

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 17 February 1998

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)** took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

SUPPLY BILL

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

VICTOR HARBOR WASTE WATER

A petition signed by 76 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to relocate the proposed waste water treatment plant to an alternative site away from the Victor Harbor township was presented by the Hon. D.C. Brown.

Petition received.

PATAWALONGA

A petition signed by 17 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to consider long term effects when deciding on options for the disposal of stormwater from the Patawalonga and to reject the diversion option was presented by the Hon. M.H. Armitage.

Petition received.

LANGUAGE STUDIES

A petition signed by 1 621 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to ensure that language studies in State schools have the same status as other subjects studied at these schools was presented by Ms White.

Petition received.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The **SPEAKER:** I lay on the table the following reports which have been received and published pursuant to section 17(7) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991:

Twenty-second report of the Economic and Finance Committee, being the Annual Report 1996-97.

Sixty-third report of the Public Works Committee on the Centre for Performing and Visual Arts—Adelaide Institute of TAFE.

Sixty-fourth report of the Public Works Committee on the Glenelg/West Beach Development Stage 2—West Beach Boating Facility.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER:** I direct that written answers to the following questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 1, 3 to 6, 16, 24, 25, 28, 32, 33 and 38.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:
By the Premier (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

Fees Regulation Act—Regulations—Education—Overseas Students

By the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism (Hon. G.A. Ingerson)—

By-Laws—

Corporations—City of Adelaide
No 1—Interpretation of By-Laws
No 2—Streets and Public Places
No 3—Traffic
No 4—Street Traders
No 5—Park Lands, Public Squares and the River Torrens
No 6—The Central Market
No 7—Lodging Houses
No 8—Nuisances, Health and Safety
No 9—Continuation of Existing Licences
No 10—Moveable Signs

District Councils—Yankalilla—No 16—Horses on the Foreshore and Sand Dunes
Eastern Metropolitan Regional Health Authority Incorporated—Constitution
Local Government Act—Regulations—Local Government Superannuation Board—Contributions Tax
Derivatives
Extension of Benefit Cover
Spouse Members
Public Parks Act—Disposal of Public Park—Allotment 302 Kauffmann Ave, Lyndoch
Racing Industry Development Authority—Report, 1996-97

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

Abortions Notified in South Australia, Committee Appointed to Examine and Report on—Report, 1996
Disability Information and Resource Centre—Report, 1996-97

The State Theatre Company of South Australia—Report, 1996-97

Regulations under the following Acts—

Controlled Substances—
Drugs of Dependence
Poisons
Prohibited Substances

Development—
Building Rules
Smoke Alarms

Harbors and Navigation—Restricted Areas—Goolwa
Motor Vehicles—

Farm Machine
Notification to Registrar of Change of Address
Passenger Transport—

Flag Falls
Small Passenger Vehicles
Road Traffic—

Clearways and Bus Lanes
Declaration of Hospitals
Obedience to Signs
Signalling Devices
Southern Expressway

Development Plan Amendment, Report on the Interim Operation of—Commercial (Monarto South) Zone
Plan Amendment—Report by the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning

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

Industrial Relations Advisory Committee—Report, 1996-97

National Crime Authority—Report, 1996-97
Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Advisory Committee—Report, 1996-97

Witness Protection Act—Section 28—Report, 1996-97

Regulations under the following Acts—
Associations Incorporation—Various
Dangerous Substances—The Code
Electoral—Failure to Vote Form
Liquor Licensing—

- Long Term Dry Areas—
 - Port Adelaide
 - Port Augusta
 - Port Lincoln
 - Short Term Dry Areas—Various
 - Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare—Opal Mining
 - Partnership—Limited Partnerships
 - Retail and Commercial Leases—Exclusions
 - Rules of Court—
 - Industrial Court—Industrial and Employee Relations Act—Industrial Proceedings—Enterprise Agreements
 - Magistrates Court—Magistrates Court Act—Amendment No 12
 - Supreme Court—Supreme Court Act—Amendment No 61
 - Remuneration Tribunal Determinations—No 1 of 1998, Report Relating to
 - Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act—Workers Compensation Tribunal—Practice Directions
- By the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training (Hon. M.R. Buckby)—
- Education and Children's Services, Department for—Report, 1996-97
 - ETSA Contributory and Non-Contributory Superannuation Schemes—Report, 1996-97
 - Regulations under the following Acts—
 - ASER (Restructure)—The Site
 - Land Tax—Records and Certificates
 - Public Corporations—
 - Interpretation
 - Land Management Corporation
 - Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia—Courses and Fees
 - Stamp Duties—Sale of Stamps
- By the Minister for Environment and Heritage (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—
- Board of the Botanic Gardens Adelaide—Report, 1996-97
 - Coast Protection Board—Report, 1996-97
 - Environment and Natural Resources, Department of—Report, 1996-97
 - National Environment Protection Council—Report, 1996-97
 - Native Vegetation Council—Report, 1996-97
 - Patawalonga Catchment Water Management Board—Report, 1996-97
 - State Heritage Authority—Report, 1996-97
 - Regulations under the following Acts—
 - Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—Code of Practice—Circuses
 - Water Resources—Revocation of Proclaimed Wells—
- Lacepede
- Environment Protection (Vessels on Inland Waters) Policy 1998
- By the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—
- Aboriginal Affairs, State Department of—Report, 1996-97
- By the Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Regional Development (Hon. R.G. Kerin)—
- Regulations under the following Acts—
 - Dog Fence—Prescribed Rate
 - Electrical Products—Principal
 - Fisheries—
 - Expiation of Offences
 - White Pointer Shark
 - Gas—Various
 - Livestock—Principal
 - Meat Hygiene—Codes.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Today the Government is announcing an important and absolutely essential change in policy direction and budget strategy. We are doing so not only because we would be shown to be culpable of financial mismanagement of South Australia if we did not—and I will elaborate on that statement later—but because South Australians sent us a very blunt message last October. They said they wanted to be looked after, cared for, better than they had been. They signalled they were impatient for results. Today we are heeding that message. We are also significantly moving our policy direction because South Australia is not and cannot be an economic island.

Our State is not isolated from the developments and pressures occurring in other parts of Australia. We are being battered and manipulated by Federal decisions and Federal policies. That is to our detriment. The end result is that it always hurts more those who can least afford to be hurt: South Australian families. That situation is set to worsen. That is partly due to Federal pressures, particularly the effects of competition policy. It is equally due to the fact that we are in a situation today where, no matter what we do, we simply cannot escape the clutches of the enormous debt that we inherited in 1993.

It is not for the lack of trying. We can get the debt down, and we have done so. After heading towards \$9 billion, it is down to \$7.4 billion. We are good managers, and we are proud of that. But what we cannot do is pay off the debt, still pay the huge interest bill on the debt (at nearly \$2 million a day), balance the budget and, at the same time, afford to put money into the essential services and infrastructure that are so badly needed throughout South Australia. We just cannot do it no matter how hard we try. For example, in this age of information technology, every school child in the State should have the use of a personal computer, and they have not.

Tens of millions of dollars need to be spent to clean up our waterways, coastal areas and national parks. Families should not be faced with ever increasing school fees in public schools, and they are. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital should not be crumbling before our eyes for want of an \$80 million restoration, but it is. We should not have our police, ambulance and fire service without decent radio equipment worth over \$100 million, yet it continues to be. The Royal Adelaide Hospital needs over \$120 million spent on it, and we do not have it. All of this decay—and there are numerous other examples—arises from the mismanagement of South Australia by the Bannon Government through the 1980s. That Government deliberately allowed infrastructure and every single service in this State to decay through lack of adequate funding for maintenance. It was no accident: it was deliberate financial starvation.

But, even after four years in Government, although we have made progress we have not been able to fix it. For that, I can understand the impatience and the frustration of the people. As a Government we are equally frustrated. We have been labelled a mean Government because we have not been able to redress the balance; to treat ordinary families better; and to ease the pressure on their pay packets. South Australians are right when they say this situation has to change. Families in this State deserve to feel secure. We can and we will deliver that security—the security of the best health care; the security of the most relevant and technologically advanced public education; and the security of jobs staying—and growing—here because industry knows that we will definitely continue to be a low cost State.

But to get to that point means making some tough decisions. I say that because we can deliver only if we are a State which is well on the way to being debt free, a State which has money in its coffers to spend on South Australians and, importantly, a State which has taken the critical steps to save itself from the damaging firing line of Federal policy, particularly the effects of competition policy. Competition policy and State debt are the double whammy for this State. For all those reasons, making the Cabinet decision that our policy settings had to change radically and rapidly was not difficult. I say that despite the fact that I am making statements today which are the very opposite of those which I declared were policy less than a year ago. I do not resile from that, not at all; far from it. As Premier I am intent on doing what is best for South Australians. If that means changing—radically changing—Government policy settings because the world around us is changing fast, then so be it.

Accordingly, today I announce for all the reasons I have just identified that the Government is to sell ETSA and Optima in a process starting now. That process will take two years. There are a number of sale options: long-term lease, trade sale or public float. However, on preliminary advice, a public float would see a substantial discount on price. Leasing is the most likely to result in an Australian buyer, given the Federal taxation legislation which advantages foreign borrowers in trade sales. It is the Government's intention to introduce legislation. We want the best option with the best result for South Australia to be achieved. We will invite the Democrats and Independent MPs to meet and work with us over the next few weeks.

I extend this offer also: the Treasurer, Robert Lucas, is keen to have the input of Labor's Treasury spokesman. It is in Labor's hands to take up that offer of talking to us to do what is best for the future job and family security of all South Australians. I hope that no members of this House or of the Legislative Council will stand in the way of decisions essential to delivering a strong economic future for South Australia. We cannot allow the objective of a secure and enjoyable lifestyle for everyone who chooses to live in South Australia to be thwarted. There is no doubt that Labor, if in government, would be forced to follow exactly the same privatisation path. History, both in this State and federally, shows that Labor can always find a stunningly pragmatic reason to support privatisation whenever it wants to. So, our offer is open to the shadow Treasurer to meet with the Treasurer. We hope that he will at least keep an open mind and that he will objectively assess the mass of published independent evidence that indicates that the State has no option but to follow the course that I have announced.

The Government is also considering a number of other sales, including Lotteries, the TAB, the Ports Corporation, HomeStart, WorkCover and the Motor Accident Commission. As already publicised, SA Water's board has already, of its own initiative, undertaken its own investigation.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am being particularly tolerant this afternoon. This is probably one of the most important statements that has come before the House in my day. I want to hear it, and I would like the Opposition and Government members alike to hear it in silence and, perhaps, to use Question Time or the grievance debates later if they want to make particular points.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Scoping studies on the agencies I have referred to have already begun, to determine whether a sale is the best option for the State. This vitally important

strategy will go a long way toward delivering a debt-free State early in the next millennium. And, with little debt, all South Australians can again receive the high level of care from Government that they deserve, a level of care to which the taxes they pay entitle them.

Returning to ETSA and Optima, it has always been my intention that those assets stay within State ownership, and I have stated so on numerous occasions. So, what has changed? The answer is—a lot. It has been in only the past few months that the ramifications of the national electricity market to State Government owners of power assets have become evident as the national electricity market becomes imminent. And it is not a pretty picture.

Yet, we have no choice but to join. I remind the House that it was John Bannon who committed us to joining in 1991. This means that Federal competition policy leaves us with no choice but to be part of it. To ignore this is to potentially lose up to \$1 billion—that is, \$1 000 million—in competition payments to South Australia. As well, in December in his annual report the Auditor-General warned us of the several and severe risks to South Australia in joining the national market. But, as I have said, Federal policy originating in the Keating/Bannon era leaves us with no choice but to do so.

However, the Auditor-General sees that joining as owners, as the shareholders of Optima and ETSA, leaves us exposed to massive risk; in other words, another potential disaster of almost State Bank dimensions if operators make the wrong decisions when they are compelled to act entrepreneurially. While the Auditor-General's warnings did at first sight look unreal, it was becoming clear to the Government that they were, if anything, a cautious judgment, given the other evidence of risk we have now seen. We could, indeed, suffer a financial disaster of State Bank proportions by clinging to our previous policy direction of retaining ownership of ETSA and Optima. We do not believe that South Australians should be exposed to that risk. That level of risk is for the private sector to deal with, not our taxpayers, not you, and not me. The Auditor-General's remarks were followed by a report by the Institute of Public Affairs. That report offered us the following strong advice:

South Australia should move quickly to privatise its electricity supply. . . the privatisation would prevent the State's taxpayers from being exposed to risk if competitive pressures reduced prices and profits in the. . . national electricity market.

The report went on to say that the South Australian Government 'should exercise leadership in promoting privatisation of its electricity assets'. The report further states:

Privatisation is likely to bring improved efficiencies and to offer greater assurances of a continued stream of income similar to that presently obtained from its electricity assets. With a likely sale price in excess of \$4 billion would more than halve State debt.

The Director of the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies, Graham Scott, has also recently commented on the State's then continued determination to keep ETSA and Optima in public ownership. He said:

. . . the South Australian industry will be hard put to compete when the national grid is fully developed. . . and the ability to sell into other States will be very limited. . . ETSA's value on the marketplace is a lot more likely to decline over the next couple of years than it is to go up.

In fact, recent independent research carried out for the State Government states that the value of our power assets could drop by up to 50 per cent while only this month ETSA itself said prices to consumers could rise rapidly on the national

market. We cannot let that happen. Twelve months ago, even three months ago, we had no indication this was likely to be the result to South Australia of the national electricity market.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is a situation not of our making. But we have to deal with it. It is a situation which led ETSA's Chairman to write to Minister Armitage early in January this year to point out to him the role of ETSA's directors in looking after its shareholders who are the Government and, ultimately, all South Australians. Chairman Mike Janes wrote that it was their considered view that the Government should sell its power assets sooner rather than later.

In the midst of receiving this raft of advice that our policy settings were wrong, outdated by fast-moving Federal policy agenda, there was trenchant criticism of our electricity policy within a report of the ACCC. While the Government has since moved some way to address this policy, the report of the ACCC in December last states:

The South Australian Government's decision and analysis of the public benefits and anti-competitive effects in relation to the amended derogations is inadequate and bordering on contemptuous. South Australia's proposals for averaged transmission network pricing with associated long-term derogation to 2010 were entirely unacceptable.

That is the ACCC, which will make a judgment about disbursement of competition payments to the States. In other words, this State's determination to keep power in State hands in the face of the national electricity market and Federal competition policy was placing us in a situation where, first, the assets could lose up to 50 per cent of their value; secondly, the risk of operating in the market was up to \$2 billion; thirdly, the ACCC and the NCC were so angered by the path that we had chosen, which did not match their criteria for competition policy, that South Australia stood to lose more than \$1 billion in competition payments from the Commonwealth; and, fourthly, we would not be able to control power prices within South Australia, which would be a disincentive to industry to invest here and painful for families. So, we have to face facts: I guess it is time for that reality check.

This State is still finding it well nigh impossible to recover from the last financial disaster. It cannot afford a risk as high as \$2 billion. It cannot afford to lose \$1 billion in competition payments. We would be bankrupted. South Australians do not deserve that pain ever again. We have to protect them from more debt and higher power prices that they cannot afford. That is our duty. And we have to protect the State's finances. That, too, is our duty. This is not the time to take an ideological stand. Rather, it is time to state that, whatever we have said previously and whatever we have believed, it is all now totally irrelevant, when faced with the harsh reality of where Australia's policy direction is heading.

The game has changed—and faster than we could ever have imagined—and we have no choice but to change with it. We cannot afford the pain of being left behind. That is why the New South Wales Labor Government is arguing so hard to be able to sell its power assets, against the ideological resistance of its support base. Like us, it has no choice—and it knows it.

In privatising our power assets there will, of course, be built-in safeguards for consumers and, over the next few days, all South Australians will receive information from us on our plans and how they will be affected. A 1300 informa-

tion line is also being set up to ensure that every South Australian with a query or concern about their power can be reassured.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Safeguards in the process include the following: those families who need help at present with power payment concessions will continue to receive them under private ownership; country power users will continue to receive subsidised power; any job losses will be through either natural attrition—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith and the member for Elder.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —or voluntary redundancy. There will be no forced redundancies. An independent regulator—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Elder.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —will be appointed to ensure that power is delivered at the best possible cost to the consumer—and I would take this opportunity to say that our research indicates that the fierce competition between private suppliers always results in prices dropping; a community committee will be established, including representatives of the Office of Consumer Affairs and social welfare groups, such as SACOSS. It will be invited to work with the Government to ensure all South Australians receive a fair deal from their private sector suppliers.

Let me assure you that we are not taking this step lightly. It is being done because, if we did not do it, South Australians could suffer greatly from the risk now evident in the power industry. That is what I meant at the beginning of the speech when I said that we would be culpable of financial mismanagement of this State if we did not take action. South Australia was badly managed once before in this decade, and we are still suffering. Let us make sure that it does not happen again by taking action now. In this time frame, our power assets are worth a considerable amount of money—money that could be well spent on our children. If we do not take action to divest ourselves of those assets now, the future has the potential to be bleak. The assets will lose value rapidly and could cost us billions if the national electricity market proves hard for us to survive in. The Government does not want to see that happen and will not let it happen.

SCHOOL ZONES

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I lay on the table the ministerial statement made by the Minister for Transport in another place this afternoon concerning speeding through school zones.

ASER

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I lay on the table a ministerial statement made by the Treasurer in another place concerning ASER assets withdrawn from sale.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I bring up the sixty-fifth report of the committee on the rehabilitation of the highland irrigation district of Cadell and move:

That the report be received.
Motion carried.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I move:
That the report be printed.
Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Premier tell the House whether it was he or the Deputy Premier who told the public the truth just days before the election was called, when his deputy said he could not rule out the sale or outsourcing of the management of ETSA? On 18 September last year, several days before the election was called, the *Advertiser* reported with the headline, 'ETSA won't be privatised: Premier'. The *Advertiser's* political reporter wrote:

The Premier, Mr Olsen, has stepped into the row over the future of ETSA, ruling out private management of the corporation.

I will read further from Mr Kelton's article, as follows:

The future of ETSA and the generation arm of the corporation—now a separate company, Optima Energy—has been under a cloud since a speech early this week by the Deputy Premier, Mr Ingerson.

It goes on to say:

The row angered the Premier, who was on leave in Bali at the time. Liberal sources said the Premier was furious that the gaffe on ETSA's future had given the Opposition the opportunity to raise once again the issue of ETSA's future virtually on the eve of the election campaign. Labor has continually claimed the Government plans to privatise ETSA after the coming election and says it will make it a central issue during the campaign.

During the campaign—unlike his deputy—the Premier said that ETSA would not be privatised—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There was deliberate comment at the end of the question.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: If anything, the Leader of the Opposition is at least predictable. Once again, he is stuck in a time warp. This populist Leader reads opinion polls, makes a policy determination and then pursues the course. What we have seen and what my ministerial statement clearly outlines to the House is that in December we received the Auditor-General's Report. In December we received the annual report of the Electricity Trust of South Australia in which I disclosed, for the first time, that provision had been made for losses of \$96 million in forward market trading in the national electricity market. Is the Opposition really intent on sitting by and seeing an organisation participate in a national market with provisions for \$96 million worth of losses?

Is it fair dinkum in saying that policy settings should not be adjusted to ensure minimum risk to the taxpayers of South Australia? The policy I have announced today results from a very clear objective assessment—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —of those reports given to us during December and January. As I advised the House in my ministerial statement, having had the warnings put to us, and thinking that the Auditor-General's original view might have been over the top in terms of the risk, we undertook some independent assessment which we have only just received and

which clearly underscores the warning given by the Auditor-General. It would be a total abdication of responsibility to have those warnings and ignore them and not to act.

It does not matter what has been said in the past. Does the Opposition want another State Bank for South Australia? Is that what it wants? It might have been John Bannon who, as Premier, had warnings and sat on his hands—for which we are now paying the price—but I can assure members that it does not matter what sort of embarrassment I might have in terms of changing a policy direction: I will not sit on my hands with clear warning when there is risk to the taxpayers of South Australia at stake. This policy we have put in place today is a responsible course of action for South Australians in the future.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

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

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Premier advise the House what impact the privatisation of the electricity industry will have on the jobs of ETSA and Optima Energy employees?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith will come to order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As you, Sir, indicated, we have today put to this House probably one of the most serious policy statements in a long time, and all we get from the Opposition in relation to that policy decision is heckling. I would have thought that an Opposition worth its salt would carefully look at the policy direction and start analysing it in the interests of South Australia, and not pursue cheap one-upmanship across the Chamber, because a lot is at stake for South Australians in terms of where we go during the course of the next decade. I have indicated clearly that we are not prepared to put at risk the future of all South Australians, as we would be doing if we failed to act in that regard.

To the extent that the matter relates to ETSA and Optima employees, who in my view are entitled to receive from Government some degree of assurances, I give the clear commitment—which I will be pursuing in any sale, lease or float of the company—that there will be no forced redundancies for any employee. No forced redundancies will apply relating to the employees. We had in the past a program—commenced I might add by the former Labor Administration and continued by the former Liberal Government—of downsizing ETSA, restructuring the electricity industry in South Australia and offering targeted voluntary separation packages, and that program will be continuing in the future.

Voluntary separation packages will be available, and natural attrition, given the restructuring that has taken place in our industry over the past five or six years, enables us to say clearly that there will be no forced redundancies. We must ensure that we do not have a reduction in the value of the asset of some 50 per cent. The real point is the failure to act. Failure to put in place new policy settings would have put at risk employment within the industry in South Australia because it would not have been competitive.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I remind the member for Hart that the Auditor-General's Report was tabled and made public

only in the first week of December last. Based on that report, we sought independent assessment on the extent of the risk exposure of the Government in terms of the finances and, therefore, the taxpayers of South Australia. On that basis we have announced this policy decision today. Based on that advice we will be writing to all employees of ETSA and Optima today—and the Minister has signed the letters going to all employees—indicating to them that there will be no forced redundancies.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. When did Government officials, including officials of his own department, ETSA or Optima Energy, first begin planning for the sale of Optima and ETSA, and will the Premier rule out absolutely that plans were embarked upon before the last election for the privatisation of South Australia's power? Last year, on a series of occasions, the Premier and his deputy denied the authenticity of a series of documents about the privatisation of ETSA, claiming that one was only a student project—

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —and that another, two days before the election, was ruled out as being totally fabricated.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I advise the House that the first occasion the ministry had a discussion in relation to this policy setting was—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: First, the ministry had a preliminary—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: When did you—your department?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Do they want the answer or don't they?

Mr Foley: Yes, we do; an honest answer, John.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: This is the Opposition that puts on a front in the Chamber for the media and then goes out into the corridor and says, 'Right! Policy direction, but we can't say that publicly. We'd rather you do it because we don't want to have to do it.' This is the two-faced hypocritical Opposition, the sort of Opposition that will say in the corridors, 'Right! Direction! You do it because we don't want to have the responsibility.' We will not shirk the responsibility. We will front up. To return to the question, I point out that the ministry, in a preliminary discussion, first looked at this matter on 22 December 1997.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises. Given that the Premier has now announced that the Government intends to privatise the State's ETSA industry, I would like to explain to my ETSA employee constituents what specific arrangements will be put forward for them.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The welfare of the employees of ETSA and Optima is at the forefront of our mind, as it has been with respect to all other previous asset sales. A substantial part of the value of our electricity businesses rests in the skilled employees who are, in fact, committed to developing world-class electricity businesses. In preparation for the competitive market place of the national electricity market to which the Premier has already referred, over the past eight years ETSA has made significant

work force reductions. To prepare for the national electricity market, Optima has already announced plans to reduce the number of its employees.

I would expect that the large majority, if not all, of the employees will transfer to any new organisation and, in fact, as has occurred in previous asset sales, they will do substantially the same jobs that they are doing now. That is what has happened in all the other business restructures which the Government has carried out; for example, employees transferred to new employers with the sale of BankSA, SGIC and the Pipelines Authority. Our contracting out arrangements, such as those with EDS, have provided exciting new opportunities for former Government employees who have moved across.

I reiterate: the Government does not expect significant further reductions in the number of employees at ETSA and Optima. If any reductions are required, we expect that they would be achieved through natural turnover and attrition, because that is what has happened before. Past experience dictates that that is what has happened. I reiterate what the Premier said on a number of occasions in answer to a previous question: there will be no forced retrenchments throughout the process. Under private ownership—

Mr Clarke: Why should they believe you?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Because that is what has happened before. It has happened time and again, and I am sure history will dictate that it happens again. Under private ownership businesses will be in a much better position to provide funds for new investment in an industry which is now a national industry; and, in fact, the new investment will be vital for future job prospects. As it has done with other restructuring and sale processes, the Government will make sure that representatives hold discussions with employee representatives over coming weeks. Certainly, we will ensure that those discussions develop any transitional proposals. I personally will ensure that union representatives are briefed on the plans. It is intended that existing terms and conditions will be preserved. The existing vested superannuation entitlements and benefits will be preserved, and the discussions with employee representatives to which I referred a minute ago will certainly include providing options to superannuation fund members.

We are conscious that any proposals developed can impact on individual superannuation members differently. We will ensure that detailed information is provided on any proposals and that substantial consultation is undertaken with employees. In response to the member for Mawson's question, I repeat: the most important element out of that whole question is that there will be no forced retrenchments throughout this important reform process.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): My question is directed to the Premier. Does the Government intend to revise its growth forecasts in order to reflect the true state of the South Australian economy? The Government's budget papers stated that in 1997-98 there would be 1.5 per cent growth in jobs, 3 per cent economic growth and a fall in the unemployment rate. The latest ABS economic indicators have shown 2 per cent fewer jobs, -.5 per cent economic growth and double digit unemployment.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am staggered that the second question from the Opposition has moved away from the significant policy announcement today.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Give them a week's notice to prepare a question. I am astounded that the Opposition simply does not have any further questions on today's policy announcement. Anyway, I know that members opposite are ostrich-like in their opposition in terms of their approach to these matters. Clearly, what we have indicated today is about rebuilding the economic base of South Australia. The member for Ross Smith full well knows that there was a flight of capital out of South Australia straight after the State Bank debacle. He full well knows that during the Bannon Government—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: There is one thing the Opposition does not like: being reminded of the legacy it left South Australians. It is a legacy that will take more than four years to fix up, and it is one which the Opposition delivered overnight to South Australians. The point is that this is an Opposition which delivered the disaster that we have to tackle and clean up. If that means making some tough decisions to do it, we will do so. After the State Bank debacle, investment in this State dried up because no company was going to invest in a State—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: If the member for Ross Smith will give me a minute or two just to get to the point of his argument I will be more than happy to respond to his question, but it has to be put into the context of the circumstances which we inherited and which are continuing in South Australia. I refer to the investment drought in this State and the investment in factory plant and equipment in other States because it was considered by board rooms and finance managers that coming to South Australia had a risk, a risk where paying off the debt would mean that there would be an escalation in taxes and therefore there would not be a conducive economic climate in South Australia to invest in the future. You cannot turn that around in five minutes. You have to go back and convince the markets that this is a low-cost State and that there is a conducive economic climate for investment in the future, and we are just starting to get that.

With respect to the private sector capital investment that was announced for 1996-97, we out-performed the other States of Australia. That is the precursor to further investment and job creation; it flows from it. The investment decision has to be made. That has to flow through and be invested. Upon that, the infrastructure is put in place. Upon that, the jobs are created—and so the industry winds up. There is a lead time to this. It was never a situation that could be turned around in the space of two or three years. The rebuilding of this State will take some considerable time. It will mean marketing and getting past the rust belt State image that those opposite left us when we came to Government in South Australia.

The forecasts that have been issued by Treasury will again be referred to in the budget papers that come down in May, and they will take account of a number of factors. They will take account of the Federal Government policy settings, as rightly they should. They will also take into account, as best we can assess at this stage, the impact of the Asian market place. That fallout in the Asian market place will roll in on Australia, and nobody can identify accurately what the extent of that roll in on South Australia or Australia will be. Suffice to say, having built an export culture where 40 per cent of our small to medium manufacturing businesses are in the export

market, it stands to reason that, because we have 40 per cent compared to the Australian average of 13 per cent, any fall out in the Asian market place will have a disproportionate effect within South Australia. That is why we and the Deputy Premier are taking a number of steps with respect to small-medium businesses that are exporters in terms of how we give them a degree of protection in relation to contracts in the future.

It is about responsible policy settings and management and about taking some hard decisions when they are required in the long-term interest of this State. It is not about being like a jelly-backed Opposition that we have seen from the Labor Party in Opposition and in Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Colton, I make the observation that the adjective 'liar' has been used in this Chamber several times this afternoon.

Mr Brokenshire: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson will come to order. It does nothing for the dignity or the productivity of this Chamber, and I would ask all members to desist from its use. On any occasion when points of order are raised, it will be treated very seriously by the Chair.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Premier advise the House why South Australia is joining the national electricity market if such a move exposes this State to financial risk?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I think it worth repeating that the original decision to join the national electricity market was, in fact, made by the previous State Labor Government. I do not argue with that decision, but let us keep this whole debate in perspective: it was Labor that took us into the national electricity market. Having gone into that market we are now locked into that position, because at stake is \$1 015 million in competition payments due to South Australia over the next nine years. Certainly, we support the goals of lowest achievable electricity costs to consumers, and having companies such as Woolworths and Telstra giving consideration to taking on retail licensing to supply power and being the retailer of power indicates the extent of change within the national market.

For example, in New South Wales and Victoria there are some 20 retail suppliers of electricity; a competitive base upon which households will be able to bid for and buy electricity for their household at the best possible price. It is not a monopoly position but about being able to access a competitive marketplace. So, lowering power costs to consumers and families, in particular, and empowering consumers to have the choice to buy where it suits them is certainly our objective. However, we are not prepared to accept the dramatic escalation of risk that has emerged since the national electricity market has developed and since the spot trading, where we have trading of electricity not dissimilar to trading on the Stock Exchange market.

ETSA and Optima have a Government guarantee: we are responsible for underpinning what any officer out there might do in playing the market entrepreneurially. That brings substantial risk, and we have seen that there is the capacity for substantial losses to be incurred. Our argument is that it is not the taxpayers of South Australia who should be exposed to that risk and those losses, and certainly not exposed to diminution of the competition payments because of the debt level that we require in South Australia. So, for all those reasons, we have clearly focused on a set of policy

settings that is in the long-term interests of all South Australian families.

EMPLOYMENT

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): My question is directed to the junior Minister for Employment. How does the Liberal Government intend to fulfil its 1993 promise to create an additional 200 000 jobs over 10 years, given that the latest ABS data show that, after four years and one month since its election, the Government has fallen short of its own target by almost 70 000 jobs?

The SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the Minister, I point out to all members that the Minister's title is 'Minister', not 'junior Minister'.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Premier himself described the titles, at the time of the announcement, as junior Minister. We are just going on the Premier's own advice.

The SPEAKER: In the eyes of the Chair, in this Chamber all Ministers are Ministers and have been sworn in by the Crown.

The Hon. J. HALL: I will bring down a report for the member for Ross Smith.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. What will happen to customers who are currently eligible for concessions on their electricity bills, given the announcement that has been made earlier today? Will concessions still be available to them?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Concessions for electricity, water and council rates come from the budget of the Government. I am able to give an assurance that the Government will continue to provide funds for those concessions. In the selling of ETSA, there is therefore no threat whatsoever to those concessions, because they are funded quite separately. In fact, the measure announced will help to cut back on interest payments by the Government under its budget and, therefore, will help to secure the growth funds as these concessions grow, as we have more and more people ageing and, therefore, becoming eligible for the concessions. A crucial step in this is making sure that we protect those concessions, and that will be done under the budget.

Secondly, I assure the House that a regulator will be appointed who will specifically look after the interests of both business and consumers (the households), to make sure that their interests are protected under any privatised power supply here in South Australia. The third important point is that the Government has made a pricing order to ETSA to make sure that, until the year 2002, all households will pay no more than inflation applied to the present price of electricity. Therefore, there is automatically a cap up until the year 2002 to protect the households of South Australia. I imagine that people in the country will be asking the question: will this also be there to protect us? I assure those people that under this pricing order they will be equally protected until the year 2002.

The important thing is that, in privatising ETSA, the Government is looking at the interests of those consumers, particularly the households: the people who cannot go out and negotiate on a national market and who need protection. The concessions will continue to apply.

EMPLOYMENT

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): My question is directed to the non-Cabinet Minister, the Minister for Employment. Why did the Minister claim that the rise in South Australia's unemployment to 10 per cent had largely been caused by seasonal factors when the figures she was quoting were seasonally adjusted?

The Hon. J. HALL: The wording of the question of the member for Ross Smith is not the information that I have in front of me: I do not recall that exact quote. However, I point out to the member for Ross Smith that the figures that were released in January showed an increase in full-time employment in this State, and I would have assumed that members of the Opposition would be pleased about that.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith will come to order.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): My question is directed to the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism. What benefits will arise from the reform of the electricity arrangements, particularly for industry generally but also for small business?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: The opening up of manufacturing business here in South Australia, on which we have been spending a considerable amount of time, will have significant benefits. Clearly, there are four major issues as far as manufacturing industry is concerned: the control and, if anything, reduction of tariffs; a new regime as far as sales tax is concerned; a diminishing cost as far as WorkCover is concerned; and, most importantly, a reduction of their overall electricity costs. In the tariff area and in WorkCover the Government has done a fantastic job. There is absolutely no doubt that the result of the Premier's action in Canberra had a tremendous effect on the reduction and control of the tariff issue.

In terms of WorkCover, there is no doubt that there has been a very significant reduction in costs. We will see in the future a far more significant reduction in costs because of the action that this Government has taken in its first year in government.

According to a study by the Australian Chamber of Commerce, the electricity market interstate is showing anywhere between 15 and 40 per cent reduction in cost for large users. Clearly, that is very important for South Australia. In Victoria small business has seen a reduction of 15 per cent. So, any move to privatise, to reduce the risk and to reduce the price—and it is really all about a reduction of price in terms of the consumer—is of significant benefit for the small business community of South Australia. It is absolutely critical, for South Australia to go ahead, for industry, particularly the manufacturing industry and small businesses involved in the manufacturing industry, to get a significant reduction in the cost of electricity. Most members opposite have manufacturing businesses within their electorates. This reform will make a very significant difference to the opportunity for the people in their electorates.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment. Given that the latest ABS data

show South Australia's unemployment rate increasing compared with the national average, how many additional jobs will need to be created to achieve the Government's promise to bring down our employment rate to the national average by the year 1999-2000?

The Hon. J. HALL: I will obtain the detail for the member for Ross Smith and provide an answer. However, I remind the honourable member again that for the past three consecutive months in this State full-time employment has increased. There are more than 7 000 full-time jobs in this State and I would have thought that for once in his life the honourable member would be pleased about progress.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! When the honourable member asks a question it would be nice if he would sit in silence and listen to the reply.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Premier explain how the competition payments due to South Australia may be jeopardised if the Government does not complete its plan to sell our electricity assets?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As part of the implementation of the national competition reforms, the Commonwealth has agreed to pay approximately \$322 million over nine years in extra payments on top of financial assistance grants of \$690 million over the same period. These grants are to be paid in three tranches beginning in the current financial year and we have factored those payments into our forward budget estimates. Therefore, receipt of those funds is absolutely critical. However, the receipt of those payments is dependent upon South Australia's performance against the Council of Australian Government agreement being determined to be satisfactory by the National Competition Council.

While substantial reforms have been implemented in terms of structures of ETSA and now Optima, a number of other additional reforms are required or will be desirable, including the prevention of anti-competitive arrangements within the industry and new mechanisms to manage market power. In particular, I draw the Opposition's attention to an article in the *Financial Review* today where—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am glad the member for Hart has read it. It would give some degree of assurance that our policy direction was right. I hope that the honourable member will be able to unlock his Labor colleagues from their time warp and move forward as are the rest of the world and Australia, and as we are with our policy settings. The fact is that a number of other additional reforms are required or will be desirable, including the prevention of anti-competitive arrangements. With the National Competition Council making it clear—and both Professor Fels and Graham Samuel have made this perfectly clear in the past month to six weeks—that it will impose substantial penalties for failure to achieve the agreed reforms, this Government believes it is appropriate that these reforms be best addressed by moving to a truly competitive market because then they cannot argue in the policy direction that our competition payments ought to be compromised. Having announced this policy today, they cannot pursue an argument that we in South Australia are not prepared to put the right competitive base in place in the marketplace in South Australia. As such, we do not jeopardise and we will not jeopardise those payments worth almost \$1 billion.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Elder will come to order.

DUBLIN AND INKERMAN DUMP SITES

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment. Does the Minister agree with two of her ministerial colleagues that both the Dublin and the Inkerman dump sites are unsuitable because of risks to the environment? I have a copy of a letter written by the member for Light (now the Minister for Education), which states that both he and the member for Coles (now apparently the Minister for Employment) believe that both sites are unsuitable for landfill. The letter states that the sites are unsuitable because of their proximity to the coast, the significant potential for leachate to infiltrate the water table, the aesthetic effects of Wingfield style mountains close to the Port Wakefield Road and the potential for rubbish to escape because of high winds in the area. That is from the Minister's fellow Ministers.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I say at the outset that I would have thought that most members in this Chamber would be well aware of the procedures that are set in a legislative process when any type of application is applied for, particularly in waste management—and I refer to landfill dumps. Those procedures were set in place mainly by the Labor Party, and they included an extremely strenuous environment impact statement. Regarding these dumps, I am sure that the Leader is aware that for this process to come to a conclusion and the granting of approval for that dump has taken some 2½ years. Through all of that, the legislative processes have been complied with. I assure the honourable member that those processes are extremely strenuous: some years ago when they were put into legislation every then member of this Chamber ensured that that was the case.

The outcome after this whole process has meant that it has been accepted. That also includes a very stringent look by the Environment Protection Agency, which, under legislation, has matters to deal with in regard to those processes. It is a separate authority when it comes to issuing the licence at the end of that process. The Leader of the Opposition should also be well aware that under the Act the Minister for Environment has no right at all to interfere in that process or direct any instruction to the environmental agency. In terms of the process, which I believe is very stringent, the end result is that the dump has been approved. The EPA will issue a licence but there will be qualifications on that licence, which will be protection in terms of the environmental issues that were raised during the whole process. As far as anything else is concerned, the Leader of the Opposition needs to deal personally with the other people concerned.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Regional Development advise the House what impact the Government's proposed electricity reforms will have on customers in rural South Australia?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: It is an important question, because this Government has a commitment to all people in South Australia whether they live in rural areas or the metropolitan area. I would certainly encourage members

opposite not to insult rural people's intelligence by trying to mislead them on statements about future pricing. Over the next five years the Government will put in place maximum statewide uniform tariffs for all customers—and that includes rural customers—who will not be able to choose their suppliers of electricity. It will be a regulated price and it will be monitored by the independent regulator, who will be appointed by the Government.

The job of the industry regulator will be to monitor electricity prices and service standards, and these regulated tariffs will be the same as those paid by city customers through to 2002. The Government is committed to ensuring that a continuing electricity supply and quality of service to rural areas of the State is a requirement of the reformed industry. As you, Mr Speaker, know, rural South Australia plays a very important role in the South Australian economy, and the Government will ensure that those industries receive the benefits of competition and are themselves able to grow and employ people in the regions.

DUBLIN DUMP

Mr HILL (Kaurna): Will the Minister for Primary Industries give the House a categorical assurance that the Dublin dump will not affect fish breeding areas in Gulf St Vincent, and are the Minister's views supported by any independent scientific assessment of the risk? The Opposition has a copy of a letter from the General Manager of the South Australian Fishing Industry Council expressing concern that the dump at Dublin will be in the tidal watertable. The letter states:

As with all such locations the potential for leachates entering coastal waters is very real, posing a serious threat to our valuable fishing industry.

In response to requests from the Opposition for assurances that leachates from the dump will not harm the fishing industry, the Minister's office replied that the Dublin dump was the responsibility of the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: As indicated by the Minister for Environment and Heritage in her last answer, the dump process has a stringent environmental impact statement attached to it. That process is in place, and I put the assessment of those professionals ahead of that of either my friends in the fishing industry or members opposite.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises. How can the Government ensure that South Australia's future electricity needs will be met under a privatised system, given that pressure on supply is already emerging during peak periods?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: This is an important issue for South Australians which we have discussed in this House before. It is a key issue on the Government's agenda to ensure that supply shortages and blackouts are avoided as the market is deregulated and, indeed, as the process that the Premier has outlined earlier today unfolds. To ensure that supply is available, we will establish a separate specialist organisation to provide appropriate advice and to manage the security of the system.

The important thing to note is that the experience from the Victorian and the New South Wales markets indicates that introduction of competition, which these changes will

certainly bring about, creates incentives to encourage generators to make available additional capacity to meet peak demands, or for the generators to use the present generated supply more efficiently. It is a direct result of competition.

In relation to the potential for supply shortages and blackouts, the more immediate question for the Government is whether the Riverlink interconnect with New South Wales proceeds and whether the repowering of the Torrens Island Power Station proceeds.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: That was the question I was going to ask you.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: It is a very important question, and I am glad that the honourable member was going to ask it. The Government has already agreed in principle to proceed with the Riverlink interconnect but a final decision on Riverlink cannot be made until the National Electricity Management Market Company, known as NEMMCO—and, as the national electricity market evolves, NEMMCO and NECA will become much better known around Australia—has determined whether the interconnect will be classified as a regulated asset as part of the national electricity code and the results of any environmental impact study on the interconnect are available.

In relation to the repowering of Torrens Island Power Station, the Government has not yet made a decision but the import of the honourable member's question is that the Government is fully aware of the demands from South Australians for a reliable supply of electricity, and the steps that we are putting into place will increase the likelihood of that being provided in the future.

DUBLIN DUMP

Mr HILL (Kaurna): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment. On how many occasions has the Environment Protection Authority taken action in relation to breaches of the licence to operate the Borrelli landfill at Wingfield? Will past performance be taken into account before any licence for a dump at Dublin is issued to Integrated Waste Services, a \$2 company owned by M. and P. Borrelli?

In 1996, the Chairman of the EPA told the Opposition that considerable progress had been made investigating allegations made in the media concerning the Borrelli tip and that the EPA had received confirmation by Mr Borrelli that he had received asbestos material in a form that he was not licensed to receive.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I thank the honourable member for his question, although I suggest that, when he asks questions that relate to the integrity of companies and when he names people in this House, he has his facts right. Regarding the EPA's taking up reports, I do not have that information at the moment, but I reiterate to this House and to the member for Kaurna that for nearly three years stringent processes have been in place in an attempt to get the Dublin dump under way. I suggest that members of this House are also well aware that, if they wish to take any part in the consultation process which leads to a decision, that is the most appropriate time to bring up the questions, not now.

The member for Kaurna is almost indulging in the Johnny-come-lately syndrome. For 2½ years all those processes have been in place. Since the last election, the member for Kaurna has had plenty of time, and others in this Chamber have had more than plenty of time, to work up these so-called concerns that are now appearing when the process has been completed.

If the member for Kaurna has any other concerns, perhaps he should look at the research and at the environmental impact statement that was prepared.

Ms Hurley: We are asking you for it.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I am sorry, but I am not about to do the research that an individual member of Parliament should have done to enable him to ask an informed question rather than an inane one.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Premier advise the House of the financial risks highlighted by the Auditor-General in his most recent review of electricity reform in South Australia?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I thank the member for Hartley for his question. I previously touched on this matter in broad terms: shareholder, competitive compliance, regulatory and industry risks are substantial. The risk to the Government as the shareholder of ETSA and Optima is enormous. A review by the Government has concluded that this risk to the shareholders, that is, the taxpayers of South Australia, could run into half a billion dollars over the next few years as the national market is implemented. The Auditor-General in his latest report (page A.3-29) states:

Competition introduces the risk of loss of market share but this is not the only competitive risk that will be faced. Specifically the ETSA corporations and Optima are at risk of:

- loss of customers to competitors;
- demand from a shrinking customer base being inadequate to support long-term fixed supply arrangements that were put in place prior to the implementation of the reforms.

That would have substantial impact on employment numbers if no action were taken. The Auditor-General went on to note the effect of even pre-existing commitments which relate to gas and co-generation contracts. On page A.3-32, the Auditor-General states:

When the NEM becomes operational, there is the potential for the wholesale sales prices of electricity to be less than the contracted . . . price. Accordingly, ETSA Corporation has recognised in its 1996-97 . . . statements—

tabled just prior to Christmas—

an estimated future loss of \$96 million in present value terms.

ETSA has already had to face up to the realities of competitive forces with pre-existing arrangements and has already had to recognise that previous decisions may, in that context, cost \$96 million. That is no criticism of ETSA. The loss shows the stark nature of the market we are entering: there is no room for error.

Then there is the trade practices risk. Previously, our electricity utilities had been immune from the Trade Practices Act by nature of being in State Government ownership. That has now changed. The Auditor-General notes that any abuse of market power by ETSA Power Corporation and Optima may contravene section 46 of the Trade Practices Act. He also notes that ETSA and Optima are likely to have market power. That is no small matter, because the Act provides that contravention of its provisions or anti-competitive behaviour may result in penalties of up to \$10 million for each offence. In his summary, the Auditor-General provides a sobering assessment of the challenge which faced this Government and the reason for the policy change that I have announced today. The Auditor-General says at page A.3-40:

The need for appropriate risk management strategies and oversight is compelling. Not only do the ETSA corporations and Optima represent a significant proportion of public capital in South

Australia, capital which should be preserved, but the 'downside' for the South Australian public is significant as they, through the Government, stand behind the financial viability of these entities.

He goes on to say:

The conferral of Government guarantees on publicly owned commercial businesses places a greater obligation on the shareholder, the Government and its representatives for effective performance.

He also says:

The effect that the collapse of the former State Bank of South Australia had on the State's finances must never recur.

That is the reason why we are pursuing this policy direction: never to let that situation recur in South Australia. That is the responsible course for South Australia in the future.

HERITAGE PROJECTS

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Environment and Heritage inform the House which projects were listed as priorities for funding by the State Assessment Panel and recommended to the National Heritage Trust ministerial groups and which, if any, were rejected at that Commonwealth level?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: As members would be aware, there has been a certain improvement in the amount of funds that have come into this State. All community groups were encouraged to apply for the funds that have been provided by the Commonwealth Government for natural heritage projects. The South Australian applications totalled some \$15 million.

Mr HANNA: I rise on a point of order. Is it appropriate for the member for Mawson to be holding up bits of newspaper and waving them at members of the Opposition?

The SPEAKER: If the honourable member for Mawson is doing that, I uphold the point of order and point out to all members that displaying any object in the House is contrary to Standing Orders, and I ask that that does not take place.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: It is a sad thing that Opposition members consider that a piece of newspaper is more important than a question—

The SPEAKER: Order! It was a legitimate point of order.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: The South Australian assessment applications have been quite extensive, to the tune of \$15.4 million, and that is the amount that has been accepted by the Federal Government in the vast number of projects right across the State. I do not have the information with me, because it is very extensive, but I am quite prepared to bring back that information, because it will give me the opportunity to advise this Chamber of the immense number of community applications that have gone in to bring that amount of money into this State.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Minister for Regional Development advise the House how the sale of the State's power assets will affect regional cities such as Port Augusta, which rely heavily on the power assets for their economy?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I certainly identify with the member for Stuart's interest in this matter. The electricity industry has certainly been important in Port Augusta and will stay that way for a long time. As far as the people of Port Augusta are concerned, it is not who owns the asset that is important: what is relevant is how competitive that asset will be in the national electricity market and, therefore, the ability of that asset to provide jobs for people in Port Augusta. That

is certainly the important factor for Port Augusta, and I am sure the residents will not lose sight of that.

One of the reasons why South Australia is to sell its assets is to ensure that this State is able to be competitive in the national electricity market. We have no reason to doubt the long-term competitiveness of the Northern Power Station and no reason at all to doubt that electricity will continue to be a major industry in the region, as the power station will remain competitive. Today's policy announcement certainly serves that aim well.

It is also important to stress that the asset sale is aimed at preserving jobs in South Australia and, as I stated before, that applies not just to metropolitan South Australia but throughout regional South Australia as well. What is equally important to stress is the damage that would be done to the region—such as Upper Spencer Gulf—if the assets were not sold, and that has been well illustrated by the Premier. The electricity industry is very important not only to Port Augusta but also to Port Pirie and Whyalla, which have industries that are major users of electricity, and competitiveness will therefore have a major impact on the future of those towns and their ability to employ people. We do not want power prices to rise to the detriment of industry and, therefore, to the detriment of jobs within those industries. We want to be able to attract jobs and attract industry to the regions. So, hopefully, the only impact on Port Augusta will be a positive one, and I am sure that the Mayor of Port Augusta, along with the honourable member, are sensible enough to know that what we are doing here is the correct direction for the future of South Australia.

As the Premier mentioned—and this is well and truly known in the regions—previously we had a State Government which ignored the messages being put forward about the risks and, as a businessman in country South Australia at the time, I know the price that the whole State paid, employment-wise and economy-wise, for those mistakes of the past. It is good to see a Government that is addressing that matter and taking the flak. The Premier obviously has had to go back on things he said before, and he has the courage to do that. He has put the State well and truly first, and I am sure that the benefits of that will be seen throughout South Australia. So, I am sure that the member for Stuart will get the support of the people of Port Augusta for this move.

SOUTH-EAST WATER RESOURCES

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: I wish to advise the House of the latest developments on the South-East water resources issue. For the first time ever, the people of the South-East have an opportunity to work cooperatively towards a water allocation policy that can be equitable whilst enhancing the value of water to the regional economy—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I caution the member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:—within the sustainable limits of that resource. For too long now, community opinion has been split between the competing objectives for water which

have been vigorously debated over two years in the South-East.

The deproclamation of the prescribed wells area of Lacapède-Kongorong has acted as the catalyst to draw together the competing elements of this debate. The majority of the South-East community in the past few days has publicly declared the common objective of working together to resolve equitably the means by which water resource will be allocated in the South-East in the future. The members for MacKillop and Gordon, who represent the combined interests of the South-East community, took up the challenge issued by me to formulate an agreed position to provide further evidence to substantiate their claim that the South-East community would support that agreed position. In return for those assurances, I would move to disallow the deproclamation regulations.

However, it was made very clear that the Government would not accept purely a return to the *status quo*. Any agreed position must provide a major step forward from what was the entrenched and diverse opinions that had caused stagnation of the debate and anger and concern in the community. To their credit, my parliamentary colleagues from the South-East have indeed garnered widespread support for an agreed four-point plan which, in the supporting words of the South-East Economic Development Board, 'will form the basis of a strong starting point in turning this water debate into a long-term and meaningful solution for the benefit of the South-East and this State'. The four key issues addressed by the plan include:

1. The reproclamation of the Lacapède-Kongorong area;
2. Recognition of the hydrogeological and agronomic diversity of the Lacapède-Kongorong area, allowing for differential water allocations in appropriate zones;
3. Establish a catchment water management board, using the South-Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Board as the interim water board; and
4. Develop a final allocation policy consistent with COAG water resource use and competition principles.

By involving the community directly in the management of their water resources, the Government is upholding its responsibility in recognising the need for a partnership with community leaders and the community at large. The Government provides the legal underpinning for the protection, allocation and management of the resource. The community, represented by a catchment board, will manage the resource through a catchment plan which has been developed with strong and wide community input. That is the model for the next millennium, and we are implementing it now.

While plans are being developed, the waters of the South-East will remain under the full protection of the Water Resources Act 1997. The Act provides me with a range of powers to ensure that water is used sustainably. Something that has become clear to me in the past few months is the serious lack of sound scientific information on which to base policies. Too often we have had to apply a broad-brush solution to a region where there is considerable diversity. The issues to be faced in the upper South-East are not the same as those of the well-watered lower South-East. The information problem will need to be addressed as a matter of priority in the catchment plan.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the very fine work undertaken by the upper and lower South-East water review committees, and I believe that the new catchment board would enhance their initial interim plan by utilising the great knowledge and information held by the

members of these committees. I would also like to acknowledge the remarkable commitment of all staff members throughout the Department for Environment and Heritage who have dealt with the South-East water issue with patience and professionalism. This is a debate which can be solved only by the regional community working cooperatively for a compromise model which recognises both equity and economic objectives, all within the sustainable limits of the resource. We are moving forward, and we will finalise a water allocation plan. We will establish a community-based catchment board. We will have a totally integrated water resource management plan for the whole of the South-East.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): Today has been an extraordinary day in Parliament, because it is not often we find a defining moment for the life of a Government. This Government has certainly signed its own political death warrant with its backflip on the sale of ETSA. Throughout the election campaign we were told that there would be no sale of ETSA, that we were fearmongering and that we were liars. However, sadly, everything we said prior to that election has come to pass. We will also see that this Government ceases to have any moral mandate to govern this State. It is a bit like when John Dawkins, as the Federal Treasurer in the re-elected Keating Government—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I believe the time allotted for grievances is five minutes per speaker, and the clock is showing 10 minutes. I would hate to have to put up with the member for Ross Smith for 10 minutes.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The matter has been taken into account.

Mr CLARKE: When I start dealing with the member for Coles, the member for Unley will want to listen for more than 10 minutes—for very good reason. When John Dawkins, as Treasurer, in the first budget after the re-election of the Keating Government, reneged on a whole range of promises given by the Labor Government in the 1993 election, that was a defining moment for that Government, because there was an outrage that everything that had been said before the election was not carried through: in fact, totally the reverse was the case at the first budget after that election. The same fate will await this Government. I will deal with that, and there will be plenty of time to deal with the ETSA issue over the coming weeks and months. I would like to deal with the performance of the member for Coles, who apparently is the Minister for Employment, representing the Government in this House. I must say that the performance of the Minister today—whether she is a junior Minister, a kiddy Minister or whatever—was an absolute disgrace. It is not like—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr CLARKE: You love hearing it about John!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I thought it was out of order to make reflections on other members in this place unless by way of a substantive motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the point of order put forward by the member for Unley could be sustained.

Mr CLARKE: The member for Unley could barely contain himself today when he saw the difficulties the member for Coles, the Minister for Employment, had in answering fairly basic questions. He had a look of glee and had to put both hands over his mouth to stop the smile, which was spreading wider than the equator. He well remembers how the member for Coles plotted to knife him for the preselection, saved only by the then Premier. The member for Unley then showed his gratitude by back-stabbing the Premier at the first opportunity.

However, today, I want to talk about the performance of the Minister for Employment, who could not answer basic questions. As a member of a Government that promised 200 000 jobs over 10 years in the 1993 election, she could not answer a simple, straight-forward question about the Government's plans and how it would achieve them. Then, as the Minister for Employment, she could not work out the difference between seasonally adjusted unemployment figures and unadjusted figures.

This Minister was not appointed yesterday, the week before or the month before but in December last year. The Minister has had three months to try to come to grips with her portfolio, but all she has learned to come to grips with is one page of her briefing notes. She cannot seem to flick over the first page. That is a sad indictment on a Minister for Employment, involving a State with a record 10 per cent unemployment level. She has no idea, no plans—

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: I want to look as ugly as the member for Unley, so that is why I had this haircut. That is why I had the haircut—I wanted to look as ugly as you.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I rise on a point of order, Sir. The member for Ross Smith knows full well the rules of the Parliament. Members must address another honourable member by his or her seat. The member for Ross Smith ought to know that by now.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The point of order is upheld.

Mr CLARKE: Some people said to me, 'We should not pick on the member for Coles because she is a new Minister. She might be a bit brittle and we should not appear to be a bit bullying.' The fact is that a Minister is responsible for his or her portfolio, and that is that, whether that person was sworn in yesterday or six years ago. Another fact is that the member for Coles is not a shrinking violet: she has been wheeling the numbers in the Liberal Party for a lot of years. She knifed her mate (the former Premier) of 35 years standing as soon as it was convenient. The point is that the Minister is not fit to hold the job because she cannot do it.

There is more to that job than kicking a soccer ball around a stadium. She owes it to the public of South Australia and to the 10 per cent of South Australians who are unemployed to come up with some plans in terms of creating jobs in this State. It is not appropriate for her to keep taking everything on notice.

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

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I also want to talk about jobs in this grievance debate. I remind the House that, when the current Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education and the Minister for Small Business and Regional Development, we saw 33 600 jobs lost and a general unemployment rate in this State of 12.8 per cent. I remind the House also that today, albeit that we have difficult circumstances to work through,

we have more full-time employment than ever before in this State's history.

It would be great if we could get a little support from those on the other side to continue with the job. I want to talk today about the Noarlunga Centre and, in particular, the Colonnades Shopping Centre. I congratulate my colleague the Minister for Human Services (Hon. Dean Brown) for the great job he has done since becoming Minister in ensuring that very quickly he got on with the job of getting the sale of this centre up and running—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BROKENSHERE: I have been very keen to see the sale of that land for some time. About 18 months ago I spoke in this Parliament to some senior people from the AMP. I am a strong supporter of the AMP, which has been a great developer in the past—and I am sure in the future—of Australia's prosperity. The AMP was visionary, and also pretty gutsy, when, many years ago, it invested in the development of the Colonnades Shopping Centre well before its time, and everyone knew it. When one is a developer and investor (like a Liberal Government) one looks at the long-term future; one does not look at the short-term opportunities, such as the opportunistic Opposition. It is about building sustainable opportunities for the State, and particularly our young people, and AMP has done this proudly.

We know that Westfield has got on with the job and, whilst I do not like going there because it is well out of my catchment area, I recently paid a visit and I commend Westfield on the job it has done. Clearly, we now need to see some expansion and growth in the Colonnades Shopping Centre because I do not want to see my constituents going out of their natural catchment area, spending money and therefore not helping to create jobs in their own region. Harris Scarfe and Target have done a great job. Harris Scarfe has invested in my electorate at Woodcroft as well as the Southgate Centre in part of my old electorate across the road.

I enjoyed working with some of the people in seeing that happen. That started to stop the leakage of expenditure over the hill. I enjoy working with people, and anyone who is worth their salt as a politician should because that is a politician's number one priority. The AMP representatives said that they believed the Colonnades Shopping Centre was number one or number two in the potential opportunity for growth, investment and return for the AMP. They also informed me that until the AMP owned the land it was not in a position, whilst it had plans to extend the shopping centre, to get on with the job. This Government has now achieved a win-win.

It has been given \$25 million, or thereabouts, to start to reduce the debt and help develop the State. The Government has also now given the AMP an opportunity to get on with the job. If AMP needs any further help to expand Colonnades Shopping Centre, I offer that support. I am sure the City of Onkaparinga will also offer its support because this new amalgamated council is all about economic growth and opportunity for our region. As a State Government we have a good understanding and working relationship with that council. I will be forwarding a copy of my grievance debate to senior management of AMP to encourage them to now get on with the job.

It is important that we keep as many dollars as possible in our region. It is possible, economically, to keep a dollar turning around up to 10 times in that region, but it will not be possible unless there is more competition in the shopping

centre. It will help the existing shops; it will also help my community. AMP wants to see the opportunity for competition, and it wants to see the opportunity for a broad range of products. The development also needs some youth facilities, and I believe that AMP has a golden opportunity to get on with some recreational development for our young people. An interchange is located there and young people, by and large, are great people who want to help build the future, but they also need more facilities.

We have seen similar facilities for young people offered at Westfield. The South is the fastest growing region in the State. Tens of thousands of young people will be living in that region over the next couple of decades, and I ask the AMP to again show that vision and commitment to our region and get on with an expansion program as a matter of urgency.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I place on record today my concerns about the deplorable delays in the repair and maintenance of street lighting in my electorate. Large sections of streets and major thoroughfares have been left in darkness for periods of up to four months. Following today's announcement I wonder whether this has been part of a wind-down that has been ongoing over recent months to prepare ETSA for sale. However, the fact remains that in my electorate many people have been concerned and they have been reporting street lights that have not been operating for long periods.

People have genuine concerns about their personal safety; the fact that they are frightened to go out at night because of the darkness of the streets in which they live; the fact that prowlers have been able to enter their properties much more easily; and that things have been stolen from their yards simply because the level of outside lighting has been non-existent. The other point that has been raised with me many times is the danger to our roads. Philip Highway at Elizabeth, a major thoroughfare, had nine street lights out for about two to three months. Philip Highway, for those members who do not know and who do not come often to Elizabeth, is a major thoroughfare.

People have pointed out the dangers of that situation to all road users. Philip Highway is not the only major thoroughfare. Haydown Road, a major road leading to the Lyell McEwin Hospital, has six lights not operating. That major road is in darkness. So, what are the main issues? First, that ETSA'S stated policy is that street lights will be repaired within five days. One of my constituents was told that if it was a major thoroughfare something would be done about it within 24 hours. People are making reports over a three to four month period, and that is outrageous. Secondly, I ask why repair jobs are not coordinated. Interestingly, after the Philip Highway problem was raised in the local media, ETSA did the job but it did not do all of the job.

It repaired the lights on one side of the road but did not repair the lights on the other side of the road. Why are these jobs not coordinated? The reason given to my constituents is that some of these activities have been contracted out and that one company does one sort of job and that a different company does another sort of job. One must ask: what is the efficiency in this? The final concern of my constituents is that when they make their reports ETSA does not get back to them and they are continually having to re-report because they are not sure whether their initial report has been noted and, with the long delays, people believe their reports have not been noted at all.

Last week, as I said before, this was raised in the local paper. A number of residents had had enough. The people on Philip Highway have not seen any activity for about three months. It was interesting that ETSA's public relations manager, Sue Vincent, conceded that there had been a backlog, yet she denied that residents had reported some of the cases cited by my office. Members can imagine the anger of people in my electorate when this public relations manager insinuated that, in fact, they had not done what they said they had done. I assure members that there is a lot of anger out there.

I also assure the House that this is not the end of this issue. In the past two days a resident of my electorate has presented my office with 42 new reports of street lights not operating. He and his friends are conducting patrols to note every street light in Elizabeth that is not working. I have 42 so far, and I expect more. We will pass the details on to ETSA and wait to see whether it lifts its game or whether it continues to slide before the sale.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr Clarke: Are you going to give any answers today?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The lights are still on in my electorate and will continue to be on. I would like to canvass briefly a range of issues. The Constitutional Convention was held over the past two weeks.

Mr Atkinson: Bring back your House of Such.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: You have just lost your knight-hood that was in the post. I was delighted to see the performance of the young delegates at the Constitutional Convention. I refer to Mia Handshin from South Australia and Kirsten Andrews, two young women whom I had the pleasure of meeting while I was Minister for Youth Affairs. They are examples of the sort of talent we have in this State and in this country. We all should be reassured by the performance of those two and others at the Convention. Whether or not you agree with the particular views that were espoused, the fact is that people should have confidence in the future of this country when they see the talent of our young people such as Mia, Kirsten and others.

I now refer to the retirement village industry in South Australia. There are over 2 000 villages, and there are some issues that need to be addressed, particularly with respect to privately managed villages. I am pleased that the Hon. Trevor Griffin is responding to some of the concerns that I have raised with him. Whilst we need to keep it in context—because there are not problems in all villages—people who are in a retirement situation are somewhat vulnerable. In those villages they do not want to be worried about issues of management, maintenance and so on. I will be pleased to follow this matter, and I look forward to the Attorney's response.

Another issue of concern to me is men's health. It has been a hobby horse of mine for a long time. I am not in any way detracting from the emphasis that has been put on women's health. That is good and it should continue. But men, largely from their own deficiency in terms of seeking help and so on, are suffering very high rates of cancer, particularly prostate cancer. That is an issue which I have raised with the Minister for Human Services. We need not only an education campaign but other approaches to tackle what is a devastating problem amongst men in the community. I am not in any way saying that we should do less in relation to women's health—we should do more

wherever possible—but men need to get up to speed in relation to the health services that are available to them, for example, early detection, particularly in relation to prostate cancer, and other matters affecting their health.

In high schools in my electorate I have—and I guess other members do, too—a very small number of troublesome students—mainly male students—who are not suited to the high school environment. I am not talking about those students who are best catered for in the Bowden-Brompton situation, but we have about 10 or 12 students in each high school—and I guess this extends across the State—with a similar problem. I urge the Minister for Education to take on board the provision of special facilities for those young people so that they can be challenged and provided with other opportunities in an environment that does not result in other students' learning patterns being disrupted.

In the metropolitan area similar students would number in the many hundreds. I believe that they should be dealt with in a special learning environment outside the normal school situation but not, as I indicated before, in an environment similar to the Bowden-Brompton establishment, which is a specialised school which performs a very good function within the education system. It is a good investment for the people of this State if we can tackle the issue of those disruptive male students in about years 9 and 10 before they cause difficulties for other students with whom they associate.

I was pleased to see the opening of the Southern Expressway. It does not benefit my electorate to the same extent as others in the south, but it does take pressure off Main South Road. So, in that way there is an indirect benefit. There have been some delays for people using Flagstaff Road but, overall, it has been a great success and one which I think will continue. I urge the Government to consider an O-Bahn or something similar in that respect. I was delighted to hear the Minister and the Premier respond positively to a study in that regard. I look forward to the day when we have a facility such as that in the south.

Mr CONLON (Elder): I am unable to leave the Chamber today without making some comments about the extraordinary tale that has unfolded here in regard to the Premier's decision to sell ETSA. Apparently, if I understand the tale correctly, some time between October last year and today the Premier saw the electric light on the road to Damascus and decided that the Electricity Trust of South Australia must be sold. I do not disbelieve the Premier at all, but I would like to put this tale before members and see what they think of it. As I understand it, in 1991 it was decided that the Electricity Trust of South Australia would join the national grid. It was understood from that time forward that the Electricity Trust of South Australia would engage in what is a competitive market place. Everyone knew that then and has known that for the past seven years.

We went to an election in October last year, and what did the Premier say about the Electricity Trust of South Australia? He said that it would remain in public hands and that Labor's scaremongering on the issue was just that: scaremongering. He went to the extent of telling off the Deputy Premier for being honest enough to say to a lot of people in the Opposition that the Government would like to sell it. What has happened since then? Apparently, as I say, at some point the Premier saw the electric light on the road to Damascus. It might have been when he got into his sexy shorts and slid down a cliff on a piece of rope; we are not

sure. He says that he picked up the Auditor-General's Report and read that if they are engaging in competitive practices not only might they make money but they might lose money. He thought, 'By crikey, no-one has told me that before; we had better sell it.'

I believe the Premier; I trust him. However, he might have difficulty convincing the electorate that, some time between October last year and today, he noticed that in a competitive market place you can lose money as well, which seems to be the net reason for the Premier's deciding now that ETSA must be sold. The truth is this: during his contributions today he went so far as to say that he now hopes the Democrats and the Opposition will cooperate in relation to this matter. He has absolutely no right to believe that he deserves any consideration or cooperation at all. If he wanted to sell ETSA, he had a clear opportunity to seek a mandate in October last year—and he did not. He took exactly the opposite direction, and he even went so far as to chastise the Deputy Premier for putting it on the books. If he wants our cooperation, he will have to do slightly better than that.

Prior to the last election, I took the trouble of doorknocking in my electorate. Many people raised with me the question of the Electricity Trust's being sold off—and no-one wanted it. No-one wants further sell offs in South Australia. We do not want it, and we will not cooperate in this blatant betrayal of the people of South Australia. I believe the Premier has changed his mind but, by golly, he will have a great deal of trouble convincing the electorate of that. Prior to the election last year, Graham Ingerson, the Deputy Premier, let the cat out of the bag, and we are now seeing what was the Government's plan all along.

One piece of advice for the Premier on this issue is that, given the opportunity he has provided to some people in his Government, he should not be taking the Minister for Human Services down for any more commando training at Wirrina, because the Minister for Human Services is already on a search and destroy mission. In my view, with the announcement of this sell-off today, the radar is locked on and the Premier is it. We can at least say that the Premier has done the Deputy Premier a big favour today.

Make no mistake: the Government will pay for this. If it had the honesty to announce it in October last year, it would have paid for it by losing more seats than it did. So, it has 'snuck' into government by misrepresenting one of the major planks but, by golly, it will pay for it in four years.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): The member for Elder is a new member of this House, but it is disappointing that he should join colleagues, some of whom were here in the previous Bannon and Arnold Governments, in showing the symptoms that bankrupted this State. It is disappointing because I hoped that all the new members would have learnt from the mistakes of earlier years and endeavoured never to be part and parcel of a Government (or, in this case, an Opposition) that might lead South Australia into the bankrupt situation that it was in some years ago. It is still in a very precarious situation. Therefore, I was surprised to hear him criticise and ridicule what the Premier announced earlier.

He obviously did not listen to what the Premier was saying. He did not listen to the assessment and analysis of what has occurred as a result of the Auditor-General's Report, and he is simply not interested in the welfare of South Australia. Payments of \$1 billion—that is, \$1 000 million—due to South Australia under the competition policy would be jeopardised. And who got us into this competition policy?

It was the former Labor Government. I simply urge the member for Elder, as a new member, to take the time to read the Premier's statement to the House this afternoon. I realise that it may take some time to digest it, but he should look at all the facts and the implications and not be led down a track that would be painful for this State. I believe that we have to consider this State above all other factors, to see that our economy is moving up and not going down as it did under the Labor Government. Certainly, it will take many years to correct the massive debt that we inherited from Labor.

My key aim this afternoon, although I have only three minutes left, is to address some of the issues associated with the Constitutional Convention. I will endeavour to start now and perhaps continue on another occasion. I was very pleased to receive a communique from the Chairman (Ian Sinclair) and the Deputy Chairman (Barry Jones) of the Constitutional Convention that was held in the past two weeks, from 2 February until 13 February. This will have been one of the most important events in the history of Australia when one looks back on it in future. Having attended several functions in my electorate prior to the commencement of and just at the start of the convention, I was interested in the reaction from my constituents, which was, without any shadow of a doubt, very negative.

In fact, the type of comments coming to me were: 'What do you think of the waste of the \$40 million to hold this Constitutional Convention? Don't you think there are better things to do than to waste people's time sitting in Canberra working through something that doesn't need to be worked through?' My response to those types of comments was: 'Let's see what happens in the next two weeks. Let's assess the information and we can perhaps make a more valued judgment after that.' Two weeks of discussions occurred, and the feedback I have had since then has been, by and large, 'How wonderful that an outcome was determined.' It seems that some sense was arrived at by the Constitution Convention. It looks as though the money was not all misspent during that two week period.

Therefore, I feel, from the gut reaction I have had from my constituents, that the time and money spent probably will assist in helping Australia determine its future course from a constitutional point of view. I would like to compliment all who were involved in the Constitutional Convention. At another time I will highlight what I believe are some of the significant outcomes of that convention. It was interesting to see both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition basically agree that they were satisfied with the outcome and that they would both seek to progress in a positive direction the various recommendations that were determined by the Constitutional Convention.

SUPPLY BILL

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act for the appropriation of money from the Consolidated Account for the financial year ending 30 June 1999. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This year the Government will introduce the 1998-99 budget on 28 May 1998. A Supply Bill will still be necessary for the early months of the 1998-99 year until the budget has passed through the parliamentary stages and received assent. In the absence of special arrangements in the form of the Supply Acts, there would be no parliamentary authority for expenditure between the commencement of the new financial year and the date on which assent is given to the main Appropriation Bill. The amount being sought under this Bill is \$500 million, which is the same amount as last year's Supply Bill. The Bill provides for the appropriation of \$500 million to enable the Government to continue to provide public services for the early part of 1998-99.

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2 provides relevant definitions.

Clause 3 provides for the appropriation of up to \$500 million.

Mr FOLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 11 December. Page 302.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call on the member for Reynell. I remind members that this is the honourable member's maiden speech and that matter should be respected by all members.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): First, congratulations to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and the Speaker on your election to those positions, and I very much thank the Speaker for the assistance he has given me already in settling into my new responsibilities. Thanks also to the Parliament House staff who have made my first few weeks so pleasant when they could have been very confusing. Already I have seen how skilled and committed they are to the various tasks that keep the Parliament functioning and I look forward to working with them for a very long time to come. Thank you also to the people of Reynell whose votes on election day showed their confidence in me and the Labor Party. I will not let them down.

At this point I draw the attention of the House to what the grand daughter of John Reynell tells me is the correct pronunciation of the electorate. She has asked me to refer to the electorate always as 'Reynell' as that is the family name and I have been practising very hard and I now regularly succeed.

Mr Lewis: Hear! Hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms THOMPSON: All members know that none of us gets here by ourselves—not even because of our commitment, talent or good looks. It takes many people over many years to help us get here and I wish to acknowledge some of them. The experiences I gained through growing up in a strongly working class community have been the main source of my political understanding and commitment. As with most of our neighbourhood, we had things tough as children, particularly as I am the oldest of seven children. Our father was frequently ill or unemployed and, as did many returned soldiers, he had problems adjusting back into civilian life. Our mother was a remarkable money manager but, all the same, we were good customers of Vinnies and with seven of us it almost was first up, best dressed. Things that we now

consider necessities and quite ordinary were then beyond our financial reach. There were no bikes, tennis, music, entertainment, holidays or school sports uniforms. If you could not get there by walking, by bus or by train, you did not go.

We lived in fear of something going wrong: the washing machine breaking down, the fridge blowing up or someone getting sick. Even as a child I knew that any of these events would put enormous pressure on my parents and many times it was only the generosity of family and friends that got us through. The fact that many people I knew were pretty much in the same boat meant that we were not as aware as we should have been of the sacrifices our parents made to keep us decently clothed, fed and educated. We really do owe that whole war time generation plenty.

However, it was not all unrelieved gloom: it never is. Fortunately, the libraries were free and I could use my school train pass to get to them. This is how I learned about another world which my mother and grandmother told me could be mine with a lot of hard work and determination and some good luck. Unfortunately, neither my mother nor grandmother is present today to witness this important occasion, although I am very pleased that so many members of my family are here. Our mother died at the relatively young age of 68 but not before she had instilled in her children and grandchildren a sense of compassion for others and sensitivity to their needs. She also showed us the courage and determination to overcome the many hurdles placed in our way, and we all owe her much.

Many people today live much as I did in my earlier years, some much worse, so I am not complaining. My point is that I have lived in situations where there was no money and I have been in situations of considerable comfort. Much as I am grateful for the values and sensitivities my early years gave me, I know which I prefer. I do not believe anyone lives in poverty because they like it. They do not enjoy lining up for help and having constantly to prove they are poor. I am sure there must be a better way and I am here because I want to do my bit towards finding it.

The other force in shaping my values was the union movement. As organiser and State Secretary for the then ACOA (now the Public Sector Union), I learned much which eventually led me to this place. One of the major lessons was that most problems were caused by management, not by the workers. Poor communication, lack of planning and an inability to listen to the views and concerns of the workers caused most difficulties in the workplace. Union work also clarified for me the effect of power differences in our community. It does not matter how often bosses say that differences can be negotiated, the fact is this is wishful thinking. It is wishful thinking also to believe that there is equity in the negotiation of individual contracts and enterprise bargaining without the strength and expertise of a union to even out the power just a little.

I also saw that the people at the bottom of the pile usually missed out and that these were usually women. People spoke for them, assumed they did not want the responsibility of advancement and, when the women did speak, they were often not heard. Some of this has not yet changed.

The importance and value of the public sector also became quite clear. I worked with and for many dedicated public servants. We were well aware that the services we provided made a big difference to the lives of individuals and the community. Then, as now, public servants often had to fight to defend the services they were providing. As now, they also had to speak up when they were worn out by the lack of

resources which stopped them from being able to give their clients the standard of service they deserved. In later life I had the opportunity to travel to many different parts of the world and I became convinced that a strong public sector was what distinguished where I wanted to live.

You can see the differences everywhere when you travel. Are there beggars on the street? Are the roads safe and clean? Does everyone have access to a good education? What would happen to me if I had an accident or became ill? What health care is there for the community? Are there guards and huge fences surrounding the few homes of the rich? Can I walk the streets safely or will I be told to get a cab to go two blocks after dark? I have been to countries which are poor yet have a commitment to equity. I was safe there. Where market forces dominate totally, there was no safety for me or for the mass of citizens. So as I see the destruction and denigration of the public sector which is occurring in many so-called advanced countries, I wonder how many people seeking no debt, lower taxation and a smaller public sector have really thought through the consequences of their actions. Perhaps they are the few rich who will thrive in the fight for survival, but they will need to be very rich indeed to build very high walls and many prisons, the hallmark of a failed society.

I return to my thanks to those who have helped me to stand in this House today. Mike Rann and the Labor Party at the parliamentary and organisational level did an outstanding job of restoring the confidence of the electorate in the Party. The Labor Party as a Party of the people has a remarkable ability to renew itself and return from defeats. It does so because it is committed and strongly linked to the people it serves. Its values, which recognise that everyone in our community is not born equal but nevertheless deserves an equal chance to enjoy a fulfilling and healthy life, speak to people. It is the major vehicle for the expression of the values and ideals I learned through my life and work experiences.

I particularly want to thank the many volunteers who worked on my campaign. Many of them adapted to tasks they had never tried before. A manufacturing worker became the office manager. Someone who had never before seen a fancy telephone system or fax was using them with ease after training and with commitment. It is always dangerous to single out any person on such an occasion but, just to make a point, I want to mention Sarah Brawley, the person to whom I have just referred. Sarah has had many jobs since she started work in Glasgow at a very young age. Her last job was with one of the major manufacturers operating, I am pleased to say, in Reynell. Sarah was injured in work when in her 50s and decided to retire as there was nothing further for her in her line of work. But Sarah got to thinking that she should still be able to do something, so off she went to TAFE to participate in women's education. Catching up formally on the knowledge she had acquired informally, she became interested in politics. One thing led to another and she ended up managing my campaign office.

Sarah symbolises for me the many workers who have been thrown on the scrap heap as their skills have become redundant, as they have become injured or their home responsibilities have become too great to allow them to do two jobs. These people do have a role in our future, if only people cared enough to give them the right opportunities, the training to acquire skills relevant to the new work force and a bit of help to deal with their disability or multiple responsibilities. There are many others like Sarah in Reynell and, having risked the naming of one individual, I will not compound it by naming more, but each one has received and

will continue to receive my personal thanks and acknowledgment.

My background and surroundings have equipped me with a strong social conscience, but that is only half the picture. The question remains as to why I chose politics. Basically, it was because I cannot stand by and watch the cycle of poverty being experienced by so many people in our community. My concerns are especially for the children, who through no fault of their own face a diminished horizon in our ever more competitive world. Some people think that poverty is simply the absence of money. From there they blame the poor for making unwise choices and exacerbating their situation. Judgments such as this demonstrate only that those who have lived somewhat more privileged lives find it hard to know the pressures experienced by those who have known little about comfort or success.

I have talked about my experiences of growing up and I would like to talk now about my observations of some of the lucky people in our community. Their lives are full of hope. Even today they think their children will do at least as well as they and see the world as their oyster. Dinner table conversation will be about success, plans for the future, perhaps about an outing, a sporting achievement, or some small victory at school or in the workplace. The children's skills will be developed in many areas. Sports will be available and, although the parents may complain about being taxi drivers, the children are taken to matches and to practice.

A variety of music is part of their lives. The arts in general belong to them. The money is there to explore the richness of our world and to develop a range of talents. For example, if children are born with a disability, the financial and social resources are there to maximise their chances. Parents can readily find out where to go and whom to see for all the care the child needs. They do not have to rely on the miserable amounts of speech or occupational therapy now available through our public systems. It is a nice picture but surely not too luxurious for us not to want to apply it to all South Australians.

Of course, there are different degrees of privilege, and disaster strikes even the richest in the community. However, with estimates of 40 per cent of children living in poverty at some stage in their lives and about 10 per cent living continuously under the poverty line, we do not yet have parity of privilege. What can be done about the waste of human talents that results from this? I see that this is where strong public and community sectors are required. Market forces alone will never solve these human problems. We must start even before birth. We need antenatal care which recognises what each parent knows and needs to know.

Childbirth and postnatal care must make it easy for parents to take the next step and get involved with help and other support for their difficult job. Sometimes instruction in effective play is required to help develop all the child's skills. Some parents have to learn how to play and have fun with their children. It is pretty hard to have fun when you have spent most of your life being worried. Babies do not come with an instruction manual yet they are our greatest treasure and for most of us our greatest challenge. Managing Mir or for that matter any other spacecraft is simple, compared with caring for and guiding a baby, a toddler and then, worst of all, a teenager. It is not always easy for parents and I want to compliment you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your attempts as Minister to provide on-the-spot help for new parents.

We have to provide this sort of support if we want to bring up our children in the best possible way. Publicly but

erratically funded community organisations such as the Hackham West Community Centre currently provide an excellent opportunity for novice parents, especially those who are very young and alone, to learn to delight in their children. The programs at Hackham West help parents to write their own instruction manuals. This needs to be available for all.

All this help can be needed before a child has gone anywhere near a school, so that they do not start well behind their potential. I make no apology for demanding differential distribution of resources to schools. To me, there can only be equality of opportunity for all our children if the public education system is able to apply its resources to evening out the differences in development potential provided by the home. Parents in poorer suburbs provide and do what they can for their children. They also want the best for their child. But they often need a bit of help and that requires a strong Government commitment to public health and particularly to education.

The public education system must be allowed to act as a force for cohesion in our community. It must bring people together, rather than just be there for those who cannot access the private system. It must not be a means of entrenching either poverty or privilege. Yet, at the moment, Government priorities are not allowing it to do its job properly, despite the efforts of many dedicated teachers and parents. More teachers, equipment and quality buildings are required in our public education system, especially in those areas where parents themselves are struggling.

We have never had the ideal situation, although at times we have come much closer to it than now. The policies of destruction of public education pursued by economic rationalists are hitting at the fabric of Australian society, ironically often in the name of family values and choice. I do not share the values that see everyone looking out for themselves, and I do not see the choices many supposedly have. The competitive nature of rampant market forces does not nurture cooperation and recognition of the needs of other human beings: it leads to short-term decision making, with little emphasis on prevention, equity or the future.

We can do it better, by recognising that the operations of industry affect many stakeholders—the workers, customers, the environment, the businesses up and down the production chain, the distribution system, the local community and often people in distant parts of the world. We must encourage and assist businesses to think more widely about their impact, to consult with their stakeholders and to look to long-term viability as well as short-term profits.

Another topic about which I wish to speak briefly is that involving volunteers. There are many of them in Reynell and, as I have had the opportunity to attend the wide range of local activities open to candidates and members, I have been able to appreciate at much closer range the contribution those volunteers make to our community. Indeed, we frequently rely on them to fill many gaps in public and community services. Volunteers play a large part in our life in Reynell. Often, they undertake tasks traditionally performed by volunteers—running sporting clubs, Neighbourhood Watch, fundraising for schools, the CFS and lifesavers and for other activities their children undertake, such as the naval reserves.

Too often today, though, the volunteers of Reynell are being asked to do things that should rightly be the role of Government and employers. They run financial counselling services, health care programs, crisis care and parent support schemes, employment skill development programs, child care to allow others to study, and community centres. They

provide a wide range of support for others in need and, at the same time, develop their own work and social skills. Some say this is what community is about, that it has ever been so, but it has not ever been so. Many of the people who provide these services do so because it is a second option for them: their first preference is to have a job. Many of the needs they meet arise because so many others have no job. Many of their parents, neighbours and friends have no job, and their community suffers because of it.

People need an active focus on job creation, skill development and building a sense of confidence in the future. People need health care and safe homes and streets, a justice system they feel they can rely on and the general ability to make ends meet more often than not. People do not want to feel useless, redundant or feared just because they are old or young or because they have been sick or injured or unfortunate in some aspect of their lives. And people certainly do not deserve to be blamed for ruining the economy because they are poor or sick, or told they should do community work and volunteer just because they have nothing better to do. The volunteers of Reynell put themselves forward because they care about their community and because they care enough about themselves to want to continually contribute to society and their own skilled development, no matter how limited their opportunities may be.

Most of the people of Reynell have good lives. They have jobs, they are healthy, they live in a great area and they have a sense of community. But all fear for our education and health systems, and all worry that the services they have been used to will not be there when next they need them. And too many are struggling too much. They all need our attention, and I see myself as being here primarily to focus on people, because the community, not the economy, must come first and, for me, it is the community of Reynell that comes first of all.

As I re-read my remarks, I wondered whether they sounded too pessimistic and full of woe. However, we all know of, and see, the middle-aged woman wheeling all her possessions in a shopping trolley, and we have to ask ourselves, 'How good was school for her? What did the community and the market do for her when she lost her home and family? Where is the housing she needs? Does she get health care?' We also know about the families that work together well and enjoy each other's company—and I am very pleased that I am blessed with such a family.

In South Australia we have clear skies and healthy trees, safe cars and roads. We have talented, innovative people who excel in the arts, sciences and meeting the challenges of the next century. Our modern era was founded on a belief in a new sort of community, and many of our ancestors have been prepared to push the boundaries of accepted conventions on many occasions. In our community today we have people who have experienced all sorts of different social systems, values and ways of life. Surely we can draw on the best of all systems, ancient and modern, to build for ourselves the sort of model society that the first European settlers hoped for.

There is a need for action in South Australia, but lots of good things happen here, too. I know that this Parliament and people of goodwill in the community can, and will, do better in the future than we have done in the past. We must all open our eyes wide, listen to each other and reflect on the world we want to shape and leave behind us. There are important questions for us to think about. Do we see the world through our own eyes only, or can we put ourselves behind other eyes? Do we have to continue to allow the difficulties and

traumas of one generation to be duplicated in the next without at least attempting to break the cycle? Do we believe that one size public and community service fits all—and a small size, at that? Or do we recognise that equality of opportunity often requires different treatment for each person and that the type of society we get depends on the taxes we are prepared to pay?

Fortunately, I know that most of us recognise that we all live together in this special State and that, eventually, what happens to one of us affects us all. I came here because I know that we can do better. We are helped in this by the greater variety of people we now have in the Parliament. The most important difference here is, of course, that the Labor Party has brought a balance of women to its ranks in this Chamber, and I want to acknowledge and thank the supporters of EMILY's List for helping to get me here. We have wonderful opportunities now to build a cohesive, caring and prosperous community. I look forward to joining with colleagues inside and outside the Parliament to show that we can all do better.

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

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): First, Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election. I know that you will be a wise and fair moderator of this House. I would also like to congratulate the Premier and his Government on their victory. I hope that they use their mandate wisely. The people of South Australia have put their trust in the Premier. I imagine that it must be easy to forget why we enter this place, but it is important that we remember why. It is easy to lose sight of what we set out to achieve, why we became involved in a political Party and why we first ran for Parliament. I do not believe that any member enters this House without idealism and dreams, hoping to make South Australia the best it can be. But the process of Government can often muddy the waters.

We quickly forget why we are here and who we represent. The battle for us in this four years is to not lose sight of the main objective—the people of this great State. To my Leader, the Leader of the Opposition, I wish to congratulate him on his stunning campaign and leadership. It is because of him that many of us on this side are here, and many of the previous members opposite are not. His stunning leadership and determination to take a small united team and lead it to victory in seemingly impossible circumstances is testimony to the talent and leadership he displayed.

I would also like to congratulate the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on her election. She carries a heavy burden but does it extremely well. She is an example to the world that the old stereotype that men in dark suits are the only ones qualified to lead is false. I wish her well. We on this side fought the election campaign on issues affecting South Australians, and we offered exciting and innovative ways of tackling important issues in South Australia. We on this side fought the election campaign on a plan to bring together South Australians, because only by being together can we hope to take this State into the twenty-first century, ready for the challenges that lay ahead. We will need young and energetic leaders, like the Leader of the Opposition, to meet these challenges—I do not mean young in age but young in heart and spirit, ready to fight for our State and children's future.

Our Party has shown a commitment to meet these challenges in new and exciting ways, to challenge the doctrines of the past and to move forward together. We

fought to preserve our State's treasures and assets. We fought school closures—school closures in areas where our children deserve the right to the best education we can provide. We fought hospital cut backs—cut backs that were aimed at not improving the standard of health care but were simply cruel cost cutting. We fought police station closures because all South Australians, no matter where they live, deserve to enjoy the same lifestyle and security some take for granted. We on this side of the House stand for a South Australia where any baby born can aspire to be anything they desire, regardless of the colour of their skin, their religion, where they were born, where they went to school or their economic situation.

These principles and ideas are, in part, the reason for my parents' migrating to this great country. My father was the son of a peasant farmer. He died when my father was six years old, leaving him and his two brothers and sisters to fend for themselves. His mother, my grandmother, had nothing to offer her children apart from love. They could not afford any schooling, and my father's entire time was spent working from the age of six. They often went hungry and became ill, but medical attention was either too expensive or unavailable. The civil war in Greece saw the country divided in a bitter struggle between communist and government troops, and my father saw atrocities no child should have to see. He would tell me stories of communist rebels raping and murdering his neighbours and friends. My father and mother had no opportunity for schooling or any vehicle to enable them to leave their poverty behind.

My father often tells me that the only reason he came to Australia was for his children. He could not bear to see his children suffer the same poverty and hunger that he did. He wanted his children to be able to enjoy the opportunities he never had—to be able to succeed with hard work and determination, where all children, no matter how rich or poor they were, could enjoy the same level of education and standard of health care, with no special privileges, just a fair go. He found that dream in Australia and saw his two children educated and succeed. However, that Australia to which he fled is under threat. The opportunities my brother and I had are quickly vanishing.

The energetic and imaginative leadership displayed by arguably the most exciting Prime Minister this country has ever seen, Gough Whitlam, is under threat. Free education for all is quickly being eroded by this Government. Universal health care, which was first articulated by the Curtin-Chifley Government and made a reality by the Hawke-Keating Government, is under threat. These basic principles which most Australians cherish are being threatened by a conservative Government hell bent on imposing its conservative ideology on Australia.

The racism my parents fought when they came to this country is slowly disappearing. The majority of Australians were very tolerant, and more and more a multicultural Australia was becoming a reality. Australia was realising that migrants were ready to conform to the Australian way of life but also enrich it with their wonderful and different cultures, and different smells and sounds. Australians soon realised that migrants could work with them to build a nation, that they were not asking for handouts or special treatment and they were not stealing Australian jobs. That understanding came with leadership. The Whitlam Government and then the Hawke-Keating Government brought real leadership to the immigration debate. Our leaders acted in a way that was right, using a principle that is as old as the Scriptures—that all men

are created equal—and they fought for and showed understanding.

The politics of division and hatred used by conservative Governments all over the world to seek to divide nations for electoral gain must end. We are witnessing our current conservative Government using tactics of division and racism to divert our nation's attention from the real issues. When a Prime Minister is needed to show leadership and moral authority, ours says nothing. When we need a leader more than ever, our Prime Minister says nothing. When condemnation of divisive ideas is needed accurately and swiftly, our Prime Minister says nothing. His silence is a shame, and his Government will wear that shame as a millstone around its neck.

I was honoured to be allowed to use the very Bible Ben Chifley used when he was sworn in as a Minister in the Scullin Government, and his words remind me of why I am here. He said:

I try to think of the labour movement not as putting an extra sixpence into somebody's pocket, or making somebody Prime Minister or Premier, but as a movement bringing something better to the people—better standards of living, greater happiness to the mass of the people. We have a great objective—the light on the hill—which we aim to reach for the betterment of mankind not only here but anywhere we may give a helping hand. If it were not for that, the labour movement would not be worth fighting for. If the movement can make someone more comfortable, give to some father or mother a greater feeling of security for their children, a feeling that if depression comes there will be work, that the Government is striving its hardest to do its best, then the labour movement will be completely justified.

It is these words that describe my mission in this place—to keep my head turned towards the light on the hill. It is that which motivates us all on this side of the House. It is my privilege to serve on this side with some great friends and great leaders.

I would like to pay tribute to those who helped me achieve this position. I would like to thank the member for Spence, who is a great mentor, teacher and friend, whose friendship and advice I treasure. He is a man who gave me an opportunity to serve when others would not have. Had it not been for him, I would not be in this place today. I would like to pay tribute to my former employer and friend Don Farrell, who took a chance with a young Greek kid when others would not have. He treated me with respect and took me under his wing. He showed extreme generosity and understanding when I was his employee, and for that I thank him. I cannot begin to thank my campaign manager and trusted friend, Bernard Finnigan, for all his help and advice. He is one of the most intelligent and articulate people I know, and without him I would have been lost.

Michael Brown, my resident computer expert, has shown me not only friendship and dedication but a resilient spirit. He never gives up, and he is a great example to me of the traditional Labor ethic—never surrender. I thank my personal assistant John Bistic, who has proved to be an invaluable asset to me through his hard work and determination. I would also like to pay tribute to my friend Nick Champion, who has never lost his idealism or zest for the labour movement and who constantly reminds me why I am here. I would like to thank my local sub-branch and the many volunteers who are too numerous to name individually. I would also like to thank all my old school friends—again, too many to mention—who attended meeting after meeting for me and who always reminded me where I came from.

My good friend and colleague, the member for Playford, and I started together in Young Labor and we have never looked back. He is one of the hardest working young men I know. He has helped me so much that words could never describe or repay my debt to him. I am glad to call him my friend. I thank my parents, whom I can never repay. They supported me from the beginning and never doubted, always cared, always loved and expected nothing in return. I congratulate all the new members on this side of the House who fought so hard to be here. I am sure that they will do their best to stay here for the Labor Party. Finally, I would like to thank God for the opportunity he has given me. I hope he can light the path before me and direct my every move. It is in him that I put my trust.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I support the Address in Reply. First, I congratulate you, Sir, on being elected to the highest office this House can bestow on one of its members. I am sure that you will do justice to the position and that your experience as a Minister and a member of Parliament will hold you in good stead. I am pleased that your loyalty to the Liberal Party has been rewarded. I also congratulate the Member for Heysen on his election as Deputy Speaker. I am sure that he will uphold the office and do it justice. I have had the honour and privilege of being elected to this place on 10 successive occasions.

Mr Clarke: That is 10 too many.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: There is nothing you can do about it Sunshine, nothing. Having been elected to this place on 10 successive occasions, I recognise that it is a privilege and an honour to serve in this Parliament.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Unlike the honourable member, I believe in being constructive; he is only a destructive member. The opportunity to serve one's electorate in the State is a privilege that few people are given; and the opportunity to serve in higher office is a greater privilege. My challenge in the next four years is to ensure that the people in the electorate of Stuart receive a fair go and that the difficulties of isolation and distance are diminished. One of the great problems facing the people of South Australia is that, over many years, this State has built up a culture where certain minority groups want to stop any progress and development; they want to stop people creating opportunities.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The Democrats are the prime example. They are agents of the Conservation Council—another organisation of limited value, as far as I am concerned. However, I do not want to be distracted. I am normally a person of few words and rather shy, so I do not want to be distracted. I am rather shy when I get to my feet.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Quite. It is important that the people of South Australia are given every opportunity to benefit from the great resources and opportunities that exist in South Australia. For many years I have had the privilege of representing vast tracts of South Australia which contain great mineral resources. They contain tremendous agricultural and fishing industries which have, unfortunately, been held back by bureaucracy and red tape. One of the greatest threats to democracy is bureaucracy. Whenever people want to do something there are those who want to get in their way. No matter what the project, the plan or the suggestion, a group of people want to suddenly get in the way. I do not know whether it is jealousy, or what it is.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Unfortunately, the honourable member and his colleagues had a fine record of putting in place Acts of Parliament, regulations and systems which were designed to stop people fulfilling their best objectives. There is the Planning Act, the Development Assessment Act—

Mr Atkinson: Native Vegetation.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, the Native Vegetation Act and other various—

Mr Clarke: The Environmental Protection Council.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member is making the running. He can add to the list if he likes. They are just a few examples where commonsense has not prevailed. Every time anyone wants to do anything, groups of people can find reasons why they should not do it. Instead of saying, 'Look, we are delighted. We want to encourage you. We want to assist you to get on and to create opportunities, jobs and wealth.' Our friends opposite want to continue to spend but they do not want anyone to earn the money to pay the taxes. You cannot have it both ways. South Australia must give encouragement to those people who have initiative, enterprise, determination and the will to succeed.

Whether it be the mining industry in the Yumbarra Conservation Park, we must say, 'Get on with it, create opportunities.' Whether it be mining at Roxby Downs, Honeymoon or Beverley, or exploration in the Pitjantjatjara lands, or whether it be encouraging and assisting SANTOS to carry out more exploration, we should be standing up and supporting them. A couple of weeks ago I was driving in the country and listening to the 7.30 news on ABC radio. One group was complaining about Roxby Downs, another group complained about exploration in the Coongee Lakes, and a third group was attacking two large and successful companies. Some other group was also complaining and I suddenly thought, 'Where are these people coming from? What do they really want?'

Mr Atkinson: Is there anything about the ABC you do like?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I was talking to a friend of mine the other day and we decided that in the ABC you have a troika—Matt Abraham, Terry Plane and one or two others. They work out of the Labor Party office in here. We know the game. You have that little troika: Rann's mates. Matt Abraham could not say anything nice about the Government or the Liberal Party if he tried. He would have to be born again. I know he is a little man in stature, but he is also little in mind because he has never had an original thought in his life. Talk about being negative and nasty.

Mr Clarke: Stop holding back. Don't be too subtle!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I do not care what he thinks about me. I could not care less. I will not sit idly by and see people like that continue to talk down the Government and the people of South Australia. I have only one reason to be in this place and that is to try to play a small part in improving the welfare of the people of South Australia. If we are not here with that in mind, we should not be here. Many people come in here because they cannot make it in the real world. That is the reason. They are the sort of people who should not be here. They cannot make it in the real world, and the real world says—

Mr Clarke: What are you doing here then?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I sometimes wonder. There is a big world out there. There are great opportunities. I say one thing to the Deputy Leader: he is an exponent of hot air. I do not know what he has ever done successfully in his life but

when I saw him in the *Advertiser*, either this morning or yesterday morning, he had a hat on in the wrong place: he should have it right over his face because then it would have done him justice. It would have done him more good.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am one of the persons responsible for providing those souvenirs in this building. As usual, the Labor Party never had the ability to provide that sort of facility. Members wanted it. The Labor Party members on the Joint Parliamentary Services Committee voted in favour when the proposition was put forward, and they did so because they recognised that there was a need. Members of Parliament, being pretty mean and miserable people, want to pay the minimum and get the most out of things and so those souvenirs were purchased. I understand that they have been fairly popular, but there was a need.

The Labor Party did nothing about it, and I am very pleased they are available. The honourable member never had an original thought in his life. The suggestion was first put up by the Hon. Mr Terry Cameron. I understand that he got the idea by talking to another member of the Upper House, who got his nose put out of joint because the Hon. Terry Cameron pinched his idea. Then, this morning, we had the member for Ross Smith getting on the bandwagon. We must be pretty short of news. However, I believe that the Joint Parliamentary Services Committee took a sensible course of action. If the honourable member thinks he can get those souvenirs made locally for the same cost, I wish him well. Let him find a manufacturer. I have seen lots of those sorts of caps and I reckon that the overwhelming majority are made overseas. Some of those manufacturing countries buy a lot of produce from South Australia and from Australia. It is a two way thing. Taiwan is a very significant trading partner with this State and this country. China is very—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Once again the honourable member proves that he has never had an original thought in his life. He just says something that someone has told him and keeps talking a lot of nonsense. However, I do not want to be distracted from the few comments I want to make. I am very pleased to have been re-elected to this Parliament, because this Government has a very important role to play in ensuring that the right decisions are made to make sure that the next generation of South Australians has a future. One thing about being in government is that Governments have to make the right decisions—whether or not they are popular. If you have populist government, you have very bad government. Governments have to examine the advice they receive and then make decisions based on the long-term best interests of the people of the State, whether or not they attract short-term political criticism or opposition.

No matter what the member for Ross Smith, others or I think, at the end of the day the decisions we in this Parliament make will have an effect on the community for a long time in the future. I have sat in this Parliament on the other side and, unfortunately, I have seen Governments make decisions purely for short-term political gain. Look where it landed us. Today, the Premier made a most significant statement. As a Government and as a Parliament we have to accept the advice and the concerns put forward by the Auditor-General, the board of ETSA and other people who have examined the electricity industry in this country. We have to make a decision about where we want to be in five years. The member for Ross Smith had a lot to say when Australian National was transferred.

Mr Clarke: I was right.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member did not have much to say recently when they were putting on people at the workshop and creating opportunities; we have not heard a thing from the former Deputy Leader. We did not hear anything from him when it recently came to light that Australian National had incurred an extra \$40 million of debt that no-one knew anything about. The whole administration was in chaos. They still cannot determine who owns what land and where. The Railways Institute is having a dreadful time trying to get the administration of that organisation to transfer to its properties which are rightfully the institute's.

Mr Clarke: That should have been fixed by your mates in Canberra.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Your mates who ran Australian National did not know what they had. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for being associated with your former ministerial colleagues in Canberra who allowed the situation to deteriorate to such a disgraceful state.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The decisions were made in the long-term interests. I have every confidence that we will have a very effective, viable rail industry in this country, as is required. At the end of the day, you cannot have an organisation that is not operating effectively and efficiently and not delivering a service to the customers. Today, the Premier made a statement which was frank, enlightening and designed to ensure that South Australia puts itself in the best long-term position. The easiest thing in the world for this Government and for any of us would have been just to sit by, let the process roll on and do nothing. I do not know whether the member for Ross Smith and others have read the Auditor-General's Report.

Mr Clarke: Yes.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That ought to have sounded alarm bells. Have members opposite looked at the ETSA Corporation or had any discussions with people in the industry? Have they had any discussions with Mr Carr or Mr Egan in New South Wales about why they want to privatise their electrical undertakings? Mr Egan made it very clear, from comments I read which were attributed to him, that he was more interested in having updated, modern health facilities in hospitals and dispensing with the ownership of power.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Things have moved on. What Tom Playford did was absolutely right at the time. As a matter of principle, I would prefer that this decision not be made, but there is no alternative. It is no good being like an emu and putting your head in the sand—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I think I have fed more emus than you have ever seen, Sunshine.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left have had a fair go during the honourable member's contribution. I ask the member for Stuart—

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address his remarks through the Chair and not keep responding to interjections.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am shy and retiring, Mr Speaker, and I am easily put off. Thank you for your guidance and assistance. I will endeavour not to be sidetracked by the member for Ross Smith, who needs interjections to make a speech.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I was addressing the subject of the pending sale of Optima Energy and ETSA Corporation. I have had a lot to do over a long period of time with the operation at Leigh Creek and at Port Augusta. During that time there has been a considerable downsizing in the number of people involved. There has been an upgrading in the equipment used at Leigh Creek, and there has been great rationalisation in terms of electricity production at the Port Augusta power station. A short time ago, when I went to the Optima Energy headquarters, one matter that disturbed me was not only the spot price for electricity but also the long-term effects of that. Personally, I am concerned, because I think that some of the operators in Victoria are on a suicide mission in terms of the spot price they are charging for electricity. It was clear to me that you cannot continue to produce electricity below the cost of production. If anyone continues to do that without taking remedial action, we are headed for a disaster.

We in this State currently have a very large investment in our electricity industry by way of power houses, coal mines and so on. We have tried to take many decisions to assist that industry. Australian National has been like an albatross around the neck of Optima Energy (previously ETSA Corporation) in terms of the amount charged for freight between Leigh Creek and Port Augusta. The way it carried on was absolutely outrageous. It refused to negotiate; it refused to appreciate the pressure it was putting on the power generator in this State; it had no understanding of what was involved. Therefore, it caused a great deal of difficulty.

One cannot help but be amazed at the attitude of the current Opposition in South Australia. In New South Wales Mr Carr and Mr Egan want to sell their electrical undertakings to retire debt and to improve their health, hospital and education systems. If there is a choice in this State between retaining ownership or improving health services—renewing hospitals—I think most responsible and reasonable South Australians would acknowledge that the Government has a difficult decision to make and that it would be irresponsible if it did not take a decision in the long-term interests of this State. With an ageing population we have to ensure that we look after our health facilities.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: When you reduce the debt, you then have to live within your means. Anyone who has ever run a business knows that you cannot continue to spend more than you earn.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: John Bannon knew all about bankcard economics, and John Bannon did nothing to protect the long-term interests of South Australians. He did not want to know about the problems. This Government, having been acquainted with the difficulties, has come to the conclusion that the long-term interests of the people of South Australia must be protected. Whatever the consequences, I believe that we must see this exercise through. I have always been, for as long as I have been in this place—

Mr Clarke: Too long.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith will come to order. I just remind the honourable member that he was cautioned once during Question Time this afternoon.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member says that I have been here for too long. I thought that members of

the Labor Party believed in democracy and were prepared to accept the will of the people. I was elected by the people of Stuart. I know that the Deputy Leader is not happy about it—he puffed enough around the area—but, at the end of the day, I had the numbers. As I said, it is the tenth successive time. I very much doubt whether the honourable member will be in this place for 10 successive elections. Therefore, I am saying to him, whether or not he likes it, that I must have done a few things right in my time as a member of Parliament.

First, you have to maintain your endorsement, and there are always a few yapping at your heels. But I have learned how to deal with those; I have had a little experience in that area. You then have to deal with the electorate. I am very pleased to be here. No doubt, during the next few weeks the members of the Labor Party and a few of their friends will jump up and down and make all sorts of noises, but the real test for them will come when legislation is put to this Parliament putting into effect the recommendations that the Premier made to this House today. I believe that responsible journalists in the media and large sections of the community will recognise that the Government had no alternative. The Labor Party members can join and be part of a responsible decision making process and have a reasonable and responsible input, or they can be sidelined and marginalised and no-one will take any notice of them. At the end of the day, I do not believe that this Parliament would be so foolish as to reject a major issue of this nature.

Before I was interrupted a while ago I was about to say what the Playford Government did. The Playford Government took over electricity in this State so that as many people as possible had access to the electricity grid. That is something for which I commend Sir Thomas Playford for his foresight and wisdom, and we made a great deal of progress. In my very early days in public life I was a member of the District Council of Streaky Bay, which ran a power generating facility. There are two things I will always remember from my days in council: one is slaughterhouses, and having health inspectors; and the other was having a power station, and people not paying their accounts.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It was a very well run council of astute and capable people. It is a pity that the honourable member did not get himself involved in local government: he might have gained a bit of wisdom if he gained nothing else from that humbling experience. But things have moved on. I believe that Sir Thomas Playford would have been totally opposed to the Hilmer report and competition policy, which I have never supported and which I personally think is economic madness. However, it has been foisted upon us—but not with my concurrence, because I think it will have long-term detrimental effects on the people of South Australia. Why it was foisted on us, I would not know. Prime Minister Keating and Professor Hilmer got a rush of blood and we have been dragged down this track, heaven help us.

I am one of those who believe in statutory marketing organisations. I have never had a problem with the Government's supporting and having some participation in industry if that is in the long-term interests of South Australia. I have never had a problem with that, because I come from an isolated community that has been starved of resources, and the only way that many of those facilities would be put there was if the Government had a direct input. And I still support that concept. I have never had any problem with the Government spending money, even if it is not getting a return, if it

is going to be in the long-term best interests of the people of South Australia.

I want to turn to another subject before my time concludes. I thought I had plenty of time and, being a man of few words, was not going to take much time, because the Whip told me not to speak for too long. We have just seen on television a Constitutional Convention in Canberra. What a great talk shop it was. I wonder what great value will come out of that escapade. Let me make my position very clear: I am a constitutional monarchist and certainly will not be supporting any referendum to change Australia to a republic. I do not believe it is either desirable or necessary, and there is no benefit for the people of South Australia whatsoever.

One had only to hear the nonsense of some of those people. You had that one woman with the purple streak in her hair: what a fine example of the human species she was. She would really be an asset. We heard her waxing on. I could not quite follow her line. You had Pat what-was-her-name, the magistrate from New South Wales. I must say that I was convinced by the force of argument put forward by Sir James Killen and by Bruce Ruxton. I thought that they had great wisdom and great foresight. I look forward to being on the hustings at the time of the referendum. We have a great system in South Australia, and I will not lend my support to the republican movement, because I can see no advantage.

When they are finished with this argument, what else will the trendy chardonnay group want to turn to? Will they want to change the flag? Do they want to get rid of State Parliaments? What else do they want to do? They will be looking for some other exercise of equally limited value. In my view, the money that was spent on the Constitutional Convention would have been far better spent building better health facilities in rural Australia or extending the mobile telephone net—all those sorts of things which would at least be some long-term, tangible asset. This was only a talk shop with a lot of unnecessary expense to the taxpayer, of no lasting value as far as I am concerned, and it will not have my support. I look forward to campaigning vigorously for the *status quo*. I make no apology for the views that I put forward.

I am delighted to be back here, particularly as it has displeased the member for Ross Smith. I look forward to participating in the debates and the important decisions that this Government will make in the interests of all South Australians, because that is the paramount aim of the Liberal Party and of this Liberal Government. I am honoured to have been able to serve the Liberal Party for 28 years in Parliament, and I look forward to continuing to work for the Liberal Party to the betterment of all South Australians.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Initially I thank the Opposition for allowing me this very important time slot because of an arrangement we had previously. Before I begin the main text of my speech I reflect on today's events, namely, the sale of ETSA and Optima. As we all know, it is a very serious matter and in this regard I am very appreciative of the support of my colleagues and indeed that of the Opposition. I believe that Premier Olsen's speech was very momentous and delivered with a lot of passion, decency and honesty. In this place it takes a real man to admit he has changed his mind, and the Premier did that.

Looking at the members of the Opposition this afternoon and especially those members on the front bench, I noticed only three or four of them carrying on like pork chops. The rest were very reflective, particularly the member for Kaurna,

which shows the measure of the man. I noticed that the member for Hart did not bring himself much credit. All I say to the member for Hart is, 'Look out,' because there will be some rapid promotions in this place. I ask members of the Opposition to treat this question very seriously, because we all know that this decision will cause us all a lot of pain. We can reflect back on the State Bank—and we know what happened there. I do not believe that this Government should ever be involved with risk management. The scenario is very similar.

Also with the national competition policy we knew ETSA was going to be battling it out for its share in the Australian market for energy. It is risk management at the highest degree, and we are talking large amounts of money. As the Auditor-General said—and the member for Ross Smith is the first to remind us of what he did say—our exposure was 'of great concern'. All members of this House know that we had no choice, particularly in relation to the Auditor-General's comments and the Federal Government and its competition payments. If we do not abide by the Federal Government's policies, we would then suffer massive penalties. We stand to lose both sides. I reflect on this matter today and I give all but a few members great credit. I hope the members in the other place will agree with this also.

I wish to alert the House to the fact that this week the Barossa Valley and regions filtration plant is switched on and working. After all these years it is operating on a test program at the moment and by the end of this week, that is 20 February, subject to satisfactory results, clean water will be coming down the pipeline. After 60 years and five members of Parliament preceding me, it is completed. As I am the one sitting in this place when the tap was turned on, I will take the liberty to take the credit. Also I reflect very briefly on two other new developments in the Barossa. Everything seems to be happening in the Barossa if you read the *Advertiser* today; the Barossa is booming. The two new developments in question are the Kinsmen project, which is about to start, and we await an official announcement and also the development of Chateau Tanunda under Mr Geber the new owner, a project about which we know. I certainly await with interest the completion of those projects.

I now turn to the most important part of my speech. I rise in this House today for the first time as the member for Schubert. Having been the member for Custance in this House for over 7½ years, I am treating this occasion as a maiden speech, if you like, or at least an inaugural speech as the new member for Schubert. I am honoured to be the first member for Schubert. As members would know, the electorate has been named after a famous South Australian, Max Schubert, the winemaker, who also brought fame to South Australia by his winemaking skills and, in particular, as the originator of the world-famous wine Grange Hermitage. I am honoured that Max's widow, Mrs Thelma Schubert, is with us in the House today to share my tribute to her husband and also to herself. I am very pleased that Mrs Schubert is with us and that she has accepted my invitation to dinner in Parliament House this evening. I also welcome their children, Brenton and Sandy. It is great to see them in this place.

This occasion is an emotional one for me as the first member for Schubert. South Australia, as the wine industry and you know, Sir, owes so much to this great South Australian and I believe that it is most appropriate that he be recognised in this way, that is, by having a State electorate named after him. I hope I live up to his high ideals. I regret that I never met Max Schubert, who passed away on 6 March

1994. I saw him on many occasions, as my interest in the wine industry goes back before I became a member in 1990. I was often at functions at Penfolds, particularly the Magill Cellars. I have also consumed his wine and as much Grange as I could afford, or get! We have one bottle to consume this evening. I throw out a strong hint to Penfolds: I missed out on an allocation last year. I believe that I should have a standing order as the member for Schubert, but they do not seem to get the hint!

Wine writer, Huon Hooke, wrote a very good biography, *Max Schubert, Winemaker*, published in 1994, which I was very pleased to purchase. Indeed, it is available in the Parliamentary Library and I commend it to all members. It is an excellent record of Max's life and his achievements as a winemaker. It is my belief that we can all learn a great deal from his life and the way in which he lived it. He was a great man, although he always remained modest and unassuming. He worked hard, having great determination and persistence to see things through.

Max was born in 1915, a son to Carl and Clara Schubert at Moculta in the Barossa Valley, a well-known winegrowing area. Max was brought up in a strict Lutheran household in one of the many communities in the region. Like many other German families in Australia at the time, Max's family was second or third generation Australian, but the First World War was a very difficult time for them and they all felt very vulnerable. History has shown that those difficulties were overcome with the community being fiercely proud of their German heritage and of the region. Quite apart from the recognition of Max Schubert, it is very appropriate for Schubert to become the name for my electorate. Names beginning with 'Sch' abound in this area, well-known names such as Schultz, Schutz, Schubert, Schmeiss, Schmidt, Schiller—and the list goes on. There is no Venning, but certainly Schubert fits well among the names of Barossa families.

Many people born during the war years and growing up during the years leading to the Great Depression of the 1930s developed a work ethic which some seem to have lost today. There was no social security or social welfare system in place to sustain those without work or income, and necessity provided the impetus for innovation and hard work. I believe Max was a product of this environment, together with his strict and disciplined family background. From an early age he showed the hard-working spirit, determination and imagination which established him as a man of great reputation later on.

By the age of 15, Max Schubert had already worked for the local butcher and the local grocer in order to have enough money to pay for his high school education. How many of us today would have had to put up with that? Just before his sixteenth birthday Max left school and was employed at Penfolds' Nuriootpa plant, as to be expected starting at the bottom of the ladder as a fetch and carry boy but soon progressing to helping in the laboratory. His hard-working nature and ability to pick things up quickly led him into unfamiliar territory but he was always up to the task before him and, if not, he found out how he could be.

Penfolds' laboratory in 1932 was not one such as we would expect to find today. In fact, up to that time Penfolds had not employed any trained technical staff at Nuriootpa at all. However, something had to be done about the large quantities of bacterially infected wines in the cellars, and Penfolds' first chemist was employed.

Apparently, bacterial infection was common throughout the whole wine industry at the time and, although the wine at Penfolds was pasteurised, the sterilised wine came out through dirty hoses and became reinfected. Max was noticed by Leslie Penfold-Hyland, and asked to work at the Magill plant. He took up the offer, his belief being, as he said later:

Never refuse a challenge, even if you felt you couldn't do it, even if you had to work day and night. That was me in those days.

Max could do it and he did it very well. He continued to progress and add to his knowledge of winemaking. It was in 1950 that Max visited the major winegrowing areas of Europe and the seed was planted in his mind that it would be a good idea to produce 'an Australian red wine capable of staying alive for a minimum of 20 years and comparable with those produced in Bordeaux'. That was some challenge.

Max was a real pioneer in creating such wine in Australia, but he had his critics. In 1956 the time came for the wraps to be removed on representative bottles from each vintage from 1951 to 1956. In the Penfolds book *The Rewards of Patience* Max records that the result of the wine-tasting by well-known wine identities in Sydney, personal friends of the Penfolds board, and top management was absolutely disastrous. Simply no-one liked Grange Hermitage. The samples distributed at various venues afterwards received a slightly better reaction. Naturally, Max was most upset by the reaction and found some of the comments 'downright rude'.

The Australian public did not seem to be ready for this full-bodied wine. As Max commented, as vintage followed vintage in those initial years, 'a complete wine was emerging with a full, buoyant, almost ethereal nose of great intensity'. That is one for the member for Spence to work out.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr VENNING: It had 'a palate that was full of rich flavour and character'. I read 'ethereal' as meaning heavenly or at another level. One well-known, respected wine man's comments on it was that it was 'a concoction of wild fruits and sundry berries with crushed ants predominating'. In fact, we very nearly missed out on having this magnificent wine as we know it today. Just before the 1957 vintage, Max was instructed to stop the production of Grange Hermitage. It was only with Jeffrey Penfold-Hyland's support that he disregarded the instructions in part and continued to make Grange in reduced quantities. The earlier vintages matured in the bottle and progressively became less aggressive and more refined, and people began to take notice. It must be remembered that the wine was designed not only to stay alive for 20 years but to get better over that time.

In 1960, Max was instructed to make Grange Hermitage officially again, and Grange Hermitage has never looked back. This persistence on Max's part reflects on the success of the Australian wine industry today. By any test, Max Schubert's new style reds are better (and I speak from experience), best by colour, best by smell and best by taste—not like the old thin, colourless acidic taste, which most would agree was an acquired taste, and much of the French product was and still is along that line. His reds are better, a beautiful ruby-red colour, with a wonderful bouquet and a smooth full-bodied texture. They taste superb and they are pleasant to the palate. To top it off, we know today that it is also good for you.

South Australian-based Southcorp Wines now owns Penfolds and the company has spent five years developing a new white wine at Penfolds to rival its Grange Hermitage. Apparently two trial bins have been released so far, but its

makers say that there is a long way to go to ensure consistency. In the meantime, there is a huge demand around the world and bottled red wine sales have grown enormously. I attended the national ABARE conference a few weeks ago and the wine industry had a lot to say, and it is the industry that had the most positive things said about it.

Australia has gone from eighth to fifth in the world in wine production and it is expected that we will produce 1.3 million tonnes in Australia by 2003, which is a massive increase of about 70 per cent on today's production. Wineries say that by 2000 they will be crushing more red wine grapes than white. It is an amazing statistic, that we may be drinking more red than white, and that indicates how much that part of the industry has matured. That goes well for the new style of reds that Max had so much to do with. They have caught on and are so pleasant to drink.

As for the Barossa region, which the seat of Schubert encompasses, in addition to winemaking and tourism there is a diverse range of agricultural, mining, manufacturing and service industries. Primary production, with a gross value of around \$80 million a year, includes cereals, fruit, vegetables, forest products, pigs and poultry. There are about 50 wineries in the Barossa region, and they provide significant full-time and part-time employment. It is really booming at the moment: local employment is fantastic and we cannot produce enough stainless steel or enough wood. They are battling to get enough employees to pick the grapes in the vineyards. It is 'all go' in the vineyards in the Barossa. Approximately 124.8 million litres of wine is produced in the Barossa and district which includes wine produced from grapes outside the area.

A total of 606 million litres of wine is produced Australia-wide. The harvest of grapes in the Barossa is in excess of 60 000 tonnes, which is more than one-third of the State's production. When one considers what a tonne of grapes is worth today, that is an awful lot of money. South Australia produces 50 per cent of Australian wines and almost 70 per cent of the national wine exports, and that is why in this House I never let the opportunity go by to mention how important it is that we get more water for the Barossa, because that is the only thing standing in the way of further progress.

Through value-added production, the Barossa wine industry contributes more than \$250 million to our economy in South Australia. Winegrowing and production in the region is set to expand in the next 10 to 15 years, with an anticipated increase in the grape tonnage of around 70 per cent, which is massive. It is our most successful industry, and it is governed only by the availability of water. It is an amazing fact that it is creeping up on our cereal growing as the most important net export earner for the State. It is the reputation of our wine overseas that is our success: on quality, taste, consistency, marketability and supply. Whatever we do, we must never put that in jeopardy, and I was concerned to hear today that some Australian wine is caught up in the wharf strike in Melbourne. I hope that moves quickly, because we do not want to destroy our reputation.

This scenario is extremely encouraging for the industry, the State and the nation. However, we must not relax or get carried away on the wave of success. A lot of hard work is still to be done, particularly in expanding our market overseas. As I learnt in the ABARE conference in Canberra, we export 61 per cent of our wine to only two countries, that is, the United Kingdom and the USA. That is a worry, because in 1991 most of our exports went to six countries.

The industry is very aware of and concerned about that fact. We must expand our marketing base. In the 1997 calendar year, Asian markets accounted for only 8.5 per cent of export sales by value and 6.4 per cent by volume. The challenge remains to tap into these non-English speaking countries to further enhance our markets.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate how proud I am to be the first member for Schubert. I have it on record that I recognise the great contribution of Max Schubert, and I am pleased and honoured that Mrs Schubert and her family are with us this evening. I pay tribute to you, Mrs Schubert, as the woman behind the man, the man whose name will long be remembered in this House and Parliament. I hope that I and all subsequent members for Schubert will live up to that great name. I look forward to the honour of dining with Mrs Schubert this evening. We will offer a toast to Max with what else, none other than Grange Hermitage. *Ein prosit!*

Mr De LAINE (Price): I rise tonight to support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the speech made on 2 December 1997 on the opening of the forty-ninth Parliament by Sir Eric Neal, the Governor of South Australia. I would like to pay tribute to Sir Eric and Lady Neal, because they are doing an excellent job as the vice-regal representatives for South Australia. It is always a pleasure to attend functions at which Sir Eric and Lady Neal are present. I have had quite a few talks with them—and quite impromptu talks—and I believe that they are doing an excellent job. They are also lovely people.

Sir, I congratulate you as the new Speaker in this House. I am very pleased that you have been appointed to this very high position. You are very experienced and, in the first two weeks of this session in December last year, you showed that you were very decisive and fair in your rulings. I am sure that you will perform the job of Speaker in an excellent way which will be of enormous benefit to both the Parliament and the State of South Australia.

I would like to make a few points about the Governor's speech when he opened the Parliament. He referred to school closures and amalgamations and said:

School closures and amalgamations will be minimal and closures will be considered only after a compulsory process of public consultation, as has been the case in the first term of my Government.

That is absolute rot. We have seen the closure of the Port Adelaide Girls High School in my electorate. The following year we saw the closure of The Parks High School and, last year, we saw the closure of Croydon Primary School. In particular, in the case of The Parks High School (a matter that I have raised in this place many times) there was a form of public consultation, but that consultation and the review which was commissioned by the Government overwhelmingly supported The Parks High School remaining open and continuing to operate. Nevertheless, the Government chose to close the school, which is an absolute tragedy and just makes a farce of the statement that public consultation and the views of the public and the school communities will be taken into account. That was a big disappointment to me, and I will not give up on that issue. The school is still there, but it is empty.

The Labor Party made a commitment to re-open that school if it were elected to Government. However, that did not happen. Who knows what the situation will be four years down the track. It may be too late. Nevertheless, it is a shame that it was not re-opened. I am very critical of the Premier,

because he undertook to review the closure and get back to me. I have raised the matter a couple of times in this House in the form of questions. He has been very annoyed with me, but no decision has yet been made—or the results of the review that he promised to undertake on the closure of the school have not been sent back to me.

I refer also to the Governor's speech under the heading 'Justice and Community Safety' where he stated:

My Government also intends changes to the process of fine enforcement to ensure the obligation of people to pay fines is met and so that the cost to the community of placing fine defaulters in jail is removed.

This indicates to me how out of touch with reality this Government is. It is all right to say that if people attract a fine they should pay it, but some people are in such dire straits and such poverty that they cannot afford to pay a fine. The same applies with speeding fines and the use of speed cameras—which is another subject about which I feel very strongly and which I will touch on at another time. If a millionaire, or someone very wealthy—even a member of Parliament—gets caught for speeding, they cop a fine of something like \$150 or \$180, or whatever, and an unemployed person cops the same fine. It is an enormous effort for that person to try to find \$150: for an unemployed person or a person on a low income with a large family, finding \$150 is like asking them to find \$500 000. It is totally unfair, and it is just not possible for some people to meet fine payments.

I believe that, especially in the area of speeding fines, many of those people are not offending because they are irresponsible people who go out and speed and do all sorts of things. Many law-abiding citizens get caught by the cameras through a series of circumstances in which they should never be caught. They are not criminals by any stretch of the imagination. Some of these people just cannot afford to pay a fine. So, that was a fairly strange thing to put into the opening speech. I will deal with that matter at a later time.

Another part of the speech that took my eye was under the heading 'Transport' where the Governor said:

Performance standards for taxis, hire cars, charter tour and country bus services—and all drivers—are being addressed to ensure fairer competition and better services and there is to be a review of the Passenger Transport Act.

In recent times I have had occasion to use taxis, and I have been appalled. Some years ago, when the Hon. Frank Blevins was the Minister, a certain amount of deregulation took place and the taxi industry indicated that it would clean up its act and bring in some extra standards and improve things. Things did improve for a while but, in my recent travels in taxis, I have been appalled at the drop in standards of both the taxis and the drivers. There have been some exceptions, but the norm is that taxis have been quite dirty, dilapidated and smelly and there has been smoking in them. The taxi drivers are pretty sloppy; they are unshaven, quite grubby people. As I say, I am not pointing the finger at everyone but I have found this with quite a percentage of them. This needs to be addressed, because I can see a very real diminution of standards in this regard. Also under 'Transport' the Governor said:

My Government has a strong program of forward planning for transport infrastructure.

I wonder whether part of this is in relation to my notice of motion for Thursday in respect of the proposed clearway on Grand Junction Road and the bringing of A-double transport road trains into the metropolitan area. It is certainly a

retrograde step. I will not touch on that at this stage; I will do that at a later time.

There is a lot of good stuff in the Governor's speech, but there is also some fairly shaky stuff, and I wonder how this Government will perform over the next four years. The Governor also mentioned the death of three former members who served in the Parliament of South Australia. The first was the Hon. Boyd Dawkins, MBE. Boyd was a member of the Legislative Council from 1962 to 1982, serving the Parliament for 20 years. During that time he was both the Government and Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council. I had the pleasure to personally know Boyd over a number of years. I travelled interstate with him and his wife Connie on several occasions to parliamentary bowls carnivals. We certainly had good times together, and it was sad to see the passing of Boyd. He was a thorough gentleman and a very conservative and religious man. It was a pleasure to have known Boyd, and I certainly recognise his contribution to this place. At the time I expressed my condolences to his wife and family.

Another member who passed away was the Hon. Jack Slater from the Labor side of the House. He held the House of Assembly seat of Gilles for nearly 20 years from 1970 until his retirement in 1989. In 1982 he was appointed a Minister and held the portfolios of Water Resources and Recreation and Sport until his retirement from the Ministry in 1985. Apart from being a good friend of mine, Jack was also a keen bowler, and I had the pleasure of travelling to interstate and inter-club matches within the State with Jack over a number of years. Even after Jack's retirement, he continued to travel with us and bowl, sometimes as a former member and sometimes, as he did only last year, making up the numbers to bowl with current members, when we finished second in the carnival in Sydney.

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

Mr De LAINE (Price): Before dinner I mentioned the passing of two former members of Parliament—the Hon. Boyd Dawkins of the Legislative Council and the Hon. Jack Slater from this place. The third person mentioned in the Governor's speech was Reg Curren, the former member for Chaffey, in the Riverland. He was a member of this House from 1962 to 1968, and then from 1970 to 1973. He was an active member of a number of parliamentary committees, including the committee on land settlement. At the time of Reg's passing, I extended my condolences to Reg's widow and family, and I do so again now.

I will not speak for long, because we are scheduled to hear a couple of maiden speeches. However, I will mention two former colleagues who retired at the last election. First, the Hon. Frank Blevins, who was in this place for about 12 years and in the other place for 10 years before that. Frank is a former Deputy Premier and Treasurer of this State. I have a high regard for Frank because he left school at an early age and joined the Merchant Navy in England. He came here on a dredge and was domiciled in Whyalla when they dredged Whyalla harbor. Frank stayed on and then became a member of Parliament. Frank, who held a number of portfolios including Deputy Premier and Treasurer, retired at the last election. He is someone who will be missed from this place because of his experience and commonsense. He was always a polite person and a good operator. He was cool under pressure, and we will certainly miss Frank.

Secondly, I mention the Hon. Anne Levy, from the other place, who retired after about 21 years of service. About two

years ago, Anne achieved the honour of becoming the longest serving female member of Parliament in South Australia's history. Anne was a very capable person. She was the first female Presiding Officer in Australia's history. She became the President of the Legislative Council in February 1986—just a few hours before Joan Child became the first female Speaker in Federal Parliament. Anne had a distinguished career, and she certainly is missed by the Labor Caucus. I wish both those former members well in their retirement.

In closing, I would like to formally welcome the new members to this place, on both sides of the House. There are quite a few of them. I have listened intently to their maiden speeches—and there are more to come, both tonight and later—and I have been impressed with all new members on both sides of the House. It augurs well for the future of this place if new ideas come in. I am sure that the new members will conduct themselves well, and I hope they are here for many years.

I was pleased politically that we gained a lot of new members on this side of the House, especially the new female members. We now have about 45 per cent representation of female members on this side of the House, which is good. A lot of them are young, and I hope that they will be here for a long time. On a political level, it is great to see us win back seats from the Government. However, on the other side of things, when one works with people in this place, irrespective of the politics, you get to know them and you get to like them as people. I was sad to see the exit of many Government members who lost their seats, because you get to know them and you get to like them—most of them, anyway. You respect their views, and you work together in this place. Many friendships develop, so it is sad to see them go. I wish them well in whatever they do in their enforced retirement.

As I said, I have listened to the maiden speeches of all members from both sides of the House, and I am sure that they will make a good contribution. The speeches have all been good and well thought out. It is good for the Parliament and the State of South Australia. With those few words, I will give ground to a new member to make her maiden speech. I am happy to support the motion.

The SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Florey, I remind all members that it is the honourable member's maiden speech.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): It is a great honour to rise to my feet in this Chamber as the member for the seat of Florey, elected by members of my community to represent their dreams, their issues, their hopes and their aspirations in this place. I thank the electors for the trust they have placed in me and commit myself first and foremost to representing them energetically and sincerely. I will work here to the best of my ability at all times for my community and will act with honesty and integrity for the collective good. I will work to overcome bullying, mean-spiritedness and rank abuse of power.

I will today, in my first speech to this House, touch on some of the main themes I wish to pursue during my time here. I wish to place on record at the outset my respect for and recognition of the original owners and occupiers of the land on which we stand, and my deepest heartfelt apologies for the shocking acts of genocide and racism that have been perpetrated on the Aboriginal peoples of this State and this nation. The inhumane, unjust and unfair treatment of Australia's indigenous peoples can still be seen destroying the lives of many people today. The pain caused is graphically

illustrated in the following quote from the recent Stolen Children's report:

We may go home but we cannot relive our childhood. We may reunite with our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, communities, but we cannot relive the 20, 30, 40 years that we spent without their love and care and they cannot undo the grief and mourning they felt when we were separated from them. We can go home to ourselves as Aboriginals but this does not erase the attacks inflicted on our hearts, minds, bodies and souls by caretakers who thought their mission was to eliminate us as Aboriginals.

I am so truly sorry for these events. We must acknowledge our past, make visible our pain and take responsibility for our actions if we are to be able to act in the present with the honour and decency that will enable a sound future to unfold. I am proud that it was in my lifetime and in the time of a Federal Labor Government that the curse of the constitutional, legal and political invisibility of Aboriginal people in this country was once and for all broken by the pivotal Mabo High Court decision. I congratulate Aboriginal leaders, such as Noel Pearson, Mick and Pat Dodson and South Australia's own Lois O'Donohue, and I implore all South Australians to urge the Howard Government not to divide this nation through an election based on race.

I intend to stand up to be counted for my beliefs. I will speak my mind openly and with conviction—I hope never insensitively or without compassion. Anyone with deeply-held beliefs who says clearly that discrimination is wrong, who believes passionately that people live in a community not just an economy is these days howled down and bullied as a proponent of political correctness. I say to this House that I do have a belief system and values; that I do believe in right and wrong; and that I do believe we must work against racism, against sexism and against those who would bully, exclude and humiliate their fellow citizens.

I stand here because I believe firmly that there are inherent contradictions in our economic system and I state proudly and unequivocally that I remain firmly on the side of labour. We cannot allow our beautiful community to drift aimlessly, as it has been recently. More than five years ago the A.D. Little report, commissioned by the Arnold Labor Government, warned South Australians:

Large areas of the South Australian economy are under threat . . . unemployment is running at levels which society cannot sustain without encountering severe social difficulties. . . The receding economic tide of the recession is simply revealing the structural weaknesses just underneath the surface of the economy. The unemployment situation could get worse; the problems facing South Australia will persist and the State's ability to participate in recovery will be restricted.

Yet the current State Government has failed to act decisively to alleviate unemployment. We cannot stand by as our young people are forced to leave for interstate to find jobs. It is bad for families and it is bad for South Australia. As a State we must attract people to come here and encourage them to stay. We must work together in this House to correct our disgraceful unemployment rate.

In the mid 1970s South Australia was the fourth most populous State, accounting for 9.1 per cent of the national total. Today, South Australia's population accounts for only some 8.2 per cent of the national total. The Australian Statistician forecasts that by the year 2051 the South Australian share of the national population will have fallen to 6.2 per cent.

The inefficiencies and inequities in current economic approaches become more and more evident as we flounder under the pressures of globalisation. Many studies demon-

strate—and most of my constituents in Florey can give real life examples to show—that Australia's living standards have fallen relative to those of the countries with which we have traditionally compared ourselves—from the highest 100 years ago, to third at the end of the Second World War, to sixteenth place now. Patterns of world trade over the past 50 years have disadvantaged an economy such as Australia's and, as our own South Australian economic research shows us, 'in the most profound era of economic and demographic change witnessed in Australia since the war, national income and population is shifting from the southern States to the northern and western States.' We need sound industry and regional development policies which commit Governments to intervene strongly to support job growth and alleviate the effects of structural adjustment on the worst-hit parts of this city and this State.

I have a strong interest in ensuring that Labor's industry development strategies emphasise the role of small businesses throughout all industry sectors across the State. Small to medium business enterprises have been absolutely essential to the development of South Australia. Small businesses dominate the services sector and are playing an increasing role in manufacturing and in providing most of the new job opportunities in the future.

In recent years, small businesses have constituted 96 per cent of all South Australian businesses, and they have provided about 50 per cent of the employment in this State. Many of these have been new businesses led by women. All the deteriorating social fabric in South Australia caused by the poverty, despair, health effects and unfairness of ongoing unemployment necessitates Government leadership and investment in active labour market policies. We need policies which focus on the problem of structural unemployment—not on attacking the unemployed. We need policies which distribute the burden of adjustment more equitably.

The ACTU has characterised active labour market policies as those which emphasise skill formation, including skill flexibility, adaptability and capacity for innovation; job placement (matching job supply and demand); the reduction of labour market segmentation to enhance overall flexibility and equity; and the payment of unemployment benefits as a last resort. More flexible work practices are not, however, a euphemism for greater exploitation: rather, they present an opportunity for us finally to reject some of the archaic notions which are creeping back and which led to the de-skilling of labour, mutual suspicion and antagonism. We must embrace new ways of working which take account of the quality of our working life, which explore new approaches and which take account of men and women's broader family responsibilities with their working lives.

With more balanced lives, there could be less stress and a greater opportunity for reducing working hours. We have the chance to recognise our diverse lifestyles more appropriately and equitably. Jennie George, one of the most outstanding women in political life today, has placed working arrangements firmly on the industrial agenda whilst making clear that conditions and standards of pay must remain intact. I support this policy direction. Indeed, I wish to see our Parliament be more balanced and reasonable in the conduct of its work. I support Sir Eric Neal's remarks on this issue in his address to the opening session of the forty-ninth Parliament. Respecting ourselves, our communities, our work and each other will go a long way to showing the people of South Australia that politicians are balanced people leading

balanced lives, and that, I am sure we all must reluctantly agree, is not the image projected.

My constituents tell me time and again that they are sick and tired of the behaviour which has come to characterise our Parliaments. The community expects better behaviour of their parliamentary representatives, and I am at a loss to understand why the message has not been heeded. More and more as a State we will be reliant on the quality, versatility and flexibility of our people. Such human potential, which is much more than a simple economic resource, however requires the best education, ongoing skill enhancement and protection, investment and support of an active State Government. The tragic dismantling of the active labour market policies linked to industry policy at Commonwealth level just heightens the need for State action, indeed, a whole-of-Government approach on the absolutely crucial issue of unemployment in South Australia.

Our 'social capital', to paraphrase Eva Cox, will be the main currency of this State's future—a vision shared by Don Dunstan, who transformed this State from a social backwater to a leader in social justice and law reform. Dunstan, a particularly special icon to me, understood notions of 'social capital' before the phrase was coined and demonstrated an innovative role for Government—the benefits of which are still to be seen.

He was able to develop our arts industry to the level of international attention and standing, when others saw what had become a pillar of our major cultural/tourism industry as marginal. This will be an industry area of ongoing interest to me because of the enormous community benefits it provides. Don Dunstan acted on his dream of a burgeoning film industry in this State, which reached a dramatic high with the recent success of the movie *Shine*. Governments can and must lead. Our purpose, after all, is the business of good governance on behalf of the citizens of this State. Governance is about ensuring the cohesion of communities and the purposeful capacity building of this State as an attractive, vibrant society where quality of life and living standards are important, valued and nurtured, and where there is an investment in social capital.

While other forms of capital are generally privately owned, social capital is not. It is a measure of relationships, interaction, social connectedness, empowerment and engagement. It is about social trust and civic trust. Social trust is about the relationships between people and within communities, and civic trust is the trust between people and the institutions that represent them. I believe that individuals and communities can make a difference and that our institutions should be accountable. Governments matter. There is a dynamic and essential role for the public sector in our lives. Our challenge is to modernise Government whilst building social and community cohesion, not destroying it. Our obsession with privatisation, smaller Governments and the primacy of the so-called markets is purely ideologically driven, and reached tragic heights today with the Government's announcement to sell off ETSA.

This approach is inefficient, ineffective, misguided and destructive. I am saddened, for example, that our State should be so reliant on cultivating and then using people's addiction to gambling, to poker machines, to cigarettes and to alcohol as a source of revenue. Pokies work against the development of our social capital, and there is increasing and alarming evidence that Government is failing to develop appropriate policy and program responses to this issue—blinded by dollars. I am concerned to hear of the views of Professor John

O'Connor, who has shown that Australia's *per capita* gambling rate is one of the highest in the world. I am no wowsler and, indeed, am very supportive of a civil liberties perspective. However, public policy requires developing responses in the civic interest, and I state here and now my reservations on this issue.

I am not convinced of any community benefit, and I am alarmed at the harm it causes. The need for interventionist Government approaches that tackle difficult issues such as gambling more openly and honestly goes to the heart of the current challenge to arrest the very erosion of Government itself in this State. Many Government departments are now virtually in the business of negotiating contracts in some artificially contrived bogus market, or looking for what else can be privatised, outsourced or put in the archival box marked '70s hope and heart stuff'. Teachers could be on an individual work contract for a job lot.

Indeed, if it were not so heartbreakingly close to the truth I would have felt no guilt laughing at Phillip Adams' delicious parody in this past issue of the *Weekend Australian*, describing the Howard Government's working quietly towards a return to a policy of slavery for the past two years through destroying the arbitration system, demoralising trade unions and progressively stripping the workers of the right to collectively bargain. Phillip Adams suggests that the Liberals are effectively privatising unemployment and what is left of the working class, and that welfare payments are becoming something of the past, so why not sell people off to rich tycoons and graziers and save on pensions and hospital bills?

Does it not sadden everyone in this House that we can celebrate the republican convention with great and deserved grandeur and witness, for example, the role of Andy Thomas in space, yet we cannot house all our young people in this State or find jobs for all; worse still, that we are selling off and dismantling the very infrastructure designed to assist community functioning?

We are handing over the State's role in providing essential support for each other to the churches, to the individual in the home, to families already facing stresses. We are in effect privatising our social responsibility to each other and to the citizens of South Australia and returning to a charity handout model of social service. The role of the churches and the family—and I have a great respect for both—has always been an important element in our social services. Why should they be forced to take on an unfair burden which should be shared throughout the community?

The hard work of the Public Service Association and the Australian Education Union in trying to protect the State's crucial administrative and educational infrastructure from complete disintegration is heroic and heartbreaking. I say, 'Thank you', to our teachers and to our public servants. To continue to work in the public interest in a climate which is so unsupportive and often indeed hostile is courageous and appreciated by many more in the community than you realise.

Now let me turn to the attacks on our public hospital system. The dismantling of the world-class Modbury Hospital in my own electorate, the saga of outsourcing and management inducements, the bungling and secrecy have caused hardship to many in my community, and for what result? I challenge those opposite to convince anyone in my electorate that this has been in the community interest on either equity or efficiency grounds. The dedication and hard work of the hospital staff who have given tirelessly on behalf of the community has meant that, in the face of difficulties, high

quality care has always been available for patients in the hospital. If the quality and efficiency of the services is not significantly better, why on earth have we had to go through the pain of outsourcing and privatisation?

The residents in my electorate were told that this action by the Brown-Olsen Government would save money but, Mr Speaker, the truth can no longer be concealed. Not a penny has been saved. Any promised benefits to early intervention or community health services have not eventuated. Whose interests have been served? Not the people's, that is for sure! The outstanding work of the Modbury Hospital Local Action Group, their determination and commitment and voluntary hard work in the face of totally irrational economic fundamentalism and the ineptitude of the current State Government has all the makings of a best-seller. I want the happy ending and I will not rest until the public hospital system has again the premier role of a trusted and respected public good in this community, a deliverer of world-class medical care to all our citizens and not just another financial unit where lives and quality care are viewed as a cost rather than as an investment in our future well-being. No chances can be taken by Government with health care for the community.

I applaud the work of Living Health and its projects that support community based social and preventative health initiatives. I believe our best response to our ever increasing health budget is to focus energy and resources on preventative health care. This is financially responsible and it is also the right and most effective thing to do.

I am particularly proud to represent the seat of Florey, named after such a distinguished South Australian whose scientific achievements in medicine, particularly his work with penicillin, have had a profound effect on humanity extending well beyond our borders. This year will see the celebration of the centenary of Howard Florey's birth and I wish today to pay particular tribute to his achievements, commitment and compassion, and in particular to the work of the Florey Foundation. The foundation provides a fitting legacy to the research and health legacy of Florey the man.

Since my earliest days as a child handing out Labor leaflets in the suburbs of Sydney I have proudly and unhesitatingly supported the organised Labour movement. It is to the trade unions that every one of us on this side of the House owes a debt of allegiance. It was the union movement which formed our great Australian Labor Party before the turn of the past century to further the democratic socialist vision of bettering the lives of the working people of Australia through the Parliament and community activism. It is to the union movement that we owe the very standard of living of the community which many of us now take for granted: for example, the eight-hour day, occupational health and safety, conditions, award protections and minimum standards, equal opportunities at work, social wage measures such as pension coverage, health support and superannuation, and the list could go on.

It is to the union movement that we owe the courage to stand up and to fight for policies which protect and extend the rights of working Australian men and women and the courage never to give up on the pursuit of full employment, a basic human right of all South Australians.

I am appalled at the deliberate, divisive, destructive and downright sneaky assault on Australian workers as illustrated in the current waterfront dispute. I pay particular tribute to the struggle faced by the MUA at this time and I note how similar are the struggles for the wharfies and the miners today to the struggles a century ago in this country. I say a special

'thank you' to the MUA, the TWU, the NUW and the MEAA for their support for me over the years and pledge my support to voicing their issues as appropriate in this House.

The pursuit of greater safety and equity in the workplace has been severely challenged by the conservative forces and their workplace relations policies which tear at the very fabric of our national sense of fair play. The bullying by bosses occurring on the waterfront, sanctioned at the very highest levels of our national Government, must send shock waves through us all, yet many assume that the national manifestation of the bullying of the vulnerable by the more powerful, of vested interests presuming that it is okay to be confrontational and aggressive to make one's point, is just part of the way that people relate to each other in today's post-modern, winner-take-all world.

I beg to differ. Bullying in its many forms is one of the most serious and endemic problems in our community. Bullying is the deliberate and persistent intimidation, coercion, oppression and/or persecution of those less powerful or in a weaker position. It is something to which we give licence every time we remain silent in the face of wrongdoing. It is alive in the school ground, it operates in the workplace, and it is the *modus operandi* of the boardroom—and, often, I am sad to say, in political life. As we all know from experience, politics can be brutal. There are bullies within the factions of all political Parties. I support the positive role that factions play in political life in helping to bring about agreement and understanding and to mediate differences. However, I cannot condone those individuals who gain strange delight in bullying others and who coerce and threaten, belittle and intimidate.

As the barriers to women's participation in our Parliaments and other decision-making bodies are finally lifted, we need, as women and men together, to develop new and different ways of being able to assert our views without mirroring the aggressive, bullying behaviour of what to date have been our only role models. There is a paradox in our society in that we encourage the development of the qualities of nurturing, sharing, duty, turn-taking, fair play and adhering to the rules. Then, more and more as our children grow, they discover that our society really values the quality of the bully: aggression, self-serving ambition, opportunism, intimidation, cheating and a preparedness to change the rules. What hypocrisy!

Why not adopt as I do a more appropriate role model in Joan Kirner, who speaks of inclusive behaviour, of humour, warmth and generosity of spirit? I make clear that bullying will have no place in my political or personal life. Bullying in the school yard is so destructive to the development of young people's sense of self, but it does not stop there. Studies have shown that nearly 20 per cent of small businesses feel that they have suffered unfairly at the hands of larger firms. Unscrupulous trading practices need to be examined to see that the smaller family business is not being effectively bullied out of operation by the combined effects of tenancy pressures and unfair trading.

Bullying in all walks of life leaves permanent scars and pain. Family violence statistics show that intimidation, threats, coercion and physical menacing is all too common in the daily lives of many South Australians. I pledge myself to supporting policies and initiatives which make visible these silent and cruel behaviours; which encourage people to recognise how rampant bullying is in all our lives and in the daily lives of our community; and which tackle the behaviour at its root cause. I say to families and individuals in my

electorate, 'Please, do not to put up with being bullied in any part of your daily home or working life. Take action; get assistance; know that it is wrong for you to be threatened, intimidated or stood over by another person. Know that you can ask questions. It is your right to seek the assistance you need and that you are not alone.'

Bullying is wrong and must be named, spoken of and overcome. By fostering a hostile work environment where bullying is tolerated, firms are partly responsible and they can be made liable if they fail to act. For example, sexual harassment is about unwelcome conduct which refers to one's gender or sexuality in a way which makes one feel vulnerable or at risk. It is an abuse of power. It is not about love, sex, attraction or communication: it is about power.

Bullying or harassment of any kind is about power. It is an action or set of actions or a circumstance which leaves uncomfortable and vulnerable a person over whom the perpetrator has some authority. It does not matter whether it is intended or unintended. We must act to codify society's expectations about what are reasonable and acceptable standards of behaviour between people in certain situations, and make these explicit. Power differentials do exist between people; and gender relations, for example, are power regulations.

Understanding harassment and bullying behaviour is about acknowledging that sexual domination is a form of violence, be it between men and women, between those of the same sex or between adults and children. And it is about understanding that mutual respect for each other—for the fundamental human rights of our fellow community members—must receive as much attention in our daily lives as our pursuit of power, status and ego. So often we mistake power over others for the real power which comes from working together with each other.

I pause briefly here to comment from the heart on one of the most serious issues confronting us today. The announcement last week by the Prime Minister that Australia will involve itself in the Gulf hostilities fills me with a deep disquiet. I am appalled that on this very day as I stand before you in this Parliament we are sending our fellow Australians towards a very serious area of hostility, towards likely action in war. I can never, and will never, accept that war will ever be more desirable than the pursuit of peace. I am not convinced that our involvement is as yet appropriate and warranted and, along with many others in my community, I feel alarmed at the Howard Government's decision.

Violence is never an option. Once you have reached the barricades, both sides have lost. Even retired General Norman Schwarzkopf has been quoted expressing his doubts that this military intervention will achieve its desired outcome. Let me make clear, however, that as a member of the Vietnam Veterans Association and the RSL I am a long-term and committed supporter of our defence personnel. The tragedy of our treatment of Vietnam veterans remains a shame for my generation, and I will work with the Vietnam veterans and their organised groups to ensure that their needs and demands are met.

I will champion all these themes during my time in this House. I will work towards reconciliation and justice for the Aboriginal people. I will pursue the revitalisation of the South Australian community. I will do what I can to fight our shameful unemployment. I will work to ensure active labour market policies which underpin regional and industry development strategies. I will fight for improved health for all; sound preventive strategies, especially through nutrition;

and the survival and strengthening of our public hospital system. I will support the arts industry, and our education, community health and public services. I will champion measures that assist small businesses in my community and in this State. I will work with the trade union movement on industrial policy that respects people and does not seek to enslave them. I will oppose bullying in all its insidious forms.

And now, I give my 'thank you's'. I give my special thanks to all my wonderful family, especially my mother, who is with me here tonight. To my friends and supporters I extend my heartfelt thanks for their love and generosity of spirit in pursuit of the common cause. I also thank my mentor, friend and campaign manager, Peter Duncan, and his family. Not only is Peter the best in the business but also his example and contribution to public life are superb and something we all envy. I thank Dr Jim Hyde, my friend and confidante, for his wonderful intellect and sense humour. I also thank Deirdre Tedmanson for her inspiration and support. Her loyalty and continued hard work for the Labor Movement is a credit to her tenacity and the integrity of her political vision.

I thank here the members of Emily's List—the Labor women's organisation established through the efforts of people such as Deirdre and Joan Kirner—for their support, which is so freely given, even after a campaign. Other special thanks go to Collette Snowden for always being there and to Glenys Rochford and Amanda Davey, who have given me the gift of balance for life in a seasonal way.

Underneath all this is the support of the team from Colonel Light Gardens and my electorate staff, who give without question and follow me over the top of the trench each day. To all of you I say, 'Thank you'; I will honour your faith in me. I congratulate and wish well all my newly elected colleagues to this Parliament and look forward to working with you all with goodwill. To my electorate I again pledge my sincere efforts to work on its behalf. It is to the people of Florey that I will be ultimately accountable, and it is to them whom I turn for the renewed sense of enthusiasm that brings me to my feet in this House today.

There being a disturbance in the Speaker's gallery:

The SPEAKER: Order! The gallery will come to order. Before calling the member for Mitchell, I advise members that it is the honourable member's maiden speech this evening. I ask members to resume their seats or leave the Chamber.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Although I have already raised some issues in this place, this is technically my maiden speech—although I prefer to call it my inaugural speech. It is customary to take this opportunity to thank those who helped me get here, and I do so briefly. The most important supporters are those who voted for me. There were undoubtedly a great variety of reasons why people put me ahead of the alternative candidate, but I am afraid that I will not be able to be all things to all people, although that is an image which we politicians are meant to pursue. Still, the ballot paper in Mitchell suggests that I did not have the benefit of the donkey vote, so perhaps there were a few people among the several thousand to whom I personally spoke during my time as a candidate who endorsed me personally and wanted to promote the values for which I stand.

I was surrounded by a loyal band of hard-working volunteers, who put in much time and effort. There was precious little money to be had from Party headquarters with which to fund the campaign, so I must pay special tribute to the ALP supporters in my area who gave so much financially

compared to their means, by coming to dinners and barbecues and buying raffle tickets. One of the most touching moments of the whole campaign was when I was out doorknocking and a local pensioner offered a \$100 donation for the campaign fund. That would have been about three months of his entertainment budget gone in one hit. Moments like that gave me great encouragement.

It was an arduous campaign, from my point of view, and the margin in the seat of Mitchell is less than 1 per cent. But I have a very positive attitude toward things and, the way I look at it, that finely balanced result is excellent for the people who live in my electorate. It means that, when I make requests on behalf of my constituents, I am likely to get a favourable result from the Government Minister so that the next Liberal Party candidate can take credit for my suggestions being implemented. I sincerely thank all those who made sacrifices and helped me out in the great 1997 Mitchell campaign.

Tonight also seems to me to be a good opportunity to make some observations about the political process generally and where I fit into it. I have never studied political philosophy, but sitting in the House of Assembly has led me to think about what goes on here. I do not mean the way we stand up and make speeches, or the way the messengers come around with pieces of paper, as though the computer had never been invented, but, rather, I refer to the metaphysical aspect of what we do here, which is, essentially, the exercise of power.

Not one elected member should deny that we have embarked upon a political career seeking power, and I am sure that the motives of some here are almost wholly based on a personal desire to increase their own sense of power with the prestige and the healthy salary that goes with the job. But I am equally certain that, no matter what personal gratification comes with the job, many of us here have a genuine desire to exercise power in pursuit of our vision of society.

At this early stage of my time in Parliament, it is worth saying something about what I believe that vision of society might be, or what it should be. Before I get to that, however, I would like to reflect on the nature of power. I believe that power is the capacity to make people do things which they would not otherwise do. It is more than influence: it is compelling. I believe that it is natural to seek power. Whatever our background or vocation, we all have egos, and the ego seeks power in order that the needs and desires of the individual can be met. I suspect that there would not be any of us who did not fantasise as a child about controlling the world. In some unfortunate cases, the fantasy lingers on. For most of us, however, the free expression of our lust for power is curbed as we are socialised, because in most parts of our society it is not acceptable, not polite, to be seen to be seeking control over others. Of course, this is not universally the case.

Through a variety of intellectual deceptions, there are many examples of groups or classes within society which seek to persuade others that they should accept the domination of one over another—whether it be based on male chauvinism, racism, religious or political dogma. Members of the dominating group might be active or merely complicit in the pervasion of the dominant paradigm. When ideas such as these prevail in the community or part of it, the systemic domination of a class of other people, whether it be women, infidels, Aborigines or whoever, becomes widely acceptable. Generally speaking, however, it remains unacceptable in society to say, ‘I want to dominate you’ or even, ‘I want to be a powerful person.’ Of course it is not just that the free

expression of the drive for power is inhibited as we are taught to behave nicely.

As people mature emotionally and spiritually the innate desire for power may be genuinely tempered by compassion and a growing respect for others, even if allowing others freedom means letting them make their own mistakes. It is possible to develop and have faith in a vision for society which does not have the individual at the centre of the universe. It is possible to dedicate whatever power one has to the betterment of others and to society in general.

Although I have been through hard times and seen some horrible things, I remain an idealist. I do not think that politicians today are any worse than they have been in previous times. The same human urges have been working themselves out throughout history, whether under monarchy, dictatorship, democracy or whatever. If the public view their political representatives with any greater disdain in our time, it is because of the more intense and revealing media focus on whatever faults there are rather than a lower quality of representation compared with times past.

It is time for me to move to slightly safer ground and share some thoughts on our political system as a whole rather than focussing on the human failings of our political practitioners. There has been an evolution of political forms in European-based cultures over the past few thousands years. The trend seems to be towards greater diffusion of power. Thus we begin in the days of omnipotent emperors. We then have the kings and queens before the devolution of power to the land-owning barons in such bodies as the thirteenth century English Parliament and, in much more recent times, the removal of minimum property qualifications and gender restrictions for members of Parliament. Gradually, it seems, political power has been available to an increasingly broader range of people.

It is worth remembering that advances towards greater democracy, that is to say greater power sharing, have been made as a result of the combined force of those who seek to break down the concentration of power. For example, the Magna Carta—of unique significance in British history in its guarantee of personal freedoms—was signed only after the barons of England camped around London and threatened to overrun King John and his forces.

There has also been a kind of evolution in the source of political power. Thousands of years ago political power came primarily from the dynamic force of the individuals who asserted themselves over the rest of the tribe or community. As societies in Europe became more settled with the development of farming techniques and the development of the science of fortification, ownership of land became paramount as a basis for wielding power. Ownership of productive land remained the ultimate power base until the industrial revolution. From the middle ages onward the power of the merchant class in European cities increased and systems of banking developed and this brought in a new way of developing wealth. It became apparent that whoever was able to marshal capital was able to develop extraordinary wealth and power. Owning the means of production and the means to finance production became more important than owning land itself. That is not to deny that land remains a source of wealth and therefore power.

In considering the source of political power, I wonder whether we are on the threshold of a new age whereby those who control sophisticated communication technology and the media generally are becoming the most powerful people on earth, despite the constraints put in place by democratically

elected Governments. Market research confirms that people are influenced by the media they soak up. Hence political leaders increasingly rely on the media not only to get across facts but to communicate images to the public. Unfortunately, truth can be distorted in the process, because truth does not necessarily sell advertising space.

There is plenty of evidence on the Australian scene to suggest that political decisions are influenced by the influences of the big media proprietors. This has been most obvious at Federal level in the context of discussions about the limits on cross-media ownership and foreign ownership of Australian media. Another example on the national scene relates to the native title debate. When one of our media moguls stands to gain from the extinguishment of other people's property rights on the extensive pastoral lease landholdings owned by his companies, it has to be questioned whether his pervasive media interests can report on the native title debate with absolute impartiality. There is a one-sided debate in our daily newspaper which provides another good illustration of my point. The State Government seems to wish to initiate the debate about 'development' in South Australia.

The credo being promoted is that 'development is good', 'opposition to development is bad'. The Premier's press releases are uncritically reproduced in the newspaper. Of course, the kind of 'development' they are talking about is what might be called economic development—usually, building things on land where there was no building before or else putting up a big new building where there was an old building before. Often these projects involve the State's handing over tens of millions of dollars to the developer, because 'development' is such a good thing. Of course, much of that money finds its way out of South Australia through interstate or international companies.

Where a building project is economically viable, I have nothing against it *per se*, but there are always a range of human and environmental factors which need to be considered along with the sheer financial equations of any particular project. The kind of 'development' which I would like to hear more about is the development of a more just society, where compassion and sharing are promoted ahead of speculation for profit. Yet we do not get too many press releases and editorials promoting those values—except perhaps near Christmas time when consumerism is at its most rampant. It is only to be expected that media owners will seek to influence society towards a direction consistent with their commercial interests. However, when news and current affairs reporting, through selective reporting and lack of critical interpretation, is combined with limited alternatives for the public to learn about what is going on, it goes beyond merely influencing public opinion; it becomes a matter of exercising power by conditioning those who have no ready source of alternative information. This power tends to be exercised in favour of those who are already powerful rather than those who are relatively powerless.

The way I see it, then, there are several ways in which power can be exercised. Power is most obviously exercised when there is a promise of reward or a threat of punishment of some kind. However, there is a more subtle form of exercising power, and that is through conditioning people. It is manipulative because it is generally not what it appears to be—it is not the full picture. The media are agents for this type of conditioning, despite the genuine desire of many journalists to report the truth. Such considerations put into perspective whatever power we have as a Parliament.

During my time in Parliament, I will come back again to the issue of the media and their corrosive influence. On television, promotion of news as entertainment, in pursuit of ever higher ratings figures, has led to an emphasis on stories which are titillating rather than informative. Thus, for the average viewer, the picture is painted of a world which is lurid and violent, in which there is no point caring because no-one else seems to care. I have spoken at length about the media because I feel that one of the most important functions of Government today is taking leadership against this degrading picture of the world. In terms of Government, certainly there is a management role. It is also a vital function of Government to redistribute resources within society so that the funds can be supplied for the provision of public services such as education, health and housing. However, equally important is this leadership role. We should be speaking out for values which are worth promoting.

Members of Parliament have a role in promoting what is good, beautiful and true. It seems almost embarrassing to bring up these virtues for discussion, because there does not seem to be an awful lot of public debate about them. Too often the truth is avoided by Governments and politicians because it is seen as politically unpalatable. 'Accountability' is a catchword of the 1990s, but since 1993 the State Liberal Government has not lived up to its own rhetoric. Secret donations, secret outsourcing contracts and covered up reports have characterised the incumbent regime. The irony of some of these cover-ups—the Anderson report is a prime example—is that their public release would often have been less damaging than concealing the truth.

When I suggest that governments should promote beauty, I refer not just to the encouragement of culture in its various forms but also the preservation of the environment, even though at times this goal is in conflict with the development ethic to which I referred earlier. Two of the most beautiful parts of my electorate (Warriparinga and Glenthorne) are under threat of being submerged under built form. I will do what I can to prevent that.

I referred also to the promotion of what is good. That is not simply a matter of preferring one economic interest over another; it is a matter of promoting ideas and public services which encourage the best in people rather than fostering self-interest. It is very hard to define what is good, although that is what we should constantly strive for as we do our work in this place. It is easier to say what is not necessarily good. I do not think equality of wealth is the ultimate goal. I would not hesitate to reward hard work, training and skills, but I will stand up at any time to argue for equal opportunity. Despite our laws which go some way toward that goal, we are a long way from having true equality of opportunity for all members of society.

I do not think that liberty is the ultimate goal. Everyone other than anarchists think there should be some restraints on our behaviour *vis a vis* others in society. Liberty by itself can simply mean indulgent licence which can harm others. We are not here to preserve some traditional concept of civilisation, but I believe we should be working toward a society where greed and unfair dealings of all kind are kept in check. What I am pointing to is perhaps best encapsulated in the term 'social justice'. That term is hard to define, but like commonsense you know it when you see it. Perhaps it is because I have seen great poverty and hopelessness in the world. As a sensitive human being I cannot help but feel compassion for those who are struggling to make ends meet,

especially those with limited personal skills and resources who face the world with confusion and anger.

This is why I find the philosophy of liberalism so offensive. It is based on the false assumption that everyone has the same opportunities and everyone can act reasonably all the time. It is all very well for those of us who have a decent education to sit back and suggest that everyone should get up and compete in order to have their place in the sun. The fact is that life is not played on a level playing field, and I believe we are neglecting our basic responsibilities if we do not support those who are less fortunate than others in terms of the circumstances of their upbringing, family life and education. Liberalism is founded on the interests of the merchant classes of the developing capitalist economies. It was as suitable for the capitalist to embrace it as the divine right of kings was a suitable philosophy to be espoused by the monarchs of the previous millennium. Both those philosophies are now exposed as fraudulent. I suggest that we are here to do good, but I am certain that does not mean setting any one group or class above another.

Where do I fit into all this as an Opposition backbencher? I see the backbencher as having essentially three roles: the visionary aspect of the work; advocacy for particular causes; and the pastoral side of the work. By 'visionary' I refer to the contribution that one can make in terms of creative legislation and amendments. There is scope for this through policy discussion within one's own Party. This role takes on a special significance for the members of the Party in Government where there is a much greater chance of translating vision into action. Secondly, there is obviously an advocacy role where an individual MP can initiate and engage in public debate. To me, this is a matter of responsible leadership in the general sense. We must have the courage to speak out about important local issues or issues which affect society generally.

Thirdly, there is what I call the pastoral aspect of the work. This is what gives me the most job satisfaction at the moment. The electorate office is busy with people coming in or telephoning every day with a great variety of problems. We House of Assembly members serve as a sort of local ombudsman, mediator and information service. Because we are assumed by the community and members of Government departments to have a certain degree of power, people tend at least to listen when I put forward reasonable complaints on behalf of my constituents.

Many constituents run into problems because they simply do not have adequate personal resources to solve the problem for themselves. It may be because they do not have the financial resources or information to work their way through the system successfully, particularly if their problem involves resort to the legal system. In many cases constituents are simply not able to articulate their problem in an acceptable manner: they are so full of anger that they are not being listened to any more by the public servant responsible for making a decision about them, whether it be with respect to their Housing Trust home, pension, or whatever.

Thankfully, I am able to conclude that there are a number of ways in which I can contribute to the parliamentary process and the community generally. I am proud to be a member and a representative of the Labor Party, which has had its ultimate goal poetically expressed as the 'light on the hill'. Whether we call it a fair go for all or social justice, the members on this side are striving as a team to achieve it. Within the Parliament, the Labor Party and my community, I will conscientiously speak out against injustice and make

whatever contribution I can toward a creative society in which reason, love and the fulfilment of each person can flourish.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): It will be a bit difficult for me to follow many of my colleagues who have spoken for the first time by way of maiden speeches tonight—

The Hon. R.B. Such interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: The member for Fisher is absolutely right, because those members have spoken with high hopes and a great deal of idealism. I commend them all for that because if we are to have a better life in this country, and in this State in particular, we need such leadership. However, unfortunately, from time to time there falls upon a few of us the task of dealing with a bit of dross in life, and I happen to specialise in dross. The reason I must deal with dross is that, unfortunately, I have spent four years in this House. I have witnessed the types of debauchery on the Government side that we were witness to only a few hours ago with respect to the Premier's backflip, and open candour for the first time since the State election, that he intends to sell ETSA and a number of other State Government instrumentalities and agencies, the property of the people, and put them on the auction block.

What I find very interesting is that the Premier has now said that the centre point of this Government's economic policy for the next four years is based on flogging off ETSA, Optima, and a range of other State Government authorities. If he does not succeed in getting this legislation through the Parliament, basically he has admitted that life is too hard for him and his Government; that this Government cannot achieve what it wants to achieve (so he says) in terms of the provision of basic services to the community, whether it be in health, education, job creation, and a range of other factors, in which case, in my view, this Government has no alternative but to go to the people in an election.

Mr Condous interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: The member for Colton would interject because he knows he would not even score a pension. Of all the members of this House who have done handstands, pirouettes and backflips that would qualify for the Olympics, the member for Colton would be a grand champion, but I will deal with those issues later.

I should also extend my best wishes to the new Speaker on his election—rightfully so. I think he will do an outstanding job as Speaker and by comparison with any number of other Speakers he will do very well indeed, as will the new Deputy Speaker. I had my money on the member for Hammond to be Speaker because I thought that would introduce a bit of spice and life in this Parliament where every day we could walk in not knowing what would happen as to whether the Government's majority would suddenly evaporate through the Speaker's exercising his undoubted authority, were the member for Hammond to be made Speaker.

I also thank the electors of Ross Smith for electing me with a substantially increased majority at this election and, in particular, I pay a tribute to my supporters and members of the Labor Party in Ross Smith for their assistance over the past four years in allowing me to serve that electorate once again and, in particular, to my electorate officer, Linda Martin, to my sub-branch presidents and secretaries, and to my family to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude for a very difficult four years for all of us.

I also congratulate my colleagues on winning their seats in Parliament to increase the numbers of the Opposition quite

substantially but, in particular, I thank those of our colleagues who did not make it into this Parliament but who came very close to winning, not only close to winning but even those who stood in unwinnable seats as far as the Labor Party was concerned. Our candidate for Stuart, Ben Brown, and our candidate for Hartley, Quentin Black—with whom I am sure you are very familiar, Mr Acting Speaker—did magnificent jobs with absolutely scarce to no resources whatsoever being provided by the Party office in coming so close to winning those seats. Regrettably, their electorates were not south of Majors Road otherwise there may have been more assistance in that area, but those candidates performed admirably under very difficult circumstances.

We had a number of other candidates who stood in unwinnable seats but who carried the Labor standard in areas where usually, particularly in country districts of this State, you get tarred and feathered if you happen to be identified as a Labor Party supporter or activist. In some towns there are so few Labor voters that the secret ballot is a bit of a nonsense because everyone knows by name those who voted for the Labor Party. I extend my very great gratitude to those people for the work they did in carrying the Labor Party standard in those electorates to help build up our vote for the Legislative Council.

It is interesting that political commentators refer to the three so-called Independents who hold the balance of power in this House. Let us be under no illusions: this Government has 26 votes locked up. Those three Independents are about as independent as Martyn Evans and Norm Peterson were. They won their seats, with the exception of the member for Chaffey, as disgruntled members of the Liberal Party who resigned from the Liberal Party because they lost out on preselection in their area or because of certain circumstances such as occurred in the seat of MacKillop.

There is no way on this earth that any of those three are ever going to cross the floor against this Government, except perhaps on some issue relating, for example, to the South-East Water Conservation Board or whatever it happens to be where they feel honour bound, as loosely as I can use that term, to actually vote against the Government. Even then, notwithstanding their public position, they would find a reason to vote for the Government.

To describe a member of the National Party as 'independent' is a joke. They make up another conservative Party. They will vote with the Liberal Party on every occasion; they will never deviate. The only use the National Party serves in this Parliament is that it annoys the Liberal Party that it has won one of its safest seats and that the Liberal Party will have to spend a huge quid to beat them at the next election. From that point of view, the Labor Party is happy to have the National Party here so that we can give it our second preferences. This will cause the Liberal Party to go berserk and spend money in a safe Liberal conservative seat, money that it would have otherwise spent in a marginal seat. So, the National Party serves some good for us purely from that point of view, but a member of the National Party will never vote against a Liberal Government.

The member for MacKillop is going through a period of meditation—studying his naval—and all along busting his insides to work out how he can justify rejoining the Liberal Party after resigning three weeks before the election and running as an Independent. He will study very carefully the chances of his getting a Ministry or, dare I say, a committee or chairperson's position. If I were you, member for Hammond, I would be very careful, because I am sure that

the member for Mawson will work in league with him to achieve your downfall at his promotion. The member for MacKillop also wants to get back in because he is a Liberal and always will be a Liberal. He will never vote for the Labor Party. So, I am not offending a potential vote by stating the obvious tonight because, in fact, if the member for MacKillop ever voted for the Labor Party it would be the third miracle that Mary MacKillop needs to be canonised. If that is the case, I am about due for the white puff of smoke and the popehood. If that happens, God help us all.

The member for Gordon was an absolutely devoted, loyal member of the Liberal Party until such time as he was spurned. Because of Alan Scott and various other forces within the Liberal Party, he was duded for preselection. He was miffed, he ran as an Independent and he won. He is wrestling with his conscience. Before he decides to rejoin the Liberal Party, he will take a little bit longer to come to the same conclusion as the member for MacKillop has made already, but he has not yet made public his decision. The member for Gordon might see out the term as a so called 'Independent', because he also wants to ensure that he levers out of the Liberal Party its preselection for that seat unopposed. He realises that he is in this place only because of the Labor Party's second preferences.

Ms Thompson: He'll miss the Ministry.

Mr CLARKE: As the member for Reynell says, he too wants to be a Minister. In fact, I see 26 Ministers because, after today's announcement where the Government basically turned on its head everything that it promised prior to the last election, all members of the Liberal Party will realise that this is the last fiesta. This is the last time you can get your snouts into the trough in terms of being in government. It is the last time you can enjoy the perks as Speaker, Deputy Speaker, chairs of committees, Ministers and all the other trappings that go with office. This is the absolute last time for most of you who are over the age of 30 that you are going to enjoy the trappings of office. So all of you will want to get into that big trough. You will widen the trough and deepen it if necessary to make sure that for the next four years, because you know you will lose office—you have had it—you enjoy the perks. The Leader of the day of the Liberal Party will have to acquiesce to those demands by creating ever increasing numbers of paid positions to keep the 26 members of the Government on side. That is as plain as night follows day.

Basically, the public of this State will not tolerate a couple of things. They will not tolerate stupidity: hence we were beaten convincingly in 1993 because of the way events unfolded with respect to the financial affairs of the State Bank and SGIC. In fact, the Australian public are more tolerant of corruption: we were beaten by less in Western Australia. The Australian people are very unforgiving of stupidity and they are also extremely unforgiving of people who do not tell them the truth. The people know what the Government promised prior to the last State election about the privatisation of ETSA, Optima Energy and all the other State Government agencies. They know there was not a blinding light that the Premier received in the past couple of months for him to change his pre-election commitments on those matters.

Government members know in their hearts that the people do not believe him and you will not be forgiven for that. You will not be forgiven for treating people as if they were stupid. The trust of the people cannot be abused and Government members cannot think that over the next four years the people will forget and forgive them. You have lost your moral mandate to govern and, when you get beaten in this Parlia-

ment on this legislation, as I believe you will, to sell those assets, and as that is your centre piece for economic recovery for this State, if you have any shred of decency or honour left, you will go to the people and say, 'We ask you to vote on it, to determine which Party should be in power, because we want to sell all these assets. This is the mandate we seek.' If you have any guts whatsoever you will do that, but you will not. You will cling to the lifeboats for as long as possible, believing that somehow people will forget your knavery. They will not.

I now return briefly to the electorate of Stuart, because I spent a fair bit of time there campaigning for our candidate, Ben Brown—an outstanding candidate for that seat—and we came close to winning. As to the current member for Stuart, the former Speaker, he and I have had differences on a few occasions, but my interest in that electorate is not through any personal animus—none whatsoever—it just happens that he is a Liberal and—

Mr Lewis: You are not!

Mr CLARKE: Exactly—and I am only too happy to try to relieve the Liberal Party of its stewardship of the electorate of Stuart. That electorate taught me much because I had the opportunity with my partner and Ben Brown to go to Stuart on a number of occasions and doorknock and campaign in a whole range of small country towns such as Oodnadatta, Maree, Marla, William Creek (a great hotel there), Hawker and a variety of other places.

With respect to regional South Australia, those people wanted and understood the need for proactive Government intervention in their economic life. They understood only too well that, if you withdrew Government services and Government employment from those small centres, those centres themselves died or had their economic activity significantly reduced. They might not have liked the word 'socialism' but, quite frankly, many country people are great socialists, because they understand the need for Government activity in those areas to sustain their standard of living. They did not like seeing the Telstra offices, the work depots or the ETSA line offices close, or the Family and Community Services offices closed and withdrawn back to Adelaide. For the first time, they started talking to me and a number of our supporters saying that they were tired of having their vote taken for granted.

It had been assumed that 80 per cent of country people would vote for members of the Liberal Party. And what did they get out of it? Constant disappointment; small communities withering on the vine; and further cutbacks in Government services that sustained those local communities. They could see the need for Government intervention, and they had as the member for that district a person who championed a Government that was only too happy to see the withdrawal of Government services in their area. They realised that they had a member who was more interested in the trappings of office of Speaker than with dealing with their issues of concern.

We were well received in the work that we did in that electorate. We could tell that there was a groundswell of support for the Labor Party in the rural areas of this State. We did not know exactly how much: we had not done the polling; we did not have the money to do that. But from the warmth of the reception we received in those areas we knew that there was a big swing; it was just a question of whether or not it would be big enough to get us over the line. I recall the member for Stuart attacking me on a number of occasions when I ventured into his region, when I attacked him and the

Liberal Party over what I said would happen with respect to the sale of ETSA and with other Government institutions. He accused me of scare-mongering.

He got up before public meetings of many people saying that basically I was a liar; that I was scare-mongering. Yet in this House today we find this same person extolling the virtues of the sale of ETSA and those other Government agencies about which barely three months ago he had accused me of lying. The member for Stuart may have survived 10 elections: I will personally take it upon myself to try to ensure that he does not make an eleventh successful election, because the people of that region deserve honest representation. They are entitled to know first hand from their representative what is going to happen to their township, their standard of living, their community.

We often forget, in a capital city the size of Adelaide, that we may be able to absorb the loss of a few jobs here and there but that in a city the size of Port Augusta, with some 12 000 to 14 000 people only, the loss of 15 or 20 jobs makes a huge impact on that local community.

If the Government privatises ETSA, there is only one way private industry will make a bigger quid out of it than the State and that is if it gets rid of more people, creating greater unemployment. The people in the bush understand that only too well. We will ensure that they are reminded of it up until the time of the next election.

I look forward to the next four years, not so much because we are in Opposition, because I detest Opposition. You can speak a lot, but I like to do things and see an outcome. This Government has been one of the most disgraceful, discredited and mean-spirited Governments that we have had to endure in this State for many a long year. It does not deserve to be in office. Government members are cobbled together out of a desire for survival, led by a person who has no credibility, driven by personal disputes and factionalism and where the former Premier preens himself every day just waiting for the opportunity to strike and resume, as he sees it, his rightful place as Leader of this Government. I dare say that, if he does, the ministry will increase significantly more again to buy off the favours that are already being traded in this place by the aspirants for office.

What happens to this State in the meantime? This State has 10 per cent unemployment. The only reason it is not around 12 or 13 per cent is that our participation rate in the work force has dropped again. We are not at the national average, because people have given up hope of looking for work. When we ask the Minister for Employment, 'What are your plans to generate employment in this State?' we get the lame answer today that she does not know: 'I will take it on notice. I will give you a report.' That is the best we can get from the Minister for Employment in this State with double digit unemployment—not even a rhetorical flourish of bagging the Labor Party once again for all the ills of this State that we usually get from members of the Liberal Party.

Is the Minister for Employment so incompetent, so unsure of herself that she cannot even let loose with the usual barrage of vitriol and untruths against the Opposition to which we have become so accustomed over the past four years? Is the Minister for Employment not able to do that? Yet all along we have young people desperately seeking work. Mature aged constituents of mine who have worked for most of their lives are looking forward only to a hard grind to make life possible. All along, the only answer this Government can provide is a diversion: 'Let's flog off the last of the assets of this State and somehow we will muddle

through.' The Premier says, 'Trust me. I will ensure that no-one is compulsorily sacked.' What a joke! Why should anyone accept the Premier's word for anything?

There is not one promise which he can make and which anyone in this House or in the public can say confidently they accept. His word is utterly meaningless. This Government has wrapped itself around a Leader who cannot be believed. Members opposite know that in their heart of hearts. They know that he cannot be sold to the public, and the last election showed that, if anyone needed to be shown. He lost the 1985 election, he lost the 1989 election and he nearly lost the unlosable election in 1997. He has now confirmed to every member of the public what they always really felt in their heart about him: that he is a man who is not to be trusted—a snake oil salesman, in essence. It does not give me any joy to say that because, when we get into government at the next election, whenever it is held—

Mr Condous: If.

Mr CLARKE: Not 'if' but 'when'. The member for Colton may say 'if', but I know it is 'when'. I would like an economy which is a bit vibrant and which is generating a bit of wealth so that we could spend some money on urgently needed programs. However, this State has been traduced with dishonour, because this Government cannot tell the truth to its own electors. It has no mandate for the centrepiece of its economic plans for the State for the next four years and when, as I believe it will be, it is thwarted in the other place, it will be interesting to see how much stomach members opposite actually have. Will they go to the people?

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

Ms GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Ms KEY (Hanson): I place before the Parliament a grievance that has been raised not only by my colleagues in the trade union movement but also by working people in the electorate of Hanson whom I represent. Most members would have read about the debacle at the Webb Dock site in Victoria, where workers are being attacked, not only by the Howard Government—and Peter Reith in particular—but also by some elements of the National Farmers Federation. I say 'some elements' because many farmers have been reported as saying that they do not support the action that is being taken by the industrial wing of the National Farmers Federation. Indeed, in South Australia many farmers are concerned about the attacks on workers on the wharves.

I should like to put on the record some of the facts in this matter and some of the myths that have been perpetrated by the media. Basically, the Government wants us to believe that the dispute at Webb Dock is about struggling farmers trying to increase productivity on the waterfront, while the Maritime Union of Australia is trying to protect lazy workers, high pay and cosy conditions. In truth, it is really sections of big business getting together with State and Federal Governments and trying to attack the wages and conditions of all workers, beginning in this case with the Maritime Union of Australia.

The myth is that wharfies are extremely privileged and all earn over \$80 000 a year for doing almost no work. That is

the myth that is put out by the media and by some members of the Liberal Party. The fact is that the average award rate for a stevedore is about \$30 000 a year for a 35 hour week. In big container terminals workers earn good wages by working up to 80 hours a week at all times of the day and night; they are basically on call. The employers refuse to employ more staff and expect workers to do overtime. So, for that overtime they get paid—at this stage—penalty rates. The image put forward is that the workers are the ones with all the money. Let me say that there are enough people in the National Farmers Federation—certainly Mr Donald McCauchie and others—who are multi-millionaires and who have large land holdings, particularly in places such as Queensland.

There is also the myth that the National Farmers Federation company is a sincere attempt to bring competition into the wharves and help battling farmers who need to be able to export their produce. The Webb Dock does not handle rural produce. The company moved into the wharf in the dead of night with a private army with batons and riot shields (and great play was made of the riot shields that were apparently provided by the Victorian Government) and then locked out the workers who were rostered to work that night. This move was opposed by many farmers and many grain organisations.

Certainly many of the people involved in the grain industry in South Australia were appalled at the behaviour of the National Farmers Federation and Patricks. For a number of years the MUA has exempted farm produce from industrial action, as have other unions, and they certainly have not held up any farm cargo.

Another myth that is perpetrated by both the media and the Liberal Government is that the productivity of Australian ports is below international standards and that this is the fault of the maritime union. It is important to emphasise that, although there have been many changes in the waterfront over the past 10 years, the work force has been reduced by 50 per cent but the volume of cargo handled has been increased. Container lift rates increased by approximately 20 per cent in the five years to 1997. The union has worked for change, it has undergone reform and review, and it has been cooperative in its approach.

Productivity is determined by a number of factors, most of which are not controlled by the union. In many terminals the equipment is 20 years out of date and there are too few cranes to achieve international productivity levels. I am advised by maritime union workers that there is also an issue about how the cargo is stored in the ships. Obviously, if it is stored in such a way that it can be taken out quickly, the container rate or the movement of that freight will be a lot faster. However, quite often, especially at overseas ports, I am advised, the most obvious cargo to come out first is often stowed first and is on the bottom of the cargo that is being lifted out. That is a point that we must bear in mind.

In bulk handling such as grain, coal and iron ore, Australian docks are known to be amongst the best in the world. The bumper 1997 Australian wheat crop of 19 million tonnes was loaded in record time, and many farmers and also people in the industry commented in various press releases and even statements in Parliament about the productivity and efficiency of the dock workers in this case. Some companies, such as Sea-Land, which provide up to date equipment and which negotiate with the union, have productivity rates equal to those in any similar port around the world.

It is interesting that, despite the fact that the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning in the other place made

comments about productivity and efficiency in local Port Adelaide, she has become very silent since this dispute has been in place. All of a sudden, although Port Adelaide has had a very good record in productivity and turn-around rates, nobody wants to talk about it—not even the South Australian Farmers Federation. One therefore cannot help being suspicious about why all of a sudden nobody wants to talk about the efficiency side of the maritime industry and how we have a very good record in South Australia.

I would ask that, when people—especially those on the other side of the House—hear comments about dock workers, they think (if they do not already hold an opposite point of view) about whether the way in which those workers are being portrayed is fair and whose interests are being served by trying to crush the maritime union. It is my belief that the maritime union is on top of the list and that it is just a matter of time before the Howard-Reith industrial agenda unfolds to its worst state, and that it may be just a matter of time before colleagues in South Australia reveal what their real agenda is for workers in this country.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Earlier today I touched briefly on the Constitutional Convention that was held from 2-13 February, and I indicated the variation in the reaction from people in my electorate prior to and at the very beginning of the convention through to the reaction that I have gauged so far at the conclusion of the convention.

I believe that it is of interest to this House to consider some of the things that were discussed at the convention. The three questions that were principally considered were, first, whether or not Australia should become a republic; secondly, which republican model should be put to the voters to consider against the current system of Government; and, thirdly, in what time frame and under what circumstances might any change be considered. There is no doubt that the convention was very representative of the people of Australia, there being 152 delegates altogether. A total of 76 delegates were elected under the Constitutional Convention Election Act of 1997—and, in fact, I took the opportunity to exercise my vote, or votes, the way it was designed—and the other 76 were appointed by the Commonwealth Government and included 40 representatives of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Parliaments. So, it was a good mix of people, and I believe that the press highlighted, during the two week period, the variety of views that were represented there and the way people went about things.

Three categories of model for a possible Australian republic were put to the convention. They were, first, the direct election model; secondly, parliamentary election by a special majority; and, thirdly, appointment by a special council following prime ministerial nomination. As most members would know, following an exhaustive balloting process, the bipartisan appointment of the President was endorsed by a majority of delegates who were voting for or against the motion. That bipartisan appointment would, in the event that Australia becomes a republic, be the model adopted for the appointment of a president.

The objective of the nomination process is to ensure that the Australian people are consulted as thoroughly as possible, and this process of consultation would involve the whole community, including State and Territory Parliaments, local government, community organisations and individual members of the public, all of whom should be invited to provide nominations. From that, Parliament would establish a committee which would have responsibility for considering

the nominations for the position of president; the committee, in turn, reporting to the Prime Minister.

I have mixed feelings about a constitutional monarchy versus a republic. My key feeling is that we have had very stable Government in Australia over a very long period: I look at so many other countries and see instability, and I would not want that to occur here. Yet, at the same time, I recognise that there is inherently no problem in having our own head of State. I believe we have seen that since the time of Sir Paul Hasluck, an Australian appointed to the position of Governor-General; and the most recent examples are Bill Hayden and our current Governor-General. So, we have had Australian Governors-General, off and on, for quite some time.

What disturbed me during and prior to the Constitutional Convention was the suggestion that the President should be appointed by the people; that they elect the President. The populist view was that, surely, everybody should have the right to vote for the President. However, I argue strongly against that from the viewpoint that, basically, we would then have a President elected by the people and a Prime Minister elected through the majority Party elected by the people. We would have two people who could equally claim to have the power vested in them by the people of Australia. I could see divisions occurring immediately. I could see one seeking to test his or her authority against the other, which would have a destabilising effect.

My fears were realised a day or two after the Constitutional Convention when a poll showed that the person who gained the most support to be President was none other than a former Prime Minister, Paul Keating. Could you imagine a situation where the President was a popularly elected person, say, Paul Keating, and the Prime Minister was the duly elected Prime Minister of Australia, say, John Howard? We would have a situation for potential turmoil on many occasions. It would virtually be taking the situation out into the public arena rather than having it in the Parliament itself.

I am pleased that the model that has been recommended is for bipartisan appointment of the President. I also pay tribute to Paul Keating for coming out straight away and saying that it is not something in which he is interested. He felt that he had done his part in seeking to champion the cause of a republic and the appointment of an Australian President by a two-thirds majority of the appointing body, that is, Federal Parliament. This has gone a fraction further than that, although it would be the Parliament in the end that makes the appointment.

One or two members in their Address in Reply today referred to the fact that members of Parliament have lost esteem in the community. I would have to agree with them. It is somewhat tragic that the press has a habit of highlighting the negatives of members of Parliament so often, which reflects on all of us, whether or not we deserve it. I was taken aback a bit by comments I read during the Constitutional Convention which indicated that people do not want politicians to make decisions on who should be our President.

Let us stop and think for a moment. What is a politician? A politician represents the people. A politician puts himself or herself forward as a person who believes they can best represent the interests of their constituency. Therefore, they are the logical representatives of the people in the appointment of a President, just as the people involved in the Constitutional Convention were representatives of the people, even though most were not politicians. I am happy to defend the role of politicians and certainly the Parliament because it

is a democratic system that has worked well in many countries over a long period.

There are many areas of the Constitutional Convention with which I would hope Australians will familiarise themselves, which I guess will occur as a result of the literature we will start to receive in the next few months or over the next year or two when we have the referendum and other matters brought to our attention. We now know that it was decided that if Australia were to become a republic it should occur by 1 January 2001, which provides an opportunity for it to come into effect prior to 1 January if it is felt that all matters have been settled.

The implications for the States is a matter that we as State parliamentarians will need to consider seriously and in considerable depth over the next year. We will need to decide what course of action we want to take if Australia should go down the path of becoming a republic. Various items are identified there, and hopefully I will have the opportunity on another occasion to look further into what South Australia may consider, should Australia opt to go down the track of becoming a republic.

Motion carried.

At 9.15 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 18 February at 2 p.m.