information and controls. The Auditor-General's Report says that the Government was not always able to verify that agreed arrangements and performance benchmarks had been achieved when companies sought ongoing support. The Auditor-General states that since 1995 there has been 'no advancement on the introduction of a formalised monitoring or reporting arrangement for these packages'. That is very much what Labor has been saying for quite some time. It is time for the Premier to introduce Labor's policy of performance-based industry assistance programs to ensure that the promises made by companies for the creation of jobs are actually delivered when a company receives one of the Premier's very favourable taxpayer-funded packages.

Since the Economic Department Authority has had an annual budget of almost \$100 million, this is no small matter, but it does not end there, either. The Premier is indeed the Premier for privatisation. He is at this moment planning more water privatisation behind the back of Parliament as we speak. The Auditor-General has found that the Premier's \$1.5 billion water contract was not being properly monitored by SA Water—surprise, surprise!—given its track record on this whole shoddy outsourcing contract.

The Auditor-General reviewed what SA Water has done to monitor the performance of United Water under the contract in the operation and management area. In spite of the fact that United Water took control of Adelaide's water system nearly two years ago, he found that SA Water had not yet established a framework to ensure that 'all the outcomes required by the contract were being achieved'. He found insufficient evidence of proper oversight and review of the wholly foreign-owned United Water by SA Water. He found that what little review there was took place only when there was a problem, presumably a problem like Bolivar. He found that there was no final asset management plan between United and SA Water. Instead, SA Water has done such things as 'issuing SA Water manuals on good operating practices to United Water upon commencement of the contract'. Well, that did not prevent the Bolivar pong.

*There being a disturbance in the Speaker's gallery:*

*Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr FOLEY:** I suggest to the member for Waite that he be a little careful about what he says.



**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will not respond to interjections.

**Mr FOLEY:** Sir, the interjections just made are totally inappropriate.

*The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** Well, Minister, you are not supposed to interject.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hart.

*The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the member for Hart proceeded with his speech, the interjections from the other side would probably stop.

**Mr FOLEY:** Thank you for your protection, Sir.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order, Sir. It is early in the new Parliament but I draw your attention to the member for Spence—who has a predilection for directing traffic in this place. I thought displays were out of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order if displays were taking place at the time. It would aid the passage of private members' time if the member for Hart could resume his speech, and other members may then wish to contribute.

**Mr FOLEY:** I thank you for your protection, Sir, but to suggest that the Opposition is exploiting children is a disgraceful remark and the member for Waite should be ashamed of that comment.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will come back to the motion before the House.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Has the member for Hart finished his remarks?

**Mr FOLEY:** No, Sir, I have not—

**The SPEAKER:** Could we proceed.

**Mr FOLEY:**—and I would enjoy the protection of the Chair, thank you, Sir.

**The SPEAKER:** The Chamber is fairly silent. I would imagine the member for Hart could resume.

**Mr FOLEY:** Instead of this, SA Water had done such things as 'issuing SA Water manuals on good operating practices to United Water upon commencement of the contract'. That did not prevent a Bolivar pong. It is hardly enough to ensure that over \$5 billion worth of plant and equipment is being managed well.

When the Auditor-General comes to the water contract's export and industry development aspects, it gets no better. How can the Premier claim the contract is leading to industry and export development when the Auditor-General has found that the information provided to him by SA Water was incomplete and that SA Water was not even assessing a number of United Water's specific industry development commitments.

The Auditor-General has found that SA Water's annual performance appraisal was general and that the report arising from it specifically removed issues raised by independent consultants related to measurement of United Water's exports. He also found that SA Water was not even assessing whether United Water was meeting a number of its specific industry development commitments. The Auditor-General has revealed part of the reality of the Premier's rotten water privatisation contract. Every time the Premier uses the phrases 'international best practice' and 'international water industry' to clothe the naked truth that this water contract was a rotten deal for South Australia, he merely shows South Australians what they already know: that in the Premier we have a Premier with no substance.

In John Olsen we have a Premier for privatisation. With recklessness for the consequences, this Premier has pursued privatisation and outsourcing with zeal but without any real idea of what he is doing. Privatisation and outsourcing have been the centrepiece of what passes for policy under our policy-free Premier—and we well know that the Premier has learnt nothing from this election and is planning, as I said earlier, more of the same.

I have said it before, and I shall say it again: South Australians owe a debt of gratitude to the Auditor-General for revealing things about this Government that the Government would rather keep quiet, such as the fact that, while the Premier tells us to accept privatisation as something of benefit to the people, the reality of so much of his privatisation is that private interstate companies make the profits and South Australians take on the risk. John Olsen's penchant for outsourcing and privatisation means that the profits are privatised and the risks are socialised. Just look at the EDS Building saga. The Premier refuses to detail to this Parliament the current level of taxpayer risk and exposure as a result of Cabinet's final decision to proceed with the North Terrace EDS Building. But, we know, because the Auditor-General has told us, that the Department of Treasury and Finance identified taxpayer risk, such as the failure to gain adequate occupancy levels. Documents leaked to the Opposition in November last year put the potential taxpayer exposure at up to at least \$32 million, but this could even be more—as we have now learnt.

The Auditor-General points out that the Government was forced to increase rent payable to the site owners for the holding costs during the extended negotiation period. What is the public risk exposure now? The Premier will not tell us. This is a fundamental issue of public accountability, but it is on that very issue of open, honest and accountable Government that the Olsen Government has feet of clay.

More than two years after the signing of the contract with EDS, the EDS contract summary is still not available to this Parliament and the United Water contract summary was only tabled yesterday, even though from an audit point of view they have 'been available for release to the Parliament for some considerable time'. I am not sure why the Government was so keen to withhold the water contract, given that, as they know, we were leaked the entire contract a little under a year ago. Once again, this Government shows nothing but contempt for the Parliament and the people. These two contracts alone will cost the South Australian taxpayer more than \$2 billion.

More generally, for the third successive year, the Auditor-General has warned of the risks and dangers of outsourcing. He has warned in this year's report of the loss of the Government's control of intellectual property, warning that, and I quote:

Without a guarantee of availability to these intellectual property assets, the Government is not in a position to ensure that it can effectively govern.

Here again, the Auditor-General finds the Olsen Government wanting and challenges fundamental aspects of the Government's whole approach. Think about the EDS deal: a \$565 million deal into which we are locked for nine years in an area of rapid technical change and development. The Auditor-General found that the Government was being paid no compensation or licence fees for the Government's intellectual property. He points out that the agreement does not specify what intellectual property assets the Government

owns and will be making available to EDS. The Auditor-General states:

The risk is that the Government does not know what assets it is providing and it will therefore not be able to ensure effective management of these assets over the course of the contract nor guarantee that they will be handed over at the expiry or termination of the outsourcing agreement.

The position is little better under the water contract, and the Auditor-General continues to warn of the risks. For example, for the second year running the Auditor-General has warned that, where the Government outsources assets and functions to the private sector, the Government will often retain liability for the actions of the outsource provider. Once again, the Premier's model of privatisation is one in which overseas and interstate companies take the profits and the South Australian taxpayer takes the risk.

This is a Government that apparently considers the affairs of Government are no business for ordinary South Australians. Labor disagrees. I have already referred to instances cited by the Auditor-General where he believes that the Government must be made more accountable. Here is just another example: the Auditor-General found that the expenditure of public funds on the Wilpena Tourist Centre development was 'unlawful'. Payments for the development were made prior to examination and report by the Public Works Committee of this Parliament, which you would recall, Sir, as the former Chairman of that Committee. This was done by dishonestly breaking up the costs of the project to achieve a figure below the \$4 million limit, at which point the Public Works Committee must become involved. As the member for Schubert would know, that is deception and, as the Auditor-General said, unlawful, and members of the Public Works Committee, indeed members of the Government, should be extremely concerned at such a deceitful approach to the approval process for that project.

The reality of the situation is that the Government's contribution is a lot more than \$3.9 million to upgrade the Wilpena infrastructure and its facilities. It also includes a Government guarantee for the extension of the ETSA supply to that site. The Parliamentary Committees Act 1991 specifies that no public money can be made available for the construction of public works until the Public Works Committee has presented a final report on the issue. The Auditor-General has again delivered a report which challenges the Olsen Government's extravagant claim of financial management. In particular, the Auditor-General challenges the Treasurer's claims to have substantially reduced State Government outlays and to be a low taxing Government. The Auditor-General questions the extent to which the claims of the Government to have met its financial targets are sustainable over the long term. The Auditor-General states:

Of crucial importance is whether the means by which forecast outcomes can be achieved can be sustained in the long term and not be the result of continuous balancing from one-off adjustments.

In less polite language, is the Government cooking the books? For example, the Auditor-General notes that the \$77 million special dividend to be received from ETSA this year is not recognised as an abnormal item in the budget papers as it should be. The Auditor-General's analysis takes out the effect of Commonwealth transfer payments so that we can see clearly the effect of decision-making by this State Government. The Auditor-General finds that between the years 1993-94 and 1997-98 general Government final consumption expenditure has risen and not fallen—and

members should note that—by some \$158 million in real terms.

At the same time funding to cover future separation liabilities has fallen and not increased by \$212 million in real terms. After all the panic that the Liberals sought to create in the wake of their 1994 Audit Commission Report about unfunded superannuation liabilities, the Auditor-General points out:

The level of superannuation funding provided for in the 1997-98 budget is substantially less than the 1993-94 budget.

That is going from Labor's last budget. How has this come about, after all the play made by the Liberal Party about superannuation funding in the wake of the 1993 State election? I quote the Auditor-General:

In recent years in this State the amount of superannuation funding contributions each year has been determined, in effect, as a balancing item to maintain the deficit of the non-commercial sector at projected levels.

As Audit states:

The reduced superannuation liability funding cannot be regarded as representing an underlying improvement in the underlying deficit position. Rather, it is a discretionary decision to make contributions consistent with achieving forecast outcomes.

The Auditor-General concludes that there have been increases in expenditure over the past four years that have exceeded outlay reductions. He further concedes that, if past outlay trends continue, they will place pressure on the achievement of future debt and deficit targets, a point that the Government needs to look at seriously. Indeed, as the Auditor-General points out, the present budget papers project that by the year 2000 the estimated superannuation and debt levels will be \$14.3 billion, which represents a deterioration of some \$675 million compared with the estimates given in the previous year's budget papers.

The audit report also questions the Olsen Government's claim to be a low taxing Government. Taxation revenue has increased by nearly 13 per cent in real terms between 1993-94 and 1997-98, and this is not due solely to natural increases in taxation revenue. Nearly 25 per cent of increased taxation is due to changes made in legislation by this Liberal Government since 1993, such as the broadening of the payroll tax base in recent years. The Auditor-General is to be commended. His role is vital to good government in this State. He has shown us that our Government is rushing into policies of privatisation that will make South Australians poorer and not richer. He has shown us that, when the Premier talks about privatisation and outsourcing, he is often talking about privatising the benefits and socialising the costs. He has shown that our Premier and his department preside over a consultant bonanza while he has cut nearly 15 000 public servants from this State's payroll.

The Auditor-General has shown that our Premier and his Economic Development Authority do not really know where some of their public money has been spent. He has shown that after two years our Premier's water privatisation contract is still not being properly monitored and overseen by this Government. After the monumental stupidity and appalling negligence of the Government and certain officers within SA Water in the process of awarding the contract to United Water, things are getting no better. What confidence can we have in the administration of this contract, the largest contract of its type not just in this State but in this country?

Yet, as the Auditor-General also points out, in spite of this, in spite of Bolivar and the continued breach of supposed cast iron provisions for economic development under the

water contract, the Government is now paying the head of SA Water, Mr Ted Phipps, up to \$100 000 a year more than he was receiving two years ago. Today, Ted Phipps' pay is just a little shy of \$250 000 a year. The Auditor-General has shown that open, accountable Government is essential; he has shown us just how far we really are, under this Liberal Government, from having open, accountable and honest government.

If we recall the 1993 State election campaign, the Government's election slogan told us that we would have much more open, accountable and honest government. It is a disgrace that this Government was prepared to get elected in 1993 on a banner it threw away the minute after winning government. The Auditor-General has shown us that the claims made by the Olsen Liberal Government about its record in financial management range from dubious to untrue.

I commend the Auditor-General for his report and ask all members to read it. I ask Government members not to accept blindly the assurances of Ministers of Executive Government and not simply accept the assurances of the Premier that all is well within Government. This is indeed one of the most comprehensive reports of an Auditor-General that I have seen in this State Parliament. It is comprised of seven volumes of details and commentary that goes well beyond what we have seen previously from Auditors-General. Throughout the report it highlights serious problems with the administration of this Government, not just on the big ticket issues to do with water, EDS and other major outsourcing contracts but in some of the smaller areas of government where it is easy to hide and cover over incompetence and to brush aside issues of poor government and financial mismanagement.

I ask all Government members to do the right thing and keep the Executive Government on its toes and ensure that they scrutinise reports and work on Ministers, ensuring that those areas for which they are responsible receive the proper scrutiny, accountability and quality management that is deserved. I can say in conclusion that this report, as we enter the fifth year of this Liberal Government, is an indictment on the incompetence, poor financial management and poor oversight of the agencies of this Government. Over the next four years, if this Government does not make some major changes in the way it goes about the governance of this State, we will see a number of major disasters. I hope they can be averted, but it is clear in the evidence presented that questions must be asked right across Government, not just regarding recurrent outlays but in the concerning area of capital works programs. One case of development and capital outlay is described by the Auditor-General as unlawful, and in a sports stadium development the Auditor-General called the process into question. This should concern all members of Parliament, particularly Government members.

These sorts of issues cannot keep reappearing year after year in the Auditor-General's Report and go unanswered. The Government and members opposite have an obligation to lift their game, improve their act and give this State decent governance and ensure accountability so that the financial mistakes of the past are not repeated into the future. They must ensure that we see in South Australia—

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** If you read the seven volumes you will see a litany of woe, a list of financial mismanagement about which the member for Schubert should hang his head in shame. Certainly issues relating to public works in this State will require further investigation.

*Mr Brindal interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** No, public works. I would never reflect on the all powerful Economic and Finance Committee. In conclusion, I ask all members to take on board the very serious concerns of the Auditor-General in his seven volumes. It is a pity that it was not tabled during the election campaign, but that has been debated in recent times. In reality, it is a report that condemns this Government on a whole series of fronts when it comes to its financial management record, and I can only hope that this time the Government listens to the Auditor-General and lifts its game.

**The SPEAKER:** Would the member for Hart confirm that he has moved that the report of the Auditor-General be noted?

**Mr FOLEY:** Yes, I have, Sir.

**Mr MEIER** secured the adjournment of the debate.

### CROYDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** I move:

That this House—

- (a) calls on the Minister for Education and Children's Services and training to acknowledge criticisms by the Ombudsman that the final report to the Minister of the Upper West School Cluster Review did not reflect dissenting views, that documents presented to the Minister contained inaccuracies, that the Co-Chairs of the Croydon Primary School signed the final report on misleading advice and that grave doubt exists as to the extent of consideration given to the Croydon minority report;
- (b) acknowledges the significant campaign by the Croydon Primary School Council and parents and friends to save the school and advance the educational opportunities of their children; and
- (c) calls on the Minister to reverse the decision to close the Croydon Primary School and work with the community to deliver improved educational opportunities for children in this region.

I would like to take the first part of the motion which deals with the criticisms of the Ombudsman in response to an appeal to him regarding the way the review of the Upper West School Cluster was conducted. In doing so, I refer to the Ombudsman's letter of 25 September 1997 to the Chief Executive of the then Department for Education and Children's Services which addressed the complaints in that appeal. They come under several headings, and I will work through them. In his letter, the Ombudsman says to the Chief Executive:

It is my view that there remain a number of aspects of this process which I consider less than satisfy.

The Ombudsman goes on to outline steps which he suggests the department should take in future. In other words, the Ombudsman has found flaws in the way that the review was carried out. The Opposition has attempted to debate in this place legislation that would address those flaws in the decision-making process and the review process. However, sadly, that was not possible.

Turning to the Ombudsman's criticisms specifically, the Ombudsman has some concern regarding the consultation process and its outcome. The Ombudsman questions also the outcome as a result of the consultation process. I will read in summary one sentence under this heading in the Ombudsman's letter where he says:

I consider that where at least one school was clearly not in favour of closure—

and there the Ombudsman is referring to Croydon Primary School—

then it would have been appropriate for this to be recorded in the final report—

and for the information of members, it was not—

rather than a summary of the collective views of the schools which may present a misleading picture.

Obviously, in the Ombudsman's view, there was a misleading picture in the final report. It did not reflect the views of all the schools involved in the review. That is one criticism.

Another criticism by the Ombudsman is in respect of the voting at the final meeting. The Ombudsman says in his letter to the Chief Executive:

Whilst you have advised that this process was described at the start of the meeting and never challenged, the complainants [the Croydon Primary School] have informed me that Croydon Primary School representatives maintained that there was inadequate time to discuss the motions before they were required to vote.

Whilst I cannot be certain as to what happened in this respect, I would urge the department to ensure that, where it is necessary for a review group's decisions to be determined in this matter, then all efforts are made to ensure that adequate time is provided for individual schools to properly consider the motions put forward.

To this end, I would have thought that it would have been desirable for the motions to be disseminated prior to the meeting so that the representatives could have come better prepared.

He goes on to suggest that such an approach be considered in the future.

The third criticism that the Ombudsman has of the Upper West School Cluster Review deals with the way dissenting views in the final report are recorded. The Ombudsman states:

I am advised that the Croydon Primary School representatives voted against the recommendations in the final report.

The Ombudsman says of this that he would have thought that this was appropriate information to be included in the report. It was not, so that is another flaw that the Ombudsman found with the review process that led to the Minister's decision to close Croydon Primary School.

Yet another criticism that the Ombudsman has of the way that the review was conducted comes under the title of 'Signing the Final Report'. The Ombudsman says:

I note that you have now accepted that the Co-Chairs were advised that signing of the report only indicated participation in the process and not agreement with the recommendations, which was an incorrect position.

Clearly, the Ombudsman is pointing out to the department—and, after the event, the department clearly accepts this—that it held an incorrect position in terms of the signing of that report. The Ombudsman goes on to say, more pointedly:

You have indicated that you would write to the Co-Chairs (not the Deputy Chairperson) and acknowledge the basis of signing the report. In light of the known facts, I would strongly urge you to adopt the suggestion in my previous report to write and apologise to the Co-Chairs for the incorrect information provided, for the subsequent implications, that they agreed with the recommendations.

Clearly, the Ombudsman is yet again saying that the department did not act properly in following process in this review. He goes so far as to suggest to the department that it apologise to those co-chairs of the school council for the incorrect position that eventuated and for the subsequent implications in the recommendations. It is quite a strong suggestion from the Ombudsman that there were serious flaws in the review process. I believe it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge that, and that is what this motion does.

Yet another criticism that the Ombudsman makes of that review process comes under the heading 'Minority Report from Croydon Primary School'. Here, the Ombudsman expresses grave doubt as to the extent of the consideration

given to the Croydon minority report. He says that, in respect of the distribution of the Croydon Primary Schools minority report, he was advised that four copies were hand delivered to the Minister's office, with a request that they also be sent to the department. However, the Ombudsman found that that did not happen. He also said it is unfortunate that the department did not send a copy to the district superintendent for comment, or to other relevant staff. I believe all members would agree, from the context of the Ombudsman's letter, that there are inadequacies on several fronts in the way in which that review was carried out, and I hope that, some time in the new year, when we finally debate the legislation currently before the House, members will take note of that and act to correct it.

The second part of my motion acknowledges the very significant campaign by the Croydon Primary School Council—the parents and friends—to save their school. Their campaign was based on one concern, and one concern only, and that was to save their school and advance the educational opportunities of their children. I am a little stunned by members opposite denigrating that campaign, because I believe that most of the community in South Australia recognised the sincerity of and the motive behind that campaign. It was a simple motive: they had the goodwill and determination to work with the Minister, the Government and the department to do whatever they could to keep—

**Mr VENNING:** I rise on a point of order, Sir. I query, looking at the Notice Paper, whether it is in order to be debating this motion, when we have two other references of previous business under items 3 and 5, 'Private Members' Bills/Committees/Regulations'. I believe that item 2, which is yet to be debated, would be also out of order. Under the same rule, so would this.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not uphold the point of order. I understand that one debate is about the future and one is about the present: there is a separation in this debate.

**Ms WHITE:** This motion is directed at the Croydon Primary School, and there is a clear difference. Thank you for not upholding that point of order, Sir. I believe that we should acknowledge the significant campaign by the primary school parents and friends. It is a pity that the Government will not harness that goodwill and determination to come up with a situation that the Government can live with to deliver very good educational outcomes for the children. The fact that the Government has attempted in this place over the past two days to quash debate on these issues says something about the state of Government in South Australia, surely.

The final part of the motion calls on the Minister to review his decision, to take another look. The Government has not been convinced by an election campaign result, community outrage and constant reporting in the media. I am now calling on the House to debate this motion. I understand that the Government will probably try to adjourn this matter but I ask that members do not run away from the issue or try to shove it under the carpet and hope that it will just fall off the Notice Paper. I intend to oppose an adjournment, and I hope that members opposite will at least have the guts to debate the issue.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

My reason for so doing is that we have heard the view of the honourable member on this issue, and other members need time to consider it. It is a standard procedure.

Motion carried; debate adjourned.

### HORWOOD BAGSHAW

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I move:

That this House regrets the announcement that Australia has made its last harvester at Horwood Bagshaw in South Australia on 27 October 1997 and the subsequent decline of the Australian manufacture of agricultural machinery, noting that over \$2 billion will be spent on agricultural machines in Australia this year.

This is a very sad day, considering the proud history that Australia has in the invention and manufacture of harvesting machinery. The last one was manufactured in Australia just a few weeks ago. So, it is a pretty sad reflection of the times and comes with a jolt, when you consider the past and wonder what the future holds for us. It was with great regret that I received the information that the last harvester, a power take off driven header, made by Horwood of Mannum, rolled off on 27 October 1997, marking the end of an era.

In 1927, Horwood Bagshaw Ltd introduced its first header harvester. It was manufactured in South Australia, as were so many other makes and models: I believe that at one time up to 30 harvesters, strippers or configurators were made in South Australia. In fact, it could be said that we invented them here. Over \$2 billion will be spent this year on agricultural machines in Australia, and it is a great shame that we will lose yet another section of our manufacturing industry to overseas manufacturers.

Last year, more than 1 248 harvesters were sold in Australia. Of that number, Horwood Bagshaw manufactured only five. In addition, they had to be discounted by some \$30 000 per unit in order to sell them. Unfortunately, manufacturing them under these circumstances was not a viable option. It could not continue, and the end was inevitable.

It is a particularly great loss when you consider that Australians played a major role in improving their harvesting processes with these inventions. My family has been involved in grain producing in this country since it came here in the 1840s. We are very well aware of that: there is a lot of proof lying about the farm that will always remind us of that.

Two South Australian farmers both claimed to have invented the first stripper that cut the crop, removed the grain and placed it in bins. In the 1840s, a prize of £40 was offered for the invention of a machine to harvest South Australia's growing wheat crops. John Bull and John Ridley—a well-known name—competed. They both produced models, although John Ridley's was the most successful working model. He demonstrated that it could harvest 70 acres in seven days on his own farm.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** The Ridley stripper. Ridleyton is named after him: the name is perpetuated in many areas of this State. I repeat: he harvested 70 acres in seven days. That is 10 acres a day. Today, depending on the crop and conditions, current machines would reap 10 acres in a little over 20 minutes or, on average, 30 minutes. So, technology has certainly advanced. In 1884 and 1911, two further inventions to improve harvesting are listed as important Australian inventions. In 1884, Hugh Victor McKay from a poor Victorian family successfully tested the first stripper-harvester-winnower, which consisted of those three machines combined and put on wheels. It was very successful. H.V. McKay set up a factory to manufacture his Sunshine harvesters in Ballarat and was inundated with orders from

around Australia—indeed, from around the world, particularly places such as Argentina.

In 1906, the business moved to what later became known as Sunshine, and it continued to grow, eventually making H.V. McKay a millionaire. In 1916, H.V. McKay fitted his harvesters with a revolutionary header developed by Headlie Taylor from Henty in New South Wales. We have some of the prototypes of this particular model still in our rubbish dumps. I think we should get them out and put them away for posterity. Headlie had perfected a method to remove the heads of grain from crops that had been flattened and tangled by bad weather—a task that had previously been almost impossible without heavy losses.

H.V. McKay was personally known to my forebears. In fact, the family is proud to own today an engraved teapot which was given to my grandfather by H.V. McKay for services rendered to the industry, for testing and using his machines. In fact, my family was one of the company's first shareholders, which it remained right until it closed. We bought one of the first machines. It was a marvel of its time. It was prone to a few problems, but it was a far cry from having to handle all the stuff coming out of the back of a stripper, cart it home and thrash the grain on the floor of the barn. It was all done in the paddock, where the trash stayed. I remember hearing the old people say that it was a marvellous machine. H.V. McKay will long be remembered. These machines bore his name—H.V. McKay of Sunshine. All farmers in this State would know of that link, but alas it has now gone, together with International, Chamberlain and John Deere, who manufactured tractors and implements in this country; East Brothers of Mallala who made early model harvesters and ploughs; and May Brothers. The list goes on: they are all long gone. One at a time they are disappearing. It is a great loss to our country, particularly to South Australia.

However, I am pleased to report that Horwood Bagshaw is still going strong despite manufacturing its last harvester at Mannum. Horwood Bagshaw has been a wholly owned subsidiary of FAI Insurance since 1989. It was set up in 1924, having been originated by John Stokes Bagshaw, who founded Pioneer Works in 1838, and Joseph Henry Horwood, who founded J.H. Horwood and Co. in 1882. So, it is steeped in history, having a long South Australian history. In those days, my family were well-known chaff merchants. The member for Stuart would probably remember my father talking about the chaff days. We were big in chaff until a disastrous fire in 1950, which burnt us out and we lost everything. We never handled another bag of chaff because that devastated my father.

I remember at the age of five seeing these huge chaff cutters working all day, and the name on the one of them was Horwood Bagshaw with the letters 'IWD DIW'. This was the trademark of Horwood Bagshaw and it meant 'If worth doing, do it well.' Everyone was curious to know what these letters meant. We were proud to tell them. Is that not a great motto for everyone, including members of this place? Horwood Bagshaw is a purely South Australian company. Another machine that I remember from those days is the Horwood Bagshaw corn crusher. No doubt, the member for Stuart would have seen those machines in his time. As a lad, it was my job to crush the oats for the milking cow in the Horwood Bagshaw corn crusher: one bag in and one bag out. It was good training for a young fellow.

The company is steeped with farming tradition in this State—and a very proud tradition that is. It is a purely South

Australian company, and it distributes products all over Australia. Over the past 25 years, Horwood Bagshaw headers have been built by the company at the former David Shearer premises in Mannum. However, the company started manufacturing at its Mile End plant in 1926, with its first header being introduced to Australian farmers in 1927. Both Horwood and Shearer were separate identities until the amalgamation of the two companies 20-odd years ago. The Shearer harvester continued to be manufactured but under the name Horwood Bagshaw. Those Shearer harvesters continued through the years. The company made some magnificent headers—the old CS and the DS harvesters, which any farmer would recall. They were made here. They were robust, strong and easy to fix, had a good capacity, and parts could be got from anywhere. They were Australian icons. A machine today, if it is imported, is usually too complicated. Farmers do not need those levels of complication. However, these were magnificent machines.

One of the last machines that was marketed under the David Shearer name was a magnificent auto-harvester called an XP88. The member for Stuart would know of this machine. They were far ahead of their time. From memory, I believe that they won a Duke of Edinburgh award with one of those machines. It is a shame that they did not continue from that position to upgrade to modern day harvesters. Many of those machines are still used: it is a magnificent machine. During the war, the company ceased to manufacture agricultural equipment and was active in the production of anti-tank gun parts, fuel and bilge pumps, engines, aircraft parts and boring and pumping equipment for the Australian Defence Forces. Horwood Bagshaw now concentrates on specialising in the tillage and seeding side and it manufactures harrows—I understand that the member for Stuart still has one of those, as do we. Horwood harrows are famous and, as they are hydraulic machines, they take out much of the hard work—80 feet of hydraulic harrow, they are magnificent innovations. In the old days, we used to lift these harrows by hand. As a lad that was my job. I am pleased that we have progressed from then.

*The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** My word. Horwood Bagshaw also manufactures cultivator bars, grader/scrapers, land formers and planers. One particular product, the grader scraper, goes to California. It is pulled by a tractor and planes the land level. There are 76 workers employed at Mannum. A vacuum seed harvester used for harvesting clover, which sucks up the seed and burr—the only one of its type in the world—was also manufactured at the Mannum plant, but the company has just manufactured and delivered the last five in production.

That is particularly sad, because my family owns one of those machines. I have spent many hours driving it around the paddock making clouds of dust. Environmentalists are not too pleased with these machines because they put up clouds of dust. They cut only four feet at a time, so you are out there for a long time making your mark. It is sad to see that machine go out of production. However, we still have ours. I am sure that if we need to use it, our machine will last for many years because it was made and built as a quality machine. Horwood Bagshaw has a strong research and development department which is making innovations all the time.

It has produced an air seeder that is ready to link to the differential global positioning system, which we know as DGPS, and is the first company in the world to be ready to go to satellite for seeding. The technology is designed to

make planting of crops more accurate for higher crop yields, also for the distribution of fertilisers, all done on a needs basis and worked by satellite. This air seeder was wholly developed in South Australia by Horwood Bagshaw and another company. So, although this is the end of an era in one way, as far as Horwood Bagshaw Harvesters and the Australian manufacture of harvesting machinery are concerned, it is great to know that the company is still going strong, and getting better all the time, by the sound of it. I am pleased to have Horwood Bagshaw at Mannum, in my electorate. I am pleased to be its member of Parliament in this place, and I offer it my best wishes and full support. Horwood Bagshaw has been a great part of South Australia; long may it be so.

Motion carried.

### **KERNOT, Ms C.**

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I move:

That this House deplores the deception of Ms Cheryl Kernot, the previous Federal Leader of the Democrats, who played a major role in the last State election and, two days after the election, resigned and joined the Labor Party, and notes that the desertion of Ms Kernot demonstrates that the Democrats really are a *quasi*-Labor Party.

I move this with some emotion, because I note that Ms Kernot's desertion came almost immediately after the election. Most of us were in disbelief. This was a most despicable action on the part of Ms Kernot. Although the dust has settled somewhat, I believe that it is an issue that should be noted in this Parliament. I fail to understand how Ms Kernot can morally and actively take part in the South Australian election campaign—with her face pictured on posters plastered all over the countryside with the Leader of the Democrats, the Hon. Michael Elliott—and campaign as a Democrat purporting to 'Keep the bastards honest,' the Democrat catch-cry, while she was actively planning to join the ranks of the 'bastards'. That is not a word I would normally use in this place, but I use it straight from the election manifesto.

I was told in the corridor here last night that some believe that spending three days with the Hons Michael Elliott and Sandra Kanck was the last straw and that she immediately went home and resigned. I know that the Democrats themselves were not pleased by the turn of events, which came as a bombshell to all of them, too. I note that the new Federal Leader, Senator Meg Lees, and the new Federal Deputy Leader, Natasha Stott Despoja, say theirs will be a different style of leadership. I certainly hope so; I hope they stay on the job and not carry on in Ms Kernot's presidential style. That remains to be seen. I congratulate both of them on their election to those positions as South Australians.

One thing we can be assured of is that the Democrats will still be a *quasi*-Labor Party, despite their protestations to the contrary, especially while the Labor Party remains in Opposition—and that will long be so in this place.

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Four years to go.

**Mr VENNING:** I am a betting man: I will see you afterwards. The Democrats can always be idealistic and holier than thou when it comes to their policies and decisions in relation to supporting or not supporting Bills. Why? Because they know they have no chance of being in Government in the foreseeable future, and they do not have to finance their policies or run the State. As a result, their policies do not come under any scrutiny by either the media or other Parties, so they are not taken very seriously. The Labor Party, too,

can be idealistic and holier than thou (as it was in this last State election campaign) when it is in Opposition—as it still is—and with the same Leader. I am so pleased about that; our greatest victory is that you still have Mike Rann.

So, the Labor Party can have certain appeal to the Democrat voters as well. The difference is that when the Labor Party actually gets into Government it does not deliver the goods. Its policies are unworkable and yet it spends so much money that the State ends up almost bankrupt. I do not have to seek proof of that. I am sure that if the Democrats ever did get into Government we would see the same result because of their pie in the sky, unrealistic policies. They would find themselves in deep water and take the State with them.

Their policy and stance on Roxby Downs and uranium mining is unbelievable. I heard the Hon. Sandra Kanck make a speech in the other place last night on the upgrading of Roxby Downs, and I could not believe what I heard. I will read what she said; I just cannot believe this woman. The Hon. Legh Davis interjected:

Of course, you'd just prefer Roxby Downs not to be there, wouldn't you? That is your real position.

**The Hon. SANDRA KANCK:** Yes.

**Mr ATKINSON:** I rise on a point of order, Sir: I understand that it is entirely out of order to quote debates in another place.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order and draw that to the attention of the member for Schubert. The member for Schubert.

**Mr VENNING:** I was aware of that, Sir: I thought the honourable member was not listening. I cannot believe that someone could go up to Roxby Downs and say that people would prefer it was not there. I just cannot believe it. Let us be real. I am sure that, if the Democrats were ever in a position to make a decision on that matter, they would not do so—all talk, yet again. So, the Democrats seem to be opposed to mining—irrespective. I remind them of their hypocrisy. They drive cars and have glass in their houses; all these products come from mining. I have concerns about our national greenhouse gas emission problem currently being discussed in Japan and our reliance on fossil fuels for power generation and the energy industry. We are now coming to realise that we must do something about alternative power generation, and there are several options: solar, wind, wave and, at the end of the list, nuclear. We must at least consider and discuss it. I have often wanted to discuss this subject in this place but I have been warned off by my colleagues saying it is too touchy. It is high time that we at least looked at this matter. Our neighbours the Indonesians have several nuclear power plants. Nuclear power is clean. I invite anybody to—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** It is clean. If the Hon. Graham Gunn will fly us over Port Augusta in the early morning, I invite the honourable member to come with us and just see what comes out of the stack at Port Augusta—just see where it goes and the colour of the atmosphere; just see how far it extends.

The Democrats and Labor Party are saying how run down are schools and hospitals. The Labor Party had years in Government to do something about this and what did it do? It managed to almost bankrupt the State with its reckless spending, and schools and hospitals right across the State were left to run down and decay. Our assets were falling apart. The Liberal Government has inherited the decay and the debt and is making great progress in improving both

schools and hospitals, despite Opposition claims to the contrary.

This Government has been prepared to make the tough decisions and take the political flak. It was a Labor Government that allowed the Royal Adelaide and Queen Elizabeth Hospitals to become so run down, and this Liberal Government has done something about it. As for development and creating jobs, this Government is working hard to get things moving in this State.

**Mr ATKINSON:** On a point of order, Sir, I thought we were on notice of motion, other motions, No. 4, which is about former Senator Cheryl Kernot. Of what relevance is the record of the State Liberal Government to this motion?

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. The honourable member is starting to stray a little wide of the mark. I urge him to come back to his motion.

**Mr VENNING:** I was about to tie in my remarks with the Democrats' involvement with the Upper House in this State. That is the connection—having the power to veto everything this Government does. I note your ruling, Sir, and you are correct. I am within a couple of sentences of getting back to the core issue of the Democrats having control of the Upper House.

In all these areas of development we are constantly thwarted by the Opposition Parties, especially in the Upper House—a situation occurring at the Federal level as well. If the Labor Party and the Democrats really want jobs, better hospitals and schools, they would support the development initiatives of the Government. Senators Lees and Stott-Despoja have indicated that these are the issues that middle Australians care about, and as Liberals we are aware of that and working hard to achieve these goals.

The Leader of the Democrats in South Australia (Hon. Mike Elliott) has claimed that we should not be reducing State debt so quickly. I have heard him say it several times. He also claimed that the debt is not as bad as we have portrayed. That is an unbelievable comment. It is naive in the extreme. If paying \$1 million a day in interest is not bad, what is? Even with our excellent record of debt reduction over the past four years, we are still paying \$1.6 million a day on the debt, which could go a long way towards schools, hospitals and job creation.

Ms Kernot is the main object of condemnation in this motion. Her actions reflected badly on her but, worse, her actions reflect badly on all politicians and provide yet more fodder for the media, which seems set on relentlessly destroying our democracy. Ms Kernot's actions gave credence to the widely-held belief that you cannot trust a politician, and those who voted for the Democrats in the last State election must have felt very betrayed when she resigned from the Party two days later. It was the most blatant act of political hypocrisy imaginable.

I have a poster at home showing a friendly photograph of the Hon. Mike Elliott and Ms Cheryl Kernot with the slogan 'Keeping the bastards honest'. If these are the standards prominent political leaders promote, it is no wonder people do not have any regard for us as politicians. No wonder we are knocked for much that we do. No wonder nobody trusts us. This was the most blatant act of putting personal political gain ahead of principle, integrity and honesty that I have ever witnessed in politics. We think of Ms Kernot during the campaign—her involvement, her so-called sincerity, the caring national leader that was portrayed in the media—and she then deserts for her own political gain two days later, knowing all the time that everything she was saying she did

not mean. 'Keeping the bastards honest' was the Democrats' slogan. Now the question is: who is honest and who is the bastard?

Motion carried.

### ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

**Mr ATKINSON (Spence):** I move:

That this House advise the Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission that its policy for naming State districts should give priority to city, town and district names ahead of the names of deceased South Australians.

This motion is the same as one that lapsed in 1995 after the member for Unley indicated to the House his Party's conditional support. My remarks in support of the original motion are in *Hansard* of 25 August 1994 and the speeches from the members for Unley and Price concurring with the motion are in *Hansard* of 13 October 1994. I also moved the motion in 1997 and it lapsed at the end of the session, owing to the Government's not responding to it.

For many years the State districts that make up the House of Assembly were named for the cities, towns and regions that each electorate covered. Our electorates had names such as Mount Gambier, Hindmarsh, Albert Park, Mitcham and Millicent.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mr ATKINSON:** Yes, as the member for Schubert says, Barossa. How much better a name would that be than the name his electorate currently bears? Whenever these electorates were mentioned in debate on election night one could picture in the mind's eye the place and the member. I would think of the Blue Lake and Harold Allison or of the Port Road just over the Torrens and the late Cyril Hutchens; of the 1930s bungalows along the Grange railway past the Woodville junction and Kevin Hamilton; of the Jacaranda-lined streets of Lower Mitcham and Robin Millhouse on his bike; or the pine forests and sawmills and Des Corcoran.

Debate adjourned.

*[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]*

### LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (QUALIFICATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

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

### HEALTH VOLUNTEERS

A petition signed by 152 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to review current policy relating to the involvement of volunteers in the health system was presented by Mr Brokenshire.

Petition received.

### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

**The SPEAKER** laid on the table the following reports: the report of the Auditor-General pursuant to section 32 of the Public Finance and Audit Act on the Port Adelaide Flower Farm; the report of the Auditor-General, a contract summary pursuant to section 41A of the Public Finance and Audit Act on the information technology EDS outsourcing agreement; and the erratum report of the Auditor-General on the contract

summary under section 41A of the Public Finance and Audit Act on the South Australian Water Corporation.

### PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Outback Areas Community Development Trust—Report, 1996-97

By the Minister for Human Services (Hon. Dean Brown)—

Charitable Funds, Commissioner of—Report, 1996-97

Chiropody Board of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Chiropractors Board of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Guardianship Board of South Australia—Report, 1995-96

Health Commission, South Australian—Food Act Report, 1996-97

Nurses Board South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Occupational Therapists Registration Board of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Pharmacy Board of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Physiotherapists Board of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Psychological Board, South Australian—Report, 1996-97

Public Advocate, Office of—Report, 1996-97

Supported Residential Facilities Advisory Committee—Report, 1996-97

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

Equal Opportunity, Commissioner for—Report, 1996-97

MFP Development Corporation—Report, 1996-97

MFP Industrial Premises Corporation—  
Financial Statements, 1996-97  
Report, 1996-97

MFP Projects Board—  
Financial Statements, 1996-97  
Report, 1996-97

Mining and Quarrying Occupational Health and Safety Committee—Report, 1996-97

Ports Corp South Australia—Report, 1996-97

SAGRIC International Pty Ltd—Report, 1996-97

Social Development Committee—Report on HIV/AIDS—  
Hepatitis B Inquiry (Part II)—Response to  
Recommendation 4 by the Minister for Government  
Enterprises

WorkCover Corporation of South Australia—  
Report, 1996-97  
Statistical Review, 1996-97

By the Minister for Administrative and Information Services (Hon. M. H. Armitage)—

Employee Ombudsman, Office of—Report, 1996-97

Freedom of Information Act—Report, 1996-97

Privacy Committee of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

State Government Services, Department for—Report, 1996-97

State Supply Board—Report, 1996-97.

### GAMBLERS' REHABILITATION FUND

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** This week the member for Elizabeth has made a number of irresponsible and inaccurate claims about the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund. This is not the first time that the member has done this. In an extraordinary outburst on Tuesday, the member for Elizabeth claimed in this House that by June 1998 \$6.4 million would be available for distribution from the fund. The member said:



Let us be clear about this. By the end of June 1998, a further \$2 million from the industry will be added to the \$4.4 million still unaccounted for. This means by that the end of June next year we should see \$6.4 million being ploughed back into the community.

**Ms Stevens:** Over four years.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** That is not what you said, and that is not what you have been saying in this House for some time, and you know it. However, this morning on radio the member changed her mind and revised her fallacious figures by more than \$5 million. The member acknowledged that the figure is not \$6.4 million (as she told this House just two days ago) but it is \$1.3 million. She was not even close.

I pose the following question to the House: why does the member for Elizabeth make such inaccurate statements when she has been briefed to the contrary? This fund was set up in 1994-95 to assist problem gamblers following the introduction of gaming machines in hotels and clubs in South Australia, and it is overseen by a committee headed by Mr Dale West from CentaCare. The committee includes hotel and club industry representatives.

In 1994-95, the hotels and clubs, through the Independent Gaming Corporation, provided a voluntary contribution of \$1 million to the fund, and \$500 000 was provided by the State Government from a levy applied to gaming machines at the Adelaide Casino. It has been explained previously by my predecessor that the start-up time required to establish a new program and for community service agencies to prepare for the delivery of services meant that the program did not become fully operational until late 1994-95. As a result, about \$404 000 was spent in 1994-95, leaving a balance of \$1.096 million. In 1995-96 a total of \$2 million was received by the Department of Treasury and Finance and paid into the Consolidated Account, representing contributions of \$1.5 million from the Independent Gaming Corporation and \$500 000 provided by the Government from the levy applied to gaming machines at the Adelaide Casino.

As announced at the time, the State Government's \$500 000 was distributed to community agencies to provide material and financial assistance to families in need. Since 1995-96 the Government has maintained this commitment by providing an additional \$500 000 in appropriation to the Department for Family and Community Services (now the Department of Human Services) to fund community benefits.

In 1996-97 this \$500 000 was spent on Keeping Families Together services provided by community agencies such as Anglicare and the Port Pirie Central Mission. Based on recommendations from the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund Committee, \$695 000 was spent from the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund in 1995-96, leaving \$805 000 as a carry forward balance of \$1.19 million including interest.

As members will be aware, in 1995 I set up an inquiry into the impact of gaming machines in South Australia. Following that inquiry the State Government dedicated an additional \$25 million a year in gaming machine taxation to establish a dedicated \$19.5 million Community Development Fund, a \$3 million charitable and social welfare fund and a \$2.5 million sport and recreation fund. Separate to this \$25 million, the hotels and clubs continue to provide \$1.5 million for the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund.

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I suggest that the honourable member just look at the figures, because she has consistently got it wrong—she got it wrong by \$5 million only two days ago. I am sick and tired of this House being misled on substantial facts like this.

**Mr FOLEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Ministerial statements are intended to present facts to the Parliament and should not be used to debate the matter.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not uphold the point of order. Ministerial statements have traditionally been that. The whole purpose of lengthy ministerial statements is to allow time to be spent on them now rather than during Question Time, and I would have thought that was the preferred course of action.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Separate to this—

**Mr ATKINSON:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Minister has just accused the member for Elizabeth of misleading the House, and that accusation may be made only by substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. To my knowledge it has been the practice of the House for some years that, if the member for Elizabeth had felt affronted, it is her prerogative to rise in her place.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Separate to this \$25 million, the hotels and clubs continue to provide \$1.5 million for the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund. In 1996-97 the fund spent \$1.56 million supporting the provision of counselling, rehabilitation and support services for people with a gambling addiction, as well as training and community education. This left a carry forward balance of \$1.8 million. The annual \$1.5 million contribution from the hotels and clubs to the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund is now virtually committed to various services and projects. There is however the \$1.8 million carry forward funds which are available for additional one-off projects. As I announced earlier this week, \$500 000 of the carry forward amount will be distributed before Christmas to provide material assistance to families which are affected by gambling.

As I announced on Tuesday—in a public statement—the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund Committee is currently looking at a number of initiatives for the remaining carry forward funds. These initiatives include further community education and increased promotion of the Break Even counselling service, prevention strategies, the provision of personal enrichment courses, including vocational and recreational courses through organisations such as WEA, and a pilot 24-hour telephone counselling service. The details of the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund have been spelt out to the member for Elizabeth on numerous occasions.

The former Minister explained the facts in a ministerial statement on 12 November 1996 after a similar outburst from the member for Elizabeth. The member has also been briefed by the Chair of the committee, Mr Dale West, from CentaCare. Gambling is having a serious impact on some individuals and families in this State. This Government recognised the seriousness of the problem by setting up the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund. It is important to stress that this fund is supported in good faith by the hotel and club industry in South Australia. I trust that this explanation will put an end to the regrettable and grossly irresponsible statements being made by the Opposition.

## QUESTION TIME

### UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** In light of today's ABS employment figures showing the gap between our State's unemployment rate and Australia's unemployment rate

growing to its highest level in over two years, is the Premier still confident of attaining his announced target of reducing South Australia's unemployment rate to the national average by the year 2000? Today's ABS figures show that South Australia's unemployment rate rose to 9.8 per cent in November, while the national unemployment rate remains steady at 8.4 per cent, leaving an unemployment rate gap of 1.4 percentage points. This is South Australia's largest unemployment rate gap since June 1995. The number of unemployed has risen to 72 300, also the highest number since June 1995. To attain the Premier's unemployment target, at least an extra 20 000 jobs need to be created annually but, since the Premier came to office at the end of November last year, only a quarter of the jobs required have been created.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** What the member for Ross Smith omitted to tell the House from the ABS figures released today is the reduction in youth unemployment from something like 32.3 per cent to 28.8 per cent. Conveniently, he overlooked that fact. Secondly, and importantly, the figures released today show an increase in full-time employment in South Australia of 3 200 people. On top of that, this week we had the ANZ job survey figures put out showing an increase of 9.4 per cent in job advertisements in South Australia. That augurs well for job creation in the next quarter. I am delighted to inform the House that another couple of companies are consolidating and expanding in South Australia.

Austereo is moving its media research back office operation into Adelaide with an initial staff of 30 and more likely expanding that to some 50 people. In addition to that, Coca Cola is setting up its plastic bottle plant in Adelaide, which is a \$40 million investment with job creation as a result of that investment. But if the member for Ross Smith really wants to help with job creation in South Australia, he should just persist in the other place with the amendment to the Holdfast Bay development. There are 2 300 construction jobs in that; hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in South Australia; and permanent tourism jobs in South Australia. When the member for Ross Smith wants to raise a question of this nature, let him not be selective about the figures released today. If he is fair dinkum about job generation, he should back the project that is before the Parliament because it will create jobs.

### MAJOR PROJECTS

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** Will the Premier indicate whether the Government has the support of the State's major employers for its plans to rebuild South Australia in the area of tourism development?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Interestingly, while the Parliament in the course of the past week and a half has been debating this measure, in particular the amendment moved by the Labor Party to frustrate and stall a project about which the developers have clearly indicated that, if members opposite are successful, it will kill off the development project in South Australia, it has brought a range of industry groups and organisations out into the public arena. These are third party endorsements—endorsements of the developers and the Government's position in backing this project, endorsements of three years of hard work, and two years in particular of concentrated development work, where environmental assessments and studies have been undertaken, clearly indicating this is an environmentally sound proposal.

We have detailed to the House and made available to the Opposition briefings and individuals that can attest to the fact that this is an environmentally sustainable project. This House, to its credit late last night, rejected the Labor Party's amendment seeking to stall and kill off this project, and confirmed and advanced the project to the extent where the amendment moved by the member for Colton creates the requirement for permanent sand replenishment programs locked in for Governments in the future, but for Parliament's changing that. Let us look at what some of the peak industry groups say.

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Elder.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The Chamber of Commerce, the peak employer body, states:

Minority groups and politics are again destabilising the growth and expansion of major projects in South Australia. This action by these people is undermining not only future investment in this State but jobs for our children in the future.

The chamber recognises that the Government and local government—key stakeholders for the last three years—have carried out due diligence, work necessary for the project with the relevant councils, Holdfast Bay and West Torrens to name two—which, incidentally, support the project, and in whose area it is located, I might add. The chamber believes it is time that a majority of South Australians stood up for their rights and stopped being dictated to by this minority, anti-development, anti-employment group. The fact it is being stalled at this late stage is a disgrace. This project is about the future of this State and the future of development and tourism. Let us go to Mr John Lewis, Director of the State's peak engineering body, the Institute of Engineers. What do they have to say? I quote:

The proposed harbor development at West Beach has been extensively examined by a wide range of engineering experts who all support the development at West Beach.

It is interesting to note that the institution states that the Manly Hydraulics letter to the Charles Sturt council makes a fundamental error in advising against any project requiring sand management. The institution says:

Sand management is a common management requirement for projects of this kind throughout Australia and the rest of the world. This is a basic requirement in the ongoing management of a large asset.

The member for Colton, representing his constituents, has confirmed that in the legislative amendment that was put forward last night and confirmed by the House of Assembly. Then we get to the bottom line of the Institute of Engineers. It says:

Any further delays in this project may turn off potential investors in other future projects in South Australia and this cannot afford to happen.

Then there is the Master Builders Association, and I quote from its release of last night:

Over a period of many years, we have been plagued by a stop-start mentality to development of major projects which would assure economic benefits to South Australia—

more particularly under the Labor years, I might add. I continue to quote:

Although we have been told by the Opposition Parties that they are bipartisan and what they really want is the recovery of the economic fortunes of South Australia, we have another situation where a perfectly acceptable project, that has gone through all the necessary environmental impact statements has been open to public comment *ad infinitum*, and followed the necessary due process is now at the eleventh hour being held to ransom.

By whom? The Labor Party. These ramifications are significant for South Australia. I have just received a release issued today by the Real Estate Institute of South Australia. Bodies in South Australia are endorsing this project, the three years of work and effort that has gone into development of the project, and meeting a compromise, released earlier this year, that met the requirements of those present at that release who said at the time that it was a smart compromise, because it did not include cutting the beach and or discharging out of the Patawalonga onto the beach. An extra \$5 million of taxpayers' funds have been committed to this project as a result of the representations of the member for Colton. What we have at the end of the day is clearly an environmentally sound proposal that has the endorsement of all peak employer organisations in South Australia.

#### GLENELG-WEST BEACH DEVELOPMENTS

**Mr CONLON (Elder):** I thank the Premier for making my question particularly topical.

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member will ask his question.

**Mr CONLON:** Given that the Premier has refused to discuss with the Opposition the West Beach boat harbor, will he meet with the Federal Liberal member for the area, Chris Gallus, in relation to her concerns over the development? Ms Gallus, the Liberal member, said on radio this morning that she was opposed to the boat harbor plan. She said:

The Holdfast Bay development can certainly go ahead without the West Beach development. . . There is no reason to put something at West Beach that will destroy West Beach and has the potentiality—

her word, not mine—

to remove sand from all the beaches north of that.

Ms Gallus described—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** Wait, she is yours. Ms Gallus described the 250 metre groyne as a huge, great and extremely ugly structure and said that the Glenelg Sailing Club did not need it because it could launch its boats off the beach.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I would be delighted to meet with anybody who is not abreast of the facts and acquaint them with the circumstances. Over the past two weeks we have made available briefings to the Opposition and other members of this House and, if there are other members of the public and members of another House in another location that need to be upgraded as to the current set of circumstances, I would be pleased to do so.

**Mr CONDOUS (Colton):** My question is directed to the Premier. Is the Holdfast Shores West Beach harbor co-development the only viable project, or are there other possible options to redevelop this area?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I am delighted to have this question from the honourable member. The fact is that the present project is the only viable option. It is also the best option, and it has taken more than three years, as I have said consistently, to develop this best option. I am also pleased to answer the question because yesterday the member for Kaurna, the very same person who, coincidentally, told ABC television on, I think, 25 September that 'people do expect politicians to lie', told this House that the developers had an alternative proposal if it became politically impossible for the development to go ahead. I refer to the comments of the

member for Kaurna that that is certainly true, and I am quoting:

The developers also told me they had an alternative proposal if it became politically impossible for the development to proceed.

In addition, in the debate last night, the member for Kaurna said:

They do have an alternative which is perhaps not the ideal alternative from their viewpoint but I know that it is an alternative that should be considered.

I suppose that dovetails into comments reported in the *Advertiser* that the Opposition has nominated Mr Conlon as its spokesman on the issue, saying that the Leader, Mr Rann, is not informed enough on the debate.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Where is the Leader?

**The SPEAKER:** Order on my right!

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The Leader has been somewhat silent on this subject in the past couple of weeks. Not even the media can coax him out to make comment on this project. I return to the member for Kaurna.

*Mr Clarke interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Ross Smith.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Last night we received a fax from Mr Jan Wilson in Jakarta, who is employed by Baulderstone Hornibrook—the person to whom the member for Kaurna spoke on Tuesday afternoon last. I quote from the fax:

This [the member for Kaurna's statement] is completely untrue, and shows the lengths the Opposition will go to in order to get political mileage when they know that I am out of the country and unable to respond.

He goes on to say:

The conversation I had with John Hill was a general discussion about the project in the context of both of us knowing I was in the process of moving to Jakarta and was no longer actively involved. The only points I made were that, while different options are always possible, the solution we had come up with was the best, and was the result of several years of detailed work, and that the project was always marginal, that we had invested many millions of dollars, and any changes or delays at this stage were a very serious matter.

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Elder!

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** It continues:

I [Jan Wilson] concluded by saying that any detailed information he required should be obtained from Mr Bob Boorman.

So, here we have the member for Kaurna taking up his place but for two weeks in this House, willing to mislead the House on the basis of a conversation he had had with the developers.

**Mr HILL:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I am not sure of the Standing Order, but I believe that I have been inaccurately portrayed by the Premier as misleading the House. This is not true.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The reference certainly does not aid debate. I do not believe that the Premier's remark is unparliamentary but it does not aid debate and I ask him to refrain to some degree from those words.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I simply go back to the statement of Mr Wilson, when he says that the statements attributed to him or his company that there is an alternative proposal are 'completely untrue'.

**Mr CONLON (Elder):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why did the Premier, along with the member for Colton, advise West Beach residents that his Government 'will not support development which compromises the environment, in particular, our beaches'?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr CONLON:** Members opposite may not like to hear it, but they will.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr CONLON:** The member for Colton circulated a leaflet before the election that included a photo and signed message from the Premier. The leaflet claimed that the environment and beach panorama will be maintained—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** —added to—and that there will be no stormwater discharge at or near West Beach.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** In response to the question, the project does.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

### STATE ECONOMY

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** Will the Premier indicate how our economy is entering a new phase of growth and can he detail some of the key performing sectors?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I am pleased to advise the House of a series of ABS statistics that have been released this week. They are quarterly figures on State final demand and are further proof of the developing health of the economy of South Australia. They follow on to build on the reports of the Centre for Economic Studies, the Yellow Pages Small Business report, the SA Great report and the BankSA Trends report. State final demand for the September quarter was 2 per cent, compared with 1.3 per cent nationally, and over the year it was 5.1 per cent. South Australia's quarterly growth rate was the second highest of all States and Territories. The private consumption expenditure increased by 3.9 per cent over the year, while business investment increased by 17 per cent over the year to the September quarter, compared with 13.7 per cent nationally.

The solid growth in private consumption expenditure is consistent with similar growth on a national basis. Low inflation, rising incomes and low interest rates have contributed to stronger spending patterns by households. Partial household spending indicators for the September quarter—that is, retail trade and new car registrations—point to continuing strong growth over the remainder of 1997. Non-dwelling construction investment rose by 67.8 per cent in the September quarter 1997. Work undertaken on major engineering and infrastructure projects over this period contributed strongly to this increase. Equipment spending experienced only a modest rise. However, the level of equipment expenditure is relatively high by historical standards.

Dwelling investment is up by 20.2 per cent over the year. This rise in business investment provides a good foundation for continued economic growth in South Australia. These figures give further confirmation that the economic recovery in South Australia is on track.

### GLENELG-WEST BEACH DEVELOPMENTS

**Mr WRIGHT (Lee):** My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Given that the proposed groyne at West Beach will stop all northern sand drift, can the Minister guarantee that the profiles of West Beach, Henley, Grange, Tennyson and Semaphore Park beaches will not be adversely affected by sand loss, and will the Government provide an indemnity to the Charles Sturt council against any damage caused to those beaches? The Opposition has received a letter from the Charles Sturt council which states that, if the West Beach development goes ahead as planned, the council needs an indemnity written into the Act based on maintaining existing beach profiles.

**Mr MEIER:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker, in relation to that question. As this House considered and dealt with the Bill last night, I query whether that question is allowable.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is an interesting question in that the Chair could be in the position of having to rule all questions out of order, in which case both sides of the House would not have the opportunity of asking any question at all on this subject, and I know that both sides of the House probably have a desire to ask questions. I ask members to take that into account in phrasing points of order.

There is also the issue as to whether the emphasis on the question relates to a matter which was not, and could not be, canvassed last night—which is the reference to the Charles Sturt council—and its request and questioning regarding future compensation. In that case, I will not rule the question out of order, but I ask members to be careful in the framing of their questions so that they do not directly reflect on clauses in the debate last night.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I thank the honourable member for his question. I believe that it also begs a question from me, inasmuch as this debate has been an exceedingly long one, it has been exceedingly interesting and it has been full of information, yet it continues to surprise me that there are members in this Chamber who have not quite understood the whole aspect of the debate—considering that last night an amendment to the discussion that we have under way took into account the very question that the honourable member has now put to me. I would suggest that that in itself answers the question for the Charles Sturt council because, if it is now necessary to go back over the debate and describe to the ex-Deputy Leader what a profile of the beach is all about, perhaps we should indicate to the ex-Deputy Leader that the profile of the beach is something that has been man-made in this State of South Australia since the 1970s, and that profile will continue to be man-made, through sand replenishment, under the amendment that was incorporated into the legislation last night.

### BANKRUPTCIES

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** Will the Premier provide the House with details of the latest bankruptcy statistics and the conclusions that can be drawn from them regarding the State's economy?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I am delighted to tell the House that bankruptcies in South Australia are now at the lowest level in more than 20 years. At a time when the total national number of individual bankruptcies rose significantly over the

September quarter to the highest number ever recorded—15 per cent higher than a year earlier—in South Australia, bankruptcies fell by 5 per cent. In the past, these bankruptcies typically have not been business related. In the September quarter, there were 653 bankruptcies in South Australia, 5 per cent lower than a year earlier. This was the second largest annual decline of all the States, Tasmania having the greatest.

Over the year to the September quarter of 1997, bankruptcies rose in three States: by 29 per cent in Queensland, 20 per cent in New South Wales, and 19 per cent in Victoria. Bankruptcies fell in the remaining States by 11 per cent in Tasmania, 5 per cent in South Australia and 3.9 per cent in Western Australia. South Australia's share of the total number of bankruptcies in Australia was 10.5 per cent in the September quarter of 1997, down by 12.7 per cent from the September quarter in 1996.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will be seated. I draw attention to the cameras in the gallery and remind their operators of the longstanding rule of the House that they must focus on members when they are speaking and not on the activities of other members in the Chamber. The honourable Premier.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** As I mentioned, South Australia's share of total bankruptcies was 10.5 per cent in the September quarter, down by 12.7 per cent from the September quarter of 1996; and for the June quarter the figure is 10.7 per cent. On a moving annual average basis, South Australia's share of bankruptcies has fallen over the past year and is at an historically low level, the lowest level for well over 20 years. These bankruptcies are typically not business related.

In 1995-96, the latest period for which breakdowns are available, only 16 per cent of bankruptcies in South Australia were business related compared with 28 per cent nationally. In fact, a large share of these bankruptcies involved people who are not running their own business, who were on a low income with welfare payments as the primary source, and who had limited realisable assets. The South Australian outcome in this area is another positive sign that our economy is on the mend and business is moving forward in this State. If you add that to the ANZ job series announced earlier this week, which indicated that we lead mainland States in advertisements with a 9.4 per cent increase, the undeniable facts are that economic recovery is on the way in South Australia.

#### BLANKS, MR B.

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** In the light of the Premier's answer to an earlier question today regarding the endorsement of the Government's West Beach harbor project by various independent third parties, is the Brent Blanks of Unley Park, whose letter to the *Advertiser* was published on 27 November, the same Brent Blanks who is Chairman of Directors of Woodhead International, a major partner in the Holdfast Quays consortium; and, if so, does the Premier consider the lack of a declaration of interest in this matter unethical? In his letter, Mr Blanks states:

I have been very mindful of the letters in the *Advertiser* opposing the West Beach development and become increasingly aware of information being supplied by the Henley and Grange Residents Association. As a concerned citizen, I decided to investigate these statements. . .

At no time does Mr Blanks declare his direct and considerable financial interest in the Glenelg-West Beach project; instead, he describes himself as a 'concerned citizen'.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Clarke interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Ross Smith has asked his question.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The interjection of the member for Ross Smith about people having their hands in the till might be something about which he would like to apologise to Mr Blanks, but I draw that person's attention to the interjection by the member for Ross Smith. I do not know whether this Brent Blanks is the same person. How am I expected to know that? However, if he is, my simple response is: so what? Surely Brent Blanks is entitled to express a point of view through a letter to the editor, if he so desires.

The Opposition is so bereft of arguments against this project that it is now resorting to letters to the editor, attacking individuals who have a point of view on the project. They have no substantive argument against this project. Like the Charles Sturt council, they have done no research and conducted no investigations and they have no substantive evidence. The Charles Sturt council has no evidence and had done no research to back up its position, and neither does the Opposition. What we are seeing today, in the absence of the Leader, is the member for Ross Smith, without substance, resorting to letters to the editor to try to shore up the Opposition's case.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

#### BRAEMAR

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** Is the Premier concerned about reports announced yesterday that Braemar is moving some of its operations to Albury in New South Wales with the possible loss of some 30 jobs in South Australia?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I would be very concerned if the reports were true, but they are not. The facts are that no jobs will be lost and that 10 staff will be transferred. Braemar, like many companies, is involved in national rationalisation. South Australia is a big winner in this, and that has been overlooked in this bulletin. Whilst metal manufacturing will be concentrated in Albury, plastics manufacturing will be based here. This division of the company is expanding rapidly. Braemar has already increased its employee numbers here by 100, and they will increase further by at least another 40. I should point out that we are regularly receiving news such as this, and if you add Austereo and the Coca-Cola announcement of commitment today, this indicates a further consolidation of private sector investment in South Australia and job generation and job creation in this State.

#### CAPITAL CITY PROJECT

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Given that the Premier on 20 February this year said, 'Well, the knockers can move to one side, this project will happen for South Australia', in referring to the \$300 million Capital City development, will he explain specifically what role the MFP took to back this development as part of the Torrens Domain? On 22 May this year the Premier said in a press release that the MFP Development Corporation would take a lead role in bringing together the developments, including

the Capital City project. He said that the Capital City project was the first to be assessed as a 'major development' under the new Development Act and that the MFP would 'create a framework in which the projects can be coordinated and possibly enhanced'. The \$300 million project represented half the value of projects included in the Torrens Domain.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The Deputy Leader is applying selective memory. The simple fact is that we indicated that we would give major project status to that development. In the meantime, the developers themselves, the proponents, David Jones, withdrew the application.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

### BUSHFIRES

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Bearing in mind the significant media coverage being given to encourage private landowners to prepare for the bushfire season, will the Minister advise the House what action is being taken in the State's national parks in readiness for the bushfire season?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I thank the honourable member for his question and, in doing so, I acknowledge his long service, certainly his wisdom in this area of the environment and his concern for environmental protection.

With the onset of summer and with the visions South Australians have seen on their television sets over the past few weeks of the bushfires raging on the eastern seaboard, it is important that on a personal level and in our many parks we are prepared for what is unfortunately the seemingly inevitable bushfire outbreaks. The National Parks and Wildlife Division of the agency manages more than 300 reserves, occupying over 21 million hectares across this State. The parks provide the habitat that protects and conserves our valuable wildlife, as well as providing major recreational facilities for the people of this State and many interstate and overseas visitors.

One major objective of the National Parks and Wildlife Act relates to the 'prevention and suppression of bushfire and other hazards'. As Australians we continually live with the threat of bushfires every summer. Indeed, I believe all South Australians would certainly be aware of the destructive forces that can be unleashed by bushfires, and most South Australians would reflect on Ash Wednesday. The National Parks and Wildlife Service therefore undertakes a series of important fire protection tasks. All equipment is thoroughly checked annually and organisational structures are reviewed. Staff training is updated in readiness for the forthcoming bushfire season. Late rains have certainly delayed the curing of grasses, particularly in the Adelaide Hills, although this recent hot and dry weather will certainly shorten this respite, and some parts of the State had reached 90 per cent curing by November.

While the El Nino effect on Australia will probably not be as strong as at first thought, south-eastern parts of the continent are likely to experience some very dry conditions. Unseasonable rainfall in the northern parts of the State has increased the grass cover, and this all adds up to increased fire hazard. National Parks and Wildlife has put considerable effort into bringing the organisation into its present state of readiness to combat bushfires. Close liaison has been maintained with local CFS brigades and Government agencies with bushfire fighting responsibilities and within our

local communities. In fact, National Parks and Wildlife is an integral part of the CFS approach, and close relationships have certainly developed markedly in recent years.

District response plans have been developed, and they form the basis of action in the event of a wildfire. This planning work is essential in ensuring that the total community is able to provide the most effective response in the event of an emergency. It is my earnest wish that the equipment sits in the shed. It is my sincere hope that we do not face a major bushfire outbreak emergency this summer. However, in the event that an incident does occur, I am certainly grateful for the preparatory work that National Parks and Wildlife has undertaken and the current high state of preparedness that certainly is in evidence.

### CAPITAL CITY PROJECT

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Again I direct my question to the Premier. Why did the \$300 million Capital City development fail to gain development approval from his Government after six months on the fast track approval process, and did this contribute to David Jones' inability to find an investor for the project? David Jones' lodged its development application with the Government on 26 May on the fast track process. On 18 September David Jones' Managing Director, Peter Wilkinson, said he could not begin to secure a final buyer for Capital City until the development was approved. He said:

No investor will commit to purchasing any such project without the guarantee that it has construction approval.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Just for the benefit of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, David Jones' withdrew its development application. It could not be processed until it was submitted, and shortly after that David Jones' withdrew it. If the honourable member would like the telephone number of David Jones', so that she can call and have that matter attested to, I will be pleased to supply it.

### FISHERIES

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** Will the Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Regional Development inform the House what action the Government is taking to ensure that South Australia's fishing industry remains sustainable and that fish stocks are preserved for future generations?

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I thank the member for Flinders for her question, acknowledging that she has a great interest in the fishing industry and that many of her constituents constantly let her know how things are going. The State Government has committed to conducting a comprehensive review of the policy directions and management arrangements for the valuable resources of this State in the fisheries. The review will examine the current management of our State's fisheries and compare it with a number of alternative methods, such as the establishment of an authority to oversee the State's fisheries, as is practised both federally and in Queensland. I emphasise that we are working closely with the fishing industry to try to ensure the sustainability and viability of that industry, and we are receiving very good cooperation in doing so. I meet regularly with industry representatives, and I know they appreciate that because, as the member for Hart knows, certain previous Fisheries Ministers refused to meet with industry representatives for many months at a time.

The South Australian commercial fishing industry is vitally important to the State's economy, with a gross value of production estimated at \$288 million and, in addition, more than 450 South Australians go fishing at least once a year. That injects nearly \$350 million into the economy, making it one of our most important tourist industries. Very importantly, that industry is a major source of employment in coastal regions of the State, particularly around the regional areas, and it is important that we get the management right. It is time to make sure that we look at the way we are operating and see what improvements can be made. We are certainly mindful of the importance of both the commercial and recreational sectors. At the end of the day, we need to ensure an appropriate structure in which to place the management of the State's fishery resources. The structure that we need must be cost effective and maximise returns for commercial fishers whilst providing appropriate access for recreational fishers.

In conjunction with the relevant fisheries management committees, we are developing a series of management plans for the individual fisheries. The abalone fishery management plan was published in October, and I have just approved management plans for Gulf St Vincent prawns and the southern zone rock lobster fishery. The plan for the northern zone of the rock lobster fishery has been submitted for approval. This is the first time in South Australia that the major commercial fisheries have been subject to a formal management plan that provides clear objectives, agreed to by industry and Government, for the direction of the management of those fisheries. The plans also include biological reference points and performance indicators, which allow us to rate the performance of the management committees in the sustainable management of these valuable community resources. This approach provides for greater transparency, ensuring suitable outcomes for the fishing industry and some certainty of a future.

### ENTERPRISE ZONES

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** I direct my question to the Premier. In light of today's unemployment figures and this week's industry statement in which the Prime Minister and Federal Liberal Government introduced Labor's policy of a manufacturing bond scheme targeted to the Newcastle region, will the Premier now join me in calling upon the Federal Government to provide specific support for enterprise zones in the Upper Spencer Gulf? In the last election campaign, Labor's policy for enterprise zones would have provided exemptions from State Government taxes for 10 years to regions of high unemployment, and incentives to businesses to invest in the affected regions.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I know that the member for Giles is a new member in the House, but the fact is that we have had a statewide enterprise zone and tax free status for new investment, export and value adding. Any location throughout South Australia meeting the criteria will get all those benefits and more. Rather than adopting the Labor Party's selective policy that disfranchises the majority of country regional areas of South Australia, our policy, which has been in place for the past four years, has been to ensure that, no matter what investment is made in any location, provided it creates jobs and focuses on export markets it will get support from this Government. We are starting to see the benefit of that in the economic figures that have been released today.

I would have thought that the member for Giles would have the grace, in asking this question, to acknowledge that only in the past 48 hours we have put investment into her city of Whyalla of some \$15 million through the pilot SASE project—a job generating project of 140 people, if my memory serves me correctly—which has the great capacity to value add in the future. Instead of having a cheap shot at the Federal Government, let us acknowledge the work, support and millions of dollars currently going into the honourable member's location for job generation.

### APPRENTICES

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** Given the drop in the number of apprentices and the Premier's stated support for increased training positions, does he support the imposition of a \$1 300 Government fee for apprentice training? The Opposition has been given a copy of the policy document '1998 User Choice—Policies and Procedures for New Apprenticeships in South Australia', which includes the requirement of a training fee for apprentices of up to \$1 300.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I thank the member for Taylor for her question. It is a very good, considered question and I will get a considered answer.

### ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** Will the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism advise whether the Government intends to go ahead with the expansion of the Adelaide Convention Centre, and will that decision meet the deadline to ensure that the Australian wine industry technical national and international conference, expected to attract 2 000 delegates in the year 2001, is not lost to Melbourne? The Australian wine industry technical conference organisers must know by their meeting this Monday 15 December whether the expansion of the Adelaide Convention Centre will proceed. It has been waiting for nine months for an answer from this Government about the proposed expansion of the complex by an extra 7 000 square metres, which could then accommodate the conference. In the meantime, Jeff Kennett is out there getting the business.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is now commenting.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I have had a meeting with the organisers and they are satisfied with the answer.

### HOSPITALS, COUNTRY

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** Will the Minister for Human Services explain why it was decided to give contracts to Adelaide businesses to supply goods and services to country hospitals, including the Whyalla Hospital, therefore taking business out of rural South Australia?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I appreciate that the honourable member is new in this place, but if she wants to ask a question of that nature she ought to at least specify what are the goods and services. It may be something that is imported only through Adelaide or something only manufactured in Adelaide. Therefore, what would be the point of buying it anywhere else? If the honourable member comes to me afterwards I will be only too willing to investigate the issue. I have always been one to fight strongly to ensure that, where possible, we supply locally. If the honourable member can provide examples of cases where there is no cost disadvan-

tage from supplying locally, I will always back local suppliers. I assure the honourable member that in the area of human services, as it is now called, that is the policy that we will adopt.

#### ADELAIDE FESTIVAL POSTER

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake):** Will the Premier now apologise to the Christian community of South Australia, especially the Orthodox and Catholic churches, for the hurt and pain his Government caused over the Adelaide Festival poster portraying the Virgin Mary holding a piano accordion?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I have had significant personal discussions on behalf of the Government with the Greek Archdiocese and it is very happy with our position.

#### BICYCLE LANES

**Mr De LAINE (Price):** Will the Minister for Government Enterprises, representing the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services in another place, advise the House of the legal status of bicycle lanes on the left-hand side of roads? It has been reported to me that speed cameras have been set up in bicycle lanes, obstructing the path of cyclists who have had to move out into the mainstream traffic in order to pass the camera.

**The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE:** The member for Price asks an important question, particularly where bicycle riding is encouraged by the Government. I will refer the question to the Minister in another place and bring back a reply as soon as possible.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Ms KEY (Hanson):** I direct my question to the Minister for Government Enterprises. In the lead-up to the State election the Liberal Party policy on workers' health safety and welfare revealed the Liberal's intention of slashing occupational health and safety regulations in this State by 25 per cent or more. Will the Minister inform the House whether the Government still intends to proceed with this reckless policy of cutting South Australia's occupational health and safety—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is commenting.

**Ms KEY:**—regulations by 25 per cent or more and, if so, which regulations does he intend to cut?

**The SPEAKER:** I point out to the honourable member, who is relatively new, that she introduced comment into her explanation. Perhaps she can talk to her Whip at a later stage and he can help her rephrase her questions.

**The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE:** Occupational health and safety is very important. The honourable member is probably aware—and I am sure she did not maliciously fail to mention this—that there are 365 pages of regulations. The most important thing about those regulations, I am informed, is that quite a few businesses, particularly small and family businesses that are working hard all day with the various things that go into making small businesses successful, are not up with the requirements because of the huge load of administrative in the 365 pages. I am vitally interested in the importance of the outcomes of what occupational and worker health and safety regulations are trying to lead to, namely, fewer injuries, less demand on families for people who are injured at work, lower rehabilitation costs, more employment and so on.

I have already had a discussion with a representative of the UTLC with regard to this sort of matter and have given that person a commitment that, as Minister, I am absolutely intent on the best possible outcomes, which means lower rates of workers compensation, injury and so on. We will look at the regulations to ensure that the outcomes are what people focus on rather than the number of regulations. It is the outcome I am interested in.

#### ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** Given the Minister's answer to my previous question on the expansion of the Convention Centre, will the Deputy Premier now tell the Parliament what he claims he has told the Australian wine industry conference organisers as to whether the expansion of the Convention Centre will go ahead in time for it to hold its national and international conference in the year 2001?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** The same answer as before.

#### MOSQUITOES

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** Will the Minister for Human Services authorise the use of fogging to eradicate mosquitoes in my electorate in the Globe Derby and St Kilda regions?

*Members interjecting:*

**Ms WHITE:** If it works, I will help. Last year I asked the previous Minister whether he would authorise that and he said 'No.' Will the new Minister relieve the suffering of my constituents with authorised fogging this season?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I will ensure that the Department of Public and Environmental Health within the South Australian Health Commission investigates whether fogging is appropriate. There is a very delicate balance here. Considerable work has already been done on the possibility of using fogging, but one must be careful not to damage the environment. However, I will put it to the department, because it is the expert. If it recommends proceeding with fogging, I will certainly endorse it. If it recommends not to, I am sure the honourable member and other members of the House will accept that as well.

#### MAGNESIUM MINING

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** Will the Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Regional Development please advise the House on any developments being undertaken by the resources section of his department in respect of mineral development, in particular work being done on magnesium? Yesterday, both the Premier and the Minister talked of new initiatives to create significant employment in rural South Australia, particularly Whyalla, and I have heard that magnesium is another possible opportunity for rural jobs.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** South Australia has extensive mineral deposits and we have done well with gold (although the price could be better), silver, copper and iron ore, but we have some very good magnesite deposits in the Willouran Ranges north-west of Leigh Creek which outcrop over a strike length of approximately 100 kilometres. Officers from the Department of Primary Industries and Resources have identified changing market demand for magnesium, particularly in the automotive and computer industries. The demand comes from the high strength to weight ratio of magnesium compared with other materials, such as steel.



There are significant improvements in production technology and in the casting technology for magnesium alloys which has also stimulated demand. The department has recognised the potential for magnesium metal to be produced in South Australia, and a recognised world specialist magnesium consultant has been engaged by a consortium (led by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources) to report on the commercial possibilities of producing magnesium from South Australia's deposits. That consortium includes both private and public interests.

If the pre-feasibility study indicates project viability, a major producer and investors will be sought to undertake a detailed feasibility study. Through our exploration initiatives we have identified resources such as magnesium with which this can be done. We have to take that data to the next level and seek a return for the State. Once again, this is the Government facilitating projects which create employment and development in South Australia by adding value to our resources. Thankfully, most of those are in regional areas.

### NURSING HOMES

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** Will the Minister for Human Services guarantee that the Federal Government's decision to charge residents up-front fees for nursing home care will not mean additional charges for residents of nursing homes owned and operated by the State Government?

*Mr Brindal interjecting:*

**Ms STEVENS:** He can. The State Government funds aged nursing home care at Tregenza at Elizabeth with 30 beds; Strathmont with 32 beds; Julia Farr with 62 beds, including 18 under a special agreement with the Commonwealth; and Hillcrest with 18 beds.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I will need to investigate two aspects: first, whether there is an agreement between the South Australian Government and the Federal Government in relation to the issue and, secondly, the extent to which the means test would apply to these people. In fact, the Federal Government has indicated that even the increase in fees will be means tested so that those less able to afford it will not be subject to an increase in fees. I promise to undertake both of those investigations and report back to the honourable member.

### PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** Will the Minister for Human Services advise the House on the progress of the new \$19 million Port Augusta Hospital? The House would be pleased to be updated on this worthwhile project which is now being brought to fruition after years of Labor neglect of the health services of this area.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is now commenting.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I thank the honourable member for his question, and I point out that a member with his experience would never comment when asking a question. I am delighted to report to the House that, as a result of very rigorous campaigning by the then member for Eyre to the then Minister for Health, the Port Augusta Hospital was built. It was built ahead of schedule by using private funds outside the normal capital funds of the State Government budget. As a result of that, the Port Augusta Hospital and the Mount Gambier Hospital were built at a total cost of \$45 million. They could never have been built if it was not for the fact that

the State Government was prepared to become innovative and look for the use of private funds—an area strongly criticised by the Labor Party, even during the election campaign. However, I wonder whether the people of Port Augusta and Mount Gambier would criticise the fact that we have used private funds to build both hospitals.

The Port Augusta Hospital has been built 2½ months ahead of schedule and, together with the member for Stuart, I will be going to Port Augusta next Wednesday to open the hospital. I congratulate all the people involved, in particular the contractors—who happen to be Boulderstones. They finished the job 2½ months ahead of schedule. The project has been finished not only on time but also on budget. It has been a great project in terms of meeting the commitments, and I am delighted that the hospital has been in operation since 17 October. The people of Port Augusta, and particularly those sick in hospital, appreciate the new surrounds.

I also take this opportunity to compliment the Director of the hospital, the CEO of the hospital, the Director of Nursing and staff of the hospital on the excellent service they are providing in this new hospital.

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### RACING INDUSTRY

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** As members would be aware, the racing industry is one of the State's most important sectors, and this Government is committed to ensuring that it has a vibrant and viable future. To this end I have announced a major new marketing strategy which will cover all three codes of racing and which aims to increase attendances at local races by 33 per cent in 1998. This marketing plan produced by the Government's Racing Industry Development Authority is based on a major study which found that our racing industry has the potential to offer a world-class racing product. Under the strategy we will employ a racing brand manager; develop a racing industry identity; promote a customer service culture; place a strong emphasis on entertainment; introduce a customer loyalty program; and develop new wagering and racing products and racing packages.

This marketing strategy has provided us with a clear picture of the current racing industry and the direction that we must take to ensure its vitality in the future. The study also found a general lack of consumer understanding and experience of the racing industry. The racing industry has a vision to provide entertainment to the public as well as substantial employment and gambling revenue for the State, and it certainly has the human resources, the infrastructure, technology and the quality racing product to make this happen.

The key to the strategy is to ensure that racing appeals to the general public, including those who go to the races frequently and those who have never been, and this will involve the development of new racing packages and products. The strategy also aims to educate the public about the racing industry, how it operates and what it means economically and socially to South Australia so that they understand and appreciate its relevance to them and our State.

I believe that this latest announcement of a major marketing strategy will help take the South Australian racing industry well into the twenty-first century.

### PALLIATIVE CARE

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement concerning palliative care.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** It is with much pleasure that I table the fourth report to Parliament on the care of people who are dying in South Australia. The preparation and tabling of such a report has its genesis in the recommendations of the select committee of this House on the law and practice relating to death and dying and in a resolution subsequently passed by both Houses of Parliament. The preparation and tabling of the report ensures that the issue of palliative care remains on the agenda of this House. Certainly, it remains high on the Government's agenda.

It provides the opportunity—as I know my predecessor has done on previous occasions—to place on record my sincere appreciation for the hard work and dedication shown by health professionals working in this field and for the care and compassion shown by volunteers, carers and members of the clergy who provide support in an area that touches every one of us. I also pay tribute to the organisations and individuals who support the needs and advance the cause of palliative care patients, their carers and their families. South Australia has a good record in its approach to palliative care. Our pioneering and world leading approach in relation to a number of initiatives such as legislation and good palliative care orders has been outlined when previous annual reports have been tabled. It was my pleasure to open the new home for the International Institute of Hospice Studies in October this year.

The institute is an innovative academic and educational base which has already won recognition in Australia and overseas for its courses in palliative care. It has much to offer, not only in publications and educational programs but also by way of projects with a palliative care focus, which will ensure it will maintain its position at the leading edge of patient care.

South Australia is very fortunate to have the Palliative Care Council of SA Inc. The council is being funded this year by the South Australian Health Commission to establish and maintain a resource and information service for palliative care providers, health professionals and personnel, and the wider community. The provision of information is vitally important. The funding of this service is clear recognition of the growing importance of palliative care and an acknowledgment of the good track record of the Palliative Care Council.

The report provides details of what has been achieved and what remains to be done. The Health Commission is proposing to undertake a comprehensive review of palliative care services during 1997-98 with the aim of improving access to palliative care services and ensuring ongoing development of optimal service delivery. We will continue to contribute to national projects and I will continue to advocate for palliative care in the ongoing negotiations about Commonwealth funding arrangements. I have pleasure in tabling the report and I move:

That the Fourth Report on the Care of People who are Dying be referred to the Social Development Committee.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no need for that motion because it will be referred automatically by nature of the parent Act.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It was a motion of this House that a report be prepared and sent to the committee, and that is why I have moved the motion.

**The SPEAKER:** It will be referred automatically as a result of the original motion.

### ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** It is common knowledge that introduced species, particularly feral cats, rabbits and foxes, have long been the scourge of the Australian environment. South Australia has developed what is recognised as one of the largest and most effective attacks on feral animal populations which have a long and well documented history of endangering indigenous species in Australia. The program is Operation Bounceback, which is supported under the Government's \$30 million commitment, over six years, known as the Parks Agenda.

Operation Bounceback is a program designed to reduce and where possible eliminate feral animals in Flinders Ranges National Park—an area of some 1 000 square kilometres—allowing our endangered native species, in fact, all native species, to recover. The park, I am sure members will agree, is picturesque and exists within a semi-arid and mountainous area, containing such well known geological landmarks such as Wilpena Pound and Brachina Gorge. The size of the park provides a good opportunity for integrated management practices and certainly successful outcomes. For instance, the feral goat population has been all but eradicated through aerial and ground based activity. Foxes have been targeted and largely eradicated, and this is a campaign conducted on average four times a year.

Importantly, the rabbit control, which commenced within a 20 square kilometre area, has been expanded greatly following the introduction of the calicivirus. With the assistance of Onkaparinga TAFE, rabbit warrens have been mapped to identify the infestation hot-spots. Warrens are treated by various means, including the use of heavy earth moving equipment.

Feral cats remain the major threat to native species. In 1994 an honours research project stated that spotlighting and shooting represented the best method of control. This has been trialled and expanded to the current regime of six campaigns a year. While it is difficult to eradicate feral cats totally, this management technique at least means that the cat population impacts less on our native species. The outcomes of the program have certainly been impressive. As a result of this broad-based approach, feral animals have been dramatically reduced within the Flinders Ranges National Park.

Feral goats have been reduced from a density of 15 per square kilometre in 1992 to less than one. Rabbit numbers have now declined to 5 per cent of their original level. Some 7 000 rabbit warrens had been destroyed by 1996. Fox numbers display the same pattern. Densities formerly as high as 100 per 100 kilometres are now down to .5. Feral cats have also been reduced from 20 per 100 kilometres down to three.

These are excellent outcomes indeed. The importance of this is that perhaps, for the first time in a century, this environment is experiencing dramatic improvements, and the native populations of the environment have responded. Yellow footed rock wallabies have increased from 50 to 80

animals in 1993 to 250 to 300 in 1997. Members will agree that this is an excellent outcome, as we are looking at an outcome because we are looking at from about 80 to 300—a truly excellent outcome for this species which was obviously on its last legs but which is now rapidly recovering, thanks to this innovative, large scale environmental management program. Importantly, native vegetation has also demonstrated a similar recovery, with several species of important perennial shrubs responding well in this new environment of opportunity.

Mr Speaker, I know that you have an immense interest in this area and I am sure that you will recognise that this program demonstrates that within larger parks, with a regime of controlling feral species, native species can recover, often quite dramatically. On behalf of the House I would like to express my gratitude to the previous Minister for having the foresight to implement this program, the officers of the department who have worked diligently on the project, and the volunteers who are in their hundreds if not thousands, including members of the Sporting Shooters Association, who have given their time to achieve some very worthwhile conservation outcomes.

#### GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

**Ms RANKINE (Wright):** Yesterday in the House I referred to a situation in relation to a telecommunications tower being erected in the Cobbler Creek Recreation Park at Golden Grove. It is important in the light of the Government's reaction to my questions to provide members with some background to that situation and a few facts surrounding the issue. The Golden Grove Recreation Park was declared a national park in November 1989. It is the very last area of native vegetation in the northern suburbs and it is home to a large number of rare species of native birds and wildlife. It is a valuable outdoor learning area for our local children. Indeed, on World Environment Day in June this year I joined 1 300 primary school children planting out 17 000 native trees in the park.

My concern is about the continuing alienation of this park. It is not that I am anti-mobile phone: it is that I believe that, when mobile phone towers are placed within our community, local residents are entitled to have proper planning procedures in place and proper consultation. On that issue alone, I would like to make the point that the people who fought very long and very hard for 20 years to have that park established were totally precluded from any consultation. Simply because the tower was a couple of hundred metres inside the Tea Tree Gully council area, the people of Salisbury were not given the right to have a say as to where that tower went. When I spoke to Vodaphone about this, I was told it was simply too hard to talk to local residents.

When the penny finally dropped with the local member that this was a real issue of concern to the community, he arranged for the former Minister for the Environment to come out to the park and talk to a selective group of people. The present Minister referred yesterday to misinformation that I peddled during the election campaign. If she wants to talk about misinformation, we will talk about the information provided to residents on that day, 24 June, when the Minister and local member both addressed these local residents. They came out and put the point that the tower had to go either in

the park or near a group of local high schools. They used the old sales ploy where you run a totally unacceptable option to make your real priority seem reasonable.

Residents did not buy this, nor did I. What they saw, however, was the Government buckling to an overseas owned telecommunications firm. I do not know whether it was deception or just incompetence, but the Ministers and local member also told residents that the work had proceeded to such an extent that the tower could only come under the then Federal legislation, that is, the pre 1 July legislation. At that stage, the only work that had commenced on site was four pegs in the ground.

The Minister then stood in this House on 1 July and told members he had signed a lease with Vodaphone the previous Friday to allow the tower to go ahead. I made some inquiries and the very next day he was back here saying he had not signed a lease on the Friday but had signed an internal memo on the Thursday. It was like a bad episode of *Yes Minister*. Not only did the Minister not know the difference between a lease and ministerial memo but he did not know which day of the week it was. No wonder residents have no faith in him or his offsider.

As the election drew closer, the Minister seemed to be persuaded by the arguments that the work undertaken prior to 1 July on this site did not comply with the requirements. He started sending off correspondence to Vodaphone, questioning it about the amount of work undertaken and, as I mentioned yesterday, on 15 October, he actually withdrew permission in writing for Vodaphone to access the park. There is a twist in the tail of this, of course, when you realise that, while the Minister was publicly threatening Vodaphone with legal action if it did not comply with his directive, we had a contingent of police, Vodaphone and National Parks and Wildlife officers all on site at 6 a.m. but no-one doing anything about it.

When the police were presented with documentation that the Minister had withdrawn permission, they refused to take action. There are a number of questions that local residents and I would like answered in relation to this matter.

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

**Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey):** I refer to school closures. The position taken today by lobby groups suggesting that one, two or three members of this House are responsible for school closures is outrageous. There are 47 members in this place, all of whom have a voting right. School closures are an emotive issue, but the fact remains that the decision to close a school is the Minister's, not the Parliament's. Amendments to the Education Act proposed by both the Labor Party and the Democrats do not change this position. They do not take away the authority and therefore the responsibility to close schools from the Minister.

Improving the standard of education for our children is a priority for all South Australians, and it is important to maximise resources to ensure that students are not disadvantaged. Due to demographic changes over the years, the education services required in a particular region may change. It is, therefore, just as imperative for the Government to rationalise certain services as it is for the Government to build new facilities as the needs of the community change. All proceeds from the sale of schools are ploughed back into improving other schools in that region. There are a number of very good examples of this, and I will cite some of them.

I refer to the Marion Road corridor. Money received from the closure sale was used to upgrade Daws Road High, which included a specialist area for hearing impaired students. Also, money was used for the upgrading of Hamilton Secondary College's new middle school facilities and a specialist facility for students from Minda. There was a major upgrade of Ross Smith Secondary School after the closure of Nailsworth High, including services in the form of a lift to assist wheelchair access.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mrs MAYWALD:** That is exactly right. Glossop High School is another perfect example where a review process recognised a need in the community to expand services. It was a review process undertaken by the Labor Government prior to the former Parliament, and was agreed upon and construction commenced in the previous Parliament.

I fully acknowledge that the school closures process could be enhanced and, to that end, foreshadow amendments which I intend to introduce and which the Independents and the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training fully support to formalise the review process. Amendments to establish a review committee of appeal will not address the issue of a lack of structure in the initial review process. Establishing formal procedures in relation to public consultation on school closures will ensure that school communities will now have the opportunity to have their say in regard to school closures.

A review committee process will ensure that communities have a say in determining what action should be taken by Government to maximise education opportunities in their district. It is critically important that the process of review is well defined, open and accountable. School reviews are complex and often emotive issues, especially when they lead to closure. Whilst I recognise the determined efforts of the Croydon Primary lobby, I remind them that to be a good listener is a skill and a courtesy that the Independents and I will extend to any lobby group, but giving a lobby group a hearing does not constitute giving a commitment.

Although we have limited research resources, we believe we have given this issue the due consideration needed, and our decisions in this place have been independently made. In my view, it would be irresponsible to introduce legislation of a retrospective nature that would raise false hopes and prolong for another year uncertainty for the children of Croydon Primary.

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** I was very interested to hear the comments of the previous speaker, because I refer to the closing of the McRitchie Crescent school in Whyalla. This morning I became quite distressed when I saw what happened here concerning the parents and children from the Croydon Park school, because it did bring back to me memories of the day those involved with the McRitchie Crescent Primary School in Whyalla heard that their school was closing. I was actually at the school on that day, and anybody involved in a school closure would realise how horrendous something like that is to a school community.

I was actually part of the review process which was carried out in Whyalla to look at the school situations there. This was set up by the Minister for Education and Children's Services at the time, and it seemed an excellent idea that a community had the opportunity to look at their schools, to review their situation and to make recommendations to the Minister. This review process in Whyalla took 18 months.

We worked very hard. We met initially on a monthly basis, then fortnightly, and at one stage weekly.

The review process involved hours and hours of our time. We did not take it lightly: we looked at the school situation and we consulted very widely with the community. The members of the review committee were principals, parents, teachers and community representatives—including me, as the Deputy Mayor at the time. We had public meetings with the community. We sent out questionnaires and surveys to the community, and we collated all that information. We had information from the Education Department on the school communities and on the schools themselves.

At the end of this process, we came up with a recommendation not to close any local schools. That, to some people, may seem a silly thing to do, because the review was set up to look at the possible closure of certain schools. However, that was not the only thing that we came up with. We made some very good suggestions for the schools in Whyalla, based on both educational and economic grounds, that would save money and provide a better education for the students in Whyalla. We believed that our recommendations were quite feasible, would satisfy everyone and would enable schools, which do have a local identity, to stay open in those communities.

We waited for some time and, without any warning, McRitchie Crescent School and Iron Knob Primary School were told that they were closing. The way in which they were told was horrendous. The Principal in question was telephoned at approximately 11.15 a.m. and told that her school was closing. She had no idea that this had been considered. At 12 o'clock, the Chairperson of the school council was called in and told that the school was closing. In the meantime, the Principal had hurriedly called in her teachers and told them that the school was closing. There was no opportunity to tell parents at this stage, and at 1 o'clock the news was released to the media and the ABC began broadcasting that there were to be two school closures in the Whyalla area.

So, a number of parents heard from the radio that their school was closing. The message spread around the school very quickly. There were children in tears. I was asked to go there, and a number of other community people were also in attendance. The school did not even have time to prepare a proper newsletter or information to go home to the parents that night. I believe they very hurriedly put something together to send home to the parents, and next morning they were able to prepare a more detailed notice. The way in which it was handled was absolutely appalling. If we are to have more school closures—and that seems to be a possibility—I ask the Government to assess the situation very carefully, look at the way that it is handled and be sensitive about these issues. It is a terrible process for a school to have to face the fact that it is closing down. The school in question has had very little time to close down; they were given four days—student-free days—to close the school at the end of the year.

The decision was not thought through very carefully, and I believe that it was done purely on economic grounds. It was the smallest school in numbers but it had the best facilities, it had a prime location, and the type of students who attend McRitchie Primary School need that sort of school.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I, too, would like to comment on the episode that I witnessed this morning with regard to Croydon Primary School demonstrators in the gallery. I have not previously commented on the democratic rights of the

people from the Croydon Primary School, because I believe that any group has a right to demonstrate, to be heard and to go through the full legal process to put his or her case—in this case, the school. I would be the first one to defend the right of individuals to demonstrate and to use every legal means available to do so. However, I believe that this matter has got out of hand, and the attack on the three Independents in recent days really takes the cake. Each of those individuals has one vote. To say that they have more than one vote and to go and talk to them and then expect them to act accordingly is beyond reason.

I also commend the member for Chaffey for her outline of the importance of reviewing schools and districts, and so on. I say this not from a position of ignorance. As a school teacher before coming into this place, I have been involved in closures and amalgamations. I am still a registered teacher and a member of the teachers union. I was disgusted this morning to see, as part of that group, the President of the union to which I belong. I believe that it is beyond the pale.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** If she is a parent, she is doubly irresponsible—as a parent and as the leader of a union. I thank the honourable member for bringing that to my attention.

*Ms Geraghty interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Yes. I have no objection to demonstrating. I have been involved in a school closure when Ingle Farm and Valley View Secondary Schools were amalgamated, and the present member for Playford would acknowledge that students are much better served in that district now. They had excellent facilities at Valley View Secondary School, and I commend the previous member for Playford for all the work that he did to ensure that the school was well served.

The previous Labor Government closed 70 schools: this Government has closed fewer than 40. The question is not how many we close or open but whether students' educational needs are being met. Ultimately, it is not a question of territoriality but the educational facilities that students receive. I support the member for Taylor in introducing the Bill, if that is her wish, and I support groups lobbying any politician in a proper democratic process. However, I do not—

*Ms White interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I defend your right to introduce the Bill but I do not have to support it. This morning in the Strangers' Gallery the President of the teachers union, with the demonstrators, was condoning, by her inaction, what was going on. I believe that the member for Chaffey was also harassed as the demonstrators were coming down. That is not what the democratic process is about, and I was disgusted. I am proud to be a member of the teachers union and I will continue to be. I will exercise my right to voice my concerns as I did as a teacher, and I will do so as a member of Parliament. However, I was disgusted with what happened here this morning.

I know that the children were upset—they were upset when Ingle Farm Secondary School closed—but the previous Government had in place counselling services and special teachers who took care of the transition. All those things should be in place. They were in place then, they are in place now, and they will continue to be in place because, regardless of who is in power, we have an education system that is one of the best in Australia.

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

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** My contribution to this grievance debate relates to the deterioration in the schooling system in my electorate and the impact of the cuts in school service officer hours and money available to schools in the electorate. Before I address that issue, however, I wish to comment on the fact that I have heard many grievances this afternoon relating to a matter that was available for debate this morning, and I find it very strange that participants in this afternoon's process—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order. The clock is not on and the honourable member speaking will not have the assistance of knowing how much time she has left unless someone puts it on.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. I have my own personal clock here with the clerks. I can see the time.

**Ms THOMPSON:** It bewilders me that people would decline to participate in a debate on the issue of school closure and then waste time in a grievance on that matter. However, I refer to the matter of the cutting of school service officer hours at the Morphett Vale High School.

This school has a very active school council under its Chair, Ms Bev Holder and a very active teaching staff under the leadership of Doug Moyle and Wendy House. There is a problem at the moment in that because of the reduction in school service officer hours no grounds work will be available next year. The school sought to take action to overcome that problem by applying for the installation of a watering system on the oval, which it shares with the Lonsdale Football Club. That would have been a smart move if it had worked. The problem is that, despite the fact that the school was given the go-ahead for this project in September and that State Services have developed appropriate tender documents, it has now been told that it will not be able to proceed with the tender because of the requirement for a water energy management document.

No time line has been given for the completion of this work, and the school council and the teachers are very concerned about the several impacts this will have. One impact is that, because of the Bay of Biscay soil in this area, the oval will become cracked and undulating. This will make it totally unsuitable for use by anyone. The school will be unable to lease the oval to the Lonsdale Football Club and, in particular, the school itself will not be able to use it for sport, with football training starting in February. The school is very concerned that it will not be able to use the school oval during breaks and before and after school because of the unsafe nature of the oval and that this will contribute to discipline problems in the school. It has not been advised when this work is likely to occur and there will be no grounds work time available from 1 January, but at the moment the school oval requires at least two hours a day watering during summer.

The issue, then, is to consider the impact that these apparently small cuts will have in areas where not much money is available in the local community to top up what is available through DECS. About 35 per cent of students at the Morphett Vale High School are on school card. Their parents are not able to contribute further funds towards the topdressing of the oval or the installation of a watering system. Already much of the grounds work undertaken at the school is undertaken by students. I was pleased to participate in a ceremony the other day where two students, Arron and Angus Hender, were awarded a certificate of achievement for their contribution to the grounds work in the school.

As part of its enterprise focus, the school conducts a Year 10 Futures Program. Students of this program have also been involved in developing the school grounds, planting and refurbishing, and doing other work in the community. It is good that they are developing a broad range of skills. I congratulate Morphett Vale High School's leadership and staff for developing this wide range of skills and recognising the broad range of talents that different children have. However, it is not good enough to get decent facilities for schools in the southern area through the work of students and teachers in a voluntary capacity when decent and safe facilities should be available for all students as well as the local community.

**Mr BRINDAL (Unley):** I would like to comment briefly on the extraordinary events that have taken place in this House during the past two days. I refer specifically to what we witnessed in connection with the proposed boating facility at West Beach. In this context, I would particularly like to praise the member for Colton, who is not only a very good local member but who is almost single-handedly responsible for coming up with an excellent compromise for the Government to ensure the future integrity of the beaches. Today, there was a legitimate protest by concerned residents. Rather than stay inside as he could have done, I was standing outside and I observed the member for Colton go out and speak individually to all those protesters. Members know that it is easy to go to a meeting and play popular politics and get the plaudits of the crowd. In fact, there are a few local members in the area, both State and Federal, who seem intent on pursuing populist politics: they open their mouth whenever they think there is a vote to be gained. Whether or not they are informed is an entirely different matter.

The member for Colton took time to inform himself and to weigh up all the problems and the possibilities, and he proposed what I think is a compromise for which I hope he will be remembered when he has long left this House. He not only tries valiantly to do the best for his electorate but he is prepared to answer to his electorate. That is in strong contrast to a newer member of this House, the member for Kaurna, who must nevertheless be complimented: at least he lives by his own philosophy. No-one expects us to tell the truth, so apparently he comes in here determined to live by that philosophy.

**An honourable member:** That's outrageous.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I make no improper allegations except to say to this House, 'Look at what the Premier read onto the public record of this House.' I say to all members that, whilst it is unparliamentary to accuse someone of telling lies, truth can be judged as a matter of public record. I call no-one a liar. I invite all members to look at what the Premier said today and work out who is telling the truth in this matter.

I would also like to point out that throughout this debate the City of Charles Sturt has played a pre-eminent role, because it has suited the Opposition to put forward the City of Charles Sturt as the champions of the people. I believe that it was when the Opposition was in Government that the Coast Protection Board was formed. It was formed because it is the province of all South Australians to have the custody and care of our beaches. It should not have been left to the City of Charles Sturt, the City of Holdfast Bay (the Brighton-Glenelg council, as it then was) or the Henley and Grange council. We formed a Government authority, and that Government authority looked carefully at this project and believes that it

is viable. That authority, which Labor established, believes the project is worth being given the go-ahead.

That has been totally ignored by this Opposition, which is so puerile as to demand that the profile of the beach be maintained. Any goose knows that the profile of a beach changes daily. It changes with the tide and with major climatic events, and no Government, not even God himself, unless he wants to change the course of his universe, can guarantee constancy of the profile of the beach. Finally, I would like to say that members of the Opposition claim that the City of Charles Sturt holds the sand in trust. It does not hold it in trust; it holds it in transit.

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

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### GAMBLERS' REHABILITATION FUND

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Ms STEVENS:** Earlier today, the Minister for Human Services accused me of misleading the House in relation to the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund. I reject this accusation. Statements that I made during a grievance debate on Tuesday 9 December, following a question that was not answered by the Minister during Question Time, correctly referred to the amount of money which has been allocated to the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund over four years but which has not been fully used. Statements I made on radio this morning referring to the Auditor-General's Report for 1996-97—and this was clearly stated—showed that \$1.845 million was still unspent as at 30 June 1997.

I trust that the Minister will apologise for this inaccurate assertion. This strident attack on me illustrates his need to cover up the Government's ineffective management of these funds since the inception of the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is moving away from a personal explanation.

### ABORIGINAL LANDS TRUST (NATIVE TITLE) AMENDMENT BILL

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 1996. Read a first time.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

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

Leave granted.

This Bill makes amendments to the *Aboriginal Lands Trust Act* 1966 to clarify that future vesting of land in the Aboriginal Lands Trust, or dealings with the land by the Trust, will not affect native title in the land.

It provides that the Trust, when dealing with land vested in it, may extinguish or affect native title by agreement with the Minister and the native title holders.

The transfer of land to the Aboriginal Lands Trust is one way in which native title claims over some areas of land may be dealt with by the State. Some native title claimants have expressed the fear that their native title rights may be affected by transfers to the Trust. This

Bill makes it clear that future transfers to the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and dealings with land by the Trust, will not affect or extinguish native title unless specifically agreed to by the native title holders.

I commend the Bill to the honourable members.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title*

*Clause 2: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation*

Cross references to the *Native Title (South Australia) Act 1994* are added to the interpretation section.

*Clause 3: Insertion of s. 16AAA*

A new section is inserted to clarify that in future the vesting of land in the Trust, or dealings with land of the Trust, will not affect native title in the land.

The new section expressly recognises the potential for the Trust to enter agreements with the holders of native title (and the Minister) under which native title may be affected or extinguished. Such agreements are contemplated by section 21 of the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993*.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

### WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION (SELF MANAGED EMPLOYER SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Administrative and Information Services) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986; and to make consequential amendment to the WorkCover Corporation Act 1994. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

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

Leave granted.

The 1993 Liberal Worker Safety Policy document indicated that a Liberal Government would establish a new category of employer under the WorkCover Scheme, to be known as 'Self Managed Employers' or 'SMEs' who would be responsible for the management of claims made by their workers.

The legislative amendments subsequently introduced into the Parliament in early 1994 included the proposed changes necessary to establish the SME category. There were some concerns expressed as to how the scheme would work and the legislation was consequently amended in the Legislative Council to allow the SME Scheme to be established on only a 'Pilot' basis, with no more than twenty employers allowed to participate.

The legislative changes commenced in July 1994 and the SME Scheme commenced operation in October 1994 with an initial group of nine employers followed by a further eleven in January 1995, making twenty enthusiastic employers prepared to take on the management of claims made by their employees. For the initial three month period there was no levy reduction for the employers who participated, and then a 4.4 per cent levy discount was provided. The motivation for the employers was that rewards would be achieved through better claims management and earlier return to work, which of itself would generate cost savings and other intangible benefits for the employers and their workforce.

The Scheme has operated very successfully. A formal review was conducted by the Board of WorkCover in December 1996 and as a result of the favourable assessment, the Board recommended the establishment of the category as an ongoing option for employers.

The proposal was also referred to the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation for consideration. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposal to establish the SME as an ongoing feature of the Scheme.

Another encouraging endorsement of the Scheme is the fact that other States have adopted the concept in varying forms and introduced a self managed category in their Workers Compensation Schemes. Victoria and Queensland are two states to have done so. The concept is also endorsed by the Heads of Workers Compensation Authorities (HWCA) in the report 'Promoting Excellence—National Consistency in Australian Workers Compensation'. It is pleasing to

see the Eastern States pick up on the innovative approaches developed in this State.

The SME category is particularly appropriate for employers contemplating exempt employer status or self insurance. It gives them an opportunity to gain experience of claims management under the overall management of WorkCover. To date, four of the pilot group have moved from SME to Exempt employer status. There are now over twenty other employers who have expressed interest in becoming an SME.

The SME category is by no means an easy option for employers. They must satisfy WorkCover Corporation that they have appropriate skills, policies and practices in place to manage claims effectively and they must report to WorkCover Corporation in some detail. They must take full responsibility for their decisions and can not blame a third party (WorkCover Corporation or the Claims Agent) for decisions made on claims and they must deal with their employees directly and appropriately.

From the employees point of view there are also advantages. Claims decisions are made more promptly and with full knowledge of the work situation and the range of suitable duties available, if that is an issue.

In view of the success of the Pilot, commitment to establish the SME category as an ongoing feature of the WorkCover Scheme was included in the 1997 Liberal Policy, 'Focus on the Workplace'.

This Bill deals only with the establishment of the SME scheme, but necessarily amends both the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act and the WorkCover Corporation Act.

Although other issues in relation to the WorkCover Scheme are under consideration by the Government and are likely to lead to a further amendment bill in the future, it is considered important to deal with this one amendment now so that the highly successful SME scheme can operate as intended.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title*

*Clause 2: Commencement*

*Clause 3: Insertion of s. 59A—Self managed employers*

The new section establishes a scheme for registration of self managed employers. The Corporation must be satisfied that the employer has adequate resources to manage claims made by the employer's workers and that registration is otherwise appropriate. A list of factors to be considered is set out in the provision.

A registered self managed employer will enter into a contract or arrangement with WorkCover in relation to the management of claims. If that contract or arrangement is breached the employer's registration may be revoked.

*Clause 4: Substitution of s. 62—Applications*

This clause substitutes section 62 which currently sets out the procedure for making an application to be registered as an exempt employer. The new section extends to applications for registration as a self managed employer.

*Clause 5: Amendment of s. 67—Adjustment of levy in relation to individual employers*

The amendment expressly contemplates a reduction in levy for a self managed employer.

*Clause 6: Amendment of WorkCover Corporation Act 1994*

New section 14(4) contemplates contracts or arrangements with self managed employers. Currently the section only contemplates such arrangements on a trial basis.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

### ROXBY DOWNS (INDENTURE RATIFICATION) (ABORIGINAL HERITAGE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 December. Page 232.)

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):

Some two weeks before Parliament was due to sit, the Attorney-General advised the Opposition that an urgent Bill was to be considered regarding the Roxby Downs indenture agreement. The Attorney-General's briefing advised that there was a problem with the Aboriginal heritage considerations of the Bill, that it needed to be got through quickly because the Roxby Downs expansion phase needed to

continue with expedition and, if this Bill were not passed, that would hold up the expansion phase and had the potential to cause a number of financial and procedural difficulties for Western Mining Corporation. In a further briefing this was confirmed by Western Mining Corporation. However, later in the piece as we were beginning our consultations we began to become aware that there were some problems with Aboriginal groups. Our first contact was with the Andamooka Land Council, as we were advised that it was the traditional owner of the land and the people with whom we should talk.

The Chairman of the Andamooka Land Council advised me that there were no difficulties with proceeding with the Bill. However, I was contacted shortly thereafter by a lawyer representing the Kokatha People's Committee who expressed some concern about the Bill and wanted further time to consider it. In fact, they wanted us to participate in adjourning the Bill until February until there had been proper time for discussion and consultation.

When I contacted the Attorney-General and Western Mining Corporation they advised me that further negotiations would be going on and that the probability was for some resolution of the issue. This was reiterated by the Attorney-General in his second reading explanation of 4 December. His final paragraph states:

The Government has also had extensive consultations with Western Mining Corporation and relevant Aboriginal interests with a view to concluding a satisfactory outcome. They have agreed that this Bill should be introduced today with a view to it laying on the table until next week by which time it is hoped to have a negotiated outcome concluded.

In fact, that hope was not fulfilled, because the negotiations broke down and we were back in negotiation with the representatives of the Aboriginal people at the beginning of this week. We were further advised that there was some hope of resolution of the issue.

This story of the to-ing and fro-ing in the negotiations for this Bill illustrates the difficulty for the Opposition in dealing with such an important and technical piece of legislation at such short notice. We were unhappy and uncomfortable with the situation we found ourselves in because we were not able to satisfactorily conduct negotiations or consult all the people we wanted to consult. Various groups approached us, but we were not able to satisfy ourselves that we had approached all the people who should have been approached and asked their advice.

Various representatives of those Aboriginal groups are similarly unhappy with the situation. They feel that they have been pressured into dealing with a situation that they were not entirely ready to deal with. This is a difficult situation, and it is unfortunate that, in order to ensure that the Roxby Downs expansion phase proceeds as it should, the Parliament has had to deal so quickly with this piece of legislation, because complex circumstances surround this legislation.

It relates to the 1979 Aboriginal Heritage Bill, which was assented to, but the date of commencement was not proclaimed. Subsequent to that 1979 Bill, Western Mining Corporation did its environmental impact statement, conducted consultations with Aboriginal groups and of course went ahead with the project in due course. In 1989, another Aboriginal Heritage Act was brought in and the 1979 Act was not repealed. We have conflicting views.

Western Mining Corporation would have us understand that it believes that it was continually acting under the 1979 Act, whereas the Aboriginal people advised us that they believed that it was operating under the 1989 Act. We had

legal advice and were briefed by Crown Law that there was some doubt concerning which Aboriginal heritage agreement Western Mining Corporation was operating under, and some weight was given to the view that it should be operating under the 1989 Act.

So, we had the advice from the Attorney-General that we needed to remedy this situation quickly because, if we did not and Western Mining went back and had to deal with the 1989 Act, a fresh round of negotiations with the Aboriginal people might have to commence, which would delay the project by many months. This is an untenable situation for the company and for this State, which is benefiting from a \$1 billion expansion of the Roxby Downs project and is in great need of the extra revenue it will create and the extra jobs it is creating currently.

With some reluctance, owing to the circumstances, the Opposition indicated to the Attorney-General that it would deal expeditiously with the Bill. This week we were advised by lawyers representing the Port Augusta region native title working group that it had reached agreement. I commend this group for the speed with which it conducted the negotiations and its cooperation in achieving an agreement. It was very difficult for them under the circumstances because they were not happy to do it, and it was made more difficult by the fact that the lawyers operating for the group had to deal with people in remote areas, so time pressures created even more difficulty for them.

The Attorney-General in another place has detailed the agreement, but I will restate the basic outline of the agreement. First, it provides for the establishment of an Aboriginal heritage management plan to enable the working group and WMC to deal with all issues between them relating to Aboriginal heritage in the Olympic Dam and Stuart Shelf areas. The second part of the agreement is that a time frame of 14 weeks for the negotiation and finalisation of the plan is in place. Thirdly, a mechanism for the incorporation of the agreed heritage plan into the legislation is agreed to. In short, the agreement buys a little more time for the traditional owners of the land to work with WMC to put together a proper Aboriginal heritage plan for that area.

It must be very obvious that the main problem might be that this agreement will not be concluded within the 14 weeks or that negotiations might then break down and be unsatisfactory and there will not be a way of signing off on the heritage plan and getting it into legislation. The Attorney-General, in discussion in another place, gave the undertaking that he would personally give attention to facilitation of the agreement and would bring whatever pressure the Government could bear on WMC to cooperate fully in this process, and that he would do whatever he could to ensure that the agreement is honoured by all parties.

I certainly seek a similar assurance from the Minister in this place that this will happen. In light of this agreement, the Opposition informed the Attorney-General that we would be able to support the Bill before us. We did so in the other place last night. Just before the Bill went through the other place we were contacted by the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement, which advised us that it disagrees with the principle of the legislation and was not happy with its passing.

The ALP respects this view and understands its viewpoint in terms of principle but believes that the issues we are dealing with in this Bill relate to Aboriginal heritage issues on the Roxby Downs and Stuart Shelf sites and the identification and protection of those sites, so we will abide by the



decision of the traditional owners of that land. Therefore, with the assurance by the Minister that he will support the Attorney-General in doing all he can to facilitate the agreement, the Opposition will support this Bill's passing.

**Mr EVANS (Davenport):** I support the Bill and place on record my disappointment at the Australian Democrats' stand on this Bill. I am amazed that the Democrats can go on record as saying that they would prefer that Roxby did not exist. A number of jobs are directly related to the mine itself, and the jobs and economic development that flow on further down the track are obvious to most in this place, but apparently not to the Australian Democrats. They certainly do not have a priority on jobs. It is interesting to note that in the first two weeks of sitting after the last election we have debated two issues that relate specifically to jobs—the Holdfast Bay development and this Bill. The Australian Democrats have essentially indicated that they oppose both. We should note that, when the Australian Democrats are screaming about no jobs for young or middle-aged people, we will remind them of their stance, which essentially is anti-jobs.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier):** I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Davenport for their contributions. It is a significant Bill for Roxby Downs. The whole development of this Bill and its support by the Opposition has been done with much goodwill to attempt to sort out the issues, and I thank the Opposition for its support. It is an important issue for the Aboriginal community, for Western Mining and for the Government. I thank those who have been part of the debate for their contribution to the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2.

**Ms HURLEY:** In the second reading debate in the other place last night the Attorney-General gave an assurance that the Government will facilitate the drawing up of the agreement on the Aboriginal heritage plan for the Roxby Downs area and said that, if necessary, he would personally get involved in negotiations on the plan so that the plan could be established satisfactorily within the 14 weeks time frame agreed upon. Will the Deputy Premier also provide such commitment to ensure that the management plan is agreed upon within the time frame stated in the notes from the Attorney-General?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I am advised that the Attorney-General has been involved and does intend to stay involved in it, and we will give the assurances that the Deputy Leader has requested.

**Ms HURLEY:** What will happen if, for whatever reason, the agreement is not reached within 14 weeks and as a consequence cannot be incorporated into legislation?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I am advised that is not an issue. We expect to be able to do it within the time frame. It is vital that it occur and we will make every effort as a Government to get it done within that time frame.

**Ms HURLEY:** Issues have been raised as to whether the passage of this Bill might contravene the Federal Racial Discrimination Act. Does the Minister believe that the Aboriginal people in this area are being treated differently from Aborigines in surrounding areas in South Australia, or elsewhere in Australia, in relation to the Aboriginal Heritage Act?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I am advised that there should not be any issue at all. I believe that the original understanding of the communities was that it has been working under the Act since 1982.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### UNCLAIMED SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the amendment made by the House of Assembly without any amendment.

#### LAND TAX (LAND HELD ON TRUST) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the Bill without any amendment.

#### STAMP DUTIES (MISCELLANEOUS NO.2) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the Bill with the following suggested amendment:

Page 4, lines 13 and 14 (Clause 6)—Leave out the definition of 'financial institution' and insert—  
'financial institution' means a financial institution within the meaning of the Financial Institutions Duty Act 1983;

Consideration in Committee.

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

That the Legislative Council's suggested amendment be agreed to.

Motion carried.

#### OPPOSITION LEADER'S COMMENTS

**Mrs HALL (Coles):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Mrs HALL:** On Tuesday, 9 December, during the debate on the Statutes Amendment (Ministers of the Crown) Bill, the Leader of the Opposition referred to a member of Parliament and a parliamentary secretary 'who was also on the Public Works Committee dealing with recreation and sport matters as well as being intimately involved with the sporting organisation that was to benefit'. The Leader of the Opposition went on to imply that there was a conflict of interest.

For the record, I want to state the facts. I was the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Recreation and Sport; and I was a member of the Public Works Committee from its commencement in early 1994 until 20 March 1996, when I voluntarily resigned. The sporting organisation that was to benefit was, clearly, the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, and I want to put on the record that that project did not come before the Public Works Committee until 6 June 1996—nearly three months after I had left the committee. I regret that the Leader of the Opposition continues to use this type of smear. There was no crossover in time and no conflict of interest.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is now starting to comment.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.  
(Continued from 10 December. Page 219.)

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** Four years ago today we won government in a landslide and soon after came into this House as a new Liberal Government full of great ideas for the future of the State of South Australia but faced with an unbelievable level of debt. This debt required cuts in finance to all portfolio areas if we were to be able to pay even the interest on it when it fell due before the end of our first term, instead of adding it onto the capital, as Labor had been doing. The Treasurer, Stephen Baker, did a fantastic job of keeping under strict control the natural exuberance of the new Ministers all wanting to do a first-class job in their areas of jurisdiction. The new Ministers in turn had to keep the considerable wants of the bevy of new backbenchers—all with our wish lists in our pockets—under control. The Premier had the unenviable task of presiding over the whole cauldron.

What was achieved under these difficult circumstances was, I believe, remarkable. We went from going into debt to the tune of \$1 million a day to the 1997-98 budget estimated to produce a surplus of \$1 million. While doing this, by working smarter, the Government managed to achieve enormous improvements in all those areas that affect the people of the State the most.

In health, not only are the numbers on waiting lists 27.7 per cent down and clearance time improved by 36.6 per cent compared with September 1994 but considerable improvements have been made to infrastructure all over the State, particularly in regional areas that have been neglected for many years. On Eyre Peninsula \$16.5 million is being spent to upgrade the Port Lincoln Hospital and another \$1.5 million in Ceduna.

In education it was the same. We are at last beginning to address the literacy problems with the basic skills testing pointing to where improvements need to be made, and remedial action is being taken. Again, infrastructure particularly in the regional areas, that was run down is being repaired, upgraded and renewed, with recladding, repainting and new science laboratories happening in schools across the State. Computers in schools are now common place, with some schools reaching a ratio of one for each five children. Unfortunately, we did not let the people know what we were achieving. Even our own team was not reminded enough of the success we were having and therefore did not let the electorate know about all the positives being accomplished. If the debt had not been so great, we could have achieved more, but it would have been wrong not to deal with the debt as a priority. In my maiden speech I stated:

It is time to remember that we must become profitable again. It is also time to remember that taxes are paid on profits and that without taxes we cannot afford all the things we want for ourselves and our communities. Teachers, nurses, police, pensions are all paid from the public purse. I do not believe that Governments should tax profits more: the answer is to make more profits. This will provide more jobs and will help to solve many of the social and physical ills of our people.

We had to put our own house in order. We could not just solve the problem by taxing, as it would have created another problem by further reducing jobs in the real wealth and job creating area of private enterprise. We have paid a high price for our poor communication and it will be up to us to make sure that the members, the people of the State and the media are given no reason to be distracted from our considerable achievements under difficult financial circumstances as we continue to help the State achieve great things into the next millennium. I was amused at the Leader of the Opposition's

reference in his 'rousing speech' to the State ALP convention as reported in the *Sunday Mail*, when he stated:

The ALP in the lead-up to the next State election had to embrace the 'new battlers', small business people and those struggling in rural South Australia.

I would like to let Mr Rann know that they are not 'new battlers': they have been battling since the settlement of these areas and I am sure that he will soon be able to forget them again after the next election, as Labor has always done before. Country people will not be fooled by fairweather friends. It is only under a Liberal Government that they begin to see improvements in their lot. It is the Liberal Government that constructed the Berri Bridge and the Burra-Morgan, Kimba-Cleve and Lock-Elliston roads, the upgrading of country airports, country Housing Trust areas, and is improving health and education, as outlined previously.

Last week the Financial Planners of Australia held the largest conference ever in Adelaide with 2 600 people. Mr Harry S. Dent, a famous Harvard MBA speaker, predicts that we are on the verge of the greatest boom in the history of Australia and the world because of the baby boomers and computers. We are well suited to be the beneficiaries of such a boom, with the State Government's focus on information technology and our large population of well educated baby boomers and their families. Recent indicators show that we as a State are in the vanguard of such a boom. The *SA Employment Outlook 2010*, prepared by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies for SA Great, and released on 2 December, projects that nearly 101 000 jobs will be created in South Australia by the year 2010 in the median (most likely) scenario. Such a trend is certainly shown by the ANZ jobs growth survey of employment advertisements in South Australia for the last month, which jumped by 9.4 per cent, more than double the national average.

The recent Roxby Downs announcement will help this trend to continue upward. I am hopeful that a similar boost to jobs in mining, given the cooperation of the Opposition, within the term of this Government will become available at a Yumbarra mine site. This site is in the electorate of Giles and mention of it was noticeably absent from the maiden speech of the member for Giles, and this is despite the fact that it would ensure large numbers of jobs for people in her electorate. The proposal is supported by Aboriginal groups who can see the benefits it would bring. It would take only a few hectares from the huge Yumbarra National Park of 327 589 hectares. Upgrading of the facilities available to the people in the region could also be expected involving the harbor, the airport, the roads and accommodation to name but a few. Perhaps the member for Giles could get her colleagues to allow the checking of the potential of the minerals, the presence of which is indicated by a huge magnetic anomaly, and the development of another mine for the benefit of the State and her electorate if the presence of commercial quantities of minerals is proven.

A few kilometres away from Yumbarra is the beautiful area known as Davenport Creek, which local people tell me they would like to see protected. This is privately owned land and is under a mining lease. Perhaps the member for Giles would like to support me in an effort to make this area with its sand dunes, its clean clear water and its shag rookery into a national park for the long-term future enjoyment of the people of the State. One small area of low biodiversity and little public interest could be developed as a mine while another area, which has much higher biodiversity and public interest, could be environmentally protected. This could be

accomplished using the funds made available by sale or royalty from mining to buy the land and the mining rights over the creek. There would probably even be funds enough to allow for the extension of the pipeline to Penong. The rhetoric of Labor about cooperation with the Liberal Government for the creating of jobs, particularly in the country regions, and wealth for the State would be much more believable with some tangible proof. Here is a wonderful opportunity to provide that proof.

On 3 November details were released on South Australia's overseas exports as at September 1997. These are up 11 per cent on 1995-96, with the fastest growing commodity group being fish and crustaceans, which increased 69 per cent. I am proud to say that Eyre Peninsula produces about 65 per cent of the State's income in this sector and, judging by the developments that I have witnessed, I believe much of this increase would be from the peninsula. Many people have heard about the great success of tuna farming. However, developments in abalone, oyster, mussel farms and the holding of crayfish in cages is far less well known. The entrepreneurs involved are on the leading edge of developments in these industries. They are creating real wealth for the State and, just as importantly, jobs in regional South Australia. In addition to the direct jobs created, there are also many indirect jobs from production of food for the farms and the considerable amount of equipment required. Many of these indirect jobs are being created in the city.

It is not surprising that the Yellow Pages Small Business Index also released in November advises that small business confidence in South Australia is strongest among all States. One would not think so if one listened to the Opposition talking down our great State and the achievements of its hard-working people. The Bank SA Trends Bulletin, again from November this year, advises that finance for housing construction increased almost 30 per cent in the past year. This is an indicator that is a vote of confidence in this State by the people themselves. In Port Lincoln, the Lincoln Lakes marina development is releasing another 142 building blocks for sale to the public. The existing marina blocks are all sold and the majority have new homes and units on them.

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that boundary changes to the Flinders electorate mean that I farewell the constituents I represented on Kangaroo Island for the past four years. I wish them well for what I believe will be a very exciting future in a place that has become a tourism icon around the world. The support of the Kangaroo Island councillors and council staff, both before and after amalgamation, during what was quite a difficult period in the history of the island, was appreciated. Jean Woolley very ably represented me on the island, supported by her husband Brian, and I commend her untiring efforts, often well beyond the call of duty. At this time I also mention the hard work and support given by my personal assistant, Brenton Rehn, supported by his wife Julia, and I wish him well in his future activities and new role as a grandfather.

I am pleased to welcome the people of Ceduna, Kimba and Franklin Harbor council areas to the Flinders electorate. I look forward to meeting and working with them. The importance of their councils in assisting me in identifying the needs of their communities and putting forward winning cases to the Government cannot be underestimated. Together, working as a team, we can help to achieve the great potential we all believe is there to be developed within the electorate. As with the other councils with which I have already been working, I do not expect that we will agree with one another

all the time but, if we all do the best we can as we see it and respect one another's point of view, I know we can accomplish great things.

For the benefit of members who are not aware of the electorate of Flinders, I provide some statistics. Flinders is now approximately 55 000 square kilometres and encompasses 10 council areas, with 10 hospitals, numerous nursing homes and hostels, and 60 educational institutions. It has 46 conservation parks of 519 880 hectares in area, not including Yumberra located nearby, with two national parks of 59 440 hectares. All these institutions are supported by dozens of hard working people and equally hard working teams of volunteers.

The electorate contains only 2.6 per cent of the State's population, but produces as mentioned about 65 per cent of the State's fishing income and around 33 per cent of the State's grain income. The latter could be even greater this year if the recent rains have not caused too much damage. The mineral potential has hardly been touched. It is a whole tourist region in its own right and has more tourist bed nights than Kangaroo Island, the Barossa Valley and Flinders Ranges put together.

The region has its own hard working Eyre Regional Development Board, which works over this huge area and is just completing its first resource agreement. During the last four years it has helped generate 508 sustainable employment positions and helped to bring into the electorate \$4 million in grants and subsidies from State and Federal agencies. This is achieved under tight financial constraints and hampered by the huge logistical problem of this fabulous region of the State.

It is interesting to note that the last census showed that there had been almost no change in the number of people living on Eyre Peninsula over the period covered. This has been achieved at a time when other regional areas have been losing population. I do not actually see population increase for the State as a whole as being necessary if we increase the per capita income of the people by getting more employed, working better and smarter and more profitably.

It has been an exciting and, I believe, very productive four years for the electorate of Flinders. There have been many developments within the electorate which give me great pleasure to have seen to fruition, such as the improvements to schools, health and recreation facilities. There are many other developments that I hope to see completed within the next four years, such as the Kimba to Cleve and Elliston to Lock roads, and there are still others in my plan for the electorate that I hope to see accomplished within the next four years: for example, adequate numbers of professionals to provide doctors, mental health workers and dentists to fill the existing jobs, the wind farm at Uley, mining in Yumberra, and the redevelopment of the civic hall in Port Lincoln to provide the region with a performing arts theatre.

With the support of the people of the electorate, of my excellent staff, family and friends—and I mention particularly my cousin Philip Roe and the Liberal Party branch members—I will continue to work hard on behalf of the people in my electorate and the State of South Australia and justify the faith they had in me as shown by my increased vote at the recent election.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright):** Mr Speaker, may I say that I am delighted to see you in the Chair and offer my personal congratulations to you on attaining your new office. I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to His

Excellency's address and, in so doing, take the opportunity to commend his Excellency on the job he has done to date. Only this morning I was advised of the extensive number of schools His Excellency is being present at over the next two weeks as he attends school prize and speech nights. It is a credit to him to make himself so accessible to so many of the public in South Australia and, already in the short time he has been in office, he is demonstrating himself very much to be the people's Governor.

It is also the first opportunity I have had in this Parliament to reflect on the result of the last State election. Before I do that, it is worth mentioning that this is the third occasion on which I have had the opportunity to respond to a speech of a Governor immediately after an election. In so doing, I am reminded of the comments that were often hurled across the Chamber at me by the former member for Albert Park and then Lee, Mr Kevin Hamilton, who seemed to take great delight in taunting members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, and used to on a regular basis—certainly weekly if not daily—refer to me as a 'oncer'. Now, I am at worst a 'thricer' and, of course, Mr Hamilton is no longer present in this Chamber, and that is a source of great delight not only to me but to many of my colleagues in the Liberal Party who were similarly taunted by the unfortunate and hapless Mr Hamilton.

It is interesting to examine closely the results of the election in my electorate. Of course, I am very pleased to have the support again of the people of the electorate of Bright. This is the third successive occasion that the Liberal Party has won the seat, which was held by Labor from 1985 to 1989. It is interesting to note that, despite the fact that the Labor Party has been claiming victory through the result of the last State election, the first preference vote of the Labor Party in the seat of Bright, a seat they held from 1985 to 1989, still is 18 per cent lower than it was when they won it in 1985. They managed only a paltry 30.7 per cent of first preference votes. It was quite clear where the electorate went if they moved from the Liberal Party. In the seat of Bright, the Australian Democrats achieved a first Party preferred vote of 21.7 per cent. That can be no long-term comfort for the Labor Party, because it clearly indicates that, yes, a group of people have moved away, but they can just as easily come back again. It is no comfort to any Party hanging in there with the numbers they have on second preferences. That is the dilemma of the Labor Party at the next election.

They may be a little cock-a-hoop at the moment and say they have won a few more seats, but it would be a very foolish Labor Party indeed to believe that that means they can stumble over the line at the next election. I invite them to look carefully at the history books to see where in the past, at both the national level and in various State jurisdictions, Governments have received a reduced majority and have hung on even with a balance of power situation, and they have then gone and returned themselves with a larger majority. There is no reason whatsoever why the Liberal Party should not re-increase its majority at the next election, particularly if the Labor Party keeps the present Leader.

It is fair to say that every member of the Parliamentary Liberal Party hopes that the current Labor Leader is still there at the next State election. I will be in there batting for him the whole way to make sure that I do my best to ensure the current Labor Leader's staying there heading the Labor Party at the next State election. That would be the best gift the Liberal Party could have. One thing I am sure of: the current Labor Leader will never be a Premier of South Australia. I

am happy to put that right on the record now. The reason I am so confident in saying that is that we know what is really happening behind the scenes. Mike has been given a bit of a go because they stumbled in with a few more seats through second preferences, but at the end of the day Labor members know that he is an electoral and political liability.

*The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:*

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** I am not sure if the honourable member would have voted for the former Deputy Leader. There is no doubt that there is a fair bit of angst on that side also over their leadership. They cannot possibly be happy with the new Deputy Leader. Again, we hope the new Deputy Leader stays there. We think she is terrific. She is terrific for Opposition and it is Opposition in which she will help keep you stay. We are very pleased with your current leadership team, and may it stay exactly as it is.

The Labor Party can certainly take no solace from the vote. When they consider that Bright, one of the marginal seats they needed to hold in 1989, still is 18 per cent higher in first preference votes alone than they achieved in 1985 when they won, the Labor Party has one heck of a long way to go before they will come within a whiff of getting Government in South Australia.

Of course, I am also looking forward to the ongoing nature of this term because now, as a consequence of legislation that has passed this House, it is likely that I will be given an opportunity to be sworn into portfolios which many members know I have cherished for some time and desired the opportunity to move into. Many know of my passion for the information technology industry, an industry from where I previously came before entering Parliament. Many know that over the past 12 months I was frustrated that I could not finish the job I had started with the organisation known as Services SA, a department that I created through the amalgam of what used to be the old SACON and the old State Services.

I look forward to the challenges that those portfolios will present and to any questions that might be forthcoming from the Labor Party. I am well aware that they have been reluctant to question me—and the record demonstrates that fact. I was probably the most under-questioned Minister, if not definitely the most under-questioned Minister, during the three years in which I held portfolios, and I challenge the Labor Party to use the opportunity to question me in this House in the future.

In relation to education, I am privileged to have in my electorate two unique examples of schools which I hope will eventually become the norm in South Australia. Those schools are the Hallett Cove East Primary School and the Woodend Primary School. They are schools that are visionary and in which different methods have been tried. The Hallett Cove East school was the first of the two schools built, and it comprises construction of houses. I am proud to have had a significant role in having the school built in that format. Indeed, it was a promise of the Liberal Party in 1989 that, if elected, such a school would be built. The Labor Party opposed the idea—and, indeed, so did their bureaucrats.

I well remember in late 1989, prior to the election at the end of that year, attending a public meeting of the Karrara Residents Association in the premises of the Karrara Kindergarten to canvass options with the local residents for the building of a new school. The meeting was well attended. I raised at that meeting the prospect of building a school in a period of some 12 weeks utilising home building technology and building a school of houses. I was ridiculed at that meeting by the Education Department bureaucrats of the day. They advised that no school could be built within 12

weeks, and that certainly no school could ever be built out of houses.

Unfortunately, a Labor Government was elected in 1989 and that school was not built in 12 weeks. However, a school was built of houses, and it has been an overwhelming success—a success that is trumpeted by parents, teachers and students alike. The vision is such that, when that school reaches a point in time when it is no longer required, the Parliament of that day will not have to undergo the angst of the Croydon Primary School, because it will have knowledge in advance of what is to happen with that school. The school has been reverse planned from a housing estate and streets, a community oval and community facility, removing the houses that were not needed, removing a road and taking walls out of the house to form two classroom divided areas so that, when the school is ultimately disposed of, perhaps in 15 or 20 years time, the designs that are there can be put into place. The road can go in, the oval becomes a community oval, the hall becomes a community facility, houses will be constructed along the extra road that is built, the walls will go up inside the school classrooms and we then have a good use for facilities where it has not been possible to use them in that way before.

The other school I mention is the Woodend Primary School, which was built by Hickinbotham under this Government and is leased back by this Government. That school has also been reverse designed so that, ultimately, when it is no longer required in 15 or 20 years time, the school will probably become a nursing home, with the school offices becoming administration facilities and the classrooms becoming residential space for the occupants of the facility in its then new role. That school, because it was built under a Liberal Government, met the criteria for which I was ridiculed at that 1989 meeting. The school was built in 12 weeks. It is one of the finest looking primary schools that I have seen, and I would encourage members, if they have the opportunity, to visit the Woodend Primary School, located at Sheidow Park, and see for themselves what a fabulous facility has been designed and built by the private sector in just 12 weeks.

Again, the success of that facility has been trumpeted by parents, teachers and students alike. The morale at both of those school facilities is incredibly high, and parents attribute it not just to the fact of their being new schools but also to the fact that the design makes them such a terrific learning environment. Everyone recognises the value in having an ultimate use for schools which we know will be surplus to requirements in 15 or 20 years time through the inevitable population movements that will occur at that time.

Regrettably, the Auditor-General did not necessarily see those schools in this light, and I refer to a section of his report at page 173, where he advises of his findings in relation to school leases. The only two school lease properties in existence in this State at this time are those two that I have just mentioned, and they are both in my electorate. The Auditor-General says:

In 1995, the department entered into lease arrangements relating to two primary schools with the private sector. One arrangement related to the sale and lease-back of an existing school—

that was the Hallett Cove East school—

while the other related to the lease of a privately constructed school—

that was the Woodend school—

on property owned by the department and sold to the builder. The departmental documentation indicates that the lease projects have been undertaken on a trial basis to assess private sector proposals as a source of funding for future construction of schools. Audit acknowledges that the department's principal objective in relation to the utilisation of the private sector, in both projects, has been the desire to reduce the cost of construction of schools and therefore limit capital borrowings.

I am fully supportive of the Auditor-General's investigating such an arrangement—in fact, it is absolutely imperative that he does—and I have no difficulty with the background that he has provided. However, I do have difficulty with his first finding, where he says:

It is Audit's view that documentary evidence regarding the demographic studies indicated that, for each lease proposal, concerns existed as to the justification to proceed with each proposal.

Some members in this Parliament may be aware that in a past life I worked as a demographer and I am tertiary qualified to undertake such work. Prior to becoming a member of Parliament I had many clashes with the so-called demographic experts of the Education Department. In fact, it is fair to say that the department used people who certainly were not qualified or experienced in that field and were, I would have to say, responsible for an amazing series of blunders that transpired for an extended period.

In relation specifically to the two schools, Hallett Cove East and Woodend, on both occasions I took on the Education Department over its predictions. The predictions were undertaken during the time of the previous Labor Government, but, in fairness, if those bureaucrats have remained on with our Government I do not see that it is necessarily something over which one can point politically to a group. Just to make the point, we had people who were not properly undertaking their demographic studies. I was so concerned—

**Mr Hanna:** They should have built a high school at Trott Park.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** Well, I will come back to that, Mr Speaker. The member for Mitchell interjects, 'They should have built a high school at Trott Park, shouldn't they?' I will come back to that: I will not let that point go. The member might be interested in what transpires in relation to it. Regarding the Woodend Primary School, the Minister at the time was the Hon. Susan Lenahan MP, who lost her seat in 1993 and who expressed the view at a public meeting that there would be a group of private consultants who would undertake the demographic study. Understandably, at that stage, Susan Lenahan had recognised the bad demographic work of the past and thought she would cover all bases by at least bringing in some experts to put their work above that which the bureaucrats had done.

I wrote to her asking that specific criteria be put in place. In doing so, I reminded her of the problems of the past. In a letter to her of 25 September 1993 listing the problems, I stated:

- the disposal of a primary school site bounded by Zwerner Drive, Ramrod Avenue, Ragamuffin Drive and Olivier Terrace;
- the disposal of a primary school site at the end of Barramundi Drive;
- the eleventh hour prevention through resident action of the sale of the site now occupied by the R-10 school;—

that school is now an R-12—

- the building of the R-10 school as a 1985 State election promise and compromise following the realisation by the Education Department they had bungled on their demographic figures and needed both a high school and a primary school for the area;

- the building of the Hallett Cove East Primary School following a 1989 election commitment initially given by the Liberal Party, when I revealed the Education Department had bungled its demographic figures for the Hallett Cove area yet again.

It is at this juncture that I return to the point made in interjection by the member for Mitchell. The former Labor Government had a plan to work on for education in the area that he and I jointly represent. That plan was one of five feeder primary schools into a high school. The five feeder primary schools were to be the Sheidow Park Primary School (which is in my electorate but services some of the constituents of the member for Mitchell); the new Woodend Primary School to which I have referred; the Hallett Cove South School which is in existence; a school which was to be at Hallett Cove on one of the sites I mentioned that was disposed of; and a further school which was to be on the other site and which I mentioned was disposed of.

Essentially, the Labor Government foolishly through erroneous demographic data came to the conclusion that student population numbers would not be high enough to justify five primary schools and a high school, so it flogged off one of the primary school sites.

It got better. It was also going to flog off the high school site—the Hallett Cove school site. The member for Mitchell knows that site is full. It was going to flog that off, too. We stopped them. When I say ‘we’, I mean that the residents action group in which I was involved stopped them from doing that. The records in the Education Department prove that was their intention, and we held the site.

As a 1985 Labor compromise it tried to bung the primary school that was needed from a site it sold and a high school onto the one site. The consequence of its doing that is that the residents of Sheidow Park and Trott Park have been prevented from having access to that Hallett Cove school, a high school, because there is a primary school and high school on the site instead of just a high school.

In response to the interjection from the member for Mitchell, the high school should have been there; then his constituents would have had a high school to attend. The reason they have not is that his Party, the Labor Party, relied on bad information, bad demographic data and got its sums wrong as a consequence.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** I will say this for the Hon. Susan Lenehan. On receiving my letter—and I have had the opportunity to see the files that she acted upon since—she actually asked the consultants to take my points into account, and they did so to an extent. What they failed to do was analyse further expansion of the area. So the demographic data to which the Auditor-General was referring and which was used to determine whether or not the Woodend school was needed by the Education Department failed to take into account a subdivision of 1 350 houses.

I raise this now because I am appalled that the staff in the Auditor-General’s office did not do their homework properly. They did not look to see whether the demographic data was correct. There is one simple way they could have done that, and that was to ask the question: how are the schools operating now? They would have received the response that the Hallett Cove East School and the Woodend School are so full that they have both been zoned so that people outside the zoned area cannot attend. Yet, we have the Auditor-General in his report saying that the demographic data showed that the schools could not be justified.

That is because the department considered my data instead and data that I gathered through the enormous effort of groups such as the Karrara Residents’ Association. They undertook a fabulous doorknocking exercise, knocking on every single door in the suburb. If people were not home they left a note and went back later. The people from that residents’ organisation got the sort of information that no education demographer had ever been able to get their hands on before, including details of when people even expected to start families. Here we are 10 years after that data was collected and it has been demonstrated to be absolutely spot on.

I put to the Hon. Susan Lenehan that a similar method ought be engaged for Woodend. It was not and, as a consequence, the demographic data has been wrong. Because the demographic data is wrong, this means that the Auditor-General’s report is wrong, because he used flawed information. I intend to put that to the Auditor-General in writing and to invite him to look at the enrolment figures and the projected enrolment figures for those schools based on more accurate data, the data that is being collected by this Government, to ensure that we do not get these things wrong.

I think it is important that all members of Parliament, regardless of their political persuasion, and all future Education Ministers use the Hallett Cove example as a lesson for future Governments that we must not rely on unqualified people, people without knowledge, to put together figures to justify school projects. It is important that the sums be got right, and too often we have seen knee-jerk reactions.

In order for these schools to be built, it is very important that schools that are no longer required are sold off. That means that some hard decisions have had to be made. I feel sorry for the small group of students who attend the Croydon Primary School, but the point is that that school had to go—no ifs and no buts: it must be closed.

I am absolutely disgusted at the way in which the parents of those children have used them. They were brought into this place today in such a way that you, Mr Speaker, had to ask for quiet. In my view, seeing parents orchestrate young children in that way is a disgrace. As a parent, I was disgusted. I think those parents are abdicating their role as responsible parents by using their children in that way. If any member of the Labor Party had anything whatsoever to do with that—and I hope none of them did—they should hang their head in shame for using children in such a despicable way, because what we saw today was totally unforgivable, and I hope we never see it again.

In the few minutes that are left to me, I would like to mention some things that are occurring in my electorate. To some members they may seem to be of a minor nature, but they are significant to the local people. After eight years of requesting successive Ministers for approval, for common-sense to prevail regarding the planting of trees on arterial roads, I am delighted to commend the Minister for Transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) in another place for her decision to allow trees to be planted on Brighton Road. I also commend the City of Holdfast Bay for hardly waiting for the ink to be dry before planting those trees on Brighton Road in both your electorate, Mr Speaker, and mine. We both know how much they have beautified Brighton Road—it looks terrific. I cannot understand why the Ministers of a Labor Government refused to give approval for trees to be planted in this way.

The other bouquet that I would like to hand out goes to the authors of the report into Adelaide’s coast. Members know that I represent a coastal electorate. I have been frustrated for

some time because sand replenishment along the coast has always been a matter of coast protection without recreational activity being taken into account. I commend the authors of the report for recommending that the recreational use of a beach be considered part of the criteria for sand replenishment. I have been arguing that principally for the suburb of Hallett Cove. The Hallett Cove beach used to be a sandy beach that was used for recreational purposes. It has a surf lifesaving club which in the 1970s prospered. Surf lifesaving carnivals were held on that beach.

Today, it is a rock shelf with a little bit of sand that has been placed on it over the past three years because of an agreement that this Government reached with the Port Stanvac refinery to pump sand from the southern side to the northern side of the jetty. That has helped, but we need sand replenishment at Hallett Cove. I commend the authors of the report for flagging Hallett Cove specifically as an opportunity for recreational sand replenishment. I look forward to seeing in the future the new Minister for Environment and Heritage act decisively on those recommendations and to seeing sand replenishment occur at that location so that the residents can once again enjoy the beach as it was.

The Hallett Cove Surf Life Saving Club is certainly looking forward to seeing sand replenishment occur so that it can get back to what it used to be, and so that many nippers can be involved in that organisation and able to compete strongly and successfully in surf life saving competitions.

I enjoy representing my electorate. I am delighted to have the opportunity to represent it for another four years and, like most members, I am sure, I look forward to representing my electorate over the next four years. I am eagerly looking forward to the cut and thrust of this Chamber in 1998. May I say, Sir, I hope it is a little more vigorous than we have seen over the past six days, because Question Time has been an absolute breeze.

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** Mr Speaker, I begin by congratulating you on your appointment and wishing you well in the job. I must say that returning to the Parliament after this election has been very pleasurable, given the number of members on our side of the House. Asking questions in Question Time is much easier without the bevy of Government members on our left screaming in our ears.

**The Hon. W.A. Matthew:** You loved it!

**Ms STEVENS:** I am not sure; it made things interesting, but it is more interesting now. I congratulate and welcome our new members, the members for Giles, Norwood, Kaurna, Elder, Playford, Peake, Wright, Mitchell, Lee, Hanson and Florey. Welcome to our team. We are really pleased with the extent of talent that we have, and we believe that we are now an alternative Government and will be a real fighting force for South Australia over the next four years and into the new century. I also congratulate my previous colleagues—those who are still here—because, when we look back over the past four years, it was tough going with only 11 members, and I think we did a great job in this House. In welcoming the new members I also welcome the Hon. Carmel Zollo in the other place.

Another very obvious thing about the Labor side of the House is that there are 10 women members. That is quite an achievement; in fact, it is the best gender balance in any House of Parliament in Australia. I think the Australian Labor Party can take a great pat on the back for that and in particular our Leader, Mike Rann, can take a great pat on the back for that, because he has tirelessly supported and championed

equal gender in this House. We have almost achieved it. I welcome my female colleagues here, and I am sure they will make a great contribution.

I return to the Hon. Mike Rann, the Leader of the Opposition. In the election I watched him and admired him for his tenacity and for his unfailing energy; he kept going. During the campaign when we felt down or negative, Mike Rann was always out there, like a terrier; he never let go. In fact, in the last week when he took part in the debate, he spearheaded the turn-around for us that came so quickly in those last few days. When we look back and think about why there was such a turn-around to Labor, we must think very carefully and reflect that what the electorate really wanted was hope and vision, and it wanted to hear positive things for the future. That is what they got from us, and from Mike Rann. Sadly for them, the Government completely stuffed it up.

When they had it all running for them with the great victory of the Crows, they completely stuffed it up. They lost focus and could not pull themselves around, and they could not present to the electorate something that the electorate would grab and go for. That was the cause of the loss of 11 seats in this House. The issues of jobs and jobs security, of health and education—the basic services that we all require—are what the electorate wanted to hear about. It wanted to hear about those things within the framework of a future for our State. In its continued opposition to privatisation in all its forms—the water contract, our health system, the EDS contract, prisons—the electorate cast its vote and showed the Government that it was on the wrong track.

I must admit, however, that we were also helped by the Federal Liberal Party. The debacle that we have seen over the past year or so from John Howard's Government in aged care, child-care, higher education funding and in its ineptness in being able to take over the job and lead the country also went in our favour. We went to the election with a good selection of policies. Much work went into those policies, and we know that we will need to do this again, but we are ready to do that. We will continue to listen to the electorate, to seek advice and to come up again with a set of policies that we believe the electorate will approve of and, hopefully, it will vote to put us into government to start doing some of those things.

We cannot afford to rest on our laurels. We know, as members opposite have been trying to interject, that our primary vote is still lower than it should be for us to assume government. We have seen those results: we are analysing them, and we know that to assume government we will need to raise that primary vote. That will be a priority for us, and we will all do it.

In terms of my own electorate, I am obviously very pleased to now be on a margin of 14.4 from a margin of 2.8. It is a good feeling to be back in three figures, rather than two. Even though there will be a redistribution, I will be working as hard as I ever have before.

When you go to the declaration of a poll and see the people there, have the votes and the results read out, it is a humbling experience as well as a positive one if you have won. You realise that you are there to represent your electorate and to work hard for the people who put their faith in you, and that is a considerable responsibility. I will be taking it very seriously again for my people in the electorate of Elizabeth. Those primary issues of jobs and job security, access to services and hope for the future are critical for my electorate. We have a considerable unemployment rate in Elizabeth, so we need business to go well.

We need growth to occur in this State; we need business to come here so that jobs can be made available. We have a strong community. We have a strong and vibrant new local government entity, the Playford City Council, working very hard towards this end. We have organisations such as the Northern Adelaide Development Board, and we have many people in our community who want to get together to go forward. I will certainly get behind them and work with anyone to try to make those things a reality.

I now refer to a few matters in relation to the shadow portfolios I have again been assigned. I was pleased to be offered the same portfolios I had over the past four years because they are complex and took a long time to begin to understand, and I do not profess to have as full an understanding as I would like. It is a honour to take them on again. I put on the record some concerns I have in relation to statements that the Minister for Human Services has made, first, on the radio in terms of health funding, and, secondly, in this place last week about the funding of public hospitals. I will spend 10 minutes or so going through the statements he made and putting another viewpoint for members to consider, because at this very early stage in a new Government we need to get the benchmarks quite clear.

On 4 November the Minister for Human Services (Hon. Dean Brown) claimed on a radio interview with Murray Nicoll on 5AN that the Liberal Government had increased spending on health over the past four years. I have a copy of the transcript and quote the Minister as follows:

... with increased funding, even in real terms, for health care in this State over the last four years.

What a preposterous statement. I was listening to that radio program as I was driving home and a statement like that was nearly enough to make me drive me off the side of the road. What a preposterous statement: that over the past four years this State Liberal Government had increased spending to health in real terms. Anyone with any recollection of the Government's own budget papers, media releases and statements in this House by the previous Minister knows that this is simply not true.

In the first four budgets the previous State Liberal Government cut spending on health in real terms. In 1994-95 the cut, compared with the 1993-94 Labor budget, was \$45.5 million. In 1995-96 the cut was \$77.9 million, in 1996-97 the cut was \$86 million and in 1997-98 it was \$24 million. Over four years the cumulative cuts totalled \$234 million in real terms. These cuts were in line with many of the previous Minister's statements to the House. I will give one as an example, but there were many. On 29 June 1995 in the budget Estimates Committee the previous Minister for Health stated:

When we were here last I set out the budget strategy for the health system over the ensuing three years. The health sector had been asked to achieve savings of \$63.5 million per annum by the end of that period. . . All agencies have been asked to achieve additional savings in 1995-96 for health. This has meant an additional \$6.5 million savings requirement for a total of \$70 million.

The present Minister will be well aware of these cuts, for at that time he was the Premier. If he wishes to refresh his memory I refer him to the *Hansard* of 29 June 1995, page 256. During that same period, that is the four years from 1994-95 to 1997-98, the Commonwealth contribution to South Australia's health budget, excluding additional funding for the transfer of Daws Road Hospital, as detailed in Financial Paper No. 2, Estimates of Receipts and Payments, increased from \$511 million in 1993-94 to \$539 million in

1994-95. It then increased again to \$573 million in the next year; it increased again to \$590 million in 1996-97 and, further, to \$597 million in 1997-98. In four years, Commonwealth funding increased by a cumulative total of \$254 million in cash terms and \$121 million in real terms after allowing for inflation.

These figures show that during the period when the Minister was Premier of this State his Government made cumulative cuts of \$234 million from health in real terms, while the Commonwealth Government increased support by a cumulative total of \$121 million. I trust that the Minister will now acknowledge that his statement on radio on 4 November 1997 was incorrect. I trust that he will acknowledge that, and I shall wait for that to be said in the House.

It is very interesting that the former Premier, who is obviously hoping that he will again be Premier, has been put in a portfolio such as human services. Obviously, he is out to make a name for himself and to reposition the Government in the minds of the electorate so that, according to his strategy, he can hoodwink the electorate into thinking that, instead of making all those cuts over those four years, the Government increased spending.

He thinks that if he stands up here or speaks over the radio loudly and stridently he can rewrite history. Well, he cannot. We have been out in our electorates and we all know what has happened in the health system over the last four years. We know that over 1 000 nursing jobs have gone; we know that there have been beds and ward closures; we know that our hospitals are dirty; and we know that community services have been closed down. Who is he trying to kid?

I find it quite amazing that he can say this on radio and think that people will take him seriously. He does not learn, though, because on 4 December last week he made the following statement to the House on hospital funding:

... during the election campaign the Labor Party tried to create the impression that this Liberal Government had cut funds to public hospitals in South Australia. The facts show that in this financial year (1997-98) we are putting in an extra \$77 million compared with the 1993-94 budget. That \$77 million is a real increase over and above inflation and highlights to the Federal Government in the same period its increase in funding has been only \$13 million.

We went back and trawled through the Estimates of Receipts, the budget papers, for the past four years. In terms of considering funding to hospitals, we put together the figures for hospital resourcing and hospital support resourcing.

We found a different picture. Taking into account inflation, we found that in real terms the cuts to our hospitals compared with 1993-94 (which is what he was comparing it with) were as follows: in 1994-95, a cut of \$20 million; in 1995-96, a cut of \$52 million; in 1996-97, a cut of \$7 million; and, in 1997-98, there was an increase but it was not \$77 million but \$19 million. If you put all that together, the picture looks a little different from what the Minister was saying. Over the four years, the cumulative cuts make a total of \$60 million compared with the funding for our hospitals in 1993-94.

Of course, when I say that, members who have been out in the communities with their constituents would already know that from what they have heard. We know about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We know about other hospitals. The member for Gordon mentioned the Mount Gambier Hospital, but the story has been the same across the whole State. It is quite amazing that the Minister for Human Services would come into this House to try to claim otherwise.



In terms of other issues, certainly for my own electorate, I believe that education funding, funding for people with disabilities and funding for community services from Family and Community Services (the new Human Services Department) will be critical. All members would know that our communities need this vital resourcing and I am hoping that this Government—and perhaps it requires a hefty kick from the electorate—will finally realise that you actually must take a balanced approach—that you must have economic and social priorities that are balanced. I hold out that hope and I assure all members that I will be fighting for this over the next four years.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I support the motion for adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor's speech. I would like to acknowledge the appointment of Sir Eric Neal. His appointment has been great for South Australia, especially as it involves the promotion of a South Australian from the business area. He has been involved not only in business areas but also in social areas. His comments on multiculturalism have been greatly welcomed. I was fortunate to be at a multicultural community function at which he was a guest speaker, and I know how much his comments were appreciated, especially having regard to the recent concerns expressed in our community.

I also congratulate the Speaker on his election to this high office. He has demonstrated—and it is very much appreciated—that he is a fair Speaker, and I look forward to serving in this House under his Speakership over the next four years. It is also appropriate to recognise the contribution of the former Speaker, the member for Stuart, over the past four years. It has been a very difficult time in which we were trying to get the economy back on track. Obviously, his leadership in that area has been very much appreciated.

I would also like to congratulate the new members on their election to this place, and I include the two Independent members and the one National Party member. It is also good to see the number of women elected to this place. I congratulate the Opposition on sticking to its promise to get more women into this Chamber. I remember that, when I gave my maiden speech, the only woman member in this place—prior to the member for Elizabeth's coming to this place in a by-election—was the now Deputy Leader of the Opposition; she was the only woman on the Labor side. You have come a long way, and I congratulate you.

I would also like to welcome members from diverse backgrounds, such as the members for Peake and Norwood and, in the other place, the Hon. Carmel Zollo, who happens to come from the same background as I. It is always good to see that the Parliament is growing in diversity and is representing the true composition of the general community. That has to be a good thing. If those who have doubts about multiculturalism were to come to this place, they would see that it is alive and well and making great contributions to the community.

I will refer back to my maiden speech, because it is always important to reflect on what has happened in the past four years. I have the same enthusiasm for being a member of Parliament now as I did then. I believe that it is an honour and a privilege to serve the community at this level. As I said then, it is an even greater honour and a privilege for someone who was not born in this place, and it tells much about the type of democracy we have in Australia. At the function to which I have referred, his Excellency Sir Eric Neal commented that no citizen is precluded from holding any position

in Australia. That is a good thing. In the United States of America, you cannot run for President unless you were born there. You only have to ask the famous comedian Bob Hope to realise that that is a fact. Bob Hope was prevented from running for office in the United States because he was born in England. There are no such restrictions in Australia, and that is not always appreciated.

However, when we look at the standing of politicians in general, we see that it is a sad state of affairs that we are not held in very high regard, and I do not think things have improved in the past four years. We only have to look at newspaper headlines to realise that the community does not think very highly of us. That is sad because, if the community does not think of us highly, our ability to deliver is diminished. Getting things done requires a partnership of trust between the general community and members of Government and the Opposition—representatives in general. That is a sad case. I refer to an article in the *Advertiser* of 6 December under the heading '\$624 314 bill to keep Mr Keating'. These types of headlines, which refer to the remuneration of politicians and ex-politicians, do not do the cause of democracy any good. That diminishes our ability to get things done.

As to the overall indicators of how South Australia has been going in the past four years, if we are honest with ourselves, we must say that things have improved and I challenge members opposite, if they think about it, to comment on whether or not things have improved. They have improved. There is no doubt that things could have been done better or that there is still room for improvement. I am concerned about the level of unemployment, just as any member opposite would be; I am concerned about the level of youth unemployment, just as any member opposite would be. I have three children and I am concerned about their employment opportunities, just as any parent would be. Nevertheless, if we look at the situation objectively and look at where we were, where we are now and what foundations have been laid for the future, I believe no-one would doubt that we are on the track and heading in the right direction.

True, general unemployment is still high, but let us look at the indicator of youth unemployment coming down to 28 per cent. True, it is still too high but nevertheless the indicator shows that we are going in the right direction. As to an overview of the economy, it is particularly positive and suggests that South Australia has finally been able to shrug off in a sustainable way the legacy of the State Bank bail-out and the early 1990s recession. In quick succession we saw the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies last briefing, *Bank SA Trends* and the *Yellow Pages Small Business Survey* all painting the most optimistic pictures of likely economic employment growth trends for South Australia over the next 12 to 18 months. They have been credible sources for a number of years.

Members can look at how well the wine industry is developing, how Mitsubishi and General Motors are succeeding and how our exports have increased. We can look at investment in the Riverland olive plantations and development in the information technology industry. Things are moving. There is no doubt that we have to be cautious and ensure that those improvements are sustained, but no-one can doubt that the situation is improving. I refer to the *Advertiser* headline of 8 December, which states:

Six thousand six hundred jobs for South Australians only. Roxby expansion all clear. Local workers to get preference.

Getting headlines like that is really telling us something because we did not get that in the past. Again in the *Advertiser* on the same day we saw this:

Hard hit towns to get boost. Depressed regions of South Australia, such as the Iron Triangle towns of Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Whyalla stand to benefit under today's long awaited Federal Government industry statement.

Things are improving under the partnership between the State and Federal Governments. I refer to the railway link to Darwin and the security of the tariff debate being settled in favour of ensuring a future for our manufacturing industry. These are all positive signals that South Australia is again on the move. This is all summed up in the *Advertiser* editorial of 5 December, which states:

A portrait of a State on the move. Rather surprisingly, this seems to be good news week in South Australia. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports strong growth for the Australian economy overall, 3.6 per cent for the year to September. Even as these figures were being digested, the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies projected job growth for the State of 1.1 per cent a year until 2010. This would mean a net growth of more than 100 000 jobs. The study was commissioned by the SA Great organisation, a body dedicated to looking on the bright side of things.

It should be emphasised, however, that the centre is independent and without bias. Indeed, the organiser, Professor Cliff Walsh, has never been afraid to present projections which justify the definition of economics as the dismal science. This makes all the more encouraging the kind of job creation which it has predicted.

The facts show that we are heading in the right direction. Projects such as the Holdfast Bay development will provide jobs for our children, and it will put South Australia back on the map. That is what we need.

*Mr Wright interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I am glad that the member for Lee agrees with me, because what we need is a bipartisan approach to the development of South Australia. I can see that there are a lot of fair minded members on the other side and I trust that they will not halt progress too much. I turn now to some of the developments in my electorate of Hartley.

**Mr Wright:** Tell us about your campaign.

**Mr SCALZI:** I will tell the member for Lee about my campaign later. I am not frightened to tell him about it because we can all learn from campaigns. In what way has my electorate benefited under this Government? Indeed, it has been an honour and a privilege to serve the electorate of Hartley, particularly as it is an area in which I was brought up. I went to the local schools, I taught at Marden High School when it was a secondary school, and I was coach of the soccer team there for seven years. It is a great honour to serve a community with which one has had such a long association.

I have been pleased to see an increase in education spending. In the last four years, East Marden Primary School, Hectorville Primary School and Newton Primary School have been improved. I have seen first hand the maintenance and the capital works that have taken place at those schools. The parents have spoken to me about their appreciation that something has been done to those schools, because they were neglected for many years. Improvements have taken place at the Norwood Morialta senior campus and at the middle school, and the work is continuing. The education of our children has not been neglected, particularly in the area that I represent.

I was fortunate to be involved with maintaining the Geoff Heath golf course, the installation of traffic lights at Hectorville, the proposed pedestrian crossing on Payneham Road, and the walk-through for the elderly on Lower North

East Road opposite the North Eastern Community Hospital. I have seen the benefits of grants to local sporting bodies and to the elderly, and these are all important.

Work has been done on the environment, and the local Torrens Catchment Board has done a lot of good work. The Linear Park has also been improved. I will refer again to a couple of articles from this month's *Billboard*, which is the local paper. One article was headed, 'Students focus on environment', and it stated:

Local primary school students were recently provided with an insight into how to help keep Adelaide's waterways free from pollution. Matthew Harding, project officer with the Eastern Metropolitan Stormwater Protection Project, spoke with year 5 and 6 students at East Marden Primary School.

As a result, I invited Matthew Harding to come to the school, and we visited industrial areas in the Glynde area to examine ways of ensuring that our waterways are protected. That is the type of education needed in order to start at the local level. I refer to the improved bus services for the elderly in my area. Again, quoting from an article in the *Billboard*:

Improved local bus services. The north eastern suburbs of Adelaide will be better served by public transport following recent State Government initiatives.

Again, that was a result of the elderly coming to me and my making representations on their behalf. I am pleased to say that the Minister for Transport in another place has listened, and the elderly are provided with these services at weekends. I believe that we should do much more for the elderly. I will certainly voice their concerns to make sure they are well represented. The member for Lee asked if I would refer to the recent election, and I have much pleasure in doing so.

*Mr Wright interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** The October election must be a learning experience for the major Parties as well as the Democrats. The ALP did not win 13 seats, nor did it win 10: it won but three or four seats. If we look at the election result objectively, we recognise that the Government lost six or seven seats in December 1993 to the actual political cycle. Anyone who understands politics—

*Mr Wright interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brokenshire):** Order! The member for Hartley will be heard in silence.

**Mr SCALZI:** —would realise that the number of seats won by the Government was unprecedented. A result involving a total of 37 seats before the member for Torrens was elected in a by-election would never repeat itself. That is a fact, and the primary votes of the Labor Party and the Liberal Party show that that is the case.

**Mr Wright:** What is 21 take 11?

**Mr SCALZI:** The ALP's vote is the second lowest in 50 years.

**Mr Wright:** What is 21 take 11?

**Mr SCALZI:** The Democrat vote did increase from 17 to 19 per cent in Hartley. However, one must not be too quick to congratulate them. We all know that people voted for the Democrats because they did not quite trust the major Parties. Let us face that fact. Once they realised—

*Mr Wright interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Wright was heard in silence during his debate. I would ask that he allow the member for Hartley the same courtesy.

**Mr SCALZI:** The Democrats were really giving their preferences to the Labor Party. They were basically a Trojan horse. History will not repeat that mistake. There are three members on the conservative side who are not members of

the Liberal Party, and that tells us that maybe we have to listen more. With respect to the rural areas, it shows there were problems in the perception of the Government. Therefore, the people in those areas voted for those candidates, and I congratulate the members for MacKillop, Gordon and Chaffey, because they have shown already that their main concern is about the betterment of this State and that they will vote according to their conscience for what is better for South Australia. Remember, the ALP had the second lowest vote in 50 years.

I will now refer to the campaign in Hartley, something the member for Lee is waiting for. This is the third time I have stood as a candidate for the seat of Hartley. In 1989, I stood against Terry Groom, the then Labor member, who you would all agree was a formidable opponent with a 12.6 per cent margin.

As members opposite would be aware, the seat of Hartley was previously held by Des Corcoran, one of their great Premiers. In that election the vote shifted 8.2 per cent. I congratulate Terry Groom because, after a week or so, we met at his place. We had a pizza and a beer and congratulated each other on our efforts—a gentleman. I know that members opposite do not all agree that Terry Groom was a gentleman, but I found him to be so. Equally, in 1993 I contested the election against David Bamford, another formidable opponent, and was fortunate enough to be the winner. Bamford and I met at the Glynde Hotel, sat down and had a beer.

I am still waiting to have a beer with the last Labor candidate for Hartley. The 1997 election was quite different. I believe that the election campaign in the seat of Hartley was not the campaign that it should have been, and that is the case in many other seats. I talked earlier about the standing of politicians—

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I will talk and talk, as long as it is for the betterment of this State.

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Hartley will resume his seat. It is my duty, as Acting Speaker, to ensure that members are given a fair go. I know that the member for Hart is a seasoned member of this House and that he understands the rules; I ask that he give the member for Hartley a fair go and listen to him in silence.

**Mr SCALZI:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Acting Speaker. The election campaign was quite interesting. As I mentioned earlier, our standing as politicians is not very high.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I do not mind looking up to people as long as I have their respect. My father was prone to be a Labor supporter. I am proud to say that in this House, because my father had ideals. However, I cannot condone candidates who stand for a Party but do not show it on their election material. I believe that that is deceiving the public. I have seen political brochures in Hartley and other areas that do not make clear the Party which the person represents, and I think that is deceiving the public. At election time a person should clearly show their Party affiliation. The Electoral Act states that candidates cannot display two posters side by side, yet brochures can be distributed which attack candidates but which do not show Party affiliation, and I think that is deceitful.

If businesses were to sell their goods or services and not clearly identify their product name or their business, we would be after them, yet during an election campaign we allow it. I believe that aspect should be looked at, regardless

of the politics involved, because democratic principles are more important. I do not believe that the elderly should be used as political fodder. There should be clear parameters between State and Federal issues. If we are to survive as a Federation, blurring of those issues for short-term political gain is something that we should stop.

Travelling is important for members of Parliament. It should not be used as a short-term political weapon in the dying days of a campaign. Only this week I was fortunate to host a delegation from Shandong and Yantai. I represented the Premier in those places last year. The material that was distributed during the dying days did not show that I represented the Premier at the nursing college in Yantai; it did not show that I was responsible for a university agreement in Naples: it implied that I went back to the old country, and I think that is deceitful.

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

**Mr SCALZI:** As I was saying, one must be very careful about using travel as a political weapon in the last few days of the election campaign. Will all the members opposite sign a statutory declaration that they will not travel during the next four years? Sign it now! And members who are not living in their electorate, be very careful. Your Leader does not live in his electorate, and I live just outside mine. However, I am committed to my electorate; I was brought up in the area. Do members opposite expect me to sell my house—and I have three children—and move across a kilometre, so that I will no longer be subject to the type of campaign tactics in which the Labor Party engages?

Members opposite should remember that their primary vote was the second lowest in 50 years. If the member for Hart thinks that, because there has been a swing, I will keep quiet for the next four years, he has another think coming. I will voice the concerns of my electorate and work to the best of my ability, because the reality is that members opposite should not gloat. The community has sent us a message: we must listen. There are lessons that we on this side of the House have to learn, and we will do so. I know there are lessons that I, as the member for Hartley, must learn, and I will learn those lessons. I will listen, I will continue to make myself available and I will voice the concerns of my electorate.

Members opposite should remember that, if they had won, they would have won on democratic preference barouches. The Democrats would have taken them across, and no-one else—it would not have been due to their efforts. So, they should not harp on the fact that they have won 10 seats, and so on.

As I said, such was the political cycle, and I look forward to serving my electorate and to working in a constructive way with all the members in this House so that we move towards the twenty-first century and celebrate Federation in a way of which we can all be proud as Australians. That is what it is all about. We are a great country. Unfortunately, we are not thought of very highly, and we have a lot of work to do, whether we be Labor, Liberal, Democrats or Independents. The community expects more from us.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs HALL (Coles):** Mr Speaker, in my contribution to the Address in Reply debate, I congratulate you on your election to your high office and look forward to working with

you over the next four years. I also extend my congratulations to all new members in this Chamber—although, I must say, I wish I was not having to say good-bye to so many of my former colleagues.

I would like to express my appreciation to the public of South Australia for once again, for the third successive election, providing a majority of two-Party preferred votes to the Liberal Party. Such a clear choice by individual South Australians is an endorsement of our policy direction and a challenge for us to maintain their confidence into the next century.

The corollary of this is the sombre fact for Labor that for a considerable number of years now it has been a proven minority Party. Our Liberal results over the years tell the story: in 1989 the Liberal Party got 52 per cent of the two-Party preferred vote; in 1993, 60 per cent; and in 1997, 51.5 per cent. I have no doubt that this continuing failure by the Labor Party will cause a great deal of disappointment and frustration at facing four more years in Opposition.

I particularly thank the electors of Coles for returning me to the House of Assembly. Our Liberal majority of just over 3 000 is a figure that I will be happy to repeat or possibly better in the early years of the next century. The overall election results were by any measure a normalisation of the Liberal vote, coming off the top of about 60 per cent in 1993.

However, as inevitable as some losses had to be they do not mask the dismay and sadness at losing colleagues. I thank those who have not returned for their friendship and their work for our State and their electorates over the past four years. They served their electorates well and I hope that their Labor replacements will be measured by those standards at the next election.

Unfortunately, some aspects of the Labor campaign descended to an appalling and shameful level. The Leader of the Opposition went about his personal, public campaign, on the one hand preaching inclusiveness and cooperation, bipartisan support and the like, whilst on the other hand approving the most despicable campaign activities at the grassroots in a number of individual electorates. The lies and defamation by the political opponents of the Liberal Party in Florey in particular reduced the electioneering to the lowest level I have ever seen in any State election.

And I refer also to the travel rorts issue. How Labor distorted and lied about the travel of Liberal MPs, to such a degree and consistency that there can be no other conclusion but that Labor wants to end parliamentary travel allowances. It may be said that Labor's virulence about travel was the reason why some of its members won their seats. It is pretty obvious that having defeated Liberals by criticising, by innuendo and smear their legitimate travel activities Labor members will not use their allowances in the future. If they do, it would represent an astonishing hypocrisy, and at the next election we will assuredly have to return the favour and let their electors know about their activities. One could say that it would be a good example of 'the biter bit'.

For every member of this House, I believe that employment should be a priority issue, and as Australia becomes more deeply enmeshed in the global economy and as the effects of international competition wash continually over our industry and commerce, it is the top priority of nearly every South Australian home. For me it is a prospective challenge—prospective in the sense that with the ministerial restructure as announced by the Premier I will carry the employment and youth portfolio for our Government.

Clearly before this confirmation it is not my role to forecast Government initiatives. However, there are certain parameters that impact on employment in this State that are peculiar to South Australia. During the all too long years of Labor Governments throughout the 1970s and the 1980s a large number of our enterprises were taken over by national or interstate companies and their head offices and boards shifted to the Eastern States. It was not just the physical removal of head offices that diminished our prospects: it was the shift of policy making and investment priorities that unquestionably diminished our prospects.

Labor seems to care little about the consequence—so little that history shows that its members did their damndest to scuttle the great Roxby mine at Olympic Dam, regardless of the outcome for South Australian employment.

Unfortunately, the flight of management to the East was dwarfed by a far more malevolent influence: the staggering growth of the State debt. Clearly, the South Australian community recognises that Labor is responsible for the more than \$7.4 billion debt that we carry and the more than \$2 million that it costs us every day just to pay the interest bill. That is why Labor sits opposite again, this time into the next century, the twenty-first century, contemplating its continuing and, I contend, rightful place in the South Australian political scene: on the Opposition benches.

Particularly regarding the Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Labor Party, I find it fascinating to watch their antics as they try to shed their past, like a snake that sheds its skin in the spring. 'Let us understand', they say, 'It's all in the past, and we must put all this behind us'—the way in which Labor opposed Roxby Downs and created Adelaide's traffic problems by abandoning the remedies contained in the metropolitan transport plan? Labor lost our State Bank in Australia's largest financial crash. 'Those things and all the others are behind us', they say—'We would never do it again.' Well, would they not, Mr Speaker?

Right now, in December 1997 just after the innuendo and lies of the last election campaign, the Leader of the Opposition and his Party are again playing games with the boat harbor development at West Beach and putting at risk this multi-million dollar development plan at Holdfast Shores. It seems that nothing has changed for Labor: it is the old 'bare knuckle politics first, State second' attitude that has done so much damage to this State over the past two decades.

Should we swallow the Labor story and forget? At South Australia's peril, I suggest. Labor has not forgotten, and it operates in the same way as it always has. If there is a vote in it, it will jump on the bandwagon, chuck out the project, and then to hell with the living standards that it supposedly represents. I do not look forward to more of the old Labor machine or the new dominant group called 'the machine', which seems to be enjoying some power at the moment, but I do look forward to the new accountability under which it will be exposed for all South Australians.

As you know, Mr Speaker, employment is a priority agenda item for this Government. The jobs task force set up by the Premier immediately after the election is confirmation of that priority. It is important though for both Government and the private sector to look at ways of preserving youth morale and optimism and, importantly, the working culture of our future. With many interests parallel to employment, by definition, youth affairs represents the transition of our young people through its many and varied activities and training into wide fields of responsibility.

Young people between the ages of 12 and 25 represent approximately 19 per cent of this State's population. In the 1996 census, the number of young people in that group was 277 251, out of a total population of just over 1.4 million. This Government has endorsed a youth consultation and participation approach in an innovative and two-pronged approach to address the needs of young people. We need to listen to them, to learn from them, and to respond to them—and this Government will.

The Government will ensure that it responds positively and enthusiastically to the needs of our young people, including early intervention and prevention strategies. It has already made a strong commitment to acknowledge and celebrate the positive contributions of young South Australians to let them know of their value to our State. The strong Government focus on youth celebration is reflected in initiatives such as the Youth Media Awards, the Youth Music Awards, Youth Leadership Grants, the Youth Grants Directory and the Youth Parliament, which are all positive ways in which the community can recognise and acknowledge the achievements of young South Australians.

I look forward to developing these strategies and widening the debate within our community, centred on the pro-development decisions and the ongoing reform agenda of our Government. Young people are our bond with the future, and I hope they will not get sucked into the negativity that seems to prevail too often, particularly in this State. Young people need to develop a sense of their own worth, optimism and confidence so they can be part of this State's future. I encourage them to adopt the attitude of successful and achieving people. This State needs to develop this sense of optimism—how dearly we need to develop it.

I refer now to South Australia's latest report from SA Great, entitled 'SA—Employment Outlook to the Year 2010'. The report indicates that South Australia has been able to shrug off the disaster of the State Bank and the recession of the early 1990s, but states:

In quick succession the Centre for Economic Studies November 1997 economic briefing report, BankSA's Trends publication and the latest Yellow Pages Australia Small Business Index all indicate the most optimistic pictures of likely economic and employment growth trends for South Australia over the next 12 to 18 months.

In the past few days we have seen the ANZ job figures indicate 'the strongest trend level of job advertisements in South Australia since August 1990'.

Our future employment depends on building on our successes and achievements over the past four years. Let me remind members of the following projects: Olympic Dam and Roxby Downs mine, the Southern Expressway, the extension of the Adelaide Airport runway to assist our exports, the Mount Barker freeway, the expansion of British Aerospace, new high technology industries such as Motorola and Vision Systems, the magnificent sporting facilities at Mile End for netball and athletics, and the Hindmarsh soccer stadium. The Olympic Dam project alone is estimated to attract around 1 200 jobs, with about 5 500 in the wider community. That is the type of project that ought to be welcomed and celebrated, not condemned.

I turn now specifically to my electorate of Coles and in particular three events of significance over the past couple of months. The first is a project of unique importance within the electorate and indeed this State, that is, the magnificent and now award winning Torrens Linear Park. The impressive river park is Australia's largest river park, extending more than 30 kilometres from the Hills to the coast.

**The Hon. D.C. Wotton:** It is a great Liberal initiative.

**Mrs HALL:** Absolutely. The project was approved by the Tonkin Liberal Government in December 1981, and construction commenced in early 1982. Essentially, the river park provides not only a continuous and well used recreational link from the Hills to the coast but also spectacular landscaping and nine walking and cycling trails. It features innovative, low-cost flood measures, aimed at protecting the surrounding environs from the one in 200 year flood that we know will come one day. The project has been supported by successive State Governments and local government. Federal money has been allocated, and SA Water has acted as its project manager. I pay tribute to the Campbelltown council for the ongoing active and enthusiastic support it has given to this project over all those years.

One of the many information sheets on the river park lists the removal of noxious weeds and pest plants, earth works which have increased channel capacity and assisted drainage, construction of access roads, paths and trails, the planting of more than 300 000 species and the creation of many habitat areas. The Torrens Linear Park was officially opened in September this year by the Premier, and it is a matter of great pride to me to be a member of the Government that completed this outstanding \$34 million project. To be managed by the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs, this very special project has just won the top prize at the 1997 Civic Trust awards—the Ian Macdonald award for landscaping and streetscaping. It has been praised as a 'natural riverine character from what was a degraded river system' and is now recognised as 'one of Adelaide's best kept and most picturesque secrets and a wonderful asset for Adelaide's metropolitan area', as quoted in the local paper last week.

As many members have heard from me before, I am immensely proud of the cultural diversity within my electorate of Coles, with a statistical breakdown showing that the electorate has a higher percentage than the South Australian average and the Australian average of 'language spoken at home' in Greek, Italian, Chinese and German. The biggest percentage of people from a non-English speaking background are those with an Italian heritage, numbering more than 30 per cent of the electorate of Coles. That is more than 7 000 people.

Religious festivals, in particular, play a most important role in the lives of this community. There are many festivals celebrated at the St Francis of Assisi church in Newton, with two of the most significant in the past two months being the Festa of Montevergine and the Festa of the Madonna dell'Arco. In fact, the Festa of Montevergine has the distinct honour of being the largest religious festival of its type in Australia. The role of festas is growing stronger as Italian migrants try to maintain their traditions and their culture, to ensure that it is passed on to future generations. The importance that they play is evidenced by the number of people who attend.

The Festa of Montevergine, I am proud to say, can now fall into the category of a major event, as it attracts devotees and brings together thousands of people from across Australia. This year the thousands of people who participated in the three kilometre-long procession were joined by more than 3 000 people who travelled from Victoria, Mount Gambier, Canberra, Western Australia and, for the first time, busloads from New South Wales, totalling more than 13 000 people who participated this time. It was the forty-second anniversary of the feast, usually held on the last Sunday of

September. This festa was started by devoted parishioners, predominantly from the Campania region, with the assistance of the Capuchin Friars of Newton. From those early days, the Festa of Montevergine has grown, as I said before, into the largest religious festival in Australia.

The other Festa, the Festa of the Madonna dell'Arco, does not yet attract the same numbers. Nevertheless, the devotion, support and untiring effort by the volunteers and committee members has the same importance and ensures the success of this festival into the future. This festa is celebrated on the third Sunday of November and, again, the Capuchin Friars at Newton provide the assistance to the parishioners of the community, predominantly from the Vesuvius area. Coles, in my view, is very much the richer for the variety of cultures expressed through its associations of church, sporting activities, schools, commercial and industrial enterprises, and the loyalties given to them by its individual citizens.

I am pleased to highlight a significant redevelopment project within my electorate, and make particular reference to the Governor's speech. Under the heading of 'Education, employment and training' he referred to the redevelopment of the Norwood/Morialta High School. The middle school campus is located in Coles and the senior school campus in the electorate of my friend and colleague Joe Scalzi, the member for Hartley. I am told that the total expenditure will be about \$3.2 million and will be divided between the two campuses. Approximately \$1 million is to be spent on the senior campus and about \$2 million on the middle campus, of which \$1 million will upgrade the air-conditioning system. It is a redevelopment and upgrade that I am sure the students and staff, in particular, will appreciate at the beginning of summer next year.

Our politics are now about to enter a new and interesting, perhaps sometimes exciting, phase. Labor's increased numbers will provide a higher level of competition for the Government, but it will do much more than that. There will now be a high level of accountability for the Opposition, and that will bring an uncomfortable but much needed scrutiny of its many activities. The Government, for its part, will obviously continue its administration, as others have done, by successfully cooperating with Independent members.

The Government for its part will obviously continue its administration as others have done by successfully cooperating with Independent members. The most recent Labor Administration from 1989 to 1993 governed with 22 members out of a House of 47. It did so on the basis of a 48 per cent vote and a distorted electoral system as the basis for success. I cannot help but reflect that, if democracy had prevailed in 1989, Labor would not have governed and South Australia would have kept its bank. Those reflections now are useful in this new age of accountability which, I reiterate, now faces the Labor Opposition.

The Government must not be deterred by the games of its political opponents. We need to get on with the harbour at West Beach, the Wine Centre at Hackney, the Adelaide-Darwin rail link and the many other positives initiated by the Liberal Party. The people of my electorate will benefit from these initiatives, along with other South Australians, and they look forward to the positives that lie ahead.

In conclusion I pay a tribute to Sir Eric Neal, the Governor, for his opening remarks at the beginning of the Forty-Ninth Parliament. I also thank the many members of the Liberal branches in the electorate of Coles and my campaign committee. In particular I thank my campaign manager for untiring work in some of the early days of the

campaign under great personal difficulties. I pay a tribute to my personal assistant, Angela Forgioni, for her untiring support over the past few weeks in particular. I look forward to working with the new members in the House. I support the Address in Reply.

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** I am pleased to be able to participate in the Address in Reply and it is my intention to speak only briefly. I thank His Excellency the Governor, Sir Eric Neal, for the speech with which he opened the Forty-Ninth Parliament. I commend both Sir Eric and Lady Neal for the way they have made themselves available to all South Australians. In the very short time they have been in office they have won the hearts of many people in this State and in other States. We are very fortunate to have somebody of the calibre of Sir Eric Neal and for him to be supported by Lady Neal in that most important office in this State.

I also congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on being elected to that high office. I welcome all new members in this place and hope that those who have just joined us as colleagues will enjoy their time in this place as much as I have over a long period. I also commend and thank my colleagues who are no longer with us for the dedication and commitment that they have shown in so many ways. It would be totally inappropriate for me to refer to individuals, but I immensely enjoyed the opportunity to work with a number of those colleagues and I wish them well in future. As many of us had the opportunity to work with those people in their electorates, I am very much aware of the dedication and commitment they showed to their electors and constituents, particularly those in marginal seats. I also take this opportunity to thank my constituents in the electorate of Heysen. I have enjoyed strong support in that section of the Adelaide Hills over a long period of time.

The last election was probably one of the more interesting. In a seat that has been a very strong Liberal seat it was interesting to see again a very low vote for Labor but a much increased vote for the Democrats. I was rather disappointed about the vote for Labor in Heysen, because I had considerable respect for the very young candidate who stood for Labor in the electorate of Heysen. I am sure that, when given a further opportunity in another seat—because he will never win Heysen for the Labor Party—he will do very well as far as a political career is concerned. I enjoyed the brief opportunities that I had to work with him.

I am fortunate to have served as a Minister in two Governments, namely, the Tonkin Government between 1979 and 1982—a time I enjoyed immensely—and over the last four years under Premiers Brown and Olsen. Certainly, they were quite exceptional years and ones that I will always remember. I want to place on record again my thanks—although I previously had the opportunity to do so with respect to the period between 1979 and 1982—to both the political staff and the staff in my ministerial office for the commitment and dedication that they showed over the last four years. I was very fortunate to have excellent staff all the time that I served. Many of them have gone in different directions now, but I also wish them well in the future in whatever direction they might take.

I do not intend to dwell on how successful we were in government or on the impact that the Government had in this State over the last four years. I do not believe that it is appropriate to do that at this time, because I will have the opportunity on other occasions. I want to make the point that one of the greatest disappointments that I had over the last

four years was that it seemed impossible for us to be able to sell the Government's achievements in that time to the people of the State. The Liberal Government made many significant achievements over the last four years.

I am concerned that, in time to come and as has occurred in the past, future Governments will continue to have difficulty in letting their constituencies know just what they have achieved. I say that, because fewer people are reading the one daily publication, the *Advertiser*, and because more people appear to be relying on three second grabs from television news to keep them informed about what is happening in this State and around the world. It is also extremely difficult to inform people of the positive things that are happening. That has been the case for some time, and I regret that that should be the case.

I want refer to some of the achievements that were made in the three portfolio areas for which I had responsibility. In the Environment and Natural Resources portfolio, there were a number of areas I was pleased to be associated with and a number of success stories. I was particularly pleased to be able to serve as Lead Minister in South Australia with the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council. I think the quality and health of the water in the Murray River must be one of the greatest challenges, if not the greatest challenge, that we have in this State. I was delighted in having played a major role to bring down a cap on all diversions from the Murray River, and I believe that that will improve the health of the river significantly.

I am also pleased that we were able to progress to such an extent in regard to the trading of water between States. The current Minister has referred to that in recent days. I am delighted that that can now happen and, again, I believe that will improve the situation considerably. Of course, our main aim and goal must be to improve the quality of the water and the health of the river system generally.

One of the other achievements I was pleased to be associated with was the introduction of the catchment management program in South Australia, particularly the introduction of the Torrens, Patawalonga and Murray River Catchment Boards. I am very pleased with the way in which the community has supported those programs so strongly, even with the need for a levy to be brought down. There was very little opposition to that levy and a considerable amount of support. I was pleased that the Water Resources Act was introduced during my term as Minister. It is a complex piece of legislation and one that will need constant review. I know that that will happen.

I was pleased to be associated with the establishment of the Environment Protection Authority in South Australia, and I commend the authority and those who work with it for the progress that has been made in the cleaning-up of this State through that body.

Over a period of time, it has concerned me that there have been those on the other side of the House who have been very keen to ensure there were more prosecutions on the part of the EPA. I do not believe that is what the EPA is necessarily about. I think it is a matter of working constructively and cooperatively with industry, rather than looking to take action and to use the hard fist.

Regarding the parks agenda, the new developments at Mount Lofty summit and at Wilpena were two developments that I was pleased to be associated with as well. I guess the aspect that gave me more pleasure than any other was the fact that so many people in the community were prepared to assist in environmental programs and projects to support those

developments. As has been said on numerous occasions, there are more volunteers who work in so many different ways for environmental programs in this State than in any other State of Australia, and that is something of which we should be proud. It is not necessarily the result of any action that Government has taken, but it is a fact of life. We are fortunate that youngsters through the schools, service clubs and various other organisations are prepared and very keen to support so many of these environmental programs. That suggests that we can look forward to the future to improve the environment in the State.

I point out that I found it somewhat frustrating that in that portfolio so much emphasis was placed on issues that I did not see as being of significance, and I refer to the amount of protest by a small group of people that brought with it a considerable amount of publicity on the removal of a few trees on the Mount Lofty Summit to ensure that a view was provided for the thousands of people who visit that site. It has always been the case that people go to the Mount Lofty summit to be able to view the city and the Piccadilly Valley. It is a very pleasant place to visit. It was vitally important—particularly after that site lay there as an absolute disgrace for some 13 or 14 years—that, with a new development, people were able to be able to enjoy those views, and I was determined that that should be the case. I was concerned that so many people got up tight about an issue such as that instead of putting more support behind matters such as the importance of cleaning up the Murray and ensuring that we have in place appropriate water catchment programs, and so on.

I want to speak briefly about the responsibilities I had in the Family and Community Services portfolio. I want to commend Stephen Baker, the member for Mitcham, for the commitment he showed in his role as Treasurer of this State. I found it difficult to convince Treasury officials that, in talking about our youngsters, we should be talking about micro-economic reform for Family and Community Services as much as many of the other portfolios where it is so important, because if we do not get it right with these children who are in detention centres—and it is unfortunate that our centres are just about full to capacity, at this stage at least—and get them on the right track, those children, as they mature, will cost the taxpayers of this State an enormous amount. We should want to assist these children to do everything we can, because many of them have had very little family support and support from people in the community. We need to be patient with those children and assist them as they get older. It is vitally important that the resources are put in to ensuring that those children are cared for.

I was always concerned about the fragility of families, and I was delighted to be able to establish the Office for Families and Children. Again, a number of dedicated people are really committed to the programs that have come out of that office and are working for families and children in this State, particularly in supporting young people who are at risk. I was delighted to be able to establish the Office of the Ageing and the Advisory Board on Ageing to bring down the 10 year plan. It is the only plan of its type in Australia; in fact, a considerable amount of interest has been shown from overseas countries in that plan and its implementation. The amount of consultation that took place throughout South Australia, both in metropolitan and rural areas, was significant indeed and that helped considerably in the development of that plan.

I also want to say how pleased I was to be able to improve the home and community care funding in this State. For a

long time that had been neglected. The matching of Commonwealth and State funding had been left to deteriorate and was not achieved under the previous Labor Government. I was very pleased that we were able to assist in that area.

I want to refer to a number of issues on future occasions and I will take that opportunity at that time. Again, I am pleased to be able to participate in this Address in Reply and I look forward to further occasions when other issues of concern that I have can be raised that affect people in the community in South Australia.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I am pleased to support the Address in Reply. At the outset, I congratulate you, Sir, formally on your election to the office of Speaker. I look forward to working with you in this Parliament as the Government Whip, even though I think that term is not officially recognised in the House, so I am simply known as the member for Goyder. Certainly, it is important for both Whips to have a close working relationship with the Speaker if we want the House to function efficiently and effectively.

I take this opportunity to say how sorry I was for those members who lost their seats at the recent election. I had a close association with all members on this side of the House and it is one of the vagaries of the political system that you are never assured of continuing in your position as a member for a particular seat after an election, and that happened in so many cases at the last election. We have lost many valuable members, members who had a lot of talent and who had the potential to make a significant contribution to this State but, for the next four years, they will not be able to do it through this Parliament. To those of them who may stand again in the future, I wish them well and would certainly welcome them back into this Parliament. I say to all of them that I hope they are able to find a position that will suit them, that they will be able to use their talents and be able to achieve in their own area of work, just as they achieved a lot while they were members in the House of Assembly.

I also welcome the new members to the House of Assembly. We have many new members and we certainly have many women in politics. It is great to see a greater gender balance, with so many women in Parliament and I congratulate them on their election to office and certainly look forward to working with them or debating with or against them on the floor of this Parliament. I particularly welcome the new members on the Government side, particularly the member for Waite, who is a member of the Liberal Party, and also the member for MacKillop, an Independent Liberal, the member for Gordon who is an Independent and the member for Chaffey who is a National Party member.

There is no doubt that politics is an unknown game, and the one certainty is the uncertainty. Having been re-elected to the position of Government Whip, I must say that I am finding my tasks significantly different and more challenging than they were in the previous four years. When one is a Whip of 36 members as against 11 members, one always has the safety of being able to suspend Standing Orders if things go wrong in the House. Now that I am Whip of 23 members—but with you in the Chair, Mr Speaker, 22 members—as against the Opposition with 21 members, two Independents and one National Party member, I do not believe that I can afford to make a mistake, and members must always make sure that they are in the House when they need to be and that they are certain of what is going on. There must be no uncertainty. I look forward to the challenge in the coming years.

I express a very big 'Thank you' to the many people who helped me in the recent election campaign. It is always a very humbling experience for members to weigh up just how much help they have had from other people in their electorate and, quite often, from outside their electorate. It is very unwise for any member to think that he or she will win the seat on their own. All of us are vulnerable in our seat, no matter how safe it is. Indeed, the safer it is, the greater our vulnerability from Independents, usually those of a similar political persuasion. The more marginal it is, the more vulnerable it becomes involving a person of a different political persuasion.

Whilst I have not done a detailed analysis of who helped me, a quick count of those who helped at polling booths, with folding and in other areas, totalled more than 75 people. In an electorate such as Goyder, which is very extensive, the people on the ground are absolutely essential. I never take anything for granted in the political scene. People often say to me, 'You are okay, John, because you are in a safe seat.' I always work on the assumption that I won the last election by one vote and, if I want to get back, I have to improve that vote. All members should keep that in mind, as we are in Parliament because of the electors who put us here. We are in this place to represent them and to represent all shades of political opinion to the best of our ability.

I thank the people of Goyder for having sufficient confidence in me to return me at the last election. I say to the electors of Goyder that I will seek to do my very best for them. I will seek to represent their interests as I have done in the past. I will continue to work hard and diligently, and I am available for my electors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but I really appreciate those people who do not take advantage of telephoning between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m. If they wish to do that, that is their right and, as a servant of the people, I must accept that.

I was not 100 per cent happy with all aspects of the campaign in my electorate, particularly the political advertising. The Electoral Act makes it very clear that we operate under different rules and regulations from Federal members. Therefore, I was annoyed that at least one of my political opponents put up back-to-back signs on stobie poles and elsewhere. The Electoral Act is quite clear that posters are to be at least one metre apart. By my reckoning, if two posters are placed back to back, they are not one metre apart; rather they are centimetres and possibly millimetres apart, and that is a transgression of the Act.

I took up this issue with the Electoral Commissioner and asked for something to be done, but the answer was, 'You may have problems in your electorate, Mr Meier, but I can cite examples in many other electorates where the same thing is occurring. I can hardly address them in your electorate without addressing them in all others.' If we are not able to address issues that are transgressing the Electoral Act, then change the Act. If it is not working and people are putting up signs back to back, then make it legal. In the Federal scene, candidates are allowed to erect signs back to back.

If we are to have rules and regulations, let us adhere to them and make sure there are appropriate penalties so that a candidate does not get away with something that the opposing candidate does not attempt in the belief that it would be transgressing the Act. I will seek to address this issue during the coming four-year term so that at the next election we perhaps will be working under different rules in that area.

Secondly, I wish to address the issue of candidates being able to say, 'Vote 1, Joe Blow'. A reading of the Act indicates very clearly that that sort of advertisement is not



allowed in the State election. Every time I have had opposing candidates from, say, minor Parties who do not seem to be familiar with the Act, they insert their advertisements in the paper, 'Vote 1, so and so'. I would love to do the same scenario, but I know it is transgressing the Act. Again, I took up this matter, and the reply was, 'Many others are doing it; how will we endeavour to stop it?' My counter reply was, 'There is still another week or two to go. I am sure the advertisement "Vote 1" will reappear next week; please let the candidate know that that is not right.' But that did not occur.

It is another area that I wish to bring to the attention of the Electoral Commissioner, and I would hope that we as a Parliament are able to address that issue. Personally, I do not see too much wrong with the concept 'Vote 1', even though our Electoral Act requires that we have preferential voting and that members put a number in each box. They were the two key issues I wanted to highlight.

I must say that I felt my campaign was managed very well by, in the first instance, my campaign manager, Mr Jeff Cook. I publicly thank Jeff, who has been my campaign manager for two consecutive elections. It is great to have someone in charge who knows what he is doing, and I felt very confident having him as campaign manager. I would also express my gratitude to the campaign committee, who made sure that everything was going as smoothly as one would hope during an election campaign. I will not mention them all by name, but I sincerely thank those persons. Their help and assistance has been greatly appreciated. I look forward to continuing to work with them. I also say a very sincere 'Thank you' to the more than 75 people who helped in a volunteer capacity. I freely acknowledge that the results in Goyder would not have been as positive as they were had it not been for the many voluntary helpers involved.

The State campaign was an interesting one, without question. I have to recognise that many members, whom I have already congratulated, came in on the other side. The result is, I suppose, something that one could analyse and seek to continue to analyse, and I guess there are many issues associated with it. One will never be sure whether one has identified the clear reasons why certain persons were elected or were not elected. But I do believe that we will have to address the issue of accurate information being provided during an election campaign. I guess the issue of accountability by members of Parliament is something that has been in the public arena for many years and will continue to be so.

Many people would like to have some sort of safeguard to ensure that if an elected member of Parliament clearly and deliberately breaks a promise he or she loses their seat. I am not advocating that. I do not think that would work because often people are supposedly misquoted or quoted out of context and, without doubt, circumstances can change. It would be very irresponsible of a Government not to modify its stated program if conditions changed and it was required to take drastic action, thereby breaking its basic promises made during the campaign. Nevertheless, I was disturbed during the election campaign when issues such as the airport curfew were raised.

A headline in the *Advertiser* of 24 September stated "'Plot" to reduce airport curfew'; the introductory paragraph of the article states:

The Adelaide Airport curfew took off as an election issue yesterday with Labor promising to fight any moves to reduce the curfew.

That sounded just fine in an ordinary context. Labor is allowed to say what it wants. I was very surprised to read that because I thought the Labor Party was supportive of the Government's efforts to increase economic development in the State by allowing greater use of our airport. I guess it is Labor's business if it does not want South Australia to grow at its present rate. However, I was really annoyed by the hypocrisy of that statement, which was identified by the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) in that same article when she said that in March 1993 Labor had given approval to Qantas to land four flights a week at 5.5 a.m.

Why would an Opposition want to do a complete about turn when, first, it had been advancing down that path prior to losing government; and, secondly, when it should have realised that it would do much more harm than good to the State. The reason is very obvious: Labor wanted to target those marginal seats around the airport. Labor felt that if it made a promise to people not to increase the curfew the people would vote for Labor. However, I believe there is a dishonesty in that and I hope the people see through it.

Another example that annoyed me was the headline 'Liberals hold secret tax plans: Rann' in the *Advertiser* of 24 September, the introductory paragraph of which stated:

Secret tax plans are being drawn up by the Liberals for after the State election, the Opposition Leader, Mr Rann, claims.

The paragraph further states:

'We know he ([Mr Olsen] is planning tax increases because our sources within the Liberal Party say there are taxes planned after the election,' Mr Rann said. 'That is why we are trying to flush them out.' Mr Rann refused to give details of the planned taxes, saying he would be talking about that 'later in the campaign'.

It is absolutely irresponsible, in my opinion, to release such a statement when there is no substance in it at all. The Premier clearly responded that there certainly were no plans for increases in taxes as identified by Mr Rann, but it is a regular scare campaign, and I guess it works. An article in the *Advertiser* dated 23 September, under the headline 'Labor's BAD tax cut', states:

Businesses would receive a 40 per cent cut to their bank accounts debits (BAD) tax under a Labor Government.

However, it is very ironic that the BAD tax was introduced by a Labor Federal Government in 1983. It was then transferred to the States in 1991 by Labor, and the debits tax rate was doubled by the Labor State Government in 1993.

The hypocrisy of some of the promises that the Labor Party made during the campaign is highlighted by that example, and I believe that we must endeavour to stop those sorts of promises—it is clear that the previous Government had brought in the policy, that it was political grandstanding and that the Labor Party had no intention of introducing it if it had been elected.

The classic case of grandiose promises was highlighted by the massive bill that Labor identified during its four week election campaign, plus pre-election promises. An assessment by the Treasurer indicated that the Labor promises would rip \$427 million from recurrent expenditure and \$245 million from capital expenditure over four years: a total bill of \$672 million. It is amazing that people did not identify straightaway that, if Labor had been elected, the State would have gone spiralling into debt at a faster rate than was the case prior to when Labor left office.

It would have been total irresponsibility if Labor had sought to implement all the promises that it had made, and it would have done this State untold damage. I am so thankful

that the Labor Party was not elected to office, because I would hate to think where this State would have gone economically had that happened. It would have been an absolute tragedy for the economy of South Australia. It would have meant that all the good work that has been done in the past four years would have been undone within a very short period.

It is noteworthy also to record what the Liberal Party promised during the same period, namely, some \$45 million in programs from recurrent expenditure and \$26.5 million from capital expenditure over four and a half years, a total of \$71.5 million. So, if one compares the \$71.5 million worth of promises by the Liberal Party against the \$672 million worth of promises by the Labor Party, one can understand how there is still no sense whatsoever of proper economic management in the mind of the members of the Labor Party.

The other issue which I believe it highlights is that Labor will literally promise anything to get into power. I say to the electors of this State that they must see through what I would refer to as false promises and false advertising.

Many other issues were raised during the campaign at a State level and, generally speaking, I believe that it was the scare tactics that in the end managed to bring the swing against the Liberal Party. Those scare tactics went right down to what could only be described as a dirt campaign in many of the marginal seats, where the Labor Party sought to identify, invariably in a distorted fashion, what members had spent in terms of travel allowances, or similar. If the Labor Party is going to resort to those tactics, one could argue that all bets would be off in future elections. However, I would not want to see that happen. I believe that we must clean up election campaigns and bring in a degree of honesty that has not been seen in recent years, so that the people are able to weigh up real and genuine promises and firm commitments, and not simply pie in the sky commitments.

The Governor's address to the combined Houses of Parliament was full of commitments for the coming year, in particular—and in some cases for the coming four years—and it is very pleasing that the new Government is able to build on the work that it has undertaken in the past four years.

Everyone should be able to recognise that the Liberal Government in the past four years had one of the most unenviable tasks in the history of this State—possibly the most unenviable task of any Government of this State—in having to rebuild the economy. People do not like funding cuts in any area because they become used to a certain amount of money flowing in, but in the past four years we had to make it clear, if we wanted South Australia to continue to be a viable State, a place that would attract investment and a place that would attract rather than lose people, that the fundamental economic philosophy had to change. We have sought to change it. We have had to make cuts where we did not want to. Certainly in the last budget many of the cuts were corrected and funding is back on stream.

Areas of waste hopefully have been cut out in many cases, but more work is still to be done. An over supply of public servants has been corrected to a large extent. It amazes me that I am still able to get replies from departments and have immediate communication with departments, despite there being some 12 000 fewer persons employed than there were four years previously. One wonders what those 12 000 people did during that period, and why can the Public Service still operate so effectively and efficiently with fewer people on the payroll? Certainly the Public Service is most important to any State and it needs to be there, and it needs to be efficiently

run. I would hope that Public Service employees have a real commitment to their work; that they are committed to the State and the development of the State; and that they do not feel that it is just a job and they wish they could be doing something else.

The Government has much to do in the next four years. Many of the issues were highlighted during the election campaign. I look forward to being a member of this Government and continuing to rebuild South Australia. There is no doubt, however, that whilst in an economic sense we have made huge efforts in the past four years, we have to continue to highlight the many positives we have achieved in relation to society as a whole and the benefits to society—the people, the mums and dads, the children, our elderly citizens and to the generation coming up to take our place. I can stand very proud in this Chamber and say, 'In our policies we have sought to ensure that we are benefiting all those people.' However, we as a Government have to sell our message much more than we have and remind people of our efforts and endeavours in attracting new industry and enterprises to South Australia.

We have to try to reverse the trend of companies moving out of South Australia. People as a whole will benefit from this. It will lead to better education facilities because more money will be available due to businesses employing more people. It will lead to better health services. It will also lead to other positives such as a better opportunity for recreation because people will have the opportunity to ensure that not only are they given the opportunity to work but to enjoy their freedom due to our society being built up as a result of the State benefiting from these positive steps.

I believe that this Government will now be able to build in a way that has not been possible in the past four years. I am well aware that our task will be difficult, because this is a finely divided House and in another place we do not have a majority. I appeal to the Labor Party and the Australian Democrats to allow commonsense to prevail and not simply to make political issues out of examples that could be detrimental to this State. We need to govern together for the benefit of the whole of South Australia. It is our firm commitment to do so, and I look forward to working not only with my colleagues on this side of the Chamber but also with those on the other side of the Chamber for the betterment of South Australia.

**Mr EVANS** secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

*A quorum having been formed:*

#### **STATUTES AMENDMENT (HOLDFAST SHORES) BILL**

The Legislative Council disagreed with the amendments made in the House of Assembly.

Consideration in Committee.

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

That the amendments be insisted upon.

Last evening there was a very lengthy debate in this House, and this House recommended some amendments to the other place. They have been rejected and it is my belief we should insist upon them.

Motion carried.

The Legislative Council requested that a conference be granted respecting certain amendments to the Bill. In the

event of a conference being agreed to, the Legislative Council would be represented thereat by five managers.

**The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE:** I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council granting a conference as requested by the Council, and that the time and place for holding it be the Plaza Room at 9.30 p.m. today, and that Messrs Armitage, Conlon, Ingerson, Rann and Williams be the managers on the part of this House.

Motion carried.

The Legislative Council agreed to the time and place appointed by the House of Assembly for the holding of the conference.

*[Sitting suspended from 9.30 to 10.40 p.m.]*

At 10.40 p.m. the following recommendations of the conference were reported to the House:

*As to Amendments Nos. 1 to 3:*

That the Legislative Council do not further insist on its disagreement to these amendments.

*As to Amendment No. 4:*

That the House of Assembly amend its amendment as follows:

New section 886bb—After paragraph (b) of subsection (2) insert new word and paragraph as follows:

and

(c) in order to ensure that the enjoyment of the coast by the public generally is not materially diminished due to the construction of any such boating facility.

And that the Legislative Council agrees thereto.

*As to amendment No. 5:*

That the Legislative Council do not further insist on its disagreement to this amendment.

Consideration in Committee of the recommendations of the conference.

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

That the recommendations of the conference be agreed to.

The conference was very productive. Agreement was reached on six major issues which were debated in the conference, and the following decisions were made:

(1) Surety be given to the Glenelg project by guaranteeing approval for a boat facility to be built to the redefined criteria at West Beach.

(2) Structural safety for a one in 100-year storm event will remain. The height of the overtopping structure to be reduced and redesigned from a one in 100-year to a one in 10-year storm criteria.

(3) The redesign to incorporate the minimum length groyne needed to produce the optimum sand management outcomes and the harbor depth to be the minimum to cater for the current needs of the Glenelg Sailing Club and public launching facilities. Redesign to be completed within two weeks and certification to be undertaken simultaneously by the Institution of Engineers or a party to be nominated by them together with the Coast Protection Board. An independent environmental consultant will also prepare an assessment for public release.

(4) The sand management plan to be made available to the public.

(5) The offer of the Opposition to support a compulsory acquisition, if necessary, of the Glenelg Sailing Club is acknowledged.

(6) The Government undertakes to indemnify Charles Sturt council against any damage to the beach directly caused by the West Beach facility.

The decisions and resolutions made by the conference need to be explained. First, all amendments put forward by the House of Assembly were agreed to by the conference and primarily that included an amendment put forward by the member for Colton with one slight amendment. That amendment was put forward during the conference.

That amendment, inserting subsection (2)(c) in addition to the member for Colton's amendment, is as follows:

in order to ensure that the enjoyment of the coast by the public generally is not materially diminished due to the construction of any such boating facility.

The outcome of the conference means that the Holdfast Shores development can now begin. It also means that a facility for boats will be built at West Beach. The conference has agreed to certain restrictions and requirements which essentially will enable the West Beach facility to begin within two weeks. That is an important decision made by the conference.

Another major decision made is that the general groyne would be constructed in such a way that the underwater part would have a structural safety limit built in as if it was for a one in 100-year storm. The recommendation is that on top of that structure—bearing in mind that we get high and low tides that may vary slightly—there will be an overtopping structure reduced and redesigned for a one in 10-year storm. That important agreement was reached and is acknowledged from the Government's perspective. All the issues put forward and agreed will give us, in my view, one of the best opportunities we have had in South Australia for a long time to develop a major tourism infrastructure at Glenelg and to enable the Government's fundamental plan to proceed. It also illustrates this Parliament's recognition of the fact that some changes could be agreed to. That is an important issue and we can now get on with the job of building a long-awaited tourism development at Glenelg and enable a relocation of the Glenelg Sailing Club from its Glenelg site to the West Beach site.

Many people involved in the boating and recreational fishing industries will be happy with the outcome, and I believe that we will now be able to get on with developing a major infrastructure and tourism development project in our State. We will be seen as a pro-development State, concerned with making sure that, following the discussion of the relevant issues in this Parliament, at the end of the day a practical project can go ahead with the Parliament's support.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** In supporting the agreement, the Opposition wanted to ensure that there were some guarantees to secure some environmental protections for West Beach. We have considerable concerns about the West Beach part of this development and the environmental impact of the groyne. We wanted to make sure that the project went ahead but, in the process of doing so, because the Government could not have had this legislation passed without agreement, we wanted to make sure that some distinct safeguards were in place. One of the most important safeguards requested by the Charles Sturt council was that there be an indemnity against any damage to the beach directly caused by the West Beach facility. The indemnity is by agreement of this Parliament and is not in the Act, which I think would have been preferred, and I guess it will be a test of the Government's honour in terms of making sure that that indemnity applies. Certainly the enormous public outrage that would occur if the Government welches on the deal would be considerable.

There has been considerable concern about the height of the groyne, and we are pleased that a decision has been made to substantially reduce the height, although I understand that staff of the Premier are now telling the journalists it is only .8 of a metre. That is not what we were told during the negotiations. We were told that it was about one metre. We have also asked that this study be undertaken simultaneously by the Institute of Engineers together with the Coast Protection Board, and that there be an independent environmental

consultant—and I stress ‘independent’—to prepare an assessment for public release.

The whole process will be laughable if that independent consultant is not genuinely independent of both the Government and the developers. Some of the statements made by the developers over the past day or so would give one some doubt about their veracity on some matters. It is very important that this Parliament, and certainly the Opposition, keep an eye on them. The independent environmental consultant will also prepare an assessment. The Public Works Standing Committee will also undertake an analysis of this project and prepare a full report and release. Certainly with its new Presiding Member in place, I am sure that the committee’s scrutiny will be decent, honest, honourable and with integrity.

We have asked that the sand management plan be made available to the public. We have made an offer of compulsory acquisition, if necessary, of the Glenelg Sailing Club if it proves to be recalcitrant in any way, in terms of reaching the most desirable outcome for the people of this State and in terms of protections. We would like to see the harbor depth to be the minimum to cater for the current needs, not the vastly ambitious needs as requested by the Glenelg Sailing Club. It wants 3.9 metres. It should not get it; and nor will it, if the Government is dinkum about sticking to this agreement. In fact, the club wants to cater for particular racing yachts that it does not have there at the moment. We are saying, ‘Let us not worsen an environmental situation when in fact the facility at North Haven is currently available for those very same yachts that it desires.’

We are trying to achieve some financial efficiencies and environmental protections. Over all, this is an important lesson about what can be achieved through negotiation. That has been the problem. We are constantly told that three years of hard work have gone into this project, but we were briefed just over a week ago, and the Government, which refused to meet with us on this project even though it needed our support, agreed to meet with us only this afternoon. This is an example of what can be achieved when the Government negotiates with the Opposition. If that does not occur in the future, it will not get what it wants.

We want to ensure the best outcomes for this State. We believe that there are legitimate concerns, both from West Beach residents and the Charles Sturt council. We have attempted to broker a deal. I am not interested in stories that somehow this was related to internal tensions in the Government, about whether or not the agreement could go ahead. That is not my interest. My interest is to make sure that we achieve some basic protections.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Do you want this voted on or do you want to go back to the conference? I would shut up if I were you. I am saying that, if you meet, negotiate and talk, you have nothing to fear. Bipartisanship is by agreement and not by dictation. The lesson for all members opposite is that you have got a development that I hope will be good for South Australia. We have achieved some protections for the environment and for residents at West Beach. This could have been done a long time ago if the Liberal Party in this State had the leadership and the integrity to talk, particularly when it now has a different set of numbers in this House and in this Parliament. I guess this is a lesson for the future: if the Government meets, talks and negotiates, decent outcomes can be obtained for South Australia. However, if it plays political games, it will be frustrated in that purpose.

**Mr CONLON:** In supporting the agreement that has been reached cooperatively, I make it clear that they are certainly not the arrangements that the Labor Party would have made were we in Government.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** Thank you, Ivan. I reckon I can stay awake longer than you can. It is not necessarily what we would have done, but we have met, as well as we can, some of the priorities that we set ourselves for this Bill. We have done whatever we could to minimise the size of the groyne at West Beach. We have done what we can to minimise the effect of the groyne on the coastline at West Beach, and we have done everything we can to guarantee the maintenance of the coastline north of the groyne into the future through guarantees and indemnities. We have also looked after the small boat launchers and the sailing club, we believe in an appropriate fashion—not in the originally suggested fashion, in that we will give them, in the redesigned facility, a boat launching facility suitable to launch those types of boats which they already have and operate out of Glenelg. We will not—and we make this clear—support converting this into a deep keel facility, as we believe it is inconsistent with the requirements of the coastline.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** We have saved the Government money, and I am sure it is grateful. The position we have taken has been responsible, cooperative and, above all, it has been principled. I will say no more at this point except to do something that I believe should be done, which is to acknowledge the contributions of two members on this side for the protection of West Beach over a number of years. I refer to the member for Ross Smith, Ralph Clarke, who has been untiring in his efforts to ensure that there is a principled outcome, and the member for Hanson, Steph Key, who has had to suffer the insult that she was doing this for political purposes. I point out that Stephanie Key’s corflutes were often next to Chris Gallus’s and Liberal members with respect to this project. Having said that, this is certainly not everything we would have wanted, but we made a promise that we would do whatever we could to ensure that the Glenelg development went ahead. We repeated it over and over, and I was ridiculed for it, but we were as good as our word and we now have this.

**Mr CLARKE:** I rise to support the recommendations of the conference. I endorse the comments of the member for Elder. I believe that this is the best result we could have had, given the circumstances. But I echo his sentiment that, had we been in Government, this would not have been the way in which we would have gone about it. I trust that, with environmental sensitivity, we may retain our northern beaches. Our beaches are our heritage. We walk this earth but briefly, and our beaches should be preserved for our children and our children’s children.

One issue that was not canvassed very much, but something which is very near and dear to me, is the stormwater pipeline. I believe that that is absolute environmental madness. I know it was brought in to help save the member for Colton, because an open channel through the sand dunes would have been politically disastrous for him before the election. A pipeline still chucking out muck, straight into the gulf, when we have already lost two-thirds of our seagrasses, which breed our marine life, is absolute stupidity, and it is so near our SARDI aquatic research centre.

It is an act of madness for the Government to go ahead with that. I implore the Government not to pursue an option

which makes it a requirement for the Patawalonga to be swimmable or to allow primary contact on 365 days of the year. That is absolute stupidity. Not even the Premier in his wildest imagination would go down there on a winter's day to swim for enjoyment. I do not believe that the developers need to have the Patawalonga so clean to attract people to buy their condominiums in that area just because they can swim there in the middle of winter. This pipeline is an act of environmental vandalism, and it should be opposed and resisted.

I turn to the matter regarding the harbor. It is the best outcome. It is like having to eat an unpleasant sandwich: it is a question of whether you digest it with a little mayonnaise on top rather than in its natural state. From time to time, all of us have had to eat a little bit of that sandwich in a different form, some a bit more than others, and I have had a little bit of my own of late.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr CLARKE:** Well, I don't need to. The member for Mawson can describe that only too well. I trust that the Government will honour its solemn undertaking in this area. I conclude by asking the Deputy Premier a question regarding the indemnity granted to the Charles Sturt council. What form will an undertaking made in this House or in both Houses of Parliament have to take for it to have legal effect so that, if necessary, it is actionable by the Charles Sturt council against the Government if it breaches its undertaking or commitment?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** On behalf of the House and certainly the Government, we are absolutely delighted with the recommendation of the conference. This decision is in the interests of South Australia. It is a significant step forward. It demonstrates not only to South Australians but to the national and international investment market that South Australia has some predictability and certainty, and that it is a place where people can invest in the future. A project which has in one instance 80 per cent take up and 60 per cent in another clearly illustrates the demand in the broader community for projects of this nature.

This is a breakthrough in the sense that for a decade and a half we have had major difficulties with projects of this nature. What we have achieved through this Parliament during the course of the past two weeks has broken that impasse of the past decade and a half and we can move forward with a significant project of this nature.

I turn now to the key points recommended by the conference. I assure the Committee of the *bona fides* of the Government to follow through and implement these recommendations with goodwill and spirit. It is important for us to be able to proceed posthaste with the development of this project in South Australia. In particular, I acknowledge the work and efforts of officers such as Rod Hook and others from Government agencies and the bureaucracy who have gone well beyond the commitment of a public servant to their workload. They have taken on this project with some personal commitment and endeavour of which all South Australians ought to be proud.

Regarding the various parties to the proposal, whether it be Baulderstone Hornibrook or other private sector companies that have been involved in the process, I would like to thank them for the way in which they have been prepared to negotiate with the Government, particularly today. They have been readily available to have detailed discussions and to provide comprehensive briefings at quite short notice to

clarify points so that we might be in a position to sign off and move forward with this project.

To all who have been involved with me, the Government and Rod Hook over the course of not only today in particular but the last two weeks, I simply say 'Thank you'. I trust and hope that the resolution of the Parliament is compensation for the commitment and the dedication that they have had to secure this project for South Australians in the future. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that this will be an outstandingly successful project which will meet the interests and aspirations of South Australians and which in doing so, importantly, will ensure the environmental protection of the coastline of this State that we all have regard for.

Mr Chairman, I assure you that this Government—and on the performance of the last four years a Liberal Government as it continues in the future—will honour those commitments to the protection of our beaches, particularly along our city area and precinct. Actions speak louder than words, and the last four years of a Liberal Government have clearly demonstrated our commitment to the retention and protection of our beaches. In the future, there will be no less a commitment than that which has been applied during the course of the last four years.

I commend the recommendation to the Committee. I thank members for their deliberations. On behalf of South Australians who in my view are by far the silent majority and who sincerely and genuinely want this project to succeed now and not at some indeterminate date in the future, I thank them for their support.

**Mr CONDOUS:** I support the decision that has been reached by the conference. I am delighted that the amendments I moved last night have been incorporated in the Bill. I do not think it is a time to be critical of anyone in this Parliament, but we need to reflect on the fact that the great winners out of this are the 1 000 construction workers who will be blessed by gaining employment on this project and who will be able to display the high quality of construction work that this State has produced over a long period of time. Of course, the other winners will be the hundreds of young men and women in this State who have wanted to be committed to the tourism and hospitality industry and who will get that opportunity through the development of the hotel, the tavern, and the retail and the restaurant industry that will be based at Holdfast Shores when the development is completed.

Those of us who visit the eateries of this great State, be it at Rundle Street East, Jetty Road, Glenelg or anywhere else, will know that the level of service delivered by the young men and women of the hospitality industry in this State is probably one of the highest anywhere in the world. I am sure that this Holdfast Shores development will give hundreds of our young people the opportunity to display those skills.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Unlike the member for Colton, I will be critical of some members of this place. I am only new in this place and perhaps I am a little bit idealistic, but I believe that we had the opportunity to do something worthwhile for the people of Adelaide and South Australia and something worthwhile for West Beach. As the Premier has been at pains to say all week, this is a major project for South Australia.

I am delighted at the outcome of the conference of which I have been a part and that we can now say that this project will proceed. I am, to put it mildly, outraged at the performance of the Leader of the Opposition a short time ago. Whilst this matter has been debated in this place, the Leader of the Opposition, for most of the time, chose not to be within this

Chamber. He did not want to be here while the press were watching. He did not want to take part in this debate—

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** At the end of the day, the Leader of the Opposition chose to come in here—

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:**—in what I regard as a cheap publicity stunt and take the kudos for brokering a deal to get this project up.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I may have a lot to learn; the member for Hart is correct. However, I am idealistic, and I seek to represent not only my electorate but the electors and the taxpayers of South Australia. They deserve better than what has happened here tonight. This has been a cheap publicity stunt. The Leader of the Opposition chose to be involved in this matter only at a time when it suited him and so that he could gain publicity for his Party.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The member for MacKillop has the call.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I reiterate: I am delighted to see the success of the conference, but I am very disappointed—

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:**—that some degree of compromise was forced on this project, because whenever there is compromise we tend towards mediocrity. I would much prefer to see the project as it was first designed rather than the mediocrity the Government has been forced to accept.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I commend the results of the conference to the Committee.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** It is important that I follow up a couple of comments that were made, because it is important they be put on the public record. We all like a bit of colourful language now and again. However, when the Government makes a commitment in Committee that it will write formally to a council and set out in that letter an indemnity, it does not expect to be told in Committee, 'We hope it does not welsh on the deal.' When I, as Deputy Premier, on behalf of the Government, make that formal statement in Committee, it is expected that it will be carried out, and it will be. It is very important that the Committee understands that. In relation to an independent consultant, clearly a statement was agreed by the Committee. The Committee has status in this Parliament, it is agreed that there will be an independent consultant, and clearly that will be the case. It is also important that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:**—if this Parliament is to go in this new direction, when negotiations are agreed to, we must have a royal 'we'. A 'we' is not a one-sided position; it is an agreed position by the Government and the Opposition. That ought to be made clear to this Committee: all of us were part of this agreement, and both Parties moved it. It was pretty obvious that the 'we' from the other side was not a royal 'we' and did not include everybody. It is important that the Committee and the public of South Australia clearly understand that the Government is very much part of this agreement. The Government was prepared to enter into the

agreement and the outcome will be strongly supported by the Government, because it supports the overall principle of what we wanted to do, that is, to have a development at Holdfast Shores and a boat harbor at West Beach. During negotiation of this type it is important that the media is not the third party of negotiations. In future, it is important that we all accept that this is part of the exercise.

The member for Ross Smith made some genuine comments about the needs of our coastal environment, and that is a very important issue. The Government is very proud of the fact that it is about to implement a \$200 million environmental improvement program, and part of that program is to clean up the water that is discharged into the gulf. Whilst as part of this development the pipes will be laid out to sea, the Government has an absolute commitment to ensure that the water that travels down those pipes is cleaner and able to mix more safely with our coastline. I make it very clear to the whole Parliament and everybody in South Australia that cleaning up the environment and sensitivity to the environment are very important issues for the Government.

Motion carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

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

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 17 February 1998 at 2 p.m.

In moving this motion, I take the opportunity to thank all the members of the House for their support of the Government over the last two weeks. The program that we put forward has been very demanding, and I thank all members for their support in getting the legislation through the House. This is my first opportunity to formally welcome the three Independents to the House.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I am quite sure that their independence will be demonstrated and tested over the months to come, and I look forward to their positive contribution to debate. I also welcome to the House the new members opposite. Some interesting characters are already developing, and I note that quite a few of them are experts in everything that concerns the House. As Leader of the House, I look forward to working with them, not only to help them if they need advice about their debating techniques but also to advise them on the way that the House should run.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your appointment as Speaker, and I also congratulate the Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees on his appointment. I look forward to working with all members who have been chosen and who have been prepared to sit on committees, both the Chairmen and committee members, as we proceed over the next four years. I take this opportunity to thank—

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I will get to the Leader in a minute. I have already said nice words about him, and it was really very difficult! I take this opportunity to thank the staff—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I am sorry. I was going to remember him tomorrow.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I apologise to the member for Waite. I hope that he will forgive me when needed. I was very interested in the member for Waite's Address in Reply

contribution. He raised some very interesting points in his first presentation, and I am quite sure that he will be an asset to this House. I also take this opportunity to thank the staff of the House—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The House will come to order.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** —for their support. We create some pretty unusual hours and they are always there to give us the necessary support. The Clerk and his assistant, the *Hansard* staff and the attendants look after us in our often odd ways, and we thank them very much for their support.

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I have got it all down. I have done this once before. I also take the opportunity of thanking the library staff. I often pass through the library but I never quite get around to using the skills of the library staff. They are an excellent group of people who—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** Every member of Parliament, particularly new members, ought to utilise the skills of the library staff, because they are prepared to do a lot of research for us. They often enable members to make speeches that have some opportunity of standing up in the public after you have made them. Their research ability is something that we all ought to appreciate.

I thank the Opposition for being so cooperative. In my short time in this Parliament I have never known a group of people who were prepared to be so bipartisan, but I know full well that that has very little chance of lasting past today. I hope there is a new spirit of bipartisanship because, as someone said to me a long time ago in this place, we need an Opposition to make up the numbers and, as long as you have the numbers on your side, that is all that matters; and that is fundamentally correct.

I take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a happy Christmas. Please drive very carefully because we want the numbers on both sides to be fundamentally the same after Christmas and the New Year. I wish all members a very happy New Year and the best of whatever you are aiming for in the future.

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** This responsibility is new to me, so I apologise in advance if I forget anyone. We have had a very quick two weeks of this first new Parliament. We have had an opening of Parliament and we have processed quite a lot of legislation, and that has put a great deal of pressure on everyone. Some new members have perhaps wondered how anything is ever done in this place, and the reason that anything does get done is due to the assistance of the Parliament House staff.

First, I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the fairness and the grace under pressure with which you have handled the sometimes rowdy members on both sides of the House, and also the Deputy Speaker, who has cooperated as well.

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** It's a new broom.

**Ms HURLEY:** That is right. We also have the *Hansard* staff to thank. I am sure new members have already discovered the talent of the *Hansard* staff in rendering many of our speeches into coherent contributions for the record.

Also I thank Parliamentary Counsel, whom I am sure members find very helpful and professional and who do the job extremely well; the staff of the Parliamentary Library, as the Deputy Premier said, and the research assistants, who are very helpful and who from time to time produce papers that

I certainly find very useful; the catering staff, who keep us fed and watered during our time in Parliament House, who put up with the long hours very well and who, especially lately, have been providing us with a great variety of interesting food; the attendants who assist us all around the building and the building attendants likewise; the cleaners, who have had to cope, as I said, with the opening of Parliament as well as the short session; the clerks and administrative staff, who organise our pay, assist when key cards are lost and carry out other essential functions; the switchboard staff who, I am sure, have had a difficult time in sorting out who is where, what has been happening and directing calls; and the police, who help us out when the gallery becomes a little unruly.

We must not forget the journalists who, of course, are not a third party at our conferences but who help to make our life interesting when, as usual, we do not entirely agree with the unbiased nature of their comments. I must apologise if I have left anyone out of that litany.

I welcome the new members on both sides of the House, especially the member for Waite, the National Party member and the two Independent Liberals: of course, I very much welcome the new members on this side of the House. It was good to see familiar faces around Parliament House, including members opposite, in this forty-ninth Parliament.

On a personal basis, I also express some regret in relation to the members who lost their seats and are not back in this Parliament. I know that most of them have already found rewarding careers. I certainly hope that the new members of Parliament—and I know this is so—have found the more experienced members very helpful; I also hope that members on this side in particular can look forward to a long career in Parliament. I wish everyone a merry and a safe Christmas and I look forward to seeing everyone next year.

**Mr McEWEN (Gordon):** I call on this Parliament to celebrate Christmas and all that means in a Christian society. I call on this Parliament to celebrate the successes of the past two weeks—not the successes of Parties but the successes of the Parliament. At the end of the day, what we achieve we achieve as a Parliament. I ask members to celebrate those successes. I wish you a merry Christmas and an interesting new year.

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** I would also like to extend seasons greetings and best wishes to all the staff and helpers who have been enumerated by the Deputy Leader with respect to those who carry out the functions of this Parliament and usually ensure that we do not foul up the rest of the State by our deliberations. The functions of this Parliament could not be performed without their magnificent assistance.

I also extend my very best wishes to all members present and their families in particular, who have to put up with the very strange working hours of their partners or spouses and who wonder at times whether they do have a partner. I particularly offer my thanks to the members for Spence and Elder: I have appreciated over the recent weeks their sending me white lilies, but would you mind not sending the horse's head in the bed as well? I have got the message: there is no need to decapitate every horse in the State of South Australia just for my benefit.

I extend to you, Sir, as Speaker of the House, my very best wishes. I think you will do an outstanding job: already you have shown a great deal of wisdom in your rulings and a great deal of forbearance towards the unruly members on the

Government side. I have taken heed of your very good words of advice and, as you will note, you have not warned me to this stage. I also congratulate the Deputy Speaker on his elevation to those lofty heights. I was very pleased that he was returned to this Parliament. On election night I thought, 'My God: we are going to have a Democrat in this place as well,' and that would have been too much to bear: three in one House and one or two down here. I would even put up with the member for MacKillop, because at least I know where he is: he is with the Liberals. I would have been extremely sorry if the Deputy Speaker had been consigned to running his cafe on the top of Mount Lofty.

I extend my commiserations to the member for Mawson; I know how it feels. It does get better over time; you just have to learn to have a bloody long memory. I wish all members here and their families in particular all the very best for Christmas and the new year.

**The SPEAKER:** My role in debating this motion is to speak on behalf of the staff. On their behalf, I thank members for the sentiments they have expressed. We have a particularly dedicated staff in this building; many of us may not realise how many staff do work here. They work long hours and have to put up with 47 different personalities and different demands upon them, but I know that they appreciate the sentiments that have been expressed tonight.

From my own point of view, I thank members for their support over the past two weeks. I have appreciated the sentiments and welcome into the Chair that you have expressed. I wish you all and your families a happy Christmas and a very relaxing and enjoyable break over the Christmas and new year period so that we all come back fortified in February next year.

As the House has agreed to a change of commencement date for February, with the indulgence of the House, I direct that private members' business which has been placed on the Notice Paper for Thursday 12 February be put down for 19 February.

Motion carried.

#### **STATUTES AMENDMENT (HOLDFAST SHORES) BILL**

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the recommendations of the conference.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 11.45 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 17 February at 2 p.m.