

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 5 November 1998

The SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald) took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

**STAMP DUTIES (EXEMPTION FOR CROPS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Mr McEWEN (Gordon) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act 1923. Read a first time.

Mr McEWEN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

In so doing, I wish briefly to speak to this Bill. What has been occurring for sometime is that stamp duty has been levied on standing trees plantation forests when the capital value of a property has been assessed for stamp duty purposes. Quite obviously this is not appropriate. In a time when we are trying to actually encourage plantation forestry what we are also doing is imposing an extra impost on the very people who will be taking the commercial risk to actually plant such forests.

The important distinction here is between a tree that is planted for the purposes of producing a crop and a tree that is planted to be the crop. I make this distinction because a grapevine or a fruit tree, for example, can actually be assessed as part of the capital value for stamp duty purposes, because that tree is part of the capital base; it is not the crop. The product of that tree is the crop. The distinction I want to make in this amendment is that a plantation tree is itself the crop. One actually harvests the tree; it removes the tree. The tree is the crop. So this Bill actually includes forest and plantation trees as part of a crop for production, not a tree for capital purposes. With those brief comments, I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 2—Interpretation

This clause inserts a definition of crops meaning growing or harvested crops, including trees grown for timber or other forest products.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 31A—Duty on agreements for "walk in walk out" sales of land used for primary production

Currently, section 31A provides that if—

1. a written agreement for the sale of land used wholly or mainly for the business of primary production provides for the sale as a going concern of the land together with stock, implements and other chattels held or used in connection therewith; and
2. the agreement sets out separately the consideration payable for the land and the consideration for the other things; and
3. the Commissioner of State Taxation certifies that he or she is satisfied that the consideration payable for the land represents the value of the land,

then stamp duty is charged on the agreement only in relation to the land value.

The effect of the proposed amendments to section 31A will be to enable crops to be included, along with livestock, implements and other chattels, in such agreements.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 67—Computation of duty where instruments are interrelated

This amendment is consequential on the amendment to section 31A.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

GLENTHORNE

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I move:

That the Environment, Resources and Development Committee investigate and report on options for future use of the Glenthorne Farm site, taking into consideration:

- (a) the proposal for a wine industry training centre on the site;
- (b) the Premier's public statement that there would be no housing development on the site;
- (c) the value placed on open space by the local community; and
- (d) the historic and cultural significance of the site.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

Mr HANNA: In time to save Glenthorne they won't. The area known as Glenthorne Farm is a 228 ha block of land located at O'Halloran Hill, between Majors, Landers and South Roads. It is entirely within the electorate of Mitchell. The land is also significant to local residents as open space, that is to say, as a visual amenity. Apart from a few buildings clustered at the northern end of the site, it forms a considerable bank of local open space. As such, the land adds significantly to the quality of life of local residents in O'Halloran Hill and Trott Park. A creek runs through the centre of the site and flows into the Field River. Decisions about development of the site will therefore have considerable local environmental impact.

The historical significance of the site should not be forgotten by those looking to investigate its future. We must not forget that the land was once occupied by the Kaurua people, who occupied it for many thousands of years before white settlement.

Glenthorne was formerly part of the land granted to Major Thomas O'Halloran, one of the first white settlers in the district. His home, Lizard Lodge, was built over a number of years from 1838. Although most of the original buildings on Glenthorne have gone, the old coach-house where Major O'Halloran marked up his annual vintage on its walls, remains as a link between past and (perhaps) future experimental activities at Glenthorne.

Subsequently, sections of Glenthorne Farm were used as a horse stud, which in turn became the Remount Depot for the Department of Defence during the First World War. The Remount Depot served for training horses for shipment to India, and the depot also served as an ammunition storage facility.

The farm remained a military establishment until it was sold to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in 1946 as an agricultural experimental farm and to supply animals and fodder for experiments in other centres. In recent years, the focus on the research conducted at Glenthorne moved to human nutrition research.

Due to the shrinkage of the CSIRO as a result of the Howard Liberal Government's funding cuts, the CSIRO was forced to abandon the site. A number of proposals for housing were put together by consultants brought in by the CSIRO. These proposals were closely examined by interested locals, especially through the Sheidow Park and Trott Park Residents' Association, who overwhelmingly sought to keep Glenthorne as open space.

The CSIRO's intention to use the land for housing development was quite simply motivated by the fact that a housing development was worth a lot more dollars than if the land remains open space.

Just when it appeared as if at least some of the Glenthorne land was to be used for housing, in spite of the efforts of locals who worked very hard to save it, another option was presented to the community. Winemaker Greg Trott devel-

oped a plan to use the Glenthorne land as a viticultural research and training facility and vineyard. This would see Glenthorne remain open space, while delivering benefits to the State's economy and presenting an excellent opportunity for local job creation.

Greg Trott's proposal for Glenthorne is to use some two thirds of the available land as a commercially operated vineyard, with the balance of the land used as a research and training facility, dedicated to viticultural research and work. This facility would be self-funding after a few years, with profits from the vineyard being reinvested into the continuous improvement of viticultural and oenological techniques. South Australia's world class wine industry would benefit immensely.

Mr Trott has estimated that over \$2 million annually will be made available by the winery for research and training projects for each year of operation after the initial start-up costs have been met. The results of this research will benefit the South Australian wine industry. Mr Trott suggests that, in addition to the project's benefits already mentioned, his proposal will also lead to opportunities for employment, improvement of the environment, and it could be a tourist attraction.

Mr Trott's proposal has met with the support of O'Halloran Hill and Trott Park residents, who have put in a great deal of work to lobby to keep Glenthorne green. Prior to my election as the member for Mitchell, I surveyed local residents as to what they felt the land should be used for. Two years ago, only a quarter of local residents were in favour of the land being used for agricultural purposes, with about two thirds in favour of retaining the land as bushland. I should also mention that only 2 per cent of the residents I surveyed were in favour of any housing at all going on to the land. But most local residents to whom I have spoken recently are satisfied with Mr Trott's proposal. It has generated a great deal of community interest.

On the strength of Greg Trott's proposal, the Premier announced publicly on 2 September this year that Glenthorne Farm would be purchased from the CSIRO by the State Government for \$7 million. At the same time, the Premier indicated that a viticultural research facility and vineyard would be investigated as an option for the land and gave a guarantee that housing would not be investigated as an option. He has been kind enough to confirm in writing to me that housing has been ruled out.

The Premier's announcement marked the end of a long running battle by local residents to prevent Glenthorne becoming yet another housing development. The same local residents are now relying on the Government to find a viable use for the land which accords with the community's wishes. It is now up to the Government to find a future for Glenthorne which will serve South Australians well. The Environment, Resources and Development Committee is in the best position to explore the options and to take into account the various concerns of industry, the training sector and local residents. I therefore urge all members to support the motion.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): I am somewhat surprised that the member for Mitchell has raised this issue in the House today, but I am particularly disappointed that, first, what the honourable member has raised is far too little, far too late and, secondly, I am also disappointed with the Australian Labor Party, particularly the South Australian branch. I want to put a few things on the record

regarding the chances the Labor Party has had to do the right thing with this Glenthorne development for some time.

Before the 1996 Federal election the then Labor Government of Australia wanted to sell it and did not care what happened to it. The only thing that happened at that stage, as I understand, was that the then Minister and Federal member for Kingston, Gordon Bilney, spoke to the Prime Minister and I said, 'I do not know care what we do with Glenthorne after the election, but do not let it leak out that the CSIRO will sell this property, right on the eve of a Federal election.' That was the only interest the Labor Party had ever shown in this vital piece of open space and this vital rural opportunity for the people of the south, and indeed South Australia.

Now, as I have said previously, this is too little, far too late from the member for Mitchell. In fact, it was the then Federal member Susan Jeanes and the Hon. Wayne Matthew, the member for Bright, who drove the charge on this. It was not the member for Mitchell in whose electorate it is. I would also like to put a couple of other points forward. First, the Premier (Hon. John Olsen), together with the Prime Minister, has done a sterling job in ensuring that this opportunity is put forward to the community of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I know that the Premier and the Prime Minister met on several occasions to look at opportunities in relation to Glenthorne, because the Premier saw this as a very important opportunity for all South Australians. But we have moved on again. We are again miles ahead of where the member for Mitchell is on this issue. We are about 150 miles ahead, and I will explain why. The agreements are in place and the South Australian Government has provided \$7 million to secure once and for all this magnificent piece of land for all South Australians. It now has a sustainable future as open space which will provide economic opportunities to create wealth and jobs and which will also provide a walking area for residents around all those areas—Flagstaff Hill, Aberfoyle Park, Trott Park and so on. Opportunities will be investigated for olive production as well, which is vital to the growth of horticulture in this State. There will be opportunities to assess wetland sedimentation filtration pondage, and a range of environmental issues that were never provided when the Labor Party had its go.

I would like to congratulate many of the residents around there who put in a sterling effort to fight and ensure that the right thing was done with this land. To them I say, 'Well done' and I congratulate them for the way they worked with the then Federal member Susan Jeanes and the member for Bright, Hon. Wayne Matthew. The Premier has set up a committee headed by intelligent experts from the universities and the wine industry like Greg Trott, whom I congratulate and commend for putting this initiative forward.

I was delighted as a member from the south, who has a vital interest in the wine industry and growing economic and job opportunities for our region, to support the presentation put forward to the Premier by Greg Trott. I introduced Greg Trott to the Premier with this proposal and I was keen to go into bat with Mr Trott because this proposal makes sense. The Premier has guaranteed that never ever will any housing be put on that land in the future. Instead, we have an opportunity to see a good outcome for all constituents.

Members opposite may well laugh. They have a bit of egg on their faces today, and they are making a desperate attempt to try to get a newsletter out to the community around Glenthorne saying, 'Here I am, my name is Kris Hanna, I am

the member for Mitchell, and guess what I have for you? I am going to set up an inquiry through the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of the Parliament.' Well, whoopee-do! However, it is too late: we are going forward.

I say simply that this is a great opportunity. I give credit to the member for Mitchell on one point: at last he has acknowledged that this is an opportunity. At last the member for Mitchell has seen a vital piece of land in his own electorate as an opportunity for all South Australians, but it has taken 1½ years for that to occur. The other point I want to raise is that the current Federal member, even when the community was going forward on this issue and embellishing this great opportunity, was saying, as the member for Mitchell said, that the Kim Beazley option for Glenthorne was to still assess whether or not it should go to bushland. There is not much bushland on the CSIRO Glenthorne field station anyway. There are a few trees but not many.

I have something to say to the community of South Australia, particularly those residents living around Glenthorne. First, I love driving down the Southern Expressway and looking at the open space every morning because it is a fantastic piece of land. Secondly, it is great to be able to travel down the Southern Expressway which, again, the Liberal Government delivered on. I refer to the three occasions John Bannon went to the polls claiming he was going to deliver, yet he did not. That is the difference: some of us deliver and some never deliver.

The fact is that putting the area back under straight vegetation would not be in the best interests of the overall community. We all know how difficult it is to maintain national parks and recreational parks as they are now. Immediately to the north of the Glenthorne field station is the O'Halloran Hill Recreation Park, which allows the community in that region to enjoy the area from a recreational point of view. Together with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, friends do a lot to maintain weeds and propagate trees in that area, and I suggest that plenty more work is to be done there.

This is a win:win situation. It is a win for Premier Olsen; it is a win for the Prime Minister; it is a win for the member for Bright; and it is a win for me because it will allow research and development opportunities to further grow horticulture and viticulture through the magnificent McLaren Vale wine region, the Riverland, the South-East, the Clare Valley and all areas, because this is part of a national opportunity tied in with the National Wine Centre to ensure that South Australia—forever—is the wine capital of Australia. It also guarantees a sustainable open space opportunity for all those residents. I believe we would be wasting the taxpayers of South Australia's resources and the time of all members on the committee if we were to support this sort of political nonsense rather than letting the Government get on with developing this opportunity for all South Australians.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): The Government just does not know how to work together with anyone else. It does not know how to be gracious. Members on this side have acknowledged that all of the local members in this area supported the retention of Glenthorne as open space. As the then shadow Minister for Planning, I was aware of Labor members and Labor candidates urging me to ask questions about this, and I did so time after time in this House. The Premier consistently refused to rule out the

housing option for Glenthorne. He dithered, and he ducked and dived and the Government would not make a commitment about maintaining Glenthorne Farm as open space.

For the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services to try to rewrite history in that regard is absolute nonsense. The people of the southern suburbs are well aware of that. The members for Kaurana, Reynell and Mitchell changed at the last election, and we now have Labor members in all those seats. The residents of that area acknowledge the commitment of the candidates, in particular, the now member for Kaurana, John Hill, and the now member for Mitchell, Kris Hanna, in getting residents together and ensuring that the community lobby was strong enough so that the Premier did not give in to the lobbying of business to turn that open space into profitable housing so that the developers could make a quid out of it.

Now we have achieved the retention of Glenthorne as an open farm, and the reason the member for Mitchell has moved this motion, I suspect, is that we do not trust the Government to do the right thing with Glenthorne. It has wriggled out of things before, and it is essential for the community and for this side of the House to ensure that proper and appropriate development occurs on that site, and that this valuable land remains on the fringe of the city because it is so important to those southern suburb residents.

Personally, unlike the member for Mitchell, I am not keen on the proposal for a wine industry training centre. It seems that this follows on a trend of this Government that planning is haphazard and facilities occur all over the place. As an example, the National Wine Centre still has not been built in Adelaide, yet already we have private wine centres starting to spring up around the city. We already have a wine research and training centre at Waite. Why put this training centre out at Glenthorne? I have yet to be convinced that that is a sensible and practical thing to do or that it is a good use of Government money. I prefer the idea of rehabilitating the land and using it as an environmental model for the way that near city open space can be used to show what the flora and fauna of this area used to look like.

However, I am not an expert on these subjects and it is entirely appropriate that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee take evidence from experts in this area about the feasibility of the development and the desires of the residents, and that it talk to the local community about what should go on this valuable piece of land. The Government has committed funds to buy the land, and members on this side congratulate the Government for taking that step.

However, it is important, given that investment, that the right thing is done with that land. The right thing to do is to consult and involve. The Environment, Resources and Development Committee has a proud track record of getting these sorts of decisions right and making the right recommendation. This is an excellent way to ensure that taxpayers money is properly spent. I congratulate the member for Mitchell for introducing this motion.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Year 2000 Compliance): Like the member for Mawson I am absolutely staggered that the Johnny-come-lately, in the form of the member for Mitchell, has decided to finally put up his hand and say, 'Me too. Glenthorne is in my electorate. Something is happening around me and so perhaps I should be seen to be involved.'

It is a bit too late and a bit too little from the member for Mitchell because the problem is that his constituents know

that he has not been involved in this issue. They have approached him but they have not seen any action result from it. Realising that he is in a predicament in his very marginal seat, if the draft electoral boundaries come into play—in fact, I know his colleagues are calling him Mr Half a Per Cent or Mr Marginal; but I will leave that to them—knowing his vulnerability and that his electorate will become the most marginal Labor held seat in the State, he needs to be seen to be doing something. So, what does he do? He attempts to put a negative spin on a very positive initiative for the part of the electorate he so miserably fails to represent.

The member for Mitchell, with the back-up of his Deputy Leader, is trying to put a spin on this that somehow the Government cannot be trusted to do the right thing for the local residents. That is the spin he is trying to put on it. He knows that if he spins the matter out into a committee, using the Opposition's usual delaying tactics, he can stall, falter and delay the advancement of the Glenthorne site. Then, if his delaying tactics work and nothing happens, he can say, 'Look, the Government is not delivering in the time frame it said it would.' This is nothing more than shallow opportunism taken by a member who has not got himself involved in the issue in the electorate. In fact, I dare say he needed a map to find Glenthorne Farm when he went up over the hill. He does not like going up over the hill very often.

Mr HANNA: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I do not mind a certain amount of negativity, but it is going too far. It is getting to the point where the honourable member is reflecting on me. I ask him to withdraw the remark that I cannot find one of the major sites in my electorate.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. There was no unparliamentary comment that warrants a withdrawal.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I understand the honourable member's sensitivity. I can say to the honourable member that I have the privilege of representing both sides of the hill at Majors Road. I enjoy representing Hallett Cove and the suburbs of Marino, Brighton, Seacliff, Seacliff Park and Kingston Park, and I enjoy representing a significant portion of the area adjacent to the member for Mitchell's area, namely, Sheidow Park. I say to the member for Mitchell that, if he does not want to represent the people of Trott Park, I will gladly represent them. I will gladly have the boundaries of my electorate increased in size to represent those people. I can assure those people that if that happened I would happily represent them and ensure that the Glenthorne positive announcement is not stifled by Labor opportunism trying to flip it off to a committee.

I also notice that the member for Mitchell's motion is being supported by the Deputy Leader, who is a northern suburbs representative. I noted with interest that the Deputy Leader indicated that she is uncomfortable with the wine industry training centre being located at the Glenthorne site. I would hope that that level of discomfort is not associated with the fact that it is in the south. That is something I will be focusing on fairly carefully. In case the Deputy Leader is not aware, there is a significant winery region in our State in the Southern Vales area. Used that way, the training centre will provide a fabulous entrance to the Southern Vales, and I strongly support it. I do not support a committee investigation, a committee delaying process, an attempt to support and prop up the member for Mitchell for his failed actions so far. I support this expenditure occurring post haste. I support the Premier establishing his committee of experts for this to occur, as has been outlined by the member for Mawson.

I should say that, in his usual manner, the member for Mawson has been modest in his address to the House. The member for Mawson had a far larger role to play than that which he indicated in his very modest address. I am well aware that it was the member for Mawson who introduced Mr Trott's proposal to the Government, and the member for Mawson ensured that a number of his colleagues, including me, were briefed on this very positive proposal. I take this opportunity to put formally on the record my congratulations to the member for Mawson on the positive and significant role that he has played to ensure that this becomes a reality. If the member for Mitchell stops interjecting in this place and follows the example set by the member for Mawson, he might find his constituents respect him for doing something instead of being a Johnny-come-lately.

Mr HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

WATER CATCHMENTS

Mr HILL (Kaurua): I move:

That this House establish a select committee to inquire into and report on the following matters in relation to South Australia's water catchments—

- (a) the roles, operations and revenue and expenditure of South Australia's water catchment boards;
- (b) the role and responsibilities of the Minister for Environment in relation to the water catchment boards;
- (c) issues relating to the availability and allocation of water resources in the South-East, the Willunga Basin, the northern Adelaide plains and other areas; and
- (d) other relevant matters.

Today the two Independent members of this Parliament and their National Party colleague have the opportunity to put up or shut up on the issue of water allocations in the South-East. For about two years now controversy has raged over this issue. Certainly, in the 12 months since those members were elected to this House, the issue has not been far from the top of the newspaper headlines. The essence of the issue is this: should water be allocated on a *pro rata* basis in accordance with land holdings, as the member for MacKillop believes, or should the riparian rights be separated off and, in accordance with economic rationalist logic, be allowed to follow the dollar? How you resolve that question depends on whose interests you favour. Should the interests of the broadacre farmers be favoured over the interests of the irrigators, the new entrepreneurs with technology, who can see big opportunities to make money? If the second course is favoured, what should be paid and who should be compensated?

The member for MacKillop is in politics because of this issue. I refer to the *Border Watch* of 24 September 1997, where he is quoted as saying:

Someone had to represent ordinary people and family farmers sold out by the sitting member [that is, the Hon. Dale Baker] in a push for greedy agri-business. Present Government policy is one of giving available water resources to those with the biggest cheque books.

On 28 October the member for MacKillop in his Address in Reply added to those comments about the former member for MacKillop in, I might say, his excellent summary of the issues to do with South-East water. He said then of Dale Baker:

He was solely responsible for changing from that policy that the then Minister [that is, David Wotton] had invoked to the policy under which we have been suffering ever since.

When contacted in a hotel where he was staying in London, the former member, Dale Baker, denied any role or conversation. He said:

... absolute rubbish... fairyland stuff... I don't ever recall talking to Mitch Williams.

As yesterday's *Australian* article states, he denied influencing new Olsen Government water policy. The Opposition has been told that Mr Baker did intervene and that he and the Premier did pressure the then Minister for the Environment, Hon. David Wotton, to change his policy before the 1997 election. We have been told that Dale Baker rang the then Minister Mr Wotton and informed him that the policy was not acceptable to him and he wanted it changed. I have been told that Minister Wotton was summoned to Premier Olsen's office the same day. Dale Baker was sitting in the room with Premier Olsen (we can only imagine the expression on his face), and at the meeting the Premier informed the poor, hapless Minister Wotton that the policy was to be changed. This raises a question about who is telling the truth and about how and why the policy was changed.

Yesterday in Question Time, when this set of facts was put to the Premier, he said that he could not recollect it and that anyway policy was changed by Cabinet. All of us in this place know that, if the Premier plus a senior Minister with a lot of clout calls you into his office and says that that policy is changing, the policy gets changed. Unfortunately, During Question Time yesterday, my question, which would have established the truth of the matter, was ruled out of order. The member for MacKillop now has a question mark against his name. Is he to be believed in his version of the truth? If he is not to be believed, who is to be believed? Is it the present member for MacKillop or the former member for MacKillop?

The member for MacKillop and his colleagues now have the means and opportunity to remove that question by supporting the Opposition's call for a select committee. They have the opportunity to ask the member for Heysen whether or not he was rolled in the way described. I found it interesting that yesterday the member for Heysen did not make a personal explanation to the House about the set of events that I put to the Premier. They also have the opportunity to question the former member for MacKillop about his role, and to examine who has benefited from the new policy position. They also have the opportunity to discover whether or not any of the process has been corrupt, and I say to the House that I am in receipt of anonymous letters and phone calls, as I am sure the member for MacKillop is, alleging a range of corrupt practices in the South-East to do with this issue.

The headlines in the *Border Watch* for the period in question, that is, June-July last year, provide an interesting summary of what must have been happening in the lead up to the election. The *Border Watch* has covered this issue very well and thoroughly over the last 18 months or so and has provided a good analysis of what has been going on. Its headline on 5 June stated, 'Water crisis in South-East'. That was when the first Wotton policy was being considered—policy Mark I. Five days later, presumably after Dale Baker had got onto John Olsen and Minister Wotton had been called into Olsen's office, the headline for 10 June read, 'Water backflip'. Minister Wotton announced his visit to the South-East and advised that he had a plan to discuss with the people in that area.

On 1 July, the Minister had been completely rolled, because the headline then said, 'Water policy shock',

referring to policy Mark II. The basis of that policy was a first-in, best-dressed allocation system. It was the end of the *pro rata* system. After the election, Minister Wotton was removed and Minister Kotz was rewarded for her loyalty to the Premier by being appointed Minister for Environment. Since that time, water users in the South-East have been subject to a baffling series of backflips and changes as the Minister has tried desperately to get the politics right. As we know, she has been spectacularly unsuccessful in achieving that aim.

Her performance pales into insignificance compared with the performance yesterday of the Premier in terms of backflips. When the Premier was asked the day before on television whether he had had a meeting with Dale Baker about this, he said, 'No, never.' Yesterday in Parliament when the Leader of the Opposition asked him that question, he said, 'I might have, but some time ago. I misunderstood the question.'

As the member for Mackillop is quoted as saying in the *Border Watch* of 23 October this year, the information given at a recent water forum in the Coonawarra served to 'increase the cynicism people have for Mrs Kotz'. I must say that, having travelled to the South-East, I know that she has very few friends down there and very few people have any regard for her ability in this area. A day earlier the same paper reported:

A no-confidence motion in the Minister for South-East water resources might be called as a last option, according to the member for Mackillop, Mr Mitch Williams.

I agree; that ought to be the last option, and that is why I have moved for a select committee to be established so that all the matters concerning this contentious issue in the South-East can be canvassed.

I know that the member for Mackillop wants some time before deciding whether or not to support this move. That is okay, but he is merely putting off the inevitable. He hopes that the Minister for Environment gets him off the hook by backing down and implementing his policy position. It will be interesting to see whether or not she will do that, because she is clearly on the record as wanting something other than the *pro rata* system.

Mr Foley: He would not want to play politics.

Mr HILL: Not at all; he would not have played politics. In a ministerial statement of 17 February 1998, Minister Kotz told the House:

... 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...

That can be read as code for the position that the member for Mackillop is putting and the position that has been put by Dale Baker.

To avoid this select committee, either the Minister or the Independents will have to blink. Even if the Minister does blink, I would say to the Independents that this committee is about more than South-East water and whose version of the truth is to be believed. Other constituents need to be considered and other issues need to be sorted out. I ask the three crossbenchers to take these others into account when making their decision.

Mr Foley: Good luck!

Mr HILL: I think that we need good luck in here sometimes. The terms of reference indicate those concerns. The first term of reference deals with the roles, operations, revenue and expenditure of the water catchment boards. I will

briefly go through some of the issues to do with that term of reference. One example is Virginia. The *Advertiser* of 21 October reported that the horticultural industry is angry over the new water catchment levy. Growers have voted for a substantial drop in the levy and will refuse to pay until the matter is resolved. They want to pay the same as water users in the South-East, which is .15¢ per kilolitre, rather than the 1¢ per kilolitre that has been imposed. Their representative, Mr Musolino, said that he is not happy with the way in which Minister Kotz has handled the issue. What a surprise that someone else is not happy with the way the Minister has handled this issue!

There are issues other than those concerning Virginia. A whole range of things are of concern, such as what the board is doing, what it should be spending its money on, how much of that money should be spent on administration, how much should be spent on education programs, and how much should be spent on public relations, and I point out to the House that a huge amount of the money allocated to the water catchment boards is being spent on public relations. The other questions deal with where the money is coming from, should there be one system across the South Australian community, should it be user pays, should it be based on the capital value of the property, should environmental works be taken into account, and should income levels be taken into account. Examples have been given to me of a \$30 000 budget line from one of the boards to arrange for a one-day boating regatta to prove that the water quality is of sufficient cleanliness to allow boating to occur on that stretch of water.

Other questions that I would like to see addressed include whether the money being collected by the board is substituting for the effort previously put in by local government or the State Government. Another question that is raised is, with the establishment of the board, who now has responsibility for water quality in South Australia? Is it the Minister, local government or the board itself?

The second term of reference deals with the Minister's role and responsibilities in relationship with the boards. As I understand it, the Minister is telling different things to different boards, not that anyone would be surprised by that. I have been informed that, in the case of the South-East board, the Minister has told the board that the board has to make decisions regarding allocations. Yet in the case of the Onkaparinga catchment board, I understand from the *Southern Times* of 28 October that a decision about allocations for growers in the Willunga Basin will be made by the Minister, and I quote:

Kotz is expected to decide shortly whether to fast-track the water cap for bore licence holders in the McLaren Vale-Willunga area.

I understand that a number of *in camera* meetings have been held to determine whether it is the role of the board to recommend to the Minister or whether the board should act on the instruction of the Minister. That is a critical issue that needs to be resolved.

The third term of reference deals with a number of particular areas, including the South-East, which I have talked about in some detail, but there are other areas as well. In Port Lincoln, where there is no catchment board, there is strong local concern about water allocation. I hope that the member for Chaffey takes particular notice of this, because it is a National Party area. Under the water legislation, the relevant authority for administration is local government. In the case of the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula, which under this Act has a discretion not to put planning controls in place,

my correspondent Mr John Hyde from Port Lincoln has informed me:

Right now we have vineyards being proposed, which means irrigation in this catchment area, while another property is in the investigative stages. . . All of this is happening in the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula WPZ—

which I think means water planning zone—

and nobody can do anything about it because council has a discretion to do nothing. The water resources committee for Eyre Peninsula is powerless because it is outside of their control. If local government chooses development to proceed which will affect this vital resource, it will happen.

In other words, in the Port Lincoln area, anything can happen and there is no control at all. Water is allowed to be used by anyone who wants to get into it. There are no measures to look after the environment and manage water. I point out to the member for Mackillop that this is a serious issue which is deserving of investigation by this committee, as are South-East water conditions. The fourth term of reference is a general catch-all of anything else that will come up in the course of the committee's proceedings.

In conclusion, I say to the House that I am a great supporter of the water catchment boards. I think that they are a very good idea and they have advanced the management of water in this State considerably. It was a very good socialist initiative by the former Minister for Environment, and I support it. Unfortunately, in about 10 years, the Liberal Party, which will then be in opposition, will look at these catchment boards, see that they are doing a good job by then, and say, 'These are doing a great job, but the Government should not be doing it. They should be in private hands.' I am sure that they will attempt to privatise the water catchment boards and give them to some of their consulting mates. The Minister says—

Mr Scalzi: Do you believe that?

Mr HILL: Yes, I do believe it. I will give you a guarantee: in 10 years, we will have a look. Minister Kotz says in her letter to me of 9 September that there is a need for review of the Act. She says:

The Water Resources Act of 1997 is a relatively new piece of legislation which will undoubtedly require refinement over time as new issues affecting water resource management are identified. Amendments will, however, not be made hastily or without due consideration of the relevant issues.

I say to the House, and to the three crossbenchers in particular, that there is an opportunity, through this select committee, properly to consider the Act.

Mr WILLIAMS secured the adjournment of the debate.

SECOND-HAND VEHICLE DEALERS (COMPENSATION FUND) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr McEWEN (Gordon) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers Act 1995. Read a first time.

Mr McEWEN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill sets out to do one simple thing, that is, to correct schedule 3, which sets up a compensation fund under the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers (Compensation Fund) Act. The source of the moneys for that fund is licensed second-hand vehicle dealers. The problem has been that people other than the clients of licensed second-hand vehicle dealers had access to that fund should they have a grievance against a

dealer. This rort has gone on for some time, and it is a pity that it has got to this stage, because a Liberal Government mindful of small business should have closed this loophole years ago. This amendment, should it be successful, will mean that in future to gain compensation from the fund you will have to establish an act of omission against somebody who was a licensed vehicle dealer or whom you genuinely believed to be a licensed vehicle dealer.

The problem until now has been that, if you established that you believed you were dealing with a dealer, irrespective of whether or not they were licensed, you could have access to the fund. Yet the only people who paid into the fund were licensed dealers. It would be like two people in your street paying household insurance but everybody in the street having access to that fund if something should happen to their home—an absolutely ridiculous state of affairs. This Bill simply seeks to close that anomaly. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of Sched. 3—Second-hand Vehicles Compensation Fund

It is proposed to strike out clause 2 of Schedule 3 and substitute a new clause 2 headed *Claim against Fund*.

New clause 2(1) provides that (subject to new subclause (2)) if on the application of a person not being a dealer who has—

- purchased a second-hand vehicle from a dealer; or
- sold a second-hand vehicle to a dealer; or
- left a second-hand vehicle in a dealer's possession to be offered for sale by the dealer on behalf of the person,

the Magistrates Court is satisfied that—

- the person has a valid unsatisfied claim against the dealer arising out of or in connection with the transaction; and
- the person has no reasonable prospect of recovering the amount of the claim (except under Schedule 3),

the Magistrates Court may authorise payment of compensation to that person out of the *Second-hand Vehicles Compensation Fund*.

New subclause (2) provides that new clause 2(1) applies to such a claim whenever the transaction to which it relates occurred but only if, at the time of the transaction, the dealer was licensed, or the person making the claim reasonably believed the dealer to have been licensed.

New subclause (2) provides that new clause 2(1) does not apply to a claim prescribed by regulation nor to a claim arising out of or in connection with—

- the sale of a second-hand vehicle by auction; or
- the sale of a second-hand vehicle negotiated immediately after an auction for the sale of the vehicle was conducted,

if—

- the sale was made after the commencement of the *Second-hand Vehicle Dealers (Compensation Fund) Amendment Act 1997*; and
- the auctioneer who conducted the auction or negotiated such a sale (as the case may be) was acting as an agent only and was selling the vehicle on behalf of another person who was not a licensed dealer.

Clause 4: Transitional provision

The amendments proposed in clause 3 of the Bill to Schedule 3 of the principal Act will apply only in relation to a valid unsatisfied claim against a dealer if the act or omission of the dealer giving rise to the claim occurs after the commencement of that clause.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): I indicate conditional support for this—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member must adjourn the matter, as it is a Bill.

Mr ATKINSON: Sir, last night the Government introduced a Bill and asked me to respond immediately, and I did.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member to adjourn the debate.

Mr ATKINSON: I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion carried.

The SPEAKER: By way of explanation, I point out that the Bill to which the member referred was a Legislative Council Bill: the explanation had been on a previous day and it had been read a first time.

Mr ATKINSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I was in the House last night when this matter was deliberated on, and the second reading of the Bill was moved and the second reading explanation and clause notes tabled at that time; the Opposition was permitted—indeed, encouraged by the Government—to respond immediately so that the Bill could have its passage, and the Opposition cooperated.

The SPEAKER: The technical response is that it had been read a first time on a previous day. Standing Order 238 will answer the honourable member's question.

WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION (MENTAL INCAPACITY) AMENDMENT BILL

Ms KEY (Hanson): I move:

That the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation (Mental Incapacity) Amendment Bill be restored to the Notice Paper as a lapsed Bill pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

NATIVE VEGETATION

Mr HILL (Kaurna): I move:

That the regulations under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 relating to exemptions, gazetted on 21 August 1998 and laid on the table of this House on 15 November 1997, be disallowed.

In moving this motion, I point out to the House that earlier this year a similar set of regulations was presented to the Parliament, and at that stage I also moved disallowance, as did members in the other place. Consequently, the set of regulations was disallowed and the Government went back to the drawing board.

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

Mr HILL: I hope that I will not have to put up with the member for Stuart croaking on all the way through my contribution today. The Native Vegetation Act was established some time ago to prevent the wholesale clearance of remnant native vegetation in South Australia. Until that Bill was introduced, anybody who owned a piece of land could just tear down whatever they liked. South Australia has already lost more than 80 per cent of the original cover in agricultural districts. We have to be careful that we do not allow further destruction to occur.

The regulations that came in at the beginning of this year attempted to do a number of things. A number of the provisions were to do with fire prevention and the management of indigenous species. At that time, I moved to have the regulations disallowed because the regulations that were then proposed would have given too much discretion to people who were in control of land to clear native vegetation. The Labor Party and I believed—and I am pleased to say the Democrats believed—that this was the case. We asked the Minister to reconsider. These regulations that have come back to us have had some reconsideration but, I must say, very little reconsideration.

Regulations 3(a) and (b) are to do with clearance in relation to fires. I would have no problems with these

regulations. The unfortunate thing is that I cannot propose that just some of the regulations be disallowed. The Government knows that. If it wanted these regulations to get through, it could have attempted to introduce them separately from the remaining regulations, but it choose not to do that, because it knows that the Opposition will not support the second set of regulations.

As I said, the first set of regulations are to do with fire safety, and that is something with which we all agree. I have no problems with 3(1)(a)(h)(ii). However, there are some problems with 3(b), which is to do with the definition of a building. The advice I have been given is that, as long as the building was a fixed building, there would be no problem with that regulation. There is also a request from the Conservation Council—and, as the member Stuart has suggested, it has a keen interest in this—that guidelines associated with the regulations be included in the regulations. If the Government were to do that, there would be no problem from the conservation movement with regard to this set of regulations, either. However, unfortunately, the Government seems disinclined to do this very sensible thing. So, if the guidelines were included in the regulations everyone could see what was being planned, there would be no controversy and we could get these regulations through.

Paragraphs (d) and (t) of the regulations deal with particular species of plants. In the original set of regulations that were put before the House earlier this year a number of species were indicated that were to be allowed to be cleared if they were on the land, without having to go to the Native Vegetation Council. It was felt that it would give too much leeway to the land owners, and that this power should not be delegated down from the Native Vegetation Council. The changed regulation, in fact, just removes those species and then has a general term to say that species which are detrimentally affecting other native vegetation could be cleared. In some ways, this is worse than the original, because this could mean any species of plant. So, I oppose this regulation, because it would give far too much discretion to a land owner who was of bad conscience and who was acting in bad faith to clear away land without recourse to the Native Vegetation Council.

When it went through this process of reconsidering the regulations the Government should have gone through a proper process of consultation with all the stakeholders. The Minister kept saying that they were doing that, but in all the correspondence I have received—and I must say, the only correspondence that I have received is from the Conservation Council: no other group has bothered to talk to me about this, although I am not surprised about that—

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

Mr HILL: The member for Stuart should tell some of his constituents (on whose behalf he is speaking in this House) to talk to the Opposition from time to time if they have concerns about positions that might come before the House. Without their expressing those concerns, there is no way that we can know what their arguments are—because they do not bother to talk to us. However, the Conservation Council very kindly does, and its members brief me fully on the issues that are of concern to it. So, naturally, as the shadow Environment Minister, I am happy to come in here and argue the case.

What the Government should have done a year ago (and what it would have done if Minister Wotton had still been around) is have a good look at the overall workings of the Act and all the regulations and all the issues relating to native vegetation clearance. However, instead of doing that it just

picked a very narrow agenda, which was the agenda that the member for Stuart and some of his colleagues were wanting to push. There is a whole range of issues that the Conservation Council, for example, would like to have considered by the Parliament but the Minister will not consider them. She says, 'There are opportunities in the future to do that. Just get these through first and in the future we will look at the issues about which you are concerned.'

However, the future never comes. They just keep putting them off the agenda, as the Minister knows that the right wing clique of rural backbenchers on the other side just will not have a bar of it, because they do not like looking after the environment. Their attitude is that if you have a piece of land it is only good if it is cleared and ready for cropping or grazing. However, there are issues to do with looking after land other than growing plants on it and having animals living on it. We on this side support farming but we also support good management of the land so that native vegetation is allowed to be retained, and that is why there should be a proper consideration of the regulations.

There was a controversy about the whole process, and I have been informed by a range of people that, despite what the Minister says, there was no proper consideration of the regulations. In fact, all the Minister would do is get the review process to look at the regulations which she had already put up before the House and which she knew would not be supported. I know that the Minister knows that they will not be supported again, because I understand that she has already intimated that to a range of people.

I will explain for the benefit of the House some of the issues that the Conservation Council, at least, would like to have considered in a review. They seem to me to be reasonable issues, but the Minister will not allow them to be considered. The first issue is the removal of the cumulative effects of clearance exemptions. The second issue is the minimum size of properties in which exemptions such as those for fencing, firewood and firebreaks may apply. The third issue is the definition of the Minister's nominee being changed to include a requirement for appropriate tertiary qualifications and expertise. As to that point, I might say that the Minister is stacking the Native Vegetation Council with her cronies and cronies of those opposite and not taking into account expertise: she is just taking into account which way their allegiances go.

The fourth issue is the redefinition of clearance of native vegetation to include lichens, roots and, in some circumstances, dead trees. The fifth issue is more adequate protection for trees in the rural landscape and for isolated plants. The sixth issue is promotion of the positive aspects of the Act through community education. The seventh issue is adequate financial support from the State Government for the branch, and the eighth issue is the importance of regional management plans.

That seems to me a fairly sensible and modest agenda and it would not hurt the Government to look at it. However, the Government has refused to take into account any of those issues. All it wants to do is look at its own agenda and, unfortunately, that is not acceptable to the House. I urge this House to support my motion to disallow these regulations.

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

DOOR-TO-DOOR SALES (EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN) BILL

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to regulate the employment of children in door-to-door selling. Read a first time.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

As members would know, I introduced this Bill on 2 July this year but, sadly, because the Government did not deal with it, it fell from the Notice Paper. I thank members on this side of the House—including the members for Ross Smith, Elizabeth and Taylor, and others who spoke on the Bill—for their support. I will continue to pursue this matter until we have proper legislation that protects our children.

I have spoken to the Minister for Human Services, and I am aware that he will bring a Bill, or amendments, to the House, and I hope that they will cover the aspects of my Bill and carry the intent of the Bill—which is, of course, to protect children from exploitation and exposure to harm should they be engaged in door-to-door sales.

I will not canvass all the issues that I raised when I spoke in support of this Bill in July, other than to say that little has changed with respect to the practice of using children in door-to-door sales. I urge members again to read (if they did so previously) my comments as reported in *Hansard* and the concerns which I expressed and which were just not my own but those of a caring and a worried community.

It is important that we keep this issue alive and that we continue to make the Government aware of our concerns, and I await the Minister's Bill, or amendments, so that we can have the debate that is long overdue in this matter. We need to do that in the best interests of our working children. As I said, I will support any measures that will protect our children and, if I am satisfied that the Minister for Human Services can deal with all the issues of concern in a way that protects children, I will support those measures.

I remind the Minister and members of this House that this practice of engaging children in door-to-door selling still goes on. Only yesterday it was brought to my attention that children are still at risk and are still being exploited. I was told of an 11 year old child who spent the whole of last Saturday standing in a shopping centre selling sweets, much to the distress of several (and particularly one) of the shopkeepers in the shopping centre—not because of any loss of trade for them, but out of concern for the child's welfare. During the week, the same 11 year old child was there again at around about 3 o'clock in the afternoon until closing time.

I guess we can feel that standing in a shopping centre is a much safer thing to do than walking the streets and that these children are less at risk. That may be so, but an 11 year old is just a child and is at risk when left for long periods of time unattended. So, those who will exploit our children may change their method of doing so from having the children out on the street to putting them into shopping centres, but I want to put those people on notice that we, the concerned people of the community, are watching and that this Parliament is watching, and either through this Bill—

Ms Key interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: Yes, this side of Parliament is certainly watching, as the member for Hanson said. We put them on notice that we are watching either through the reintroduction of my Bill or through whatever the Minister brings into the House, and that we plan to put in place protective measures to curtail the creative means by which

these entrepreneurs seek to engage our children in selling. This Bill will sit in the Parliament as a reminder that we are watching and that we are going to do something. I intend to pursue it to the end, to make sure that we put proper protective measures in place. So, as I said, I give notice to those who are using our children for their own profit that our eyes are on them.

Mr MEIER secured the adjournment of the debate.

Mr De LAINE: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion forthwith.

The substantive motion that I will move is that the proposed \$15 million development of the Memorial Drive tennis centre complex and associated facilities on public and parklands be referred to the Public Works Committee for its investigation of all the work and the processes followed for the letting of contracts and commercial arrangements associated with it. That facilitates a motion of the Public Works Committee yesterday.

The SPEAKER: Order! There not being an absolute majority present, the motion lapses.

YOUNG MEDIA AUSTRALIA

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I move:

That this House congratulates Young Media Australia, a national organisation based in Adelaide, for its continuous campaigning against media depiction of excessive violence and obscenity, with the aim of minimising undesirable influences on young people in our society, and recommends that the Government considers ongoing funding support for this organisation.

In the words of the media watchdog for children, Young Media Australia, 'A new era is dawning in advocacy for a healthy media environment for Australian children and young people.' Young Media Australia (formerly the Australian Council for Children's Films and Television) has, for the past four decades, continually striven to:

- Stimulate and maintain public interest in provision of suitable film and TV programs for children and young people;
- Promote critical study and creative activity in film education in primary and secondary schools and teacher training institutions; and
- Develop an informal public debate with the object of stimulating community action and influencing legislation concerning any aspect of film for children.

Particularly, Young Media Australia believes that Australian children should have access to a range of quality screen material made specifically for them. As this is a national, non-profit, community based organisation of over 40 years standing, we should consider ourselves fortunate, as South Australians, that Adelaide is the headquarters of this prestigious body of volunteer professionals.

Young Media Australia's long history has allowed it to accumulate and disseminate knowledge about the social impact of the media on children. It also has a proven ability to comment constructively on children's media issues and a respected and credible role in lobbying regulators and the

industry in this field. Young Media Australia undertakes the following activities:

- it promotes the provision of quality media product for children, especially Australian made product;
- it provides education materials for parents and professionals on children's media issues;
- it promotes media awareness by the young and their caregivers;
- it works with other children's interests organisations;
- it speaks out on children's media issues; and
- it conducts parents' Internet training courses.

Young Media Australia's resource centre in Hindmarsh Square was set up in October 1993 as a response to the growing community concern about the impact of the mass media on young Australians. Young Media Australia's range of research allows it to offer information on issues such as violence on TV, video and computer games; advertising directed at children; and the social health impact of mass media in Australia. These materials are constantly being updated and upgraded.

Young Media Australia has a large research-based library of materials for use by concerned parents, social-workers, paediatricians and so on. The centre also publishes a range of pamphlets and other publications, and stocks consumer material from 20 regulatory agencies, including the Australian Broadcasting Authority, the Office of Film and Literature Classification, the Australian Association of National Advertisers and the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations. Their services also include the hiring of age-appropriate children's entertainment videos, media studies teaching aids for students, and even video and filmmaking equipment, and provision of guest speakers for interested groups and organisations.

Young Media Australia's list of achievements, on a limited budget, include:

- the Australian Violence Prevention Award;
- the Inaugural National Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference Most Innovative Idea Award; and
- the Australian Violence Prevention Regional Award.

It has also contributed to important reforms of the children's entertainment environment such as:

- the establishment and maintenance of quotas for children's programs;
- the gradual increase in the children's drama quota for TV;
- the Australian quota for preschool programs;
- the universal classification of home videos;
- the classification of computer games;
- the review of host selling in children's cartoon programs;
- the review of the use of 0055 numbers (the Minister would know about that);
- the review of techniques used in advertising to children; and
- greater community and regulatory attention to the effects of media violence on children.

Let me list some areas of prime concern to YMA. They are my concerns, too. They include:

- violence on TV and its effects on children's development;
- advertising and its effects on children's development;
- lack of cultural diversity in Australian-made television; and
- the lack of standards and controls in regard to the new cyber-world of computers.

Violence on TV is something we as a society must address. Today violence on TV is far more prominent and realistic than ever before. There is in fact quite serious cause for concern about the effects on the current generation of young television viewers. Children will be affected differently at different ages and stages of their development, and by different types of content. Children under eight years of age may focus on the apparent success of violent actions and superheroes winning through the use of violence, while older children may be made to feel anxious by news programs and dramas that portray events which they perceive to be real and which could in fact happen to their family or in their neighbourhood. Older children who continue to believe in the reality of TV and to identify with violent heroes are the ones who are most likely to behave aggressively.

The overall trend in available research makes it clear that repeated exposure to TV violence has three main areas of impact:

- children are more likely to use aggressive means to solve a conflict;
- children are made anxious about the mean and scary world in which they appear to live; and
- children become less sensitive to the use of violence in real life.

Recent research in fact tends to emphasise that the link between viewed violence and lived violence is just as true for girls as it is for boys. Reducing children's exposure to reality and fantasy based violence requires combined action by caregivers, regulators and the TV industry. It is here that YMA makes its valuable contribution and it is for this reason that this Parliament needs to look at supporting the continued existence of YMA. It is important to remember that children's viewing can be a positive event. This is especially true if it:

- provides them with programs which help them understand the world better;
- encourages co-operative behaviour;
- helps children develop a sense of trust and safety;
- helps children appreciate differences in people; and
- helps children develop a sense of competence.

The new media, particularly the Internet with its email, world-wide web, chatlines and so on, offers an exciting world to children which is rarely viewed, if understood, by many parents and teachers. Parents and children's groups are rightly concerned at the ease with which children can find inappropriate material on-line. It is worthwhile to note that on the Internet there is no system of classification or age restriction that is practically enforceable at this stage. YMA is available to offer advice to concerned parents about newly developed blocking software which can be installed on home computers to screen out unacceptable content—that which might be violent, sexually explicit or informative on criminal activities such as drug-taking or paedophilia; or that which invades children's privacy by seeking personal information. I am told that in 1997, there were approximately 200 million Internet users world-wide. This number is expected to double annually. YMA's role as an Internet watch-dog can only become more important to the community as the number of South Australian children using the Internet increases.

Funding for this organisation is a major concern at present. Without adequate and certain funding, YMA cannot manage effectively. Clearly, a more secure funding arrangement would be to everyone's benefit. They have suggested that grants from the Departments of Arts, Education and Human Services annually would, if combined, allow YMA to

continue its important work. As I understand it, YMA is currently awaiting word from the South Australian Film Corporation for possible funding from that source. I suggest it is time for the State Government to intervene and look at how best this organisation could be assisted at State level.

Young Media Australia tries, with its group of dedicated supporters, to deliver the best service that it can to the Australian public, including many schools, the Government itself and the entertainment industry. It has a good reputation and a commitment to providing quality information. The only thing YMA does not have is significant, ongoing funding. It is imperative that, at a time when YMA, operating on a shoe-string budget, is looking at having to close its doors, we as a Parliament support this motion which invites the Government to consider ongoing funding for the organisation. YMA does much with little, and it may be forced to close at the very time its continued expansion is warranted in a world of increasing media technology which is, for the large part, self-regulated or not regulated at all.

Mr MEIER secured the adjournment of the debate.

SOUTHERN YOUTH WEEK

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I move:

That this House congratulates all those involved in the Southern Youth Week program for their successful showcasing of the positive contribution young people make to our community.

Youth Week was held in South Australia from 18 to 24 October, and this year in the south there was a special effort to showcase the talents, abilities and hopes of young people. When I congratulate those involved, I can name only some of them, because there were just far too many, particularly young volunteers, to be able to name them all. However, the City of Onkaparinga and the Southern Youth Workers Network were the driving forces behind this extremely successful week's program.

The City of Onkaparinga has long maintained a commitment to the development of facilities for youth in the area. Its predecessor, the City of Noarlunga, was outstanding in this area. I am pleased to see the continued commitment to both facilities and programs for young people from this council. I hope that at times it is matched more by contributions from the State Government. Some of these seem to be lacking.

The Southern Youth Workers Network was formed in 1987. It comprises individuals and organisations who are involved in providing services for young people in the south. The goals of SYN are to develop services and programs that reflect the social and cultural diversity within the southern region and to work cooperatively to attract resources to the southern area. Its current Chairperson is John Davis, Manager of the Reynella Enterprise and Youth Centre. John and his predecessors have done an excellent job in continuing the direction of this very vital organisation and enabling it to maximise the value of the resources that we have available.

Alistair Cranney was a major force in organising the program and publicising it, and I commend and thank him for his energy, enthusiasm and commitment. But the unsung people who made this week such a success need attention, too. There are those young people who courageously told their stories at the Surviving Unemployment forum: people such as Brad Smith, who said, 'I did not have a life. I got really depressed.' Being honest enough to come out in public and acknowledge your depression is a major step to taking control of your own life, and Brad deserves congratulations.

Renae Buss, aged 18, was seven months pregnant when she applied for a job in a café, an area in which she was experienced. She said, 'I had no money for a bus, so I walked there in the rain. The man said I would probably get the job but, when I told him I was pregnant, that was it. He said that no-one would employ me.'

Then there was Melissa Hall who said that she had persistently approached businesses for work. She said, 'I got half way through one interview when I was asked how long I had been unemployed. I said that I had been unemployed for about 12 months, and he told me to bug off. I have been wearing the same clothes for two years. I used to steal make-up, but I don't any more.' Another young man, Greg Dodd, found the requirements of employers in what he obviously sees as a petty area to be a problem. He said that it was a nuisance taking out your piercings for a job interview.

There were other young people involved, some with very traumatic stories. One young woman described herself as coming from a dysfunctional home, brought up as a ward of the State moving in and out of foster homes. She said, 'By 21 I was a single mother using drugs and into alcohol and trying to escape a domestic violence situation.' A friend's suicide gave a wake-up call that changed her life. Through counselling at the local health centre, she was put onto the JET program and then undertook a certificate in women's education at TAFE.

Since then she has worked as a youth representative on the Young People—More than Just a Quick Fix and Surviving Unemployment projects, both projects of the Noarlunga Health Service. She has successfully secured a position as a support worker with the Department of Family and Youth Services. The enthusiasm that this woman now demonstrates should ensure that she will be successful in whatever career path she chooses, but she needed our help and our services to get there.

Two other young women who have been working as volunteer peer support workers at Noarlunga Maternity Care Service since July 1997 should also be commended. They are both single mothers who had children whilst teenagers and experienced homelessness and family difficulties. Again, with support from the Noarlunga Health Service and Coolock House they have succeeded in overcoming their difficulties and contribute to the wellbeing of other women.

In May this year, these two young women developed and presented to obstetric staff at the Flinders Medical Centre sessions about the needs of young women. Their work raises awareness of the needs of young women at this special time in their transition to motherhood. I think these stories illustrate the abilities of young people in our community and their need for our help and recognition.

The Southern Youth Week program was exciting. It started with the launch of a campaign to get 10 000 signatures on surfboards. This campaign, which has the theme of 'Southern Young People—Creative, Vital and Ready', aims to show that young people have a lot to offer and that they are ready to take their place as responsible members of the community. It works on the basis that, if you tell young people often enough that they are rubbish and unworthy, that is how they will act but, if you tell young people often enough that they are valued and appreciated and that we are here to support them as they move into adult life, they will act responsibly and join with us in developing the world of the twenty-first century.

Southern young people are ready to work; they are ready for change and ready to make a difference; and they are ready

to rewrite their image. When the 10 000 signatures are collected, the surfboards will be presented to the Minister for Youth Affairs who will have the task of deciding how he—if it is still the current Minister—can take on this public statement about the need of southern young people to be considered more positively.

In relation to this campaign, Mambo has been a major sponsor—and for that it should be appreciated. Patsy Tierney, the world aerobics champion, launched the campaign and was the first to sign a surfboard. In her speech she mentioned the way young people crave recognition, want to succeed and want to have a direction in life, but sometimes they are unsure of where they can go and how to get there.

One of the specific events was a Music Industry Training Day, supported by the city council and a Youth SA grant. This was a one-day workshop which saw 20 young people of about secondary school age from across the Onkaparinga region learn practical skills relevant to working in the music industry. A panel of experienced professional musicians presented the first session. Presenters experienced in performance, song writing, recording, music (retail), and artist and event management were able to engage these young people and share their vision of working professionally in the music industry.

Participants were then involved in setting up, running and, finally, packing up an outdoor sound system for a lunchtime performance by Triple J Unearthed Winners, Gilmore. There were several tangible outcomes including the involvement of two people a week later, who set up and ran a sound system for another Youth Week event. The feedback from young people was really important. They said, 'Can you please organise some more training? What else can we do to get work in the music industry? How do you get involved? How do we make a start in this industry? Why don't we get this sort of training at school? How come no-one has told us how to get a job in the music industry?'

There was an open day at Second Story which 100 young people attended to see the services that are provided. Similarly, there was an open day at the Boathouse, which is a project for young people who have experienced many difficulties in their life and need support from others who have had similar experiences. The opening of a FAME cubby house was particularly important. FAME stands for Flexible Alternative Mobile Education. As part of the Community Benefit project, FAME has been building cubby houses for five of the kindergartens in the southern area where there is a lack of amenities for young children.

I was astounded at the opening to see the way the pre-school children sat for at least 15 minutes listening to the speeches about the benefits of a cubby house as well as the positive interaction between the young people aged about 13 to 15 who built the cubby house with these young children. In building the cubby house, these young people, who are all at risk of leaving school early, developed many skills in team work, measurement, and occupational health and safety. They received a certificate of recognition for these skills under the Vocational Education Program.

A resource kit for working with young people was launched to assist school counsellors who have a great turnover and often lack resources. This dealt particularly with suicide prevention and drug and alcohol abuse. It is an extremely useful tool for people who are assisting young people to develop a positive life.

The big event at the end of the week was the Big Bounce Theory Gig, which included six live bands and a youth

market. This event was planned by a team of young people working with the City of Onkaparinga, the Reynella Enterprise and Youth Centre, Southside Youth Centre, the Beach Road Mainstreet project and the Southern Music Alliance. The young people, based on the desire to incorporate a spread across the region, chose six bands with members aged between 12 and 24. The Beach Road Main Street Project worked with 19 year old Jade Brook to plan and run a youth market with 20 stalls. Jade did this as a volunteer and gained great skills and a reputation that will ensure an exciting future.

The network created on the day led to Jade finding a self-employed role selling advertising for a local magazine. Throughout the day there were 1 500 people in Rotary Park at Christies Beach. The proceedings kicked off at 12 p.m. with Unlearn, followed by 5-Bah, Yesinstead and the all female band Sativa Witch. A young band called Punchline, with members from Seaford High School, was very popular and the JJJ- discovered Gilmore finished the day. Everyone who attended appeared to have a really good time and for the most part the event was alcohol free. There was little disruption or bad behaviour from any of the crowd. Young people worked on the day as stage managers, MCs, market coordinators and skating managers and generally supported the day by involving themselves in any task necessary to make the day a success.

With \$2 000 from Youth SA and \$1 000 from the City of Onkaparinga and thousands of dollars of in-kind support from the young people, they worked hard to make this event an outstanding success. Some of the comments from young people included: 'This event was so sick it was the wickedest thing I have ever been at'. The translation of that is, 'This was great, and when is the next one?' Other comments included: 'We had a great day and want to help with the next event'; 'Is there anything else we can get involved in?'; 'The experience we gained was really good and will help us get jobs'; 'I'm really stoked that the event ran with no problems—there was no aggro or violence, and that demonstrated that young people should not just be stereotyped'; 'At least the community can see a positive side of us instead of thinking we're useless'.

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

Mr MEIER secured the adjournment of the debate.

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House:

A quorum having been formed:

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I move:

That Standing and Sessional Orders be so far suspended as to enable standing committee reports set down for Wednesday 18 and 25 November to be taken into consideration after the motion to be moved by the member for Hammond is disposed of.

Members should not take the moving of this suspension as a precedent for extending consideration of committee reports. However, members would be aware that having commenced a new session after a significant break we have a situation where quite a few committee reports have been compiled during that break and therefore could not be considered within the one hour time limit. It is not right for us to seek to suspend Standing or Sessional Orders on a regular basis, otherwise we may as well rewrite them, but in this case an

exception needs to be made because justice was not done in terms of time to those committee reports yesterday. I trust that members will agree to this suspension.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MEMORIAL DRIVE

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the proposed \$15 million development of the Memorial Drive tennis centre complex and associated facilities on public and parklands in that precinct be referred to the Public Works Committee for its investigation of all the work and the processes followed for the letting of contracts and the commercial and any other arrangements and agreements associated with it.

The motion merely refers the work to the Public Works Committee to ensure that it can obtain the information it seeks about that development.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MODBURY HOSPITAL

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the seventy-ninth report of the committee on the Modbury Hospital redevelopment be noted.

The Modbury Public Hospital was constructed and commissioned in the early 1970s in the north-eastern Adelaide region to provide hospital services to the rapidly growing suburban population in that area. It had been a promise given to that community by a candidate for the Labor Party when the seat was first created after the subdivision of the 30 000-odd electors of the former electorate of Barossa. Mrs Molly Byrne, who became the successful candidate, saw through the eventual establishment of that hospital during her term of office.

The hospital was opened in 1974 with a stage 1 bed capacity of approximately 230 inpatient beds but with infrastructure and support services for an anticipated expansion to 400 beds. The SA Health Commission, in partnership with Healthscope Limited, proposed to redevelop the Modbury Public Hospital incorporating the location of a new private hospital within the main building on the existing site. More specifically, this project involves the redevelopment of the Modbury Public Hospital in which Healthscope will fund, construct and operate a new private hospital within the main building currently housing the public hospital at an estimated total cost of \$12.7 million. In addition there is an integral Government funded component to this project which involves the consolidation and upgrade of existing services and the infrastructure supporting them at an estimated cost of \$8.6 million—in all \$21.3 million.

The committee is told that, based on South Australian Health Commission calculations, the net present value of the work on the assumption of an internal rate of return of 7 per cent (the benchmark used by Government agencies) for the preferred option is a negative \$1.403 million. Details prepared in relation to this matter set out four options, listing the broad categories in which the work is to be assessed and stating the net present value and the quantifiable benefits, costs and comparisons of those options. One of the things which the committee has not yet been able to obtain but which it will be seeking from agencies in the future is the inclusion of details involving what the real revenue streams

and benefits would be, if it were a free market (which it is not in the case of hospitals), to the State's economy at large if it is another public work that will expand amenities and facilities here to attract interstate and overseas visitors. Of course, hospitals are not part of our tourism complex, and the committee, having obtained the cooperation of Government agencies over the last 12 months, now is able to provide the House and the public—to ensure that the public interest thereby is properly protected—with that calculation.

Let me now turn again to the specifics of the project. Stage 1 of the works will incorporate 44 acute inpatient beds, a purpose-built same day and multi-day operating complex consisting of two theatres, and 12 consulting suites. Members will note that, following the development of surgical techniques as well as associated progress in the arena of anaesthetics and other medical and paramedical service delivery, same day keyhole surgery now saves people a lot of the pain that was involved physically, as well as financially, in securing better health through surgery and other treatment that might be associated with it, by it now being possible to have that treatment provided to patients on the day they come to the hospital for it, and they can go home after it has been completed. Not only will that save the public purse hundreds of millions of dollars but it will also save citizens pain, suffering and money.

In addition, the structure enables access to the Torrens Valley Private Hospital through a new and separate front entrance on the western side of the main building, with a new external lift providing access to the basement, the ground and fifth floor wards and sixth floor consulting suites. Stage 2 of the private development will include the provision of an additional 21 beds. Also, the Government funded Modbury Public Hospital development will incorporate three major features: all associated works for the consolidation of public obstetrics services; upgrading of the existing four public hospital operating theatres; and a range of publicly funded works as part of a forward plan for the whole complex to meet an acceptable level of compliance with the building codes and standards now in force.

I point out to the House that, although this is one of a number of similar joint public-private sector initiatives around Australia, the outsourcing of the management of the Modbury Public Hospital is the first transaction of its particular type in Australia. Naturally, it has attracted a great deal of curiosity and attention not only from those who are open minded and keen to see what the outcome will be but from those on both sides of the question who are either proponents and strong advocates of such arrangements or, on the other side, antagonists and opponents of such proposals. Accordingly, I am sure that what eventuates at Modbury will have a quite substantial impact on the form and delivery mechanisms—from operational procedures in surgery and the treatment of illness through to the associated administration costs.

While there are now several examples of developments which the private sector has won the right to build, own and operate (BOO) as hospitals for public patients or to collocate private hospitals on public hospital campuses, Modbury is the only example in the public sector of a private operator assuming responsibility for the management of an entire public hospital on a long-term contract. Accordingly, under the arrangements between the South Australian Government and Healthscope, the Government remains the owner of the Modbury Public Hospital campus and buildings and is

responsible for funding all major and minor works, involving three areas:

- Those works will ensure that the facilities are functional, economic and safe and that they comply with relevant legislation;
- State ownership and involvement will ensure that Healthscope is responsible for the management and provision of an annually determined quantum of public-patient services (which has been determined by the commission) within a broadly defined range and level of services described in the management agreement; and
- The Government has undertaken to treat Healthscope as the private manager of a public hospital on the same fair and equitable basis as all other public hospitals. These are important features.

The committee is told that, under the new private hospital project agreement, Healthscope Limited is wholly responsible for the financing, construction and commissioning of the new facility. The private hospital development provides an opportunity for statutory compliance work to be undertaken in the relevant areas with cost saving to Government when compared with the cost and inconvenience of doing the work at a later date.

These upgrades will form part of a forward plan to upgrade amenities over the next few years. The committee notes that studies undertaken both by Fresbout Pty Ltd and by Newchurch Pty Ltd predict a declining need for public beds, with the Newchurch report estimating that by the year 2010 there would be a demand for only 146 public beds and 85 private beds at the Modbury Public Hospital. I am sure that we all will be interested—those of us who are still in public life—to see just how accurate those predictions are come 2010, which is not a long way away when I reflect that I do not think I have been here very long—and that is 19 years. As at August 1997 there were 171 public beds and 25 private beds at the Modbury Hospital. Given that the proposed redevelopment will provide potential access to 200 public and 65 private beds, the committee is assured that once completed the number of beds will be sufficient to meet the needs of the catchment area of the hospital in the foreseeable future. If it turns out to be false, God help the people who told us that was true!

The Public Works Committee acknowledges that the private sector aspect of the project will improve access to private facilities for residents of the north-eastern suburbs and will help accommodate the rapid change occurring in the health care industry. The location of the private hospital within the existing Modbury Public Hospital is a pivotal part of the 1997 renegotiated contract with Healthscope. The committee is told that the Government funded facilities are an integral part of the project and necessary to consolidate and significantly upgrade the maternity facilities, the short stay facilities, the theatre services and the entrance to the theatre, the engineering services, and the main building infrastructure of the hospital.

The work will ensure compliance with the various Australian standards, the building code requirements and the Australian Council of Health Care Standards. A concern expressed by me, as Chairman of the committee, about extractive industry cavitation was not resolved to my personal satisfaction. I know that in that general vicinity several hundred cubic metres of clay was extracted from tunnels, drives and adips and the records in the Mines Department of where they are precisely located have been lost. The committee was simply given an assurance, but cannot satisfy itself

that, in the event of an earthquake and those cavities collapsing, the hospital would not be at risk.

The need for the proposed work was substantiated by an inspection of the site where members gained an appreciation of the old-fashioned layout and outdated nature of the existing maternity and obstetrics facilities; where also the lack of privacy and limitation of available space were clearly evident. More importantly, members noted that essential equipment and facilities necessary for emergency situations were located some distance from the delivery rooms or on another floor. During the inspection members were told that the hospital experienced a significant decrease in the number of women giving birth at Modbury due to the dilapidated condition of the current facilities in favour of more modern and affordable accommodation elsewhere.

Also, whilst moving about the entire hospital complex, the committee became aware of the extensive accumulation of dust settled on unseen surfaces. Under the 'Public Interest' statutory provisions we therefore draw attention to the statement made in the Health Commission's response to the Public Works Committee's questions taken on notice dated 15 June which states:

Although a variety of micro-organisms can be found in large numbers within a hospital environment, they are considered to be significant in nosocomial cross-infection.

That is a euphemism for hospital infections, because they do not like saying that you can get infections in hospitals. The statement continues:

More important is the need to maintain a clean, dust free environment which will discourage the proliferation of micro-organisms in general, emphasising that a high standard of cleanliness is what is required to provide a safe environment for patients and staff.

They are the words that we were given, as I said, by the Commission itself. The committee accepts that the proposed project will alleviate these and other inadequacies. More specifically this redevelopment will provide a number of tangible benefits by promoting mutually benefit efficiencies, economies of scales and infrastructure sharing between public and private sector services. This will enhance the range and quality of services available to patients. The committee stresses that it made no inquiry nor was it provided with any information about the viability of Healthscope's South Australian operations, and it is therefore unable to express any opinion about its capacity, both short and long term, to meet its contractual obligations.

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I support the report. As the committee's Presiding Officer mentioned, Modbury Public Hospital was constructed and commissioned in the early 1970s in the north-eastern Adelaide region to provide hospital services to the rapidly growing suburban population in that area. The hospital was opened in 1974 and, at that time, its capacity was approximately 230 in-patient beds but with infrastructure and support services to cater for an anticipated expansion to 400 beds. However, the hospital has never realised that 400 bed capacity. In fact, the greatest number of beds ever utilised at Modbury Hospital is 235. The committee was advised that, as at August 1997, 171 public beds were available at the hospital, as well as 25 private beds already in operation as part of the interim private hospital established under Healthscope.

As the Presiding Officer mentioned, the publicly funded aspect of this project totals \$8.6 million and the privately funded component by Healthscope totals \$12.7 million. In relation to the publicly funded aspect of the project, an upgrade of the obstetrics and short stay facilities, public operating theatres and a range of works to meet building standards are all very necessary.

In relation to the obstetrics facilities, members would be aware of media reports last week which mentioned the need to restrict the admission of women from other areas in Adelaide to the Women's and Children's Hospital. The Modbury Hospital upgrade will be absolutely critical in providing the necessary obstetric facilities to cope with the demands in the north-eastern suburbs. The upgrade is very necessary and it needs to happen as soon as possible. The private hospital development has been a very interesting saga over the years. As members would probably remember, the first contract with Healthscope, which was signed in 1995, undertook to provide a 65 bed collocated private hospital built next to Modbury Public Hospital.

As a result of the renegotiated contract with Healthscope last year, that proposal was changed so that this private hospital would be built inside the Modbury Public Hospital in space made available following the closure of public beds when Healthscope took over management of the hospital. The issue facing the committee was that if it supported the building of a private hospital inside a public hospital would it be prejudicing the future availability of public beds? This question was raised with the committee by the Modbury Hospital Local Action Group. That group was concerned that, in the future, there would not be enough public beds to service the community.

As a result of those concerns the committee recalled witnesses to clarify the situation. From evidence presented members were convinced that the number of public beds that could be made available at the Modbury Public Hospital would be sufficient to meet future demands. The committee questioned Health Commission officials quite extensively on this issue so that it could be reassured that that was in fact the case. Those officials gave evidence of two particular studies that had been undertaken in relation to the future demand for public beds.

Both studies predicted that there would not be a need for any more than 200 beds, which is the number that can be put into operation at the Modbury Public Hospital if Healthscope, or whoever is running the hospital, is funded to that level. The committee felt that the very legitimate concerns raised by the Modbury Public Hospital Local Action Group with the committee had been answered. I pay tribute to the Modbury Hospital Local Action Group. We were addressed by the Chair of that group, Ms Sue Daly, together with Mr Ken Case and Ms Lynne Barnes.

That group has constantly monitored Modbury Public Hospital and the issues relating to the privatisation of Modbury Hospital over a long period of time. That group raised an important point which, as I said, the committee took very seriously. The committee recalled witnesses specifically to address the issue raised by the action group. The committee was provided with evidence from bureaucrats which quite emphatically stressed that 200 public beds would be sufficient to cope with public demand into the foreseeable future. The committee's conclusion states:

The committee stresses that it made no inquiry nor was it provided with any information about the viability of Healthscope's South Australian operations and is therefore unable to express any

opinion about its capacity both short and long term to meet its contractual obligations.

I think that was a very important statement to be included because, as we all know, the issues in relation to the Modbury Hospital contract have been a concern over the years and this, of course, has been borne out again by the Auditor-General in his report that came down just last week.

I understand that tenders have still not been called for this project. The committee itself was concerned that we could not get the information that we required to actually do our final report quickly enough. We were after information from the Health Commission, in particular, that was slow in coming and this has not been the first time this has occurred in relation to the Health Commission. We were most anxious, because we were told at the very first hearing, particularly by Healthscope, that it wanted the report quickly and it was anxious to get on to the work. We brought down our report as soon as we possibly could, and I think at the end of September it was presented to the Speaker. But I understand that, as of today, no tenders have been let. I certainly believe that that work needs to proceed as quickly as possible because the public work which links into it is also critical for the residents of the north-eastern suburbs.

I would like to make a few comments in relation to my concerns about the future of that contract. If members have not read the Auditor-General's comments on the Modbury Hospital contract, I suggest they do. It has been a damning indictment on the actions of the former Minister for Health who displayed an interesting blend of arrogance and incompetence in relation to this contract. The Auditor-General in his report states:

It is a matter for concern that the Government had been placed in the position of having to amend a contract in a manner which required it to pay more money to the contractor because the Government agency concerned had not properly carried out adequate due diligence. It is also a matter for concern that the advice to the Executive Government recommending the Government accede to proposed amendments did not address the issue of how the Government could ensure that no such failures would arise in the future.

He went on to say that the whole contract:

... has the potential, should certain events occur, to shift some of the financial risk back to the Government (for example, the decision to amend was based upon calculations of the Net Present Value (NPV) of the amended contract over an extended period of time). The extent that the 'assumptions' underlying the NPV calculations prove erroneous, the benefit to the Government may be less.

The public and private work at Modbury Hospital is contingent upon that contract and it is of concern that there are so many concerns about it.

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

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I also support the seventy-ninth report of the Public Works Committee in relation to the Modbury Hospital redevelopment. My comments will be brief, but there are a couple of things I would like to add to the record. Indeed, we had a lot of discussion in our committee and took a lot of evidence over bed numbers—private versus public, and those sorts of details—whilst looking at this particular reference. It is my understanding that the proposal at Modbury initially was to build a private hospital on the same campus, but external to the existing building which has housed the hospital for some time.

With the advent of modern medical practice, and principally the advent of modern day surgery, people come into the

hospital, have their operation, go through the recovery area of the hospital, return to their home, generally, on the same day or very close to the same day, within one or two days, whereas when Modbury Hospital was first built people requiring surgery spent extended times in the hospital. This has meant that original predictions about bed numbers required to service that area will probably never be met and, certainly, will not be met in the public sense. The evidence to the committee suggested that the existing building would have been under-utilised had it been left for use as a public hospital only.

As a result of that information being available to the powers that be the decision was made to build the private section of the hospital within the existing building. That has already happened in a temporary nature and, as part of the development, that will become a permanent private hospital within that building, which is a very good use of the existing building. The redevelopment of both the private and public areas of the hospital and the redevelopment of the obstetrics wing of the hospital, which will be relocated to be adjacent to the theatre suite, will ensure that the people of that area will continue to have best practice medical attention close to where they live. They will not have to travel halfway across the city or, indeed, into the city to get the type of medical treatment which communities these days not only require but also demand.

In conclusion, one of the matters we looked at was the ability to have patients who have been coming into the city for treatment move back into the northern suburbs. It is interesting to note that in recent days, possibly last week, the Adelaide Women's and Children's Hospital released a statement that the hospital's capacity to supply obstetric services to all and sundry who knock on its door is beyond the ability of the hospital. The numbers have become too great, and the hospital is now telling people who are seeking to have their babies delivered in that hospital that it will not be able to take the numbers who knock on the door.

So, it became imperative that other arrangements were made, and this is one of the reasons that the temporary nature of the private wards in Modbury Hospital has gone ahead. That was an attempt to encourage those people who have been coming into the Women's and Children's Hospital to stay in their own locality to obtain those services. Since we completed the evidence, and in fact reached our conclusions, further evidence from the Women's and Children's Hospital has come to hand to say that the decisions taken were, indeed, correct and of a timely nature.

Ms THOMPSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SOUTH COAST DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the seventy-eighth report of the committee on the South Coast District Hospital redevelopment be noted.

This district hospital is located at Victor Harbor. Historically, the South Coast District Hospital started as a community initiative in the 1920s, and it was later incorporated into the South Australian Health Commission. Also, in 1991, the South Coast Community Hospital was established as a private hospital within the same complex. The Health Commission proposes to redevelop the hospital by incorporating the construction of new facilities, the redevelopment of existing

public hospital facilities and the co-location of a new private hospital and radiology facilities. It is interesting that the private hospital will be owned by the community, not the Health Commission.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I apologise to the member for Hammond. I ask the member for Reynell and the member for MacKillop to return to their seats or to move outside the Chamber.

Mr LEWIS: The estimated cost of the works is \$5.083 million, and the anticipated completion date for the project is June 2000. The committee is told that the new private facilities—which, I repeat, will be owned by the people of the community and not by any other corporate entity—which will cost an estimated additional \$1.117 million, will be funded entirely by that private hospital known as the South Coast Community Hospital. More specifically, the main works for the proposed project will consist of the following five aspects: improving the general layout of the hospital, in particular, the theatre layout; incorporating a day surgery suite, for the reasons I mentioned in the course of my remarks on the previous motion relating to Modbury Hospital; meeting the needs of child patients, maternity patients and patients requiring palliative care; upgrading of accident and emergency facilities; and upgrading the radiology suite.

On Monday 10 August, a delegation of the committee conducted an inspection of the South Coast District Hospital. Members were able to see first-hand the inefficient layout of the hospital, the outdated nature of existing facilities and the danger which that layout posed for cross-infection, for instance, of the people within the hospital as patients. Throughout the inspection, the committee noted that the overwhelming needs associated with the redevelopment of this health facility are accentuated by the age of the current buildings and the increasing deterioration of services. Members noted that the resultant inefficiencies generated by these factors were emphasised by the inadequacy of the accident and emergency area, the inefficiency of the theatre layout and the limitation of the radiology suite.

It should be noted that the committee was also told during the inspection that any tsunami arising from an earth tremor on adjacent faults off shore would not affect the hospital due to the elevation of the site and its distance from the coast. The committee relies on that assurance in approving the public work because—and as members of this place who have seen the hospital at Victor Harbor will know—it is not high in elevation above sea level. It is back from the main coastline some distance, but not far from the river in its estuary flood plain channel. I will say as an aside that I believe there ought to be some more modern modelling undertaken of the likely tsunami which could occur if there were to be activity on the fault lines in the Adelaide geosyncline where there are areas of denser population and, in particular, the way in which those earthquakes would generate tsunami along our coastline.

Members noted that, while the catchment of the South Coast Health Service is characterised by the highest population growth in South Australia, service leakages to the metropolitan hospital complexes continue to increase. The committee was told that a major contributing factor to this is due to the deterioration of the physical fabric of this hospital at Victor Harbor and the facilities which have become progressively inappropriate and unsuitable in today's health care environment. Equally, however, I suspect that it is because people return to the hospital they have known and

trusted before they migrated to and took up residence in the hospital catchment area on the south coast. In any case, improvement of the facilities will be in the public interest, in that it will remove people from travelling on roads to hospitals in the metropolitan area and visiting those who have been admitted to such hospitals as close members of the family and their friends are inclined to do, as we all know, and, to that extent, it will save the public cost in their own pocket, not from the public purse alone.

The committee understands that the proposed redevelopment will address these problems while, at the same time, increase the overall efficiency in nursing, particularly as a result of the theatre and recovery activities being located in the one suite. It is just crazy—as you would appreciate, Mr Deputy Speaker, being married to a nurse—to have the nursing staff run off their feet to get from where they have to deal with patients in one part of the hospital and perform other work with other patients who are within their care and control in another part of the hospital. So, as it were, the more convenient location of the patients being treated by the specialist services provided by such nursing staff in the one general area of the hospital will vastly improve the efficiency with which the nurses can work and the safety with which patients can be assured they will be treated and cared for whilst they are there.

More importantly, it will greatly improve facilities in the accident and emergency area, the radiology suite and the day surgery unit, all of which will enhance patient outcomes and reduce the cost of that surgery. Additionally, the more efficient data communication and nurse call systems, as well as the introduction of more reliable emergency power and air-conditioning services, will offset what would have been an increase in administration, service and maintenance staffing costs with which the institution and the building in which it is based are otherwise confronted in its present form.

We consider that the provision of the purpose designed day surgery suite will ensure that more surgical patients will need to be hospitalised for only the one day, thereby greatly reducing family stress in travel and post-operative trauma for patients. Moreover, the separate palliative care section will enhance the quality of care for patients with terminal illness and provide facilities within the community for families to meet in private at the hospital and to be counselled about what is happening.

That point needs to be expanded. Sir, you would know that it is not reasonable for people in distress to be counselled about the medical condition of their seriously ill if not terminally ill loved ones in circumstances where the public and staff have to pass through while that process is under way, yet existing facilities in many of our hospitals leave no alternative but for counselling to occur in those very public places, adding to the distress and the inappropriate emotional response it can cause to the family and friends of those who are in the hospital when such counselling is under way.

Members agree that, with the introduction of the improved health and hospital facilities resulting from the redevelopment, the leakage of patients to metropolitan hospitals will be significantly reduced. This will promote greater family support for patients. It will reduce the travelling time, as I have said, that is involved, and it will provide a number of other significant benefits to families who live in the catchment area. As such, the Public Works Committee endorses the proposal to redevelop the South Coast District Hospital and recommends the public work. Again, I say from my own personal observations of the way in which the Health

Commission allocates the finances it pays to hospitals for the services they deliver to patients in the community that we would do better if we required a measure of competition between institutions to be undertaken, as it were, in house, within the commission's umbrella.

At present they are all paid the same amount for the services they deliver regardless of how efficiently the administration cooperates as a team with the staff who deliver the services and literally provide them. It seems to me crazy that, regardless of how well they perform, they get paid the same amount for what the Health Commission decides is the same service. It is the Health Commission's administrative analysis of what such a service will be and how it will recompense an institution and not the institution's own ability to contain costs and use its own constructive and creative abilities within the team in that institution to fix those costs and bill them.

What I am really saying is that the amount to be paid should be capped for each of the services at a cost which it is reckoned can be provided by the institution, and the institution should then be able to prove its measure of efficiency by billing less than that cap if it wishes, enabling the public to vote with their feet by allowing consumers to go to the place where they get satisfaction, that is, they get the same goods at lower cost or better goods at the same cost or even better goods at an even lower cost than can be provided elsewhere.

To that extent, we would have rewards being given to teamwork within hospitals and different parts of hospitals in the way in which they would be provided with an incentive to cooperate with each other within the team framework, and they would deliver the services that are being sought to the people who are being treated. I commend the report to the House.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I am pleased to second the report and recommend the adoption of the committee's recommendations. The South Coast Development Hospital illustrates an excellent community cooperation spirit in the way the community hospital and the South Coast Public Hospital came together to look at ways of developing the joint facility to benefit the community. It was evident to us as we passed around that there was cooperation that enabled the best to result for the full community in terms of things like the wards currently occupied by the private hospital to be vacated and occupied by the public hospital, which would then see an upgrade in the standard of its facilities.

The other commendable part of this proposal was the way in which alternative methods of meeting the needs of the community were explored in terms of considering a green fields site and other options for developing, so that the best fit and best cost proposal was eventually adopted. The proponents are to be commended for the thoroughness of their presentation to the committee.

One of the interesting aspects about this inquiry was our investigation into back flow valves and emergency energy supplies in country hospitals. We asked about the protection of the water supply system in a range of country hospitals, given that there are not many back flow prevention devices installed in hospitals because they were established before the current building code was implemented.

Debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 1.1 to 2 p.m.]

POKER MACHINES

A petition signed by 362 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to introduce legislation on poker machines that supports measures to give local residents the power to object to their installation, bans their advertising and have them phased out was presented by Ms Bedford.

Petition received

TAXATION REFORM

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: By its nature, given that the subject is taxation reform, this statement is reasonably lengthy. On 13 August, the Commonwealth Government unveiled a package of fundamental taxation reform that it is now in the process of implementing. It is no secret that I have been a long and strong advocate for taxation reform. It is long overdue and we need to address the inadequacies in our sales tax system, which unfairly burdens the manufacturing industry, a sector vital to the future of this State's economy.

In spreading the indirect tax burden more fairly across all industry sectors, the Commonwealth's taxation reform proposals offer significant benefits for the South Australian economy. At the same time, the proposals will offer major reductions in personal income tax, with a special regard for the taxation treatment of families that will be welcomed by South Australians. I wish, however, to focus today on another key component of the reform, and that is the changes proposed to the financial relationship between the Federal and State Governments. The Prime Minister has convened a Special Premiers' Conference on 13 November as a first step in advancing these important reforms.

The present system of Commonwealth-State financial relations is far from satisfactory, and the Commonwealth has recognised this. The States and Territories are highly reliant on Commonwealth funding. This is the result of the mismatch between the responsibilities held by the States and Territories to deliver important community services and the major constraints placed upon them to raise their own revenue. The States and Territories do not raise nearly enough revenue to finance their expenditure responsibilities and, as such, are reliant on Commonwealth funding, which over the past 15 years has been subject to significant restraint. The end result of this is the often unedifying cap-in-hand negotiations between the Commonwealth and the States over funding levels at the annual Premiers' Conference.

Associated with these weaknesses is the fact that the States have long been forced to rely on a range of inefficient and *ad hoc* taxes which undermine our economic development as a nation. The High Court's findings in the tobacco franchise fee case showed just how vulnerable these taxes can be. We cannot build a strong State on such shaky foundations. The Commonwealth's plan offers us access to a constitutionally secure revenue source which will grow at the same rate as the Australian economy. On preliminary advice from the Commonwealth, the States and Territories are projected to gain a net \$.4 billion in 2003-4, \$1.3 billion in 2004-5, \$2.3 billion in 2005-6, and to make commensurately larger gains in subsequent years.

The proposed reforms to Commonwealth-State financial relations outlined by the Commonwealth on 13 August

include the following elements. The Commonwealth will provide the States and Territories with all the revenue from the proposed goods and services tax. The GST revenue will replace the financial assistance grants currently provided by the Commonwealth, that is, the untied or general purpose grants. It will also replace the so-called section 90 business franchise fee replacement grants, which were recently established as a result of the States and Territories repealing their franchise fees on petroleum, liquor and tobacco in the wake of the New South Wales tobacco franchise case.

The States and Territories will also be required to abolish nine of their worst taxes, namely, financial institutions duty, debits tax, a range of stamp duties that apply to business transactions, and the accommodation taxes levied in New South Wales and the Northern Territory. The States and Territories will also reduce their gambling taxes to offset the impact of a GST on gambling operations. The States and Territories will assume responsibility for the funding of local government and will be required to administer and fund a new first home owners scheme. Finally, the States and Territories will be required to finance the costs incurred by the Australian Taxation Office in administering the GST.

Naturally enough, such far-reaching reforms will require a great deal of further negotiation with respect to the implementation details. In principle, however, they are definitely a step in the right direction. Providing the States and Territories with access to the revenues from the GST will, over time, enhance their capacity to deliver the services expected by the community. The growth potential of GST revenues is clearly superior to the funding sources it will replace. Over time, these reforms will deliver a sounder, more secure and more buoyant source of funding for the States and Territories.

In the short term, however, a number of transitional issues will need to be resolved, and these will be discussed at the meeting on 13 November. During the initial years, the Commonwealth has identified that there will be some budgetary shortfalls in the package for the States and Territories and it has provided certain undertakings with respect to protecting their budgetary positions via transitional grants and loans. I will be seeking firm assurances from the Commonwealth that any transitional shortfalls facing South Australia will be compensated for. Also of major importance is the Commonwealth's undertaking that the distribution of the GST revenues between the States and Territories will continue to be in accordance with the principles of fiscal equalisation which govern the present allocation of general purpose grants.

South Australia will not agree to any package which does not involve a distribution of GST revenues according to fiscal equalisation. I advise the House that, if horizontal fiscal equalisation were removed, as is proposed by New South Wales Premier Bob Carr, the net effect in South Australia would be a \$385 million reduction in general revenue payments if an equal per capita distribution were adopted. If we were to adopt a position based on where personal income tax was paid, South Australia per annum would be worse off by \$577 million. Clearly, the Carr proposal has to be rejected and I will be seeking assurances in the Premiers' Conference that the commitments thus far from the Prime Minister and Premier Jeff Kennett to support horizontal fiscal equalisation are maintained and implemented in the reforms.

Apart from the financial impacts, a number of other details will need to be negotiated, some of which may require legislative change. The GST will clearly be a Commonwealth tax in the sense that it will be imposed on the basis of

Commonwealth legislation. However, the States will clearly have a revenue interest and will not want to be at the mercy of unilateral Commonwealth changes to either the rate of GST or its coverage. The Commonwealth has already stated that any changes in the GST rate would require the unanimous support of the States and Territories. Even with such support, such a change will also need to be passed through the Commonwealth Parliament. The respective roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in managing the coverage of the GST base over time will need to be clarified.

The initial design of the GST will also be an issue with respect to the activities of State Governments and local government. The scope of GST free status of health, education, State and local government taxes, as distinct from charges, needs to be resolved in detail. While Government charges which involve the provision of goods and services will, apart from the GST free areas, be subject to GST, there are a wide range of regulatory imposts and licence fees where the GST is not likely to apply—but this issue will need to be subject to further clarification. The GST will apply to commercial Government services such as electricity and public transport, although water and sewerage charges will be GST free. However, this does not mean that those charges subject to GST will increase by 10 per cent. Other charges in the indirect taxation system will provide cost savings to commercial Government agencies which will partly offset the impact of the GST.

With respect to public transport fares, it is also the case that the expanded concessions on diesel fuel excise will offset the impact of the GST on fares. Transport operators will benefit from a new diesel fuel credit system which will reduce the effective excise payable on diesel fuel from around 43¢ per litre to 18¢ per litre and will also be able to claim refunds of the GST paid on fuel. More generally, the reductions in fuel taxes for the transport sector will be of significant benefit to South Australian businesses transporting their produce interstate and will also benefit regional areas of the State where the cost of living relative to the metropolitan area is heavily influenced by transport costs. The GST will apply to gambling activity but the States and Territories will adjust their tax rates to ensure that there is no overall impact.

The proposed shift in the transfer of responsibility for the funding of local government from the Commonwealth to the States is another important aspect of the reforms. While some representatives of local government nationally have expressed apprehension, the Commonwealth has clearly stated that it will want a commitment from the States and Territories to maintain current funding levels to local government. I believe that this shift in responsibility offers scope for improved relations between State Governments and local government.

The Howard Government's proposals offer the States a secure and stable revenue base to fund the provision of Government services. They offer us the opportunity to abolish taxes that cost jobs. For 50 years or more, successive Premiers and Chief Ministers have called on the Commonwealth to address the inadequacy of their tax bases and the arcane system of financial assistance to the States and Territories. The Commonwealth's tax plans provide a real opportunity to address this problem. And while the immediate bottom line financial impacts of the reforms will appropriately form a central focus to the negotiations, in the long run the proposed reforms have the potential to deliver a much improved basis for Federal relations than the current arrangements. They provide our State with a real opportunity for

financial stability so we can fund the programs South Australians want and need, in particular in the area of social infrastructure. We may not have this opportunity again, and the Government is intent on seizing this initiative.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

HomeStart Finance Board—Report, 1997-98
Housing Trust, South Australia—Report, 1997-98
South Australian Community Housing Authority—Report, 1997-98
Statutory Authorities Review Committee—Review of Commissioners of Charitable Funds—Response by the Minister

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

Ambulance Service, South Australian—Report, 1997-98
Legal Practitioners Conduct Board—Report, 1997-98
Metropolitan Fire Service, South Australian—Report, 1997-98
SA Water—Report, 1997-98.

QUESTION TIME

MOTOROLA

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. Given that the Minister, as the former Premier, signed a letter on 9 July 1996 offering to appoint Motorola as the designated supplier for the whole of Government radio network contract, did Motorola at any stage threaten to withdraw from the future development of its Adelaide software centre because of the Government's claimed inaction, tardiness or delay in awarding the radio contract? In other words, has the Premier been telling the whole truth about the Motorola deal?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader is now commenting.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am no longer the Minister responsible for this matter. I have refused to answer any other questions on this subject previously, and I continue to do so.

PELICAN POINT

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Surely I do not have to put up with all this drivel from the honourable member.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Will the Premier advise the House of the level of interest that has been shown in development by the private sector in a power station on land that the Government has made available at Pelican Point?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am pleased to advise the House concerning the response to the request for expressions of interest from developers for the opportunity to build, own and operate a new power station in South Australia. Members will recall that on 30 June, as part of my statement on the restructuring of the State's electricity industry, I announced that the Government would offer a market-based development package for a private sector developer to build a combined cycle gas turbine power station. Originally, the

opportunity was to be offered in conjunction with the sale of peak power stations. However, to ensure the security of the State's electricity supplies, I announced on 30 September that the new power station would go ahead in advance of Parliament's decision on the legislation to allow the sale or lease of the State's power assets. Consequently, on 23 October expressions of interest were sought to develop the power station on land which the Government had made available at Pelican Point.

I am pleased to advise the House that 22 companies responded to the call for expressions of interest. These responses have been evaluated against the published pre-qualification criteria, which include experience in such projects in Australia and offshore, financial and organisational capabilities, project management and power plant operating experience, and ability to complete projects on time. As a result, 16 respondents have been short-listed and will now be provided with detailed requests for proposal. The short list reads like a who's who of Australian and international energy companies. It demonstrates the considerable interest that the energy industry is taking in developments in South Australia and is a clear vote of confidence by the industry in the policy that the Government is pursuing. Each of these respondents has demonstrated a willingness to pursue investments in this State that will be about \$200 million to \$300 million, which I believe is also a vote of confidence in the future of South Australia. As I said, the next step will be to issue the 16 companies with a detailed RFP.

An application for development approvals for the preferred site has been lodged with the Development Assessment Commission on behalf of the Government by the Electricity Reform and Sales Unit. The unit is also undertaking a process of public communication and consultation. This will include a detailed briefing on the project to the elected members of the Port Adelaide and Enfield council, distribution of an information brochure to all residents of the area and a public meeting at which residents will be able to discuss with the unit any issues of concern. On a first call for expressions of interest, to get 22 companies of international or national standing to respond, to be able to short list that now to 16 companies, clearly underscores that the opportunities are there if South Australia is prepared to grasp them.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, it's not totally ignored. The honourable member should talk to Mayor John Smith, with whom I have had discussions. If a proponent wants to establish in Whyalla, they will get exactly the same support as they will get anywhere else in South Australia. It is simply a matter for the proponents to locate their power generating facilities where they want them. If they are going to put \$200 million or \$300 million into the system, they will want to pick the site into which they put their investment. I give a commitment to the honourable member, as I have given to the Mayor: any company wishing to locate in Whyalla will get the same sort of facilitation and support from the Government as we have given with the Pelican Point site.

SOUTH-EAST WATER

Mr HILL (Kaurna): My question is directed to the Deputy Speaker and former Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. Can he confirm that he had a meeting with the Premier, attended by the Hon. Dale Baker, in or

about June 1997 at which changes to the policy for allocating water in the South-East were discussed?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Speaker has no responsibility for that matter and therefore is not required to answer the question.

Mr FOLEY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to Standing Order 96, 'Questions concerning public business', which states:

Questions may be put to other members but only if such questions relate to any Bill, motion or other public business for which those members, in the opinion of the Speaker, are responsible to the House.

As a former Minister with a contemporary political issue, that is the current—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair wants to hear the point of order.

Mr FOLEY:—business of the House, and I ask that you allow the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I still do not uphold the point of order, I am sorry. I believe that the framing of this Standing Order relates to his current responsibilities before the House, and he is not currently responsible for anything to do with the question that was asked.

Mr FOLEY: I take a further point of order, Sir, and I will read the words again. The Standing Order states:

Questions may be put to other members but only if such questions relate to any Bill, motion or other public business for which those members, in the opinion of the House, are responsible to the House.

It is a contemporary political issue, and the Minister was responsible for that public business.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not need assistance on my right. The honourable member misread the quotation as he read it out.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! On my right—members will come to order. It says clearly '... in the opinion of the Speaker, are responsible to the House', not 'in the opinion of the House'. It is 'in the opinion of the Speaker'; the Speaker has given an opinion and holds to that opinion. If the honourable member disagrees with my ruling, he can move accordingly and we can deal with it.

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Premier advise the House why comments that the national electricity market brings no risk to our power transmission assets are totally wrong?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: We keep hearing this comment from those opposed to the sale of our power utilities. It is a complex issue, but the comments are 100 per cent wrong. The profit growth of a State owned transmission asset is totally dependent on new capital expenditure being profitably made. However, the national electricity market rules require that any new system building of both a transmission and distribution network will become subject to competition through competitive tender: not 'may', but 'will become subject to'. We know what has happened in Victoria. GPU's PowerNet has lost the majority of all such competitive tenders.

I could name a number of companies in country and regional areas of South Australia that want to put on power

to new economic development, and the monopoly price they are being quoted does not make it competitive for them to put on the power, whereas, if you have a competitive market delivering that power line to those facilities, we might get more regional development in place through competitively priced power being put in place, through transmission and distribution to the locality, rather than trying to recoup exorbitant network and transmission costs in the annual power charges, which are used to amortise the cost of the capital in the first place.

Bidding has been fierce, as we have seen in Victoria. ETSA's transmission business plans assume that it will spend \$500 million on capital expenditure, but independent expert Sinclair Knight Merz concludes that 65 per cent of that \$500 million will now be subject to competition. If ETSA fails to win those projects, which is exactly the Victorian experience, its profits will be reduced by \$9 million per year, recurring. This is just one other example of the impact, the circumstance, the outcome of a national electricity market, and it means reduced dividends. Those who say, 'Keep the asset; take the dividend to retire the debt', are in cloud cuckoo land, because the experience both in New South Wales (as I quoted yesterday) and in Victoria (as I quoted today) is that the dividends to which we have become accustomed for 40 or 50 years are going to dissipate, because there is a national electricity market, and because there is competition.

An honourable member: They might.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The honourable member says 'They might.' The honourable member just has to look at the New South Wales and Victorian experience. He need not accept what I am saying; he should ask his New South Wales counterparts about their budget this year, involving a reduction from \$1.1 billion to \$790 million. That is \$200 million in a year that has gone out of their revenue flow. We as a State cannot afford to have that sort of reduction in the dividend from ETSA. We are reliant on that to provide our social infrastructure, whether it be schools, hospitals or roads. We are simply seeking to position this State to ensure that that risk is removed and we get a compensating reduction in recurrent expenditure so that we can invest that in our hospitals and schools, giving more computers, for instance, to our kids so that they can be IT literate as we go into the next century.

Clearly, with example after example that we are seeing in this national electricity market, the risk is too great. If we want to ensure the future for our kids, we need to act. Again I say to members of the Labor Party: 'Think of the kids in this State.' Without reduced costs, we will not see new private sector capital investment. If the real question is about jobs, what we have to do is make sure our manufacturing industry is not disadvantaged with input costs. If we do not move in relation to the national electricity market, we will be disadvantaging our manufacturing industry and, therefore, disadvantaging the jobs of our kids. That is the bottom line of this policy.

ADELAIDE RAMS

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Government's investment of taxpayer funds in assisting the establishment of the Rams in Adelaide, can he scotch media speculation and reassure the House that the Rams will not be pulling out of this State next season?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is accurate to say that over the past five years the Government has assisted in the establish-

ment of a national code in South Australia, and we do not resile from that. In this State we want to be part of national sporting codes—we would not want to be left on the sidelines—and we did assist in the establishment of the Rams in South Australia. Suffice to say that I have had some discussions in the past 24 hours. As I understand it, a decision is likely to be made in the next few days, and we simply wait upon that decision.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FISHING INDUSTRY COUNCIL

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Would the Deputy Premier detail his relationship with the South Australian Fishing Industry Council and indicate the rights of the seafood industry to form industry associations? I understand that the Opposition spokesperson for fishing is critical of new groups forming.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The honourable member, probably better than anyone else in this House, knows how important fishing is to South Australia. Over the last three years during which I have been Minister, despite what the shadow spokesperson and the Deputy Leader have just said, we have built a very strong relationship with SAFIC. The relationship has been a very good one, and I have no doubt that the member for Hart will acknowledge that relationships between the fishing industry and the Minister for Fisheries have not always been good, but we have been getting on very well.

My staff, the department and I have worked hard with the fishing industry and we have worked together well. Unfortunately, there are some members of the industry itself who are not totally behind SAFIC, and a certain amount of industry friction (and I stress not industry-Government but industry friction) has been occurring. The friction is driven by a very small number of what you would call strong characters within the industry on both sides of the argument.

The South Australian Seafood Council was formed several months ago and there were fears that they may try to replace SAFIC, even though they are a wider focused seafood organisation which includes processors and marketers. Being aware of the problems, I asked both organisations to sit down with me to try to settle the arguments and talk about their specific roles within industry.

Mr Foley: You're a brave man!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I am a brave man. At that meeting I proposed that they both have important roles to play. I put to them that SAFIC has a horizontal role, which is to represent licence holders, and the seafood council very much a vertical role, involving industry issues such as training, quality assurance, marketing and promotion which were very much roles that were not being picked up by anyone within industry previously.

To get the point across, and I think I did get it across, I used the example of the dairy industry, where the Dairy Corporation and the South Australian Dairy Farmers Association work very well together. They are both needed because dairy farmers, such as the member for Mawson, would get nowhere near as far as they have got without the Dairy Corporation.

We made very good progress at that meeting. A lot of commitments were made around the table to work together and advance the industry. Unfortunately, there are still a few who are not totally happy, but at that meeting there was an overall will of the industry to work together and go ahead.

This week an article appeared in a regional paper warning of a split, and this was obviously stirred up by a couple of the disgruntled fishermen. A second article refers to remarks of the Opposition spokesperson (Hon. Paul Holloway), and it states:

He claimed the Government was backdoor dealing, undermining the State's only legislated fishing representative body (SAFIC). The whole fishing industry is on the verge of splitting into different lobby groups which Mr Holloway warns will result in Rafferty's rules. The real problem is that the Government, ever since it was elected in 1993, has been playing favourites and not dealing through the peak body, and has undermined SAFIC, setting an appalling precedent.

I must say that I have had many meetings with SAFIC. I have gone down and faced the AGMs each year and taken lots of questions, and I do not think my commitment to SAFIC has ever been questioned by anyone other than Mr Holloway. Still referring to Mr Holloway, the article continues:

He believes the new body, the South Australian Seafood Council, appears to have been set up to undermine SAFIC. The management of the fishery is becoming unravelled because the Government haven't been playing it straight.

First of all, Mr Holloway questioned the right of members of the fishing industry to actually set up an association. The member for Ross Smith should talk to him about the right of associations and the ability of people to do whatever they want to. I would further inform Mr Holloway that I have played it totally straight. If Mr Holloway chooses to speak to any of the 20-odd people who attended my meeting with the two bodies, he will find out how totally straight I was. I have gone to great lengths to try to keep industry focused on the bigger picture, the value of the industry and their security for the future.

It is also interesting that some senior industry figures are actually saying, through the extra work of the Industry Development Board for Seafood and other initiatives, that they feel that Government has actually left industry behind and they feel that industry is just starting to take up the challenge which has been put to it by Government and, therefore, the Seafood Industry Council. The seafood industry as a whole has a very promising future. It does, however, rely on good resource management, quality assurance and improved marketing and promotion. I would certainly encourage those who are not quite 100 per cent behind this push, including Mr Holloway, to join the rest of industry in striving for what should be a better future for the seafood industry.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): What action has the Minister for Human Services taken to address the findings of the Auditor-General that the Chief Executive of his department has a conflict of interest? Is the Minister aware of widespread concerns by staff in his department that the public health sector is now in disarray? Did the Minister authorise the removal of several senior officials from their positions? The Opposition has been informed that during the past week senior staff released from their positions include the head of the Mental Health Policy Unit, the Director of Community Services and the Chief Executive of Health Export Development.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: We have a real grab bag of questions there if ever there was one. I think I counted about six or seven questions there.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Only one answer, Mr Speaker? Well, on the first one, I understand that the CEO of the department has referred that to the Crown Solicitor for further advice, as suggested by the Auditor-General. So the Auditor-General's recommendations have been followed up. Concerning the staff appointments, if the honourable member happens to pick up the Public Sector Management Act, she will realise that staff is a matter for the CEO of the department. I will ask the CEO to give me a response.

ANTI-TOBACCO ADVISORY TASK FORCE

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Will the Minister for Human Services provide more information to the House on the role of the Anti-Tobacco Advisory Task Force? Earlier this year the Minister announced that the State Government was embarking on the most significant tobacco control strategy ever taken in South Australia. A total of \$3.9 million I understand has been committed and an advisory council has now been established.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Today I have announced at least some of the membership of the advisory council or task force. I am delighted that Diana Hill, Deputy Principal of Scotch College, who is a known educator in the drug area, has taken up the responsibility as Chair of that task force. Other key people who have taken on positions on the task force include Dr Rod Pearce, President of the AMA; Dr Kerry Kirke, from the Anti-Cancer Foundation; Mr Bob McEvoy, from the National Heart Foundation; Lyn Haysman, from SportsMed Australia; Graham Strathearn, from the Drug and Alcohol Foundation; Brian Dixon, from Aboriginal Services in the Department of Human Services; and others. There will be one or two young people on the council as well as someone with media expertise.

This task force has a very important role. The first requirement is to make sure that we have a broad community campaign against tobacco smoking and highlighting the enormous damage to people's health through smoking cigarettes. The second is to set up a comprehensive program throughout all schools against tobacco smoking. Clearly the educational program up until now in our schools has been less than adequate because we find it is young people from about 15 through to 18 who are some of the heaviest smokers in the community.

The incidence of smoking in this age group goes up to about 25 or even 30 per cent. The third point is to make sure that retail outlets stop selling cigarettes to those under age. It is in legislation this Parliament has passed, and it is time we clamped down on it. There has been monitoring and attempts at prosecution, with I think one successful prosecution.

Mrs Geraghty: One!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Perhaps the honourable member would like to indicate whether Opposition members favour enforced entrapment, because it would be very easy for us to go out and use tactics with minors buying cigarettes to entrap retailers.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is an interesting debate. I would welcome some response from members opposite on whether or not they favour entrapment because, if so, as a community we could look at whether we take it up. It is quite clear that it is very difficult to prosecute a retailer when you are trying to come in after the event, when it is based on the evidence of an observer and the observer does not know the

age of the person who has just purchased the cigarettes. It is virtually impossible to enforce the law effectively unless you allow entrapment to take place.

From the beginning of next year this task force will help ensure that we have an effective education program for the introduction of the banning of smoking where food is served in our community. That is one of the most profound changes in terms of smoking legislation in this State, introduced by the former Minister of Health. Overall our objective is to reduce the incidence of smoking by 20 per cent over the next five years. The Government has made a commitment of putting \$3.9 million into this task force and anti-smoking strategy. On a per capita basis that puts us about level with California and the effort it has undertaken. It is seen as the world's benchmark and the resources are there. It is up to us as a broad community to ensure that we have the commitment out there to do something about reducing the incidence of smoking in our community.

ADELAIDE OVAL TOWERS

Ms KEY (Hanson): Has the Minister for Government Enterprises sought an independent engineering report as to the cause of the collapse of one of the lighting towers at Adelaide Oval, or will he rely exclusively on the report being compiled by Balderstone Hornibrook, the company that installed the towers? If he has not sought an independent report, why not?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The matter is being investigated by Workplace Services in my department, and I understand that a report will be released shortly.

FIREWORKS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Government Enterprises inform the House of what steps have been undertaken to ensure that no terrible consequences follow from the misuse of fireworks?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As both the member for Hartley and the House would be aware, Parliament and fireworks have a long and colourful association. The honourable member's question is timely because today is 5 November—the day that celebrates that colourful association between fireworks and the Parliament, and it is obviously known as Guy Fawkes Day. In 1605 Guy Fawkes or, as I am informed, 'Guido', as he was known to his friends, and a group of co-conspirators attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament to kill King James I and the entire Parliament.

Mr CONLON: On a point of order, Sir, Guy Fawkes no longer has the corporeal reality to threaten anyone. I do not understand what this has to do with the danger of fireworks.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Guido and his buddies had rolled 36 barrels of gunpowder under the Houses of Parliament. In an attempt to protect one of his friends in the House of Lords, one of the group of co-conspirators sent an anonymous letter warning his friend to stay away from the Parliament, so leaks began even back then. The warning reached the king and the co-conspirators were caught, tortured and executed. Sometimes I think that that should happen to leakers today!

Guy Fawkes Day is an ambiguous celebration. Are we celebrating Fawkes' execution or honouring his attempt to do away with the Government and the Parliament? As Minister

responsible for the fireworks legislation, I expect complete bipartisan support when I assure the House that I am committed to ensuring that Guy Fawkes remains a figure of history. I would prefer to see the fireworks coming from the debate.

There is a sting in the tail. It is important that items such as fireworks are properly used in order to avoid what can be quite catastrophic consequences, not only for Parliaments but also for children who misuse them, particularly if they are used irresponsibly. I recently received a report from the shopgoods fireworks working party set up by my colleague the former Minister for Industrial Affairs to provide advice on the control of public access to what is known as shopgoods fireworks. In considering this report I will be mindful of the need to maintain both the security of the House and the safety of the public in general.

KINDERGARTEN ADMINISTRATIVE TIME

Mrs GERAGHTY: Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training advise whether additional administrative time is to be allowed to schools that will have kindergartens incorporated in their respective school sites and, if the reply is in the affirmative, will the Minister outline how much administrative time will be allocated? Whilst most schools are positive about stand-alone kindergartens being incorporated into school sites, school administrations need to feel confident that this will be with additional administrative resources and that they will not be expected to fund additional administrative time through current budget arrangements. If the latter is to be the case it would correctly be perceived as a net cut to education funding and resources.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The issue of administrative time for kindergartens has been raised with me. It is something that my department is assessing in order to understand the needs of directors within kindergartens. My son goes to one, so I am well aware of the demands on kindergarten directors. It is an issue we are investigating, and obviously we will be getting back to the directors.

RURAL PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): What details can the Deputy Premier provide about the \$5 million rural partnership scheme under the program of the same name for the Riverland, announced jointly by the State and Federal Governments recently? This program represents approximately two years' work with members of the community and their representatives, and particularly the former member for Chaffey.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: People who, like members of Cabinet, have recently visited the Riverland would have noticed a very positive attitude in the area. There is certainly an optimism in the area, great buoyancy and much development. A real turnaround has taken place over the past five or six years. Development in the region is largely wine related. An increase in the area's wine industry has been a major development, but almonds and other crops have also been successful. We have also seen a major—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Too many interjections are starting to float across the Chamber.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: One industry that has bounced back strongly is the citrus industry, which is now marketing very successfully in the USA, exporting in excess of one

million cartons to that country this year. Recently the State and Federal Governments have announced a \$5 million rural partnership program for the Riverland. This is certainly not a welfare program: it will ensure that the current window of development opportunity for the Riverland is maximised. The program is very much about encouraging and introducing investment in a number of areas, which is aimed at both the long-term sustainability of resources in the area and underpinning the future of the Riverland as a major food region within South Australia.

The on-farm development initiatives include subsidies for doing business plans, expansion of the property management program, redevelopment grants and access to the whole marketing chain to ensure that we maximise the value of what is produced. It is also about quality assurance programs. A range of market development initiatives are available, including market intelligence, market awareness details, export syndication and training people in export skills. The community is in a position where it must respond, drive and ultimately own that program.

The community, as the honourable member said, has played a major role in these developments. Local government, the Riverland Development Corporation, past and present members for Chaffey, and the Federal member for Wakefield have all played major roles in bringing about the program. The Riverland is a very important region of South Australia. This Government certainly recognises that and is determined that the Riverland's contribution to our food plan targets will be significant; and that jobs and prosperity will be enhanced by this latest initiative.

PRE-SCHOOLS

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training give an assurance that—

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HANNA: —no pre-schools in the south-western metropolitan region, particularly in the electorate of Mitchell, will be closed or amalgamated during the term of this Government?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The answer is, 'No', I cannot give that assurance.

COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services advise the House how the CFS is preparing for the 1998-99 wildfire season?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I thank the member for Schubert for his question, and I appreciate his interest in wildfire given that he is responsible for an important rural electorate. The CFS has now commenced a decentralised service delivery program for wildfire prevention activities to ensure that it supports the preventative role that local government has put in place. All councils have now prepared plans for wildfire prevention, integrating these plans with other land management agencies. CFS regional staff have now commenced liaison roles with both the district bushfire prevention committees and local government fire prevention officers across the State: the object being to improve service provision and enhance community preparedness against wildfire.

The role of the regional bushfire prevention committees is also being reviewed, whereby these committees review the success of district prevention strategies. Recently a survey on the success of the CFS's publicity campaign was conducted and, although the awareness levels of the CFS and the term 'wildfire'—which has been promoted actively over the past couple of years is high—the concern of the CFS, and myself as Minister, is that the level of awareness of preventative actions to take before and during a wildfire is low. I understand that the Opposition would not understand much about the importance of being prepared against wildfire, but members on this side of the House are very concerned.

Wildfire prevention will focus on the community's being prepared for a wildfire event. To assist that focus the CFS has recently appointed a community liaison officer to conduct a pilot program throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges to motivate the community to be better prepared. I advise the House that, given this year's successful season in South Australia, the fuel load is very high. The CFS is in good shape and is prepared for the fire season. The volunteers are well trained and committed—all 18 000 of them—and I thank them for their commitment to look after community safety and property in the rural areas of South Australia.

The private sector must also play a role. I encourage all those people who have property in the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Fleurieu Peninsula and throughout South Australia to get their act together. The amount of fuel load I have seen concerns me, as well as the fact that there appears to be some complacency within the community. Undergrowth is drying off quickly. The CFS has already received 50 call-outs in the past couple of weeks, and I appeal to the community to be prepared for what could be a very high wildfire season.

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training advise what is being done to ensure that people applying for an electrical contractor's licence comply fully with the requirements as stipulated under the Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians Act 1995? That Act requires applicants applying for an electrical contractor's licence to complete a business course. When my office contacted the Office of Business and Consumer Affairs, which is responsible for managing these licences, it was advised that applicants must sign a contract indicating that they are prepared to undertake the course and pay the required tuition fee. However, despite this legislation being in place since 1995, and despite industry approval of training modules, still no accredited course is available.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Obviously some finer details will need to be sussed out. I will obtain those details from my department and provide the honourable member with an answer.

YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Will the Minister for Year 2000 Compliance advise what percentage of South Australian businesses is unlikely to be year 2000 compliant, and what does 'non-compliance' mean for the operation of these businesses after 1 January 2000?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Waite for his question because, in contrast to the mirth demonstrated by members of the Labor Party, noticeably in that instance the member for Spence—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The member for Hart wants to put his mirth on the record, too, and I am happy for that to happen. In contrast to members opposite, the member for Waite understands business, is technologically literate and understands the implications of this matter. The biggest threat—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many audible interjections on my left. I do not want to start warning and naming members at this late stage of Question Time. I ask members to contain themselves, if they can.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The biggest threat to business through the year 2000 date problem is ignorance, and what we have seen expressed today by members opposite in this Chamber is volumes of ignorance. The Opposition always has a valuable role to play in our community. It provides a valuable role for me in my portfolio, for the ultimate challenge for me is to educate members opposite about this problem and to have them understand it. When I have achieved that, I will know that I have reached the lowest common denominator, the greatest level of ignorance, and then I can be sure that the whole community understands. The task starts now, and I hope that members opposite are listening.

Year 2000 compliance means that all business systems and programs will recognise and process correctly the century component of the date, in this instance the year 2000, and will also process and recognise accurately the fact that that year is a leap year. To those who do not know about the problem, it might seem a laughing matter but, regrettably, it is particularly serious, and non-compliance can threaten business continuity. Therefore, non-compliance is not simply an information technology issue: it is a management issue, particularly for small business. The most vulnerable businesses have been identified as being small and medium enterprises. To highlight just what this means, I point out that businesses with 20 people or fewer account for 40 per cent of jobs, and businesses with 20 to 99 people account for a further 21 per cent of jobs. So, a significant number of small and medium size businesses in our community are under threat.

The national industry program office has estimated that the failure of just 10 per cent of these businesses through the year 2000 date problem could mean a loss of 385 000 jobs nationally, and for South Australia that means at least 25 000 jobs, if businesses do not take appropriate action. That is no laughing matter, and I would hope that even the member for Mitchell can appreciate that. Several industry surveys have been undertaken this year by respected organisations, including Arthur Anderson and the Gartner Group, and they have shown among business a high level of awareness of the problem but, regrettably, little action beyond that. In fact, there is no real evidence that many businesses are tackling the problem—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

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

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: —as they ought, other than self-regulation, which has occurred in some industries such as the automotive and the banking industries. To obtain accurate information on the state of readiness of our businesses nationally, the Australian Bureau of Statistics is undertaking a comprehensive survey of businesses across Australia, obviously including many in South Australia. The result of

that will be available in early December this year, and this Government will be using that information seriously as a guide to the efforts we have to undertake to ensure that our businesses are not only aware of the problem but prepared to tackle it.

A respected person in this field, Karl Fielder, who was speaking in Adelaide three weeks ago, stated that 64 per cent of businesses run their critical systems and processing on personal computers. He pointed out that about 50 per cent—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The member for Peake might like to listen, because I understand that he is a supporter of the taxi industry, and that industry is one of the vulnerable areas. I hope that the member for Peake is listening to this. Mr Fielder advises that about 50 per cent of personal computers sold last year were not year 2000 compliant and some 90 per cent sold in the preceding year were not year 2000 compliant. The message from Mr Fielder to businesses is, 'Just because you bought a computer in the past two years—

Mr CONLON: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order, which, obviously, relates to the length of this answer: it has been going on for seven minutes. I simply point out to the Minister that it will be the year 2000 if he does not wind up soon.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will know that on this occasion I cannot uphold the point of order because the Minister has not started to debate the issue and I cannot contain him while he continues to provide us with facts. However, I point out to the Minister the opportunity to use ministerial statements if he is to give lengthy replies.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Of course, without interjections and points of order—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will not inflame the matter by carrying on: he will answer the question.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Thank you, Mr Speaker; as always, I appreciate your guidance. The important message from Mr Fielder to businesses is that, just because they might have replaced their computer systems in the past two years, it does not mean that those computers will be compliant. In fact, there is a good chance they will not be. The message is that businesses that are tardy in their auditing of this problem increasingly are risking their business. Indeed, many companies are making it a prerequisite that suppliers in the supply chain be year 2000 compliant in order to have their business. I look forward to being able to inform the Opposition of measures being taken by this Government to ensure that our businesses become compliant and are ready.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Given the Premier's often stated objection to another place's obstruction of the Government's legislative program, will the Premier explain on what principle his Government tried to block the Criminal Law (Sentencing) (Victim Impact Statements) Amendment Bill and the Freedom of Information (Public Opinion Polls) Amendment Bill, both of which originated in and were passed by the House of Assembly?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I have no doubt that, if the honourable member gets the *Hansard* record of Upper House debates, he will be informed.

TAFE PROGRAMS

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training advise the House of the participation levels of students in TAFE programs which have had a significant effect on regional employment?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: This Government has a very strong priority in ensuring that training in regional areas is focused on providing country South Australians with real employment opportunities. Last week, I visited the South-East, and it was very pleasing to see the depth of vigour and enthusiasm with which TAFE, private providers and schools have taken up the challenge in terms of delivering training to young people and residents in the South-East. I will give members a quick example of some of the programs that involve many of the industries. They range through tourism, hospitality, hair dressing and cosmetology, forestry, fishing, agriculture, environmental studies, viticulture, automotive electronics, engineering, retail multimedia and information technology. That is quite a spread and I would have to say that an excellent job is being done.

I visited a place called Boandik Lodge. It is a lodge for elderly citizens, catering for some 200 elderly citizens in Mount Gambier. It is very pleasing to see that, of the 160 full-time and part-time employees of the lodge, 140 employees have undertaken TAFE qualifications in elderly care. The management of the lodge is a very strong supporter of training and the program being run is excellent.

Recently, a joint promotion between the South-East Institute of TAFE and the South-East Economic Development Board identified training needs in the potato industry, which is a particularly important industry in the South-East. Currently, two customised traineeship programs are being delivered at Kentish and Sons in Mount Gambier and the Sobey Company in Kybybolite.

This week, the Diploma of Viticulture Management will be released. This is a joint initiative between the South-East Institute of TAFE and the viticulture industry, and I am advised that there is a very strong demand for the course. I spoke with the managers of Mildara Blass and Southcorp Wines, who had just returned from a conference in Canberra, which highlighted that within three years the viticulture section of the industry will be short by some 2000 employees. They are extremely concerned about the level of training that will have to be undertaken in the next three years.

I can name other initiatives, such as the commercial provision of training to western Victoria, memoranda of agreement with regional schools and strategic alliances with the three universities to deliver higher education on a local basis. A 1997 graduate destination survey carried out by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research showed far better results than the national average; that is, 87 per cent of graduates were employed by 30 May 1997.

I also visited Millicent High School, which is an excellent high school and which is the strongest high school in the Engineering Pathways program. Since it started in 1992, some 200 students have undertaken the Engineering Pathways program at Millicent High School.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: If the honourable member would like me to name them, I can do so. The interesting aspect is that only seven of those 200 students are unemployed: 193 of those students have gained employment through the Engineering Pathways program, and that is an excellent outcome. Firms such as Kimberly-Clark, Wool-

worths, Carter Holt Harvey, SA Water, Southcorp Wines and many small family businesses are involved in taking on those apprentices.

These results in the South-East show that the Government's drive in ensuring that training is delivered in regional centres is of the highest quality, and I compliment South-East TAFE and the private providers in the South-East for the excellent work that they are doing in that area.

BRUKUNGA

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. Is the South Australian Housing Trust continuing to house clients at Brukunga—

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms BEDFORD:—and are those new tenants being asked to sign disclaimer forms waiving their rights and the trust's liability should they become ill?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I think that the honourable member is referring to the old barytes mine. I do not know the details, so I will report back to the House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): Given that the Local Government Boundary—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Is the member for Elder listening? Given that the Local Government Boundary Reform Board has ceased operation, and given that we now have a new panel system, will the Minister for Local Government outline what the role of the Government will be, if any, in local government boundary reform?

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Elder for the third time. If he interjects once more, he will be named instantly.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The completion of the report of the Local Government Boundary Reform Board does conclude the life of the board as we knew it. The board was established in 1996 to reduce the number of councils in South Australia, and it has resulted in greater efficiency in local government service provision and benefits for the community. As reported in the board's report, voluntary structural reform and the initiatives undertaken under that umbrella have resulted in a reduction of the number of councils from 118 in 1996 to 68, with recurrent savings to councils of \$19.4 million and one-off savings of \$3.9 million, giving greater capacity for—

Ms Key interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:—consistent planning across combined areas, improved approaches to managing environmental issues and a greater capacity to participate in regional economic development. A boundary facilitation panel will be established in place of the board. I expect to be able to announce to the House shortly who the members of that panel are, and I will provide a more fulsome answer for the member for Fisher at a later stage.

PALLIATIVE CARE

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I lay on the table the report to Parliament on the care of people who are dying in South Australia and seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is my pleasure to once again table the annual report to Parliament on the care of people who are dying in South Australia. This is the fifth such report which, as members will recall, is prepared each year as a result of a resolution passed by both Houses of Parliament in 1993 as a recommendation of the Select Committee on the Law and Practice Relating to Death and Dying.

The report highlights a number of achievements during the year under review. A Strategic Plan for Palliative Care Services 1998-2006 has been prepared by the Department of Human Services. While South Australia compares favourably by national and international standards in terms of the quality and effectiveness of palliative care provisions and performs well in terms of best practice, the strategic plan provides proposals to ensure that we continue to do so into the future. The strategic plan seeks to ensure that services meet community needs for palliative care and to maintain palliative care as a mainstream service.

The new challenge for palliative care is to share its special mission with a wider audience and to develop its network further. The Government has already acted to address some of the priorities identified by the strategic plan, with a boost in funding of more than \$500 000 for new initiatives in the 1998-99 year. The funding will enhance existing services as well as target areas of special need, particularly in rural areas. Bereavement counselling services, which are recognised as an integral component of the best practice model of palliative care and a necessary component of a comprehensive palliative care service, have been particularly recognised in the new funding.

The report once again stands as a testimony to the many dedicated professionals and volunteers, members of the clergy, carers and families who provide palliative care, support and compassion. We have a proud tradition of volunteerism in South Australia and I pay particular tribute to those people who come forward as volunteers in this area. I met a group of them recently. I must say it is a very difficult area in which to operate, and I particularly appreciate the fact that they choose to do so on a voluntary basis. How we care for people who are dying is a vital measure of our society's values. I am also pleased to note that the 1998 Nurse of the Year award was awarded to a palliative care nurse from the South Coast District Hospital at Victor Harbor, Mrs Kathy Billing.

The report highlights some of the achievements of the Palliative Care Council. Over the last year the council has established the South Australian Palliative Care Resource and Information Service. The service has an extensive information resource collection and a web site, which is one of the few in the world containing multicultural palliative care information. It is a valuable resource and one that is now clearly available worldwide. As I have indicated previously, the need to prepare these reports on an annual basis ensures that palliative care remains a matter of priority for this Government, and it will certainly continue to be so. I commend the report to the House.

MURRAY RIVER

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 want to provide the House with an update on the Murray River water resource. The Murray-Darling Basin Commission has revised the predicted high flows in the Murray River and the River Darling substantially downwards. Consequently, flows into South Australia are now expected to be well below their earlier predictions. This dramatic reduction in predicted flows will mean that there will now be no significant watering of our wetlands within the basin. However, there is concern that even recent flow estimates and modelling undertaken by the commission and the New South Wales Department of Land and Water Conservation have proven to be quite inaccurate, and it is appropriate to consider putting more resources into refining models and upgrading modelling capabilities.

The member for Chaffey raised concerns in the grievance debate on levels of accuracy on this matter yesterday, and I share her views. The Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council will meet in Adelaide on the twentieth of this month, and that is quite opportune, as this is a matter that has already been placed on the agenda of that meeting for discussion.

It is now evident that South Australia has already received the peak flow from the flooding in both the Darling and the Murray catchments—a peak flow of some 34 000 megalitres a day was recorded in late October, compared with the earlier predicted peak flow of about 80 000 megalitres in mid-November.

The flood peak from the Upper Murray catchment has almost totally dissipated. However, importantly, flows are sufficient for water to be diverted to fill Lake Victoria, which is a South Australian storage area. The remaining flow to South Australia is about 30 000 megalitres a day currently and is likely to remain at 20 000 megalitres a day over the next week, and it will possibly remain at these levels over the next three to four weeks. Flows that were initially released from the Goolwa barrage and more recently from Ewe Island barrage have successfully cleared a channel at the Murray mouth. The river mouth is now approximately 150 metres wide.

The Murray Mouth Advisory Committee will develop a revised barrage operating strategy over the next two days, based on the most up-to-date information available from the commission. However, I remind this House and its members that water delivery, through negotiated entitlements under the cap, are not guaranteed to this State, and we are talking about flood flows that are over and above the negotiated entitlement. Assuming that there are no further significant rains in the catchment, it is likely that flows to South Australia will fall to minimum levels by mid-January. However, unlike last season, we will not only receive our entitlement flows, but we will also receive an additional flow from the Hume dam, the Dartmouth dam and the Menindee storage area. This was a negotiated amount of water; it was negotiated with the commission last year. Therefore, it is unlikely that the water level in the lower lakes will fall to the very low levels we experienced last year.

It is too early to predict whether the low or zero flow over the barrages from January 1999 might again result in a constriction at the Murray mouth. However, unless current efforts to remove some of the accumulated sand in the Coorong channel immediately south-east of the river mouth

are reasonably successful, there is a risk that we could again see some restriction of tidal flows in and out of the Coorong by autumn next year. I would like to acknowledge the work of the Murray Mouth Advisory Committee for its management to date of this difficult and complex matter. The committee will continue to monitor, manage and report the changing circumstances as they develop.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Yesterday, I heard the Minister for Human Services emphatically deny any suggestion that the services of BreastScreen SA would be cut back or privatised following a current review of its services. However, I have received representations from a number of people, all voicing serious concerns about the review, its stated purpose and possible other agendas that could be driving it. BreastScreen SA, which is arguably the best service of its kind in Australia, provides a public breast screening and diagnostic service for women in a community based setting.

The annual report of the State's epidemiology unit has shown an 11 per cent reduction in breast cancer mortality in 1997, compared with 1993 to 1996. Of this, 24 per cent was in the target group for screening. A review conducted only six months ago gave a positive result and recommended that there be no change to the existing screening program. Several weeks ago, a further review of BreastScreen SA was established by the Department of Human Services. It has five terms of reference but the first one has started alarm bells ringing and states:

To inquire into and report on the provision of radiological breast screening and assessment in South Australia.

This will include the determination of the most appropriate location for such services, an examination of current costs and predicted costs of any alternative models of service provision, and will recommend a preferred model of service provision.

In a letter to the Minister, dated 7 October 1998, Associate Professor Seymour, who for several years served on the steering committee of BreastScreen SA, criticises the necessity for a review, the qualifications of the review group, a lack of consultation, the terms of reference for the review, the composition of the review group and a procedural irregularity in the appointment of a person with a personal interest in the outcome of the review.

Dr Trevor Pickering, past Federal President of the AMA, goes further in criticising the composition of the review panel and the reasons for the review. In a letter to Dean Brown dated 1 October 1998, he says:

I was a member of the interview panel which selected visiting surgeons to BreastScreen SA on 23 June 1998. The actions of one or more of the unsuccessful surgical applicants have been disgraceful and unprofessional both towards employees of BreastScreen SA and some of their colleagues. The result of the representations from these surgeons has been the setting up of this review.

One of the members of the review panel is an unsuccessful candidate for both positions for which he applied at BreastScreen SA. His appointment is contrary to the principles of justice and will negate any findings of the inquiry.

He goes on to say:

This matter has the potential to harm seriously the very successful breast screening program in South Australia—a program recognised as the leading program of its type in Australia.

A further letter signed by 10 doctors working at BreastScreen SA and dated 8 October 1998 states that the terms of reference have a heavy funding bias and expresses extreme concern about the review as being 'seemingly unnecessary and disruptive'.

As I mentioned before, the Minister emphatically denied any suggestion of cutbacks or privatisation, but over recent weeks there have been a number of occasions where the Minister and his department have been at odds: for example, the closure of Glenside and then the reversal of this decision. Further examples involve the resignation a few days ago of Dr Bob Goldney; the decision of his department following a tender process to remove the funding from Bramwell House and then the reversal of this decision by the Minister; and the backflip by the Minister last week over just what his department had done in relation to resource audits in the food inspection area. In each of these cases, the Minister has blamed his bureaucrats for not informing him adequately or for not carrying out his instructions.

Whether that is how his bureaucrats would see it, we do not know. What we do know is that we cannot be sure that what the Minister is saying is actually what is happening. So, despite his expressions of support for the public breast screening service, how can we be sure that he is actually aware of what is going on? The Minister needs to answer some very basic questions and concerns. Above all, he needs to give a categorical assurance that BreastScreen SA will remain a public community based service and that women will not be required to attend hospitals for screening. He needs to demonstrate to everyone that this review is not about finding a cheaper hospital based or privatised option, both of which would destroy a highly successful service.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): In recent times I have been asked by KESAB to assist with some of its judging, and it has provided an opportunity for me to visit a number of councils around the area. It has given me a good opportunity to find out at first hand how some of the councils are going with their Local Agenda 21. Before I get onto that matter, however, I must say that I went along King William Street this morning and just happened to glance up at the Beehive Corner. I do not know how many members have had the opportunity to see the upgrading of that building, but it is quite magnificent. I would like to commend all those—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: No, we are not talking about European wasps, we are talking about Beehive Corner. Those who have had any responsibility in upgrading that building deserve to be commended. It is a very important building, in a very prominent place in the city of Adelaide. It deserves the upgrading and the attention that it has received, and I would like to commend all those people involved.

I would also like to talk about Local Agenda 21. I hope that most people realise that Agenda 21 is all about calling on local government and communities to find local solutions to environmental problems such as loss of biodiversity, land degradation and global warming. Agenda 21 is presenting fundamental challenges to all spheres of government and the community. It does not relate only to local government but also to State and Federal Governments. Successful Local Agenda 21 programs require a long-term commitment to effect the necessary behavioural, structural and operational

changes to ensure that environmental considerations are factored into all decision making and that the community fully participates in that process.

What has really impressed me, having been given the opportunity of visiting some of the councils, particularly those in the northern part of the metropolitan area, is how those councils have gone out of their way to involve communities in the process. They have ensured that the community fully participated in the Local Agenda 21 process. The challenge for local communities is to get involved in the development and actioning of this program. It is also a challenge for State Governments and for the Federal Government to support local initiatives to ensure that local strategies and policies, informed State and national policies and strategies are introduced.

I am not sure how many South Australian councils are undertaking Local Agenda 21 programs: I understand that it is about 15 or 16. I think that we have the highest participation rate of any of the Australian States, and that is very good for South Australia. The different spheres of government have the opportunity to improve intergovernmental cooperation in regard to achieving environmental outcomes through this program. Consequently, because of the number of councils participating, a number of initiatives such as industry pollution prevention programs, catchment care projects, solar energy schemes, revegetation projects and many more are now being included under the Local Agenda 21 umbrella. The fact that such a large number of South Australian councils have committed to Local Agenda 21 programs at a time of major local government reform and adjustment is a credit to those councils and a reflection of the ongoing success of the intergovernmental partnership for Local Agenda 21, and I commend all those who are involved.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):

There are three matters that I wish to raise. Yesterday in this House we dealt with the matter of superannuation for a judge of the District Court who is 58, and we moved to change the legislation to allow him to receive his superannuation ahead of the age of 60. I take this opportunity to raise the case of Russell Williams, an Adelaide resident who has mesothelioma and who is seeking a lump sum superannuation payment. Mr Williams receives an invalid pension from State super. However, he would like a lump sum payout of all or part of his superannuation to enable him and his wife to travel and to fix up their home. With the money to which he believes he is entitled, he wishes to fix up a number of things before he becomes too ill.

He has been informed by the Treasurer and the State Superannuation Fund that he is unable to access a lump sum until the age of 60. He is currently, as was the case with the judge yesterday, 58 years of age. I have checked this out and, under the regulations under the Superannuation Act, this is the case. However, I would like to appeal to the Premier and the Treasurer to reconsider this matter and to act with compassion to assist someone who is dying from mesothelioma. I believe that we should move for a change in the regulations, perhaps, to allow the Minister discretionary powers in this kind of unique situation. It is very important.

The issue of Mr Williams has been given some coverage, I understand, in the *Advertiser*, on *Today Tonight* and on the Jeremy Cordeaux Show on 5DN. The fact is that Mr Williams is gravely ill and is asking for an act of clemency. This is about commonsense, about compassion, and I would like to appeal to both the Premier and the Treasurer to intercede in

this case to talk to the directors of the superannuation fund to see whether a lump sum payment can be made to assist Mr Williams and his family.

An honourable member: An *ex gratia* payment.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: An *ex gratia* payment, as has been pointed out by a member opposite. The other issue I would like to raise, which I have raised with the Minister for Human Services, is that my office has recently been contacted by and I met with a Mrs Lesley Brown of Parafield Gardens in relation to difficulties she is experiencing in accessing assistance with necessary modifications to her home so that her daughter Christina can return home from the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre where she is currently a resident patient. Mrs Brown said that Christina, who is 24 years of age, has suffered a series of strokes since 1984 and has been treated in both Adelaide and Perth with the assistance of international medical experts in Miami and elsewhere, because of the very rare nature of her illness.

After her most recent stroke, which occurred on 1 August 1998, Christina was left confined to a wheelchair, unable to sit or stand unaided. Mrs Brown said that her daughter needs assistance to feed and toilet herself and that for Christina to be able to move home she will need sturdy ramps placed in the entrance to their home and alterations to the bathroom, etc., to allow for wheelchair access. Mrs Brown said that, to date, Christina had spent three nights at home during the past month and is desperate to return home. With the assistance of portable ramps and a commode chair loaned to her by the Hampstead Centre, she was able to have just those three nights. Mrs Brown said that, although these facilities were adequate for an overnight stay, it was not a viable long-term option, as Christina could not shower or have access to a specially modified toilet.

Mrs Brown said that her home was assessed by Options Coordination during August and the necessary modifications noted. However, she has now been informed by an Options Coordination staff member that her family will not be eligible to receive any assistance until Christina has been home for 12 months. Therefore, Christina and her family are in a catch-22 situation: she cannot come home, because she does not have the special things she needs to allow her to return home; but she cannot get those special things unless she has been home for 12 months. Essentially, she has to remain at the Hampstead Centre, even though she is desperate to come home. Mrs Brown has since contacted Domiciliary Care, which told her that Christina does not fit into their criteria and they are unable to offer her any assistance. Today I have asked the Minister personally for his investigation of this matter and for any information or advice he can give to assist Christina and her family.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Again I wish to draw to the attention of the House the unfortunate decision taken by the Library to remove the London *Times*. I intend in the very near future to move a motion in this House so that the House can have a vote on the issue, because I am of the view that there are many publications in the Library that may be of less value to members wanting to keep themselves properly informed and to have the ability to read one of the best newspapers in the world. The second matter is that I was somewhat amazed this morning to read in the local Messenger newspaper about the scurrilous attack made upon the member for Unley by one Matthew Abraham, who made a number of allegations.

I have come to the conclusion that Mr Abraham has lost the ability to use a telephone directory. It appears by the tone of this beat-up in which he is engaged in relation to the Minister, who is diligently going about his duties, that Mr Abraham regards himself as someone of great significance and importance, even though he is small in stature. Obviously, he has lost the ability to look up the telephone directory. I suggest to him that, if he does not have one, I am very happy to lend him a telephone book so that he can bring himself up to date in relation to contacting the honourable member.

Having read this rather scurrilous article, I was not sure whether the newspaper was short of material, but it would appear that it was. However, it gave great play to this concoction of nonsense which was portrayed in this journal in relation to the member's being too busy to talk to Mr Abraham. May I say to Mr Abraham that I am always too busy to talk to him. I see no purpose in spending any time talking to someone with a poison pen. He has rarely, if ever, made any constructive comments in relation to me or my constituency which were of any value to me or my constituents. However, I am prepared to break my normal rule and provide him with a copy of the telephone book so that he can better inform himself of the telephone number of the member for Unley, whose constituents I am informed have no difficulty in contacting him. If Mr Abraham needs a box to stand on so that he can examine the telephone book at a desk or a table, we may be able to help him out, or with a pair of glasses or whatever else to assist him in his demeanour. In my view, he is a most negative character and not constructive at all.

I again raise the matter of villains attacking helpless people. When I turned on the radio this morning, it was brought to my attention that a gentleman was attacked in his home by four villains and had his arm broken. They stole some of his property. When I spoke to my office in Port Augusta this morning, I was informed that last night gangs of up to 30 young people were in the streets for no good. On a number of occasions I have brought these matters to the attention of the Attorney-General, who does not seem to be pleased with me for some reason or another.

All I want is for good, law-abiding citizens of this State, and particularly elderly people, to be able to live in their homes free from being attacked and without living in a state of fear. These people are putting in more and more security devices at great expense to themselves. Elderly widows are coming to my office absolutely petrified at what is going on. These villains have no regard for other people's property or safety, and it is time the law took some action. I call upon the Attorney-General to give urgent consideration to bringing back the birch for these people.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, bring back the birch.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No, I am fair dinkum.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: If the honourable member thinks it is all right to invade people's homes and belt them, smash their property, intimidate them in the streets, vandalise their cars, and then give them a packet of lollies and tap them on the head and let them go home, she should go out and support them. I am supporting what the community wants. The community is absolutely sick and tired of dealing with these scoundrels. You give them a packet of lollies and tap them on the head. The social workers, do-gooders and other

hangers on, who are a blight on the taxpayers, do nothing. They live off these people, and the taxpayers have to—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: —support them, or if you put them in gaol—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: —it costs the taxpayers.

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

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Next Wednesday 11 November is a day of great national significance to our nation. It is a time when we will be able to take the opportunity to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in the First World War. It was the Great War, the war to end all wars, but sadly that was not the case. Since losing thousands of lives in the 1914-18 encounter, our nation has tragically lost many more, with the Second World War, Korea and Vietnam. Hopefully history has taught us that, no matter who is the victor of these encounters, everyone loses.

Each of us has a clear responsibility to ensure that Australia is never again in a position where we are forced to pay such a high price. Never again do I want to see us paying with the lives of our young people, where they are called upon to put themselves in the most distressing of situations any human can possibly face. Many of our young have gone off to war, as they did in the 1914-18 encounter, full of a sense of adventure and excitement, and an opportunity to see the world, with no idea of what they were about to face. Many believe that our involvement in the Gallipoli campaign of the First World War was a defining moment in our nationhood. That was the time we were truly able to identify the unique qualities which make us Australians.

As these young people landed on the shores of Gallipoli, they faced slaughter and terror; they put up with inhuman conditions; and they experienced grief beyond their wildest dreams. But what evolved out of that encounter? What these young people found within themselves was courage, bravery, honour and dignity. They had the opportunity to show that they found within themselves a caring commitment to their mates, often putting the welfare of their mates ahead of their own. They developed an understanding of their enemy, also young men suffering the same trauma and loss. They developed that Australian sense of a fair go. These are all characteristics we hold dear—characteristics that have got this nation through many struggles and difficulties.

Australia is not the same country it was in 1914. Back then we were a very British country, made up mainly of migrants from England, Ireland and Scotland. Now we are a nation of people who have come from many countries. But, like they did in the early years during the war, some have come here for adventure, some came here to join their family members, but many came to escape the ravages and tyranny of war and persecution.

A couple of weeks ago I had the privilege of attending a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. I listened to a Cambodian woman who told of the trauma that she and her family went through in Cambodia. One of 13 children, she saw her father die. She was the only surviving child. Remembrance Day, 11 November, is an opportunity for these people who have come newly to our nation to also remember their loved ones whom they have lost.

I have two RSL clubs in my electorate: one at Tea Tree Gully (of which I am a member, as is my father, a TPI

returned serviceman) and the other at Salisbury. For all the years I have worked in the Salisbury area, Mr Erold Schulz, the Secretary of the Salisbury RSL, has done a magnificent job in relation to that organisation. These service men and women of the Salisbury RSL are still reaching out and giving to the young people of this nation. They have a corps of cadets who have been encompassed by the Salisbury RSL and who are involved in a whole range of activities along with their families in that area.

Remembrance Day is not about the glorification of war. It is about bravery, courage and strength of character. I would like to pay my tribute and urge all South Australians to stop for a moment next Wednesday at 11 a.m. and reflect on the great gift those bravest of our men and women have given to this nation. For each of us they gave up their youth and, sadly for many, they gave up their lives. Lest we forget.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): Before addressing other issues, I would endorse the remarks of the member for Wright. Too often in Australia we forget the 100 000 young people, nearly all males, but some women, who gave their lives for this country. It was a shocking waste of human potential, and I think the least we can do is remember them, not only next week but throughout the year.

Bordering my electorate is Main South Road which, south from Darlington, is the gateway to Fleurieu Peninsula. At a meeting this week in my electorate, it was suggested that, because it is an important tourist route, we should beautify that road from Darlington, particularly up past the Victoria Hotel through O'Halloran Hill, as the gateway to the peninsula. To that end, I am encouraging the City of Onkaparinga and the Department of Road Transport to work together in a joint effort to plant trees and do other things to improve the aesthetics of that area. I have had informal discussions with the Minister for Transport and, as usual, she is supportive and encouraging and I look forward to positive action in that regard.

There are a couple of matters in relation to law reform that I would like considered. First, where someone has been held in remand and is then acquitted they should be compensated by the State. That reform is long overdue. I am not saying that they should get a large amount of money, but they should be paid for being kept by the State—incarcerated in a remand centre—and, if they are then found innocent, they should be compensated. It is fair and reasonable, and I would like the Attorney-General to consider it.

The other issue relating to law reform is that, where someone has committed a relatively minor offence—not a serious offence—and has not committed any further offences in a period of about 10 years, we should look at what I call a fresh start where the record is made clean and those people can get on with their life without the thought and recollection of what they have done in the past. That matter was brought to my attention recently with regard to a young man in my electorate who has something hanging over his head that he did at 19 years of age, and similar deeds hang over the heads of many other people for many years. After 10 years, if people have done the right thing and have not committed a serious crime, we should clean the slate and give them a fresh start. It would do a lot for the well-being of our community and promote a sense of fair play and justice in our society.

Another issue I am keen about and have raised before relates to the Centenary of Federation. I am urging the Federal Government to create a scholarship scheme so that young people at the upper secondary or tertiary level can

study in another State or Territory of Australia as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations. They could spend several months or longer interstate, with all the States, the Territories and the Commonwealth contributing to it. It is a genuine way of acknowledging our role and status as a Federation. I am hopeful that the Prime Minister will respond positively to the suggestion I made in writing to him some time ago.

The other day I mentioned briefly that our railway stations need brightening up. Some of them are heritage stations, and I accept that they need to be in heritage colours. However, most of our stations are not heritage listed. I would like to see them brightened up in terms of colour, as has been done in New South Wales. We should let ourselves go a little and I urge the Minister for Transport, who has a great flair for the arts, to indulge herself and her department and splash some colour around our railway stations, many of which look drab and dull.

Finally, I highlight the successful centenary celebrations on 23 and 24 October for the Happy Valley Primary School—a wonderful occasion. I had the privilege of planting a time capsule there, which I regard as a great honour. I praise the staff, students and parents of that school for their contribution over 100 years. Obviously not all the contributors are alive today, but it was a wonderful celebration and another indication of a fantastic school system in my electorate that is just one of the many excellent schools that are part of the State school system contributing to the education and well-being of our young people.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to receive the House for the purpose of the presentation of the Address in Reply at 4 o'clock today. I invite the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply and other members to accompany me for the purpose of the presentation of the address.

[Sitting suspended from 3.55 to 4.40 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that, accompanied by the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Governor's opening speech and by other members, I proceeded to Government House and there presented to His Excellency the Address adopted by the House on 3 November, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:

To the honourable Speaker and members of the House of Assembly, I thank you for the Address in Reply to the speech with which I opened the Second Session of the Forty-Ninth Parliament. I am confident that you will give your best consideration to all matters placed before you. I pray for God's blessing upon your deliberations.

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from 4 November. Page 201.)

Clause 12.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: On behalf of the Minister, I move:

Page 4, lines 25 to 28—Leave out the definition of 'prescribed day' and insert:
'prescribed day' means—

- (a) the first anniversary of the day of commencement of this section; or
- (b) if a regulation fixes a day prior to the first anniversary of the day of commencement of this section as the prescribed day—that day;

Mr FOLEY: The Opposition supports this amendment, following the events of last evening, when it was clear that the Opposition had not been provided with an appropriate briefing on this clause by Government officers. As I said last night, the Opposition was of the view that the 12 months stipulation would mean 12 months and that any extension would require a referral back to the Parliament. When it was discovered last night that that was not the case, as we know, the matter was adjourned to allow for discussions with the Treasurer. To some extent, it was illuminating that the Treasurer was of the same view as the Opposition on this matter. The matter had somehow also escaped the Treasurer's attention.

In fairness, the Treasurer acted in good faith. He agreed that it was an appropriate objection and concern of the Opposition and ensured that this matter was addressed immediately. Officers overnight, and no doubt this morning, drafted an amendment, which was circulated to all States participating in the national electricity market. Thus an amendment has been drafted with the approval of all States. That amendment clearly now puts into legislation the prescribed day and, on the first anniversary of the day, the legislation must return to this Parliament for an extension should that be required.

Obviously, the participating States, through this amendment, have flexibility in that, should they do as they have assured us they will—that is, put insurance in place inside the 12 months—reference back to the Parliament will not be necessary. That can be done by regulation, and that is acceptable to the Opposition. We support the amendment.

Mr CLARKE: I make an observation: members in the other place often pride themselves that they are members of the House of Review, scrutinising legislation that goes from this place to their place. That is their justification for their continued existence, at some considerable expense to the public purse. On this occasion, it is the people's House that scrutinised and reviewed the legislation of the House of Review and found it wanting. That calls into question why that place continues to exist.

Mrs MAYWALD: Has NEMMCO attempted to identify or assess the extent and nature of its likely risk exposure during the first 12 months of operation?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: In terms of risk analysis, yes, a risk document was prepared by NEMMCO when it approached the insurance market for cover. This analysis contained input from the transmission network service providers. We are advised that the document presented to NEMMCO is a confidential document but, in terms of risk assessment, I am prepared to approach NEMMCO and obtain whatever details we can obtain for the honourable member.

Mrs MAYWALD: Are the potential risks in any way related to the reported problems that NEMMCO has had in integrating its national computer control systems resulting in the delays in the start up of the national electricity market?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The computer systems are being trialled currently. The market trials commenced on 1 September and involve 14 sets of tests developed in conjunction with market participants. All those tests have now been run except for the 14 day trial, which is currently under way. NEMMCO advises that these tests have demon-

strated that the systems operate in accordance with design and have demonstrated required levels of availability and reliability. The 14 day live trial is intended to demonstrate the sustainability of the systems over a longer period.

Mrs MAYWALD: What scope is there for partitioning or isolating the different kinds of exposure that might arise as a result of different facets of NEMMCO's operations, for example, power management systems breakdowns, as against acts over which NEMMCO has no control?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Backup facilities exist in these systems. There are two control centres, one in Sydney and one in Brisbane, both of which are identical and can operate the systems individually, if required. So, if the computer system breaks down, it can be switched across to the other system that is operating. In addition, backup computer facilities are available at IBM's national centre, which is in Cumberland Forest in Sydney. There are backup systems; if the computer system breaks down, they can be fed straight in to support the system.

Mr WILLIAMS: When we debated this clause yesterday evening, the Opposition said that it did not like the idea of this, but it wormed its way out of it at the end. We have just heard from the member for Hart that the Opposition was not provided with an appropriate briefing. For once, I concur with the member for Ross Smith regarding the House of Review.

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: I would think that the member for Hart, as well as getting a briefing, would have read the Bill. It is obvious what the Bill provides, but this amendment has not changed my attitude—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: I am aware of that, but I still want to put on the record that I am not happy about handing anyone an indemnity against negligence towards the public of South Australia.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: It is very easy to express it, but I am still not happy with this amendment. It is very poor form for the Minister to move an amendment which still exposes the public of South Australia to negligence on the part of NEMMCO for up to 12 months. We are moving to a national electricity market and I would have thought that we would do it in a way that would not require this sort of indemnity. I do not think it is right for this House to place that sort of burden upon the public of South Australia. Apparently, NEMMCO does not have a large capital base and the insurance industry does not know and has not been able to assess the risks, so it is very difficult to set a premium to cover those risks. However, at the end of the day, the shareholders of NEMMCO are the State Governments around Australia.

At the end of the day, insurance is not about getting away from the cost of mistakes: it is about spreading the costs so that, if there are unforeseen costs, they are spread and are not imposed on individuals or small groups of individuals to their great detriment. It is about spreading the risk over the whole community. I would think that that is exactly what we are doing by not having this indemnity. We are making the States of Australia the self-insurers for any unforeseen problem that might arise. This Bill says, 'No, we will not spread the risk. We cannot find an insurer that is prepared to talk to us about a premium. However, we will not self-insure and spread the risk right across the community. We will put it to the community that, if some unforeseen circumstance arises and it happens to fall heavily on an individual or a group of

individuals, they can bear the cost.' I find that totally unacceptable.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I will reply to the member for MacKillop's statement. If the computer system that is operating breaks down, it does not mean that there is a lack of direction, because it reverts automatically to the normal State operations that are currently in place. If the honourable member is concerned that consumers will be without power for a week, 10 days, or whatever, from the assurances that have been provided to us, that will not happen. ETSA now operates South Australia's power system and, if the computers operating the national system break down or become inoperable, automatically we revert to the systems currently operating the power grids in each State, thus the continuation of supply is assured.

Mr WILLIAMS: Surely that statement from the Minister obviates the need for this clause. If the fall-back position is that we go back to the system which is operating now and which has been operating successfully for many years, there is no need to have this indemnity.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The computer system is just one part of this matter. A security system is tied up with it and there are a number of other factors. I might have been too specific in talking about the computer system only, because there are other issues. I was trying to highlight for the member for Mackillop the fact that the certainty of electricity supply is ensured if the computer system falls over.

Mr McEWEN: I think that the point that the member for Mackillop is trying to make is still being missed, just as it was last night, when it took some time before the lights went on for Opposition members and they understood what we were on about. In fairness to them, they actually realised in the end what we were on about. Let us attempt again to get the Committee to appreciate the question that has been proposed by the member for Mackillop. If an indemnity is in place and somebody is adversely affected as an outcome of some action of that party, my understanding is that the person concerned cannot seek damages because the other party has an indemnity. Rather than the States being insurers at large, so that an adversely affected party has somewhere to go in relation to seeking compensation, my understanding is that that cannot happen.

No-one is saying that there is no likelihood that an individual or a community could be severely at risk because of some unforeseen event for which NEMMCO is actually responsible but, because this indemnity is in place, they have nowhere to go. I would like the Minister to reassure me that there is somewhere else to go to get damages, just because this indemnity is in place.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The member for Gordon is correct that it does indemnify NEMMCO. There will be three computer systems, so if all three fell over—and I do not know what the chances of that might be—there would be nowhere to go. The honourable member is correct. I would imagine that the likelihood of all three falling over at once is pretty slim. If one falls over, there are backup systems in both Sydney and Brisbane to switch over to.

Mr FOLEY: Some of the comments by the coalition partners of the Government should not go unchallenged. Quite frankly, for somebody like the member for Mackillop to accuse the Opposition of worming out of something really beggars belief, given the practice of the coalition partners of this Government in recent times. For the member for Gordon—

Mr WILLIAMS: I rise on a point of order. I ask you to rule, Mr Chairman, on the relevance of these remarks to the debate.

The CHAIRMAN: I take the point that the member for Mackillop has made and I ask the member for Hart to come back to the matter that is before the Chair.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. For the member for Gordon, when addressing the amendment before the Committee, to show such passion and anger about process, given his quite blase attitude about this Government's process when it comes to side deals with Government contracts, only highlights the inconsistencies of the political and policy position of the coalition partners.

Mr WILLIAMS: I rise on a further point of order, Sir. You just ruled on relevance, and the member for Hart has continued with his irrelevant ramblings.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order.

Mr FOLEY: It is true that the Opposition was caught out last night: that was obvious, and the member for Mackillop can have great glee about that. He is obviously beyond ever making an error in this place, and I look forward to seeing him display his sheer brilliance in years to come. However, it should be noted that the Treasurer of this State was also caught out last night; so, if the Opposition Treasury spokesperson is guilty of not being on top of this legislation, I have a good partner in the Treasurer of South Australia. It just happens from time to time that people do not have total understanding of some legislation, and that is why we have scrutiny. I am prepared to admit when I am wrong, and I did that. It was not the first occasion and it will not be the last.

The coalition partners are enjoying the opportunity today to disagree with the Government and the Opposition. As one of my colleagues said quite rightly last night, had we been opposing this legislation, no doubt they would have been in coalition with the Government, as they always are; or, indeed, as the Leader of the Opposition mentioned last night, the watusi would have been danced and two would have come across while one stayed. The reality is that the coalition partners of this Government—

Mr WILLIAMS: I rise on a point of order. I believe that the member for Hart has just imputed an improper motive to my colleagues on the cross benches and me, and I would like you to rule accordingly, Sir. He said that, had the Opposition opposed this Bill, our position would have been different.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr FOLEY: The Minister who is representing the Treasurer in another place has made a good effort in putting this Bill into context. Given the tension surrounding this piece of legislation, it is important that we revisit one or two of the issues as to why we are here. It is okay when you are a coalition partner and an Independent member of Parliament representing a constituency to look at the small picture and take a somewhat parochial position. As Labor members indicated last night, we share all the concerns of the small picture position of the member for Mackillop, but at the end of the day we took a decision in this Parliament three years ago to be the lead State legislator. With that came a series of responsibilities regarding national legislation.

We were not at all happy with indemnity and, in fairness to this Government, it clearly was not, either. At the end of the day, this Government had to cop a deal for the national electricity market to succeed and to go ahead. Opposition members took a collective position that we had to do likewise. It was hotly debated within our Caucus and Cabinet and, as many of my colleagues stated last evening, they are

not happy and they wish that we were not doing this. As the shadow Treasurer, I have a view that this was the right thing to do—not that the indemnity is right, because it is not, but because we in this State have a responsibility to ensure that the national electricity market goes ahead, that we are upholding our responsibility to put that legislation in place.

At the end of the day, this State was represented around the table that nipped out this deal, but we were not there because we are the Opposition. The Independent members' coalition partners were, because they are the Government. That comes when a Party gets 50 plus 1 per cent in this place: it becomes the Executive Government and it makes the decisions.

In this state, we had to cop a deal that we did not like. However, given the serious issue at hand, we felt in Opposition that the Government had to be supported. I have copped flak for that internally. My colleagues are not happy with that, but they will live with it; we will live it, and we will move on. For the Independent coalition partners of this Government to come in here with their small picture approach to this matter without looking at the wider responsibilities of this Parliament, Government and Opposition only highlights the narrow focus that the conservative Independent members of this coalition bring to this place. However, at the end of the day, you have to be able to look at the bigger picture and be able to accept from time to time that you cannot have your own way. The Government's coalition partners really want to be serious about touching this Government up, standing up for bad policy decisions, standing up for things that are wrong—

Mr WILLIAMS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Chairman. The member for Hart has wandered back to his inane ramblings earlier in this debate, and I would ask you to rule accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has shown some flexibility in this debate this afternoon concerning the number of times that members have spoken to this clause. However, if the honourable member is so concerned about what is being said, he will have the opportunity to respond.

Mr FOLEY: I am debating the amendment to clause 12. At the end of the day, I happen to think that there has been a defining moment in this place in the past 24 hours. We on this side of politics have to understand that, if the coalition partners of this Government want to pontificate, grandstand and carry on the way they do, they had better start showing some consistency. I for one will not put up with their waltzing into this place and cherry picking the issues—as they have done on this legislation—on which they reckon they can make a stand, comfortable in the knowledge that it will not alter the outcome. I for one will not sit silent on that, and I am happy to highlight that. At the end of the day, this legislation will be supported by the Opposition. This amendment is the right amendment, and we will support it.

Mr McEWEN: The Labor Party needs to learn in this place that it will have to earn, not steal, government. What is more, it has the potential to earn government with our support if it shows it is good enough and it has the faith of the people of South Australia. The member for Spence has demonstrated that he is a talented legislator and on a number of occasions has gained our support to successfully move Bills through this House. Why do some of his colleagues not learn from the principled approach of the member for Spence—because intimidation and bully tactics will get them nowhere, whereas a principled approach will get them everywhere. They will learn the lesson one day. Let us return to the one matter that is before this Chamber this afternoon—

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Chairman. Will the member for Gordon identify the real member for Spence; I do not recognise him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr McEWEN: We are not on about small-mindedness but about an enormous issue—the freedom of the individual and the fact that this amendment abandons the individual. This amendment says that you are there at your own risk and, if something goes wrong, there is no protection for you. This is a disgraceful set of circumstances that the conservative Government in this place is allowing to go through with the support of the Labor Opposition. It is a total denial of the rights of the individual. If the risks are so small and the event that somebody will be exposed to damages is so unlikely, then put the protection in place. The real hypocrisy in this comes about from the fact that the very inquiry into Optima and ETSA has involved risk—risk in every sense of the word. This is about risk and exposing the individual to an unacceptable level of risk, and we hope that nothing goes wrong, because if it does an individual will be abandoned.

Mr WILLIAMS: I would like to comment on the member for Hart's reference to the coalition partners and small picture focus. The Bill is an integral part of setting up the national electricity market of Australia. One of the reasons for setting up the national electricity market is to try to increase the competitiveness, to allow industry to prosper. At the end of the day, it is all about jobs, employment and allowing Australian workers to compete with those in overseas countries.

The member for Hart stood there and accused me and my colleagues on the cross benches of small-mindedness. I inform the member for Hart that, ever since I have been in this place, the small-mindedness that has emanated from the benches opposite has absolutely staggered me. It has been all about politics and not about creating jobs in South Australia. Members opposite complained today—as they do on most days—about the time wasting of Ministers in Question Time. However, to my knowledge, they have asked virtually no questions about the unemployment position in this State. Yet they will talk about the small picture focus. I invite the member for Hart to expand his vision and think about the people of South Australia—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: The member for Hart—and this is his terminology—is pontificating. He is at it again, even when interjecting. We have been told that, if there is a failure, there is a backup system. We have also been told that, if all three computer systems happen to fail, we will go back to the existing situation and maintain the electricity supply in South Australia and, indeed, the other States as has been the case for many years.

I still fail to see why we have to indemnify NEMMCO against negligence. I find that totally unacceptable.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (13 and 14) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

[Sitting suspended from 5.28 to 6 p.m.]

**NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA)
(MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.1 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 17 November at 2 p.m.