

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 27 October 1999

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

### NOARLUNGA HOSPITAL

A petition signed by 1 079 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the Government to fund intensive care facilities at Noarlunga Hospital was presented by Hon. R.L. Brokenshire.

Petition received.

### RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A petition signed by 103 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the Government to increase recreational facilities in Trott Park and Sheidow Park was presented by Mr Hanna.

Petition received.

### CHILD-CARE SERVICES

A petition signed by 192 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the Government to allow the child-care services at the regency Institute of TAFE to remain open was presented by Ms White.

Petition received.

### HOME INVASIONS

A petition signed by 20 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the Government to increase sentences for persons convicted of robbery with violence of residential property was presented by Mr Venning.

Petition received.

### PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Regional Development (Hon. R.G. Kerin)—

- Code Registrar for the National Third Party Access Code for Natural Gas Pipeline Systems—Report, 1998-99
- Dairy Authority of South Australia—Report, 1998-99
- Primary Industries and Resources of South Australia—Report, 1998-99
- Soil Conservation Council—Report, 1998-99
- Technical Regulator—Electricity—Report on the Operations of the Electricity Act, 1998-99
- Technical Regulator—Gas—Report on the Operations of the Gas Act, 1998-99

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

- Administration of the Development Act—Report, 1998-99.

### LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Mr CONDOUS (Colton):** I bring up the fourth report of the committee and move:

That the report be received and read.

Motion carried.

**Mr CONDOUS (Colton):** I bring up the fifth report of the Legislative Review Committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** I bring up the 106th report of the Public Works Committee on the botanic wine and rose development stage 2 status report and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion carried.

## QUESTION TIME

### HINDMARSH STADIUM

**Mr WRIGHT (Lee):** Will the Premier explain why the government does not know how much the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium could cost taxpayers? The Auditor-General, Mr MacPherson, told today's hearing of the Economic and Finance Committee:

We have committed ourselves as a state to paying around \$30 million-plus to a facility where we have no rights and where we have very limited proprietary rights. We have significant ongoing liability exposures in terms of the need to meet the default or the inability of others to meet their obligations.

Later, he said:

It cannot be known what the exposure to the taxpayer will ultimately be.

The Premier has said that the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium is one of his major achievements.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** I have not seen the evidence given by the Auditor-General, but commonsense tells us that if we are relying on someone paying a levy and we guarantee to pick up the balance of the levy if they do not pay it, and if the levy is based on attendances, then the Auditor-General or the opposition or even the Soccer Federation do not know what the attendances will be. So, it is quite true to say that the exposure is related to the attendances. Obviously, that is a correct statement. If the attendances are 10 000 the exposure is less than if the attendances are 5 000. It is a good try by the member for Lee. The simple fact is that the exposure is attendance related; the levy is paid on the attendance. If the attendance is 1 000 the exposure is different from when the attendance is 10 000.

The honourable member has tried to make a point, but he has tripped himself up. It is obvious to everyone that, if the levy is based on attendances, it will vary. The same question could be asked about any of the other sporting stadiums funded under previous arrangements. What is the ongoing funding of The Pines hockey stadium or the velodrome? They are done under different arrangements, and there is a whole series of arrangements in relation to the soccer stadium. In relation to the matter of ownership, which is implied in the member for Lee's question, that answer was given in response to the Auditor-General's Report the other night.

### STATE ECONOMY

**Mr CONDOUS (Colton):** Will the Premier please inform the House what effect a continuing range of economic

indicators will have on the South Australian economy, with particular reference to young South Australians?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** I thank the member for Colton for his question. The release of the report today is significant, because it is the second highest level of job optimism recorded for South Australia since the surveys were commenced. A run of indicators pointing in this direction has to be taken notice of, particularly in this instance when the survey has been conducted by arguably Australia's largest recruitment firm.

The Morgan and Banks survey shows that the strongest growth will be in legal, retail, information technology services, construction and the property sector, with medium size businesses expecting a net employment growth of 29.2 per cent and larger businesses expecting net employment growth in the vicinity of 15.1 per cent. That is up 12.7 per cent on the previous survey and is a clear indicator of the strength of the economy that is emerging in South Australia. More importantly, the industries that are experiencing unprecedented growth include high-tech industries, call centres and customer service centres, and they are the key sectors that we focused on for growth in South Australia. Furthermore, the government has sought to develop these industry sectors to the extent that South Australia becomes a world leader in them.

Year 11 and year 12 students are in the midst of swot vac and many of these students will be looking to enter the work force in the foreseeable future. A range of economic indicators shows that the South Australian economy is performing well and, in doing so, it is in a position to present school leavers with greater choices. With economic fundamentals in place, there is considerable scope for our young people to develop the goals for the future, to have hope and, most importantly, to develop and engender confidence in their own future, and that future is in South Australia.

The future of our young people and the creation of jobs for our children and grandchildren is what has made the government determined to free our state from the shackles of the debt legacy—Labor's economic mess—that we inherited. There is little or no chance of improvement for a state that inherits the legacy of a generation of debt. What we have been at pains to deliver and are now successfully delivering to the South Australian community is, as we move into the next century, the prospect of a debt-free state in the non-commercial sector with an economy starting to rebound. Instead of accepting the norm that we are number five or six in Australia on economic indicators, we are now passing other states in a range of economic indicators and moving up into the second and third category and, in some areas, we in South Australia are now leading the rest of the nation. When you look at exports—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** What did the member for Peake say?

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** You are not the brightest crayon in the box.

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Peake is out of order!

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I do not know what the member for Peake is saying. Every question time he interjects constantly. I have no idea what he is saying. He must be taking elocution lessons from a *Rocky* video. I understand his nervousness about a good economy, given that there are some

problems with membership in the ALP sub-branch in his electorate. I can understand why he is pale and nervous. Moving on to the economy—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Would you like to speak up in one syllable so we can understand what you are talking about?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will ignore interjections and the member for Peake will remain silent.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I wouldn't do that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I do not think Mr Lunchalot has anything to talk about.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Have you been to lunch today?

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The member for Elder has. The pair are doing it; they are taking it in turns. I wonder whether Mike's head is on a platter. Coming back to the key point of this question about the economic rebuilding of South Australia, I advise the House that I had the opportunity earlier this morning at Mullins Wheels in what is the leader's electorate of Salisbury, I think, to open a new wet paint line at considerable cost. It is almost a 100 year old family company, third generation. It has survived the odds. Only 1 in 200 of such companies survive to build an 80 or 100 year history.

They are now exporting wheels to 30 countries throughout the world, and putting in this paint line will enable them to chase further export market opportunities overseas. It is the exports that are now setting South Australia apart from other states of Australia—a 6.5 per cent increase in our exports in South Australia compared with a 2 per cent downturn nationally. That means that we are setting a pace in exporting for the rest of Australia. Setting a pace in exporting, opening up markets, taking in trade missions, and opening up dialogue with these countries is fundamental to further expansion of exports, which brings about further jobs in South Australia. That is the sequence. When we look at the export figures, we see that our automotive industry increased its exports in automotive products by 55 per cent last year, outperforming the wine industry in growth of exports. That augers well and strengthens our arm in arguing with Daimler Chrysler, for example, the Chrysler part of which has \$47 billion to invest in the automotive industry in the next three to five years. They are the opportunities we have to go and market and seize. We must encourage South Australian based companies like Mullins to reinvest. That underpins survey results like the Morgan and Banks survey which give optimism, confidence and hope in South Australia, in particular to young South Australians.

## HINDMARSH STADIUM

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why did the government fail to carry out appropriate due diligence to limit taxpayer exposure and liability from the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, and why has the government ignored three years of detailed formal warnings from the Auditor-General about the potential cost and liabilities associated with the stadium? The Auditor-General, Ken MacPherson, told today's hearing of the Economic and Finance Committee that 'there was inadequate due diligence'. Referring to previous audit

warnings, Mr MacPherson also stated, '... but we had the amber lights flashing in our report of 1997. I remember writing it and thinking to myself, "This is a very serious issue." If the government wants to run dead on an audit report there is nothing I can do about it.'

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** If the leader looked at the answers to questions asked about the Auditor-General's Report over the past two years he would see that we have tried to put in place processes to address the issues raised by the Auditor-General. Referring to ownership of the stadium, I have already advised the House on a number of occasions that we have been in negotiations with the City of Charles Sturt regarding the possible purchase of the stadium, that matter having been raised by the Auditor-General and also I think by the Public Works Committee at the time. We have also tried to speak to the management committee and Soccer Federation about their requirements under the deed, and those negotiations are ongoing.

### NATIONAL RURAL SUMMIT

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** Will the Deputy Premier please explain to the House the extent of this government's commitment to regional development and the input South Australia will be having to the National Rural Summit being held in Canberra this week and, in particular, the need to recognise the contribution of those people who live in isolated parts of the state, especially those involved in the pastoral, mining and tourism industries, which are really the salt of the earth.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Regional Development):** I thank the member for Stuart for the question and for the obvious explanation, which was referring to his wonderful constituents in the north. Over the next few days, the federal government has seen fit—and we commend it—to hold a national regional summit in Canberra. The Hon. John Dawkins is to attend the conference tomorrow, and I will be following tomorrow night, to put South Australia's case on what we see as a range of vital issues which affect rural Australia. Certainly, the publicity leading to this has highlighted the depressed state of regional and rural Australia. That is true to some extent, but a lot of exciting things are also happening in many areas, which need to be balanced out.

There is no doubt that our export performance in South Australia over the last couple of years has been strongly driven by the success of some regions in the fields of viticulture, horticulture, aquaculture and a range of other industries which are doing extremely well. As I have said many times in this House, for the first time in decades, the greatest problem in some regions is lack of labour and lack of housing, something which governments have not had to address for quite a while. It is particularly relevant to mention that aspect this week, and it is relevant to some of those areas that the member for Stuart mentioned. We need to be totally aware that the prosperity that we are experiencing at the moment is not spread evenly across the community. We certainly have a range of communities, a range of regions and several industries in South Australia that are still depressed and need a lot of work to go ahead.

Over the last several years, the government has put in place a range of measures to address some of those problems, and certainly the Eyre Peninsula regional strategy has made a big difference in one of the areas that was really battling. We have rural plans in the Mallee, and the member for Stuart

has been chairing a committee in the southern pastoral areas looking at what we can do to help not just economically but also socially in that area, which has experienced a bad run of seasons. Certainly, the wool industry is one that absolutely stands out as needing a lot of attention. In the last couple of weeks, in conjunction with SAFF and Elders, we have launched a series of workshops to help people within the wool industry come to terms with where they are at the moment to be able to identify their costs and, hopefully, to work out what their viability might be in the future and whether, in fact, as wool growers, they have a viable future. That is a pretty important decision for them to make.

Obviously, one of the areas of great concern to us, and to South Australian governments, for quite a while has been the Upper Spencer Gulf which, traditionally, has relied on a small group of industries which we have seen downsized over the last couple of decades. Yesterday afternoon, the Premier, the Minister for Industry and Trade and I met with the Upper Spencer Gulf Common Purpose Group, which is a terrific effort by the three cities in that region to come together for the first time on economic development. They really are putting in a lot of effort. They are trying to match up their planning approval processes and they are working together as a team. They are trying to help each other through, identify what the advantages of the region are and try, through cooperation, to go ahead. I well and truly commend Ken Madigan and everyone else in that group and the implementation team that sits under that. I thank the Minister for Industry and Trade for the way in which he has helped, through Industry and Trade, to resource that group. We have also put money in out of the Office of Regional Development, and certainly those people are very grateful for the assistance that they have been given to try to create economic development in that area.

Over the next couple of days, I think there will be a couple of very clear messages for the federal government. Obviously, each state will have some fairly clear messages, because the problems are not the same everywhere. I think one of the important things to recognise with the federal government is that its commitment financially is quite good—whether it be the money for transaction centres, for the telecommunications infrastructure fund or NHT. There is a range of schemes with respect to the federal government; its financial commitment has been very good. However, over the last several years (and it started with Brian Howe with the regional economic development organisations that were set up) what we have seen in regional Australia is the federal government coming in with separate infrastructure and a separate organisation from that of the states and local government. That caused enormous duplication and a lack of cooperation across the various levels of government. That situation is improving, but the clear message to the federal government is: thank you for the commitment financially, but please give the states and local government a much greater say in how those resources are implemented into regional Australia. I think that the only way in which we can solve some of these problems is a lot of local ownership.

If decisions are made in Canberra without the states and local people being a lot more involved than they have been, that money will not achieve the outcomes which ultimately it is capable of achieving. So, that will be the major message to come from this exercise, and I look forward to the federal government acting on what is said over the next few days and to outcomes further down the track.

### HINDMARSH STADIUM

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** Will the Premier confirm that the government has engaged even more consultants in relation to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, this time to ascertain how much the stadium will actually cost taxpayers? Who are these consultants, and how much will these consultants cost taxpayers? Sir, with your leave and that of House, I would like to explain this question to the Premier. We know that you pulled the minister's leave today to stop him from going to Darwin—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the honourable member does not continue with his question I will withdraw leave.

**Mr FOLEY:** I apologise, sir. Thank you for pointing that out. Before the Economic and Finance Committee this morning the Auditor-General said:

I understand the government has engaged consultants to determine exactly where the issues stand and what can be done to limit the exposure of the taxpayer in the future.

Of course, the Ciccarello Olympic soccer consultancy has already cost \$378 000.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** I will check that for the member for Hart. My understanding is that the consultancy occurring at the moment is being conducted by Thompson Tregear, or some name like that, and is being undertaken by the Soccer Federation.

**Mr Foley:** Some name like that!

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Well, it is undertaken by the Soccer Federation.

**Mr Foley:** Some name like that!

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** I am not sure of the spelling, but the Soccer Federation is undertaking—

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** The member for Hart knows that I do not run the Soccer Federation.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

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

*The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** And the Premier.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Hart for interjecting after being called to order.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** As I was saying, I will check this for the member for Hart, because I understand that the present consultancy is being undertaken by the Soccer Federation in—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** No. My understanding is that they are trying to establish the costs of operating the stadium from a Soccer Federation point of view, and that is the consultancy being undertaken at the moment.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** Will the Minister for Education respond to community concerns over instances of substance abuse occurring in or near school property?

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education):** I alert the House today to an activity which is both serious and sad that is currently happening within our community. It involves a small group of teenagers who are not students of Enfield Primary School but who gather there to sniff paint. It is a sad state of affairs that youth in our community congregate near school grounds in and out of school hours to

engage in what is a stupid and very risky activity indeed. It is a matter of serious concern for government, parents, schools, health authorities and everyone in the community when this sort of activity is undertaken by a group of youths, especially bearing in mind that there are so many other things in our community in which young people can become involved.

The school community is addressing this issue. Indeed, the people concerned are to be congratulated, because they are working hard to educate and influence their own students about the harm that these substances can do if they are not aware of the dangers involved. In fact, a number of substances used by youths in this way are not illegal and are open to regular abuse by many in the community: they include paint, glue and textas. But what we in our community have to be aware of—and what young people especially must be aware of—is the danger and the long-term danger that the sniffing of these substances can cause.

I am pleased to say that a forum has been established at the school with representatives of parents, the police, other schools, Family and Youth Services, Second Storey (a youth agency) and the Drug and Alcohol Services Council. That forum is already working well in two ways: first, it is lending support to parents to ensure that they are aware of the signs to look for in their children; and, secondly, it will continue an ongoing education program for students of the school. This term (term 4), drug education will be taught to all children at Enfield Primary School to ensure that they are well aware of the dangers that this activity can lead to.

I also want to acknowledge the media for the responsible and positive way in which it has handled this issue. It has played an informative role in keeping the community apprised of the issue and I trust that it will continue to keep the local community informed without detracting from its seriousness. The health and safety of young people in our community is absolutely paramount. To make sure that our young people work closely with school educators and Youth and Family Services and do not fall into the trap of drug addiction is one of the responsibilities of this government.

I commend the Enfield Primary School for its initiative in setting up this community forum. I will continue to follow the progress of this forum. I trust that the students of the school who are not involved will listen well to the education that they receive this term and not undertake such a stupid and risky activity.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am advised that any questions for the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Minister for Government Enterprises will be taken by the Deputy Premier.

### GOVERNMENT CONSULTANCIES

**Mr WRIGHT (Lee):** What action has the Premier taken to ensure that all government consultancies are, to use the Auditor-General's words, 'properly documented, the expectations are clearly articulated and that that relationship is properly managed'? The Auditor-General said that this would allow the necessary openness and accountability to satisfy the public interest.

Today, in answer to a question from a member of the Economic and Finance Committee who claimed that many consultancies in recent years have not been managed so as to protect the openness of the process, the Auditor-General said, 'I would have to agree with that. The Ciccarello one is an example which we have given in this year's report.'

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** The Auditor-General also said that it was appropriate for government to have consultancies from time to time to give particular expert and professional advice, as is required by government for the discharge of its responsibilities. I note that the member for Lee left that bit out of his explanation of the question. As we have indicated previously, any matters that are referred by the Auditor-General will be taken up with the chief executive of my department to ensure that they are followed through.

### MANUFACTURING SECTOR

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** My question is directed to the Minister for Industry and Trade.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH:** It is. Following the Morgan and Banks survey details released today, will the minister outline how we are keeping our manufacturing strategy up to date in South Australia?

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade):** As the Premier has already remarked, the government welcomes this survey, which adds to a number of surveys that have shown a positive outlook for the manufacturing sector and other sectors of the economy in South Australia. We are all aware that the manufacturing sector is one of the most important sectors in the State—it certainly underpins the living standards of all South Australians. It is the largest contributor to our GNP and the largest source of employment. In South Australia alone, it employs about one in seven directly and one in four if you take into account the flow-on effect. It is one of the strongest industries about which both federal and state governments need to be concerned.

Under the previous arrangements we have had the establishment of the Centre for Manufacturing, and we have asked the centre to look at what its future role should be in relation to industry in South Australia. There are a number of similar entities now in other states, notably Queensland and others, that have set up similar if not competing centres for manufacturing, and we have asked the centre and the department to look at what is the next development in relation to the Centre for Manufacturing, and I have no doubt it will have a heavy innovation component in it, because there is no doubt that the economies and companies that will distinguish themselves will be doing so through innovation and innovative products.

We have also asked the Manufacturing Industry Advisory Board to look at a 10 year vision for the manufacturing industry, and that board has been working on that in consultation with industry now for some months, and we would hope to be able to finalise that plan sooner rather than later. We have also developed various sector plans and approaches. I have spoken previously in the House on things such as the cast metals precinct, the statewide tooling program, the Defence Teaming Centre, the Wine Industry Forum, Food for the Future and those sorts of industries.

Also we think that the manufacturing industry awards are so important that we are actually trying to get the federal government to take that up on a national basis because we believe that the benchmarking component of the awards in actual fact will have some good ramifications for companies not only on a state basis but also a national basis. On that basis we have taken it up with Senator Minchin. We certainly welcome the survey responses. The indications are that the economy is on the improve, and will maintain that for some

time. We certainly welcome that, and we look forward to working with the manufacturing industry to make sure that they gain every benefit out of it.

### CICCARELLO, Mr S.

**Mr SNELLING (Playford):** Leaving aside any cabinet deliberations—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr SNELLING:**—did the Premier have any role in or influence on the appointment of Mr Sam Ciccarello as a consultant to the then Minister for Tourism in March 1997?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** I am sorry, Mr Speaker, I just did not hear the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I would ask the member to repeat the question and ask members to exercise some silence.

**Mr SNELLING:** Leaving aside any cabinet deliberations, did the Premier have any role in or influence on the appointment of Mr Sam Ciccarello as a consultant to the then Minister for Tourism in March 1997?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Did I sign off—no.

*Members interjecting:*

### METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** Can the Minister for Emergency Services outline to the House the new recruitment program by the Metropolitan Fire Service?

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services):** I am pleased to announce today to my colleagues in this House and also to the community that due to natural attrition that has occurred in recent times in the MFS, and due to the fact that we are committed to ensuring that we have best practice fire services in the Metropolitan Fire Service, in the next couple of weeks an advertisement will be appearing throughout South Australia seeking the recruitment of 30 new firefighters to join the Metropolitan Fire Service. This will ensure that the current level of professionalism and the establishment numbers of fire officers in the Metropolitan Fire Service are sustained. It is an example in my opinion of the fact that we are committed to ensure that we grow our fire services.

Recently one of the fire service officers, Mr David Kemp, was asked to go to Taipei and other areas in Taiwan where the rather traumatic earthquakes had occurred, to give specialist advice to rescuers who were going into the very difficult circumstances and extremely dangerous buildings. I was extremely pleased to receive a briefing on his return. Further to that, the government in Taiwan asked its representative in Australia to come and meet with me, the acting chief fire officer and also Mr David Kemp to express his gratitude to our government, the South Australian community and, importantly, to the Metropolitan Fire Service officer, Mr David Kemp, on the fantastic expertise that was offered by Mr Kemp in giving advice as to how the rescuers could get into these various buildings.

The official advertisement will appear in the *Advertiser* on 13 November 1999 and will extend an invitation to persons with structural firefighting experience as well as to members of the general public. There is an intensive selection process, with the applicants requiring about six major procedures, including education, physical aptitude, task related exercises, medicals and general interviewing. The 30 successful applicants will then enter into a 12 week training course, and we look forward to those firefighters starting their

first shifts in May 2000. This is an excellent opportunity for all South Australians—men and women—looking at a career in the fire service to consider this advertisement seriously. I am sure they will get a lot of job satisfaction out of the great work that the Metropolitan Fire Service does in protecting the life and property of approximately 1 million South Australians. This is on top of an announcement we made recently with regard to police recruiting, where we currently have 72 officers in the academy, another 140 that we are targeting for this financial year and a minimum of 110 for the following two years. We have also seen recruitment programs in the correctional services portfolio lately.

So, there are great opportunities for South Australians to get into a long term career and advance through that career, get a lot of job satisfaction out of it and, importantly, be employed in an area where it is often very dangerous but also exciting, fulfilling and enriching work. I would encourage South Australians interested in joining the Public Service and our government to look seriously at this advertising program coming up in the next couple of weeks seeking these 30 firefighters.

### CHINESE DEVELOPERS

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I direct my question to the Minister for Education. Was Education Adelaide involved in any way whatsoever in discussing and/or assisting the redevelopment of the former tax office in King William Street into overseas student accommodation and, if so, what was the nature of those discussions and/or assistance? Education Adelaide was launched in June last year to attract an extra 2 000 international students to Adelaide over three years. In October last year, Education Adelaide said it was aware that developers had shelved plans to convert the former tax office building to overseas student accommodation. The following month, however, Education Adelaide Chairman, Mr Rick Allert, said Education Adelaide would in particular be targeting emerging new markets in India and China for overseas students. That same month, the Chinese company, the Zhong Huan Group, expressed an interest in converting the former tax office into overseas student accommodation. Education Adelaide reports to the minister on a quarterly basis.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education):** I am not aware of any discussions having taken place, but I will seek that information for the honourable member and reply accordingly.

### URBAN RENEWAL

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** Will the Minister for Human Services advise the House how the community is benefiting from the government's urban renewal policy?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** Later today a function will be held to mark the completion of the Hillcrest urban redevelopment. It is a very significant occasion indeed. I will give the House a picture of the extent and magnitude of that redevelopment. There were 400 to 600 timber frame houses, which most people who have driven through Hillcrest would know were very run down, on large blocks of land with very few trees, and about 60 per cent of them were Housing Trust homes when the redevelopment started. Some 250 of those old timber frame homes have been relocated; in many cases they have been sold off and used as holiday homes and so on.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** The member for the area said she knows of one that went to Murray Bridge. Some 250 of them were sold, and out of that we were able to reduce the size of the blocks. These were the really big metropolitan blocks that were developed back in the 1960s. Some 430 new blocks have been established, so we have been able to build up the concentration of homes in the area, and we have brought in private developers. In fact, if you look at the total investment that has taken place on the part of the Housing Trust and private owners, you will see that about \$40 million has been invested in that redevelopment.

I appreciate the role of the local council, the City of Port Adelaide Enfield. It has invested \$1.27 million in establishing a big village green and a number of other pathways. It has developed cycle paths and walking paths, and it created links between the Hillcrest development and Regent Gardens, which is the other big urban development taking place further to the north. At the same time, the Housing Trust has invested \$4.6 million in 37 new homes and in buying the allotments. Overall, we now have a far better blend of public housing and general housing and there is new housing throughout the entire development. Most importantly, there is urban consolidation in an area reasonably close to Adelaide.

One further benefit of this project has been the establishment of the Hillcrest apprentice training scheme. Under that training scheme, 22 young unemployed people from the Hillcrest area, some of whom had some trade training, were put to work on the scheme to assist with the development of the new homes. In that way they have a direct relationship to the urban redevelopment of their own area, and I imagine that they are extremely proud. Here is a community working for itself, working to be part of a broader urban redevelopment, and Hillcrest, like some of the other Housing Trust redevelopment programs, is a fine example of how well we do it.

I regularly welcome to South Australia ministers and other developers from interstate who come here to look at the urban renewal projects that are undertaken by the Housing Trust. I congratulate everyone who has been involved in the urban renewal program and I wish the new inhabitants of the area all the very best for the future.

### CAMBRIDGE, Mr J.

**Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Can the Minister for Education tell the House whether Mr John Cambridge, as one of the eight directors of Education Adelaide appointed by the minister, declared his personal interest in and absented himself from any Education Adelaide meetings that discussed the redevelopment of the former tax office in King William Street? In October 1998, Mr Harry Tu, a director of the Zhong Huan Group, which became interested in purchasing and redeveloping the former tax office in King William Street, became a co-director of a shelf company, the Golden Investment Fund, owned by Mr John Cambridge.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training):** As with the honourable member's previous question, I will seek that information for her and reply accordingly.

### EUROPEAN WASP

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** Can the Minister for Local Government advise the House about the effective-

ness of the current government policy which has been introduced to combat European wasps in South Australia?

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government):** I know that all areas of the state and metropolitan Adelaide are increasingly being affected by European wasp, but I also know that there is no area more greatly affected than parts of the Adelaide Hills covered by the electorates of Davenport, Heysen and Kavel. It is a serious issue. In 1998 the Local Government Association and the state government signed a statement of intent outlining an agreement to share responsibility for this issue and, in a collaborative effort, to apply \$1.5 million over the next three years to cover funding and responsibility for the continuing subsidisation of nest destruction, research and public education. In relation to the nest destruction—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** I note the member for Peake laughing, but—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** That is exactly the point. The member for Peake asks how I could be bitten on the nose by a spider. That is exactly the same—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister will ignore the interjections of the member for Peake and get on with the reply.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** Yes, I will, sir, but I am making the point that no matter how vigilant we are with our Mediterranean lifestyle, there are things in our gardens, not least European wasps, that can cause us some discomfort and pain. Luminous was selected to undertake the research over the next four years at a value of \$600 000. Those members who attended the ecology fair on the weekend at Urrbrae, which was most successful and for which Urrbrae and all associated with it have to be congratulated, would have seen a very interesting stand on the European wasp. It was a fascinating stand. Interestingly the scientists that were there—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** I hope you all get bitten on the nose by a white tailed spider and then you will think it is funny. The scientists who were there had this message, which I would like to make sure gets out to all South Australians. It is interesting that as a result of public education 85 per cent of South Australians are now able to identify a European wasp and 83 per cent of all South Australians are aware that in the case of such identification they should contact their council. That is a great credit to the LGA and the Education Department because the Minister for Education and Children's Services through his schools allowed a fairly short but intensive educative campaign to be conducted.

As a result of that the total number of nests destroyed was in 9 310 in 1997-98 and that dropped last year to 3 823, for which I think we are all grateful. The problem is that the scientists are saying that climatic conditions affected the wasp population last year. This year we had a particularly dry winter but a wet spring. Summer will determine the effect on European wasps, but there is a chance that this year wasp infestation will again rise significantly. South Australians should be aware of the problem and be aware of what to do about it. If they are young South Australians they should not go near the nests. They are virulent little insects that will sting repeatedly and could cause severe harm to a person who was allergic to them. If they see such nests they should be reported to a council and in the meantime the government and local government will do its best to work with the scientists on coming up with a long term biological solution.

## REGENCY INSTITUTE OF TAFE

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** My question is directed to the Minister for Education. Will both the Elizabeth and Regency campus child-care centres of the Regency Institute of TAFE close in December 1999? The opposition has been informed that the government intends to close these two child-care centres, even though the Elizabeth campus centre is believed to have the highest number of student users of any TAFE child-care centre in South Australia.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training):** I thank the member for Taylor for her question. I am currently awaiting a report from the Institute of TAFE, Regency and Elizabeth campuses, on a recommendation to me as to whether both those child-care centres should be closed. I am aware that there is very low utilisation of both of them—about 45 per cent in one and less in the other—but that is a matter for the report to come forward to me. I will look at that report at the time and make a decision then.

## YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** My question is directed to the Minister for Year 2000 Compliance. What redress will any person or business have if they spend money to fix the year 2000 problem but find on 1 January that it has not happened and, in particular, what is his understanding of the effect of year 2000 compliance issues on telecommunications and fuel supply in South Australia?

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Year 2000 Compliance):** I thank the member for Hammond for his question and for his ongoing interest in this important issue. I am pleased to be in a position to advise the House that, in so far as essential services and utilities are concerned for South Australia, it will be business as usual come 1 January 2000. Certainly, our essential service and major utility providers have been working on the problem for a number of years. They have had in place extensive and professional remediation programs to ensure that they address the year 2000 date problem, or millennium bug, through their organisations. All work on remediation of essential services, essential systems and equipment that is critical for supply is either completed or is very near completion, and further contingency plans are either already in place or are being finalised to be put in place at this time. So, whatever the eventuality, there should be no disruption of any consequence to our essential services and utilities.

To ensure this outcome, I obviously have been meeting with essential service and utility providers, and I am pleased to report to the House that there have been a number of worthwhile outcomes as a result of those meetings. I have met with the providers of gas energy to South Australia, including Boral, which has formed a strong alliance for the year 2000 remediation work with Santos and Epic Energy to ensure that all aspects of that energy chain are covered and are completed. Boral has undertaken in a professional manner the task of ensuring that its energy service will continue, and I am pleased to put that on the record in this place. It has not only ensured that its distribution capability exists but, as a good corporate citizen, it has gone further by contacting its major suppliers to ensure that they are aware of the issue and are ready; and, further, it recognises that if its suppliers are ready, its customers also need to be ready. So, that company has visited its 1 000 top customers and has ensured that they

are aware of the problem and that they are taking appropriate action, and it is providing assistance through advice and expertise where that has been necessary. That sort of corporate citizenship and involvement has certainly helped other South Australian companies to ensure that they are ready come the year 2000.

With respect to the electricity supply industry (the former ETSA, now broken into seven component parts, several smaller generators—and bearing in mind that Coober Pedy, I believe, has its own generating capacity through local government), all groups have been contacted. It will be business as usual. I am pleased to be advised that all the work that needs to be done by those organisations is, if not in place at this time, a matter of days from completion.

In relation to water provision, SA Water and its contractors, United Water and Riverland Water, have fully assessed and remediated the various parts of the water supply area where that has been needed. That has been a very extensive exercise; many thousands of individual pieces of equipment have had to be checked across those organisations. They did find some things that failed, or that would have failed had they been left unattended to, and they have taken the appropriate action to be in a position where they also have been able to assure the government that it will be business as usual.

In relation to the telecommunications and fuel sectors, obviously, I, directly, in all cases, and my staff frequently thereafter, have met with telecommunication providers—particularly the main providers, Telstra, Optus, Vodafone and AAPT—to seek the assurances from them that people would expect us to extract of business as usual, and to also be advised in detail of the extensive work that has been undertaken and to be assured that everything is on track. Likewise, with respect to the petroleum industry, there have been extensive meetings and information exchange and, again, the same assurances have been received, including assurances from the Port Stanvac oil refinery—important not only to our economy but also to the provision of essential fuels.

In relation to the banks and the financial sector, Australia as a whole is probably the most advanced nation in the world in its preparation for the year 2000. An extensive exercise has been undertaken by our banks, and many members of this parliament, as customers in their own right, would doubtless have received assurances from the banks, credit unions and building societies with which they bank (and, likewise, their constituents also would have received such information), to the extent that banks, credit unions and building societies have been able to advise of their preparation, and the Reserve Bank has been able to say, and I quote: 'Their deposits are safe, their records are not at risk from Y2K-related problems.'

So, South Australia is indeed well prepared as we enter the new millennium. The last of the work is now being put in place, and I am pleased to be able to advise all South Australians that they can rest easy in the knowledge that all essential services and utilities are prepared for business as usual.

#### **CICCARELLO, Mr S.**

**Mr ATKINSON (Spence):** Leaving aside the question of who signed off on Sam Ciccarello's appointment as a consultant to the Minister for Tourism in March 1997, did the minister have any role in or influence on that appointment?

**Mr MEIER:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I do not believe that the Minister for Tourism has responsibility for that at this point in time.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is some vague connection that I think you could probably string together into the ministry of tourism, but it is not a strong one. I invite the minister to respond as she sees fit.

**The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism):** I was asked a similar question during the questioning on the Auditor-General's Report. I said at the time that my understanding was that the Ciccarello consultancy concluded in February this year. That is not my responsibility: I am responsible for the tournament.

#### **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** Will the Minister for Employment and for Youth say what the government is doing to assist young people to gain employment where they have previously been wards of the state?

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Employment):** I thank the honourable member for his question, which gives me the opportunity to raise this matter in the House. Members opposite and, indeed, some on this side of the House would be aware that this received some praise in the *Public Service Review*. It is a pity that the praise was limited to stating that the government did it and the *Public Service Review* saying it was all their idea but, nevertheless, they did praise the idea, which is this: the Minister for Human Services is the legal custodian of wards of the state until they reach 18 years of age, that being a matter of law. It is always considered unfortunate that upon their 18th birthday the state ceases to have any duty of care or control legally over such young people. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate that with the minister's department we should look at such young people who indeed are at risk because they are then cut away from the mechanisms that have supported them until they are 18 and provide some preferential treatment in the state's Trainee Employee Scheme. So, a limited number of places have been made available this year specifically targeted at young people who are coming from being wards of the state into employment to help structure their lives in a way that is more meaningful to them and to show the responsibility of this government.

This is an Australian first, and this government has every right to be proud of it. The Premier talks repeatedly about cooperation. This shows excellent cooperation between my department within the ministry of education and children's services and the Minister for Human Services's department in looking at and addressing a human issue in a way that responds to the needs of real people and in a way that allows those young people a greater opportunity to progress. It is envisaged that 30 places will be made available this year and that that number could indeed rise to 80 in a year or two. There may well be more young people than that who are wards of the state and who wish to be involved.

So, in addition, it has been arranged that for those young people we will allow them at least to participate in the scheme as it currently exists on the same grounds as everybody else. We wanted to achieve a balance between providing an opportunity to trial a good initiative and not taking too significant a proportion so that in advantaging one group we would not disadvantage others. The shadow spokesperson for youth smiles. I would have thought that that member would be on side with this initiative.



*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** Why do I keep doing it? Because I actually believe that this is an interactive chamber where we are supposed to try to communicate. It is reasonably important to observe the inattention of members opposite. I also believe that parliament has the right to inform the people of South Australia of the calibre of opposition that exists in this chamber.

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Rubbish!

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** The member for Peake says, 'Rubbish!' This is the man who is yet to apologise when he misinforms this House—

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** When the Premier announced the best news that we have heard in this chamber for months, this group opposite were stunning in their inattention to the answer—they could not have cared less. There was not one member on this side of the chamber who did not notice.

**Mr Foley:** Sit down.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** The member for Hart asks me to sit down. As Question Time has now expired, I will.

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## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** What a sorry state of affairs we now have with respect to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium and the comments by the Auditor-General today. At the outset, I want to say this: the poor old Minister for Industry and Trade, who unfortunately is the responsible minister, was pulled off a plane late this morning and told that he could not go to Darwin. The Premier told the minister that he did not have permission to go to a conference in Darwin for two days. Why? There are two reasons: first, the Premier does not want to answer questions about the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium; and, secondly, he does not want the Minister for Tourism to answer them either.

So, we have a shoddy state of affairs where the Minister for Industry and Trade has his pair pulled and is instructed by the Premier that he cannot fly to Darwin. How pathetic! This Premier wants only to be the good news Premier: when it comes to the tough questions, he stops his ministers flying to important conferences in Darwin so that he does not have to take the heat. I think that shows more about this Premier than most things. This is a Premier scared of the Hindmarsh soccer stadium. Well, the Premier needs to be scared about that stadium because there is a lot to be heard about it.

What did the Auditor-General tell the Economic and Finance Committee today? In my six years on that committee, I doubt that I have heard more strident criticisms of a project from the Auditor-General. I doubt that I have heard such strong language in reference to a government bungle of a major financial issue. Let us look at some of the points made by the Auditor-General. He said:

One needs to take a step back and look objectively. One would have to say that there was inadequate due diligence in the primary analysis of what we are getting involved in. We have committed ourselves as a state to paying around \$30 million plus for a facility where we have no rights, where we have very limited propriety

rights, where we have significant ongoing liability exposures in terms of the need to meet the default or the inability of others to meet their obligations. We say that, had adequate due diligence been undertaken in the initial stages, perhaps we would not be now in this situation.

He goes on to make some quite extraordinary comments. He says:

I understand that the Government has engaged consultants to determine exactly where the issue now stands and what can be done to limit the exposure of the taxpayer in the future.

Years and years into the project, we still do not know how much this project will finally cost us—no doubt in the many tens of millions. He said that he first raised this issue at least three years ago and he said three years ago that there were very serious concerns in this relationship. He stated:

We had the amber lights flashing in our report of 1997. I remember writing it and thinking to myself, 'This is a very serious issue.'

That is the state's Auditor-General. He goes on to say:

If the government wants to run dead on an audit report, there is nothing I can do about it. But from my point of view, my obligation is to raise an issue and put it in the public domain. If for whatever reason the government seeks to do nothing, that is a matter for the government.

He goes on to say, referring to a consultancy undertaken by Ernst and Young that was supposed to give some credence to the reasons why we need this stadium:

What we said was that that opinion was subject to major qualifications and certain assumptions that I can say now were unrealistic and which we said then we did not think were sustainable.

It goes on and on. The Auditor-General is saying that this is a significant financial bungling by this government. It is financial mismanagement. It goes to the core of this government. It so concerns this Premier that he would not let his industry minister fly to Darwin: he had to come here and take the heat. It is so serious that it affects the Minister for Tourism, the former minister (the member for Bragg), and it goes to the very core of this Premier's leadership. This is a dirty deal, and it is a deal that this parliament will get to the bottom of, because I find it obscene that we have over \$40 million being wasted on a white elephant of a soccer stadium, where five kilometres down the road we have the Queen Elizabeth Hospital closing hospital wards, where we do not have enough nurses and the sick cannot get treated, but we can find \$40 million for a soccer stadium. This is a scandal—the Auditor-General's report today has confirmed that—and we will not rest until we get to the bottom of this sordid affair.

Time expired.

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** The concerns I wish to raise today involve government financial support which is being made available for young people to leave home. This is an issue that has been raised in this place on numerous occasions and it is one that has concerned me for a very long time. I have certainly raised it previously, and it is my intention to do so again and to refer specifically to a couple of examples.

Having had the opportunity to serve for four years as Minister for Family and Community Services, nobody knows more than I do that many young people in the community regrettably do not have an appropriate home in which to live, for a number of reasons. They may be abused or they may not be welcome in their home. I could refer to a number of examples that were brought to my attention as minister. But

this is a very different situation. In my opinion, there are too many caring families where children are being encouraged to leave home.

I wish to refer to a letter that I have received from a constituent, who shall remain nameless, as will the school that the child attends, but I will read it into the *Hansard* record. It states:

Dear Mr Wotton,

I wish to express my concern over:

1. the young children of today; and
2. the responsible role of respectable parents of today.

I am a married mother of five children to whom I have tried extremely hard to teach the rights and wrongs of this world. However, I not long ago came across the experience of having my eldest child leave home. This, I know, is not a rare occurrence in today's society. However, I was outraged at the unknown (but now known) events [leading to this situation] happening.

My son attends . . . high school and is currently in year 12. He brought home for our perusal information about the youth allowance currently available to children, and also informed us that the 'counsellor' at [the] school was in a position to place children in 'flats' or other accommodation to receive this allowance. My first reaction was, 'I wasn't aware that you wanted to leave home', but I then proceeded to explain to him that this allowance was for children who were violated at home or who did not have a home at all and still wished to attend school. Having explained to him that youth allowance would also have to include expenses such as rent, electricity, phone, etc., our conversation ended.

Our biggest disappointment came in June of this year when after a normal family quarrel our son decided to 'pack his bags' and go live with some friends. . . He did not let us know of his whereabouts but we assumed that the people that came to collect him and his items were going to house him. My next shock came from 'Centrelink' which wanted me to confirm that my son had been 'kicked out of home'. After explaining to them that he has a loving family and a roof over his head, I was told that he never intends to come back home, and that he would receive youth allowance to cover all his expenses.

I want to know why the government is supporting these children. We have just built a new five bedroom home to accommodate all our children and we have tried very hard to give our children their every possible need. However, we cannot give our son \$267.40 a fortnight as pocket money. (He currently pays no rent or food money, etc., to this family, and I do not know if the parents receive family allowance for him.) I want to know why the government gives children the incentive to leave home.

I am now in a position where my 15 year old daughter has the incentive to leave the family home so that she can receive the hefty pocket money from the government.

That is only part of the letter, but it is of particular concern to me that parents are in this situation, particularly caring parents. It is a matter that I wish to continue to follow up. I have raised it on a number of occasions. I believe it is totally inappropriate that there are no more checks on the parents and no more opportunities provided for parents to have their say in what the situations really are. I know that there are a number of well-meaning, caring parents who are also concerned about this issue.

Time expired.

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** I have two or three issues that I want to talk about today. The first two are matters of congratulations. Last week I was very proud to host here for afternoon tea a group of women from Whyalla called the Silver Sirens. Contrary to some comments at the time, they were not part of the animal liberation group. They were actually a theatre group from Whyalla. The costumes they were wearing were part of their stage performances. They tend to wear leopard skin, which I think is wonderful for women of that age group. It is all part of the theatrical aspect of their lives.

These women have been operating now for about two years in Whyalla. They have workshops and somebody who works with them, and they tend to present stage shows and performances looking at areas of life and trying to change stereotypes for women in the older age group. They have a wonderful time and do a lot of very good work in the community, and to some extent they have put Whyalla on the map with their performances. They were in Adelaide last week to receive an award for challenging stereotypes in older women. I was very proud to see them, bring them in there and see the look on people's faces as I walked around with them. I wish them well in the future and offer them my hearty congratulations.

Another award that I was very pleased to see was when I got a copy of the certificate of merit that was presented to the Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation in Coober Pedy for a project called the Tjilpi Tjutaku bush camp that is operating in Coober Pedy. This was an award for services in the prevention of domestic violence, and this camp in Coober Pedy was able to receive this. The camp was set up as a result of the dry legislation which has been enforced in Coober Pedy and which has certainly cleaned up the town of Coober Pedy. People are no longer drinking in the main street, but it has revealed a lot of problems because of the lack of services that operate in the community. There is no drying out centre, no drug or alcohol rehabilitation and minimal domestic violence services. As a result, people are going back to the Umoona community to drink, and this has resulted in a lot of domestic and other violence in the community.

The elders of the community were not happy; they were frightened. So there were plans to move these people out of that community to a bush camp about 10 kilometres out of the town, and they have established themselves there, living very much in the traditional way. I have been a visitor there a number of times and have enjoyed their hospitality. I believe it probably has great potential for the community of Coober Pedy as a tourism option. Recently a film crew was working in the town and an actor who is very well known amongst young people in particular, although probably not many people here would know of him, Val Kilmer, went out there and visited the camp site. I believe he had a great time out there, was fed traditional foods, talked to the women and men out there and really enjoyed himself.

They have hopes that in the future they will be able to operate as a tourism venture and that people will be able visit the camp, stay overnight, take part in the feast, watch dancing and other entertainment that these people provide for them. I was pleased to see that this project got the certificate of merit, which came from the Australian heads of government, including the Prime Minister, the premiers of all the states of Australia and the chief ministers of the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory. Once again, I offer my congratulations to those people.

Finally, I was going to talk about problems I see developing in Partnerships 21. I have not passed judgment on Partnerships 21—it is up to schools to make up their own mind—but I have concerns about what is happening in school communities. Last week I talked about the split that has happened in the Mintabie community because of the implementation of Partnerships 21. A similar split is happening in one of the schools in my own community where parents who are supporting Partnerships 21 are opposing parents who are against Partnerships 21. Yesterday the district superintendent was on air, saying that school councils were not representative of school parents' views. Well, if Partnerships 21 is all

about schools managing their own finances, we will certainly have to look at the role of school councils if they are not operating as representatives of school parents.

Time expired.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I rise today on a most important issue; that is, of South Australia's deep sea ports and the Ports Corp sale. We have had reports for the past 15 years, but still nothing has been done and, worse still, no progress appears to be happening. This important state matter has dragged on for years. I have a report in my office dated 1985, directly commenting on this issue. We have had four reports since that time on this issue. Two years ago a final deep sea report was tabled and generally the grain industry was satisfied with the final report. The industry is satisfied that the tri-port configuration is the way to go, that is, a full upgrade at inner Port Adelaide and Port Giles and a partial upgrade at Wallaroo. But where are we? There has been no action for over a year, because we are trying to get the sale of Ports Corp happening. We are moving very slowly on both fronts; we need positive action now. We need a government to show leadership.

The industry is interested in buying some of these ports, but not all of them. The grain industry has made a suggestion that it would like to see the ports where grain is the predominant commodity shipped out sold as a separate package so that the grain export pathways are preserved. They could well look to purchase these ports themselves. The industry is also very concerned to see that the upgrade of the tri-port configuration could well be abandoned if the interests of the industry are not preserved by any of the new owners. What would happen to one of the state's most vital industries if a company bought Ports Corp as a whole and was not interested in grain, or wanted to hike its rates or milk the system? It would cripple the industry completely, because that new owner would have a monopoly.

Ports Corp is currently charging a premium for wharfage. At the moment, our growers in this state are paying \$1.50 a tonne for their grain that moves through our ports. That is \$50 to \$60 a semitrailer load. They are absolutely premium charges, the second highest in the country. The only higher rates are in Cairns in Queensland, which handles very little grain at all, if any. Ports Corp is raking in the money, so I would have thought we would have a queue of prospective buyers a mile long and that we would see some action but, no; we apparently move along at tortoise pace. Victoria and New South Wales charge a maximum of 50¢ a tonne, whereas Geelong pays only 22¢. Compare that with our \$1.50. They have the panamax ship capacity (that is, the large ships) and we do not, except in the one port of Port Lincoln. It is very difficult that we are charged a premium to handle our grain. We need action.

As if the margins in the grain industry were not narrow enough already, we urgently need the capacity to load larger ships on both sides of the gulf at half the current cost. At recent grower meetings which I attended in the past week or so, farmers told me that consecutive state governments have had the 640 acre focus; too much focus has been on what is happening in the square mile of Adelaide, not what one of the state's most vital primary industries wants. It is time to change direction; Kennett was the cue to that, and I hope this government will not follow suit. The bulk handling authority (SACBH) has \$30 million to spend at Port Adelaide, but is awaiting the outcome of the sale process. It wants to improve the efficiency of the rail system, which has benefits not only

to the grain industry but also to the whole state, with fewer heavy trucks pounding the roads, lower costs in keeping the infrastructure up to scratch and reduced environmental impact on country times with fewer trucks moving through. We want to get maximum grain traffic onto rail so it will be of real community benefit.

The industry is waiting for and wants real action. Please let us expedite the process for the good of our rural and regional areas and for the good of South Australia. Our grain industry is this state's most important long term industry, recognising that wine is the current short term industry, which is going very well. Surely it is time to address this problem after nearly 20 years of prevarications and to show leadership and support. We have been left behind by other states and overseas. I will do all I can in the weeks ahead to promote this issue and achieve a positive outcome.

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey):** Today is national public transport day. As you may know, sir, the TransAdelaide depot at St Agnes is located within the electorate of Florey, and I pay tribute to all the workers who work out of that depot and all in the field of public transport. I acknowledge their continuing commitment to providing a quality service to the people of Adelaide and doing all they can to ensure that that service is maintained and strengthened.

It was disappointing therefore to hear the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning on radio recently again moot the possibility of privatising Adelaide's trams and trains. The minister says that she is still undecided as to whether to proceed on this course and I hope this means that she will consider the objective evidence of competitive tendering and outsourcing and its impact on public transport policy development and service provision before she makes any recommendation to cabinet. I for one would urge her to resist taking what could be a backward step for Adelaide's public transport system. It might even be the thin end of the wedge for it.

I hope that the minister will consider the largely negative experience of competitive tendering in South Australia and of public transport privatisation in other jurisdictions. The reality is that the introduction of competitive tendering to Adelaide's public transport system has been unsuccessful to date. While Adelaide has been at the forefront of a number of innovations—it has the largest fleet of environmentally friendly gas-powered buses in Australia, the largest fleet of disabled access buses in Australia, the introduction of new night services has proved a boon, and the new City Loop service is also very popular—and while all these initiatives are excellent, they are not enough to disguise the fact that, since competitive tendering was introduced, patronage has continued to fall at an alarming rate and ticket prices have increased while the wages, job conditions and job security of public transport workers have all suffered.

While significant public investment has been made in Adelaide's public transport system since 1993, over \$100 million has been spent building the Southern Expressway which, as Steve Hamnett pointed out in a recent *Adelaide Review*, cuts about three minutes only off the journey time from the southern suburbs, while little has been spent on developing a new fast O-Bahn track service to the south, despite promises at the last election.

Little has been spent on upgrading our rail network. The Belair line is now the worst performing suburban railway line in the country, while in Perth great successes have been achieved. The Joondalup northern suburbs line, constructed

after a significant injection of public funds from the then Labor government, now has patronage that exceeds that of the entire Adelaide metropolitan rail network, a very sad comparison.

Very little has been done to upgrade our bus fleet overall and it still relies on vehicles more than 20 years old, which were purchased as part of the Dunstan government's nationalisation of our public transport system. The only significant increase in funding has seen the establishment of the Passenger Transport Board to oversee service operators in our outsourced system, a bureaucratic administration which did not exist when the system was wholly in public hands. Not only have no steps been taken towards increasing funding and expanding the public transport system but there has been a gradual erosion of service standards and integration.

Competitive tendering has established the conditions for constant shadow competition between competing shareholders. In Melbourne, national bus privatisation has seen the outbreak of patronage warfare between the rail network and buses and there have been similar instances in Adelaide. There is no incentive to integrate service provision between rival operators. In Adelaide's north, for example, it is clear that Serco and TransAdelaide are in direct competition for patrons. Meanwhile the roads continue to be choked with cars.

Cost cutting cannot work as an approach to managing a successful public transport system. That is what a competitive tendering policy fails to come to terms with. The perfect example of that is the mooted privatisation of Adelaide's trams and trains. Rail can be a very effective form of public transport provision, especially mass rapid transport to the suburbs. Properly integrated with bus feeder routes, there can be no doubt that frequent and inexpensive rail services can add significantly to public transport patronage. To privatise rail, however, would sound the death knell of the public transport system. Even in Singapore the rail network is owned and operated by the government. The Singaporean government recognises the need for government involvement to ensure that the system runs efficiently and meets the needs of the urban community.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Year 2000 Compliance):** I rise for the second time in this debate to speak on the proposed tavern for the subdivision of Woodend in Sheidow Park in South Australia. The first time I raised this matter in the House it was as a consequence of a proposal by publican Mr Peter Hurley for a tavern—a licensed facility—to be placed at Woodend in a disused shopping centre next door to the Woodend Primary School. The licence application is for extended trading hours to 2 a.m. on three days and to midnight on the other four days.

Resident reaction has been understandably strong to this proposal. The public have made it quite clear that they do not want a tavern next door to their primary school under any circumstances, to such an extent that a number of public rallies have been held, the first a few weeks ago, which I detailed to the House previously and which it was estimated 350 people attended. Last night an update meeting was held by residents and well in excess of 200 people were present. I was pleased to be able to tell that meeting of the action taken by the government to assist in resolving their dilemma.

I rise in this House today to compliment the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning on her statement today in another place providing very clear advice to residents and, might I suggest, none-too-subtle advice to the City of Marion

as to what action it can pursue in order to ensure that the wishes of residents are met. The Minister for Transport and Urban Planning has made it quite clear that the law in South Australia requires that the hotel application be considered under two separate processes. The first of those is planning consent under the Development Act 1993 and, by its essence, that involves the City of Marion. The second requirement is that a liquor licence be considered under the Liquor Licensing Act 1997.

It is important to reflect that residents and, indeed, myself as a member of parliament have the opportunity to object to the licensing application under that act thanks to changes made under this government. South Australians now have the opportunity to object and to appear before the Liquor Licensing Commission to have their concerns heard. The process requires careful assessment of the impact of the hotel upon sensitive activities, and that clearly includes the Woodend school and the nearby houses, and I point out that there are houses immediately across the road and abutting the boundary of the car park where the tavern is proposed. The process also requires that the local planning controls must ensure that the impact of the development is carefully managed.

The minister has clearly advised in another place today that the hotel application at Woodend must be assessed by the Marion Council against the current provisions of the development plan. The current zone policies clearly require that development in the centre should be of a type, size and nature required to meet the needs of the local population and should not negatively affect adjacent residents. My concern is that the proponent of this project, the applicant for the licence, Mr Peter Hurley, is working with the owners of the shopping centre, Hickinbotham Homes, and that Hickinbotham has letterboxed extensively to gain support, so extensively that brochures have gone into Reynella, which is quite some distance from the proposal and certainly not in keeping with the neighbourhood zone, in my view. I will contact the City of Marion and ensure that it follows through the minister's advice.

This issue has created widespread interest for a variety of reasons. The Hon. Nick Xenophon in another place is interested because of his opposition to poker machines. Mr Kris Hanna is interested because he hopes to be the endorsed Labor candidate to represent that area next time. The Hon. Terry Cameron from another place, in his role as leader of SA First, is interested because he does not like Kris Hanna because he is a member of the Socialist Left faction and also because, as I know from talking with him, he opposes poker machines and a development of this nature. I welcome the involvement of other members of parliament in this issue.

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**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call on orders of the day, standing committee reports.

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

*A quorum having been formed:*

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:  
VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA BILL REPORT**

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I move:

That the 12th report of the committee on the Voluntary Euthanasia Bill 1996 be noted.

I rise to support the majority report on voluntary euthanasia. The House and the public are probably very much aware of the make-up of membership involved in the majority report, that is, the Hon. Caroline Schaefer (the chair) in another place, the Hon. Terry Cameron, Mr Mick Atkinson (the member for Spence) and myself. The House is also aware that there is a minority report by the Hons Bob Such (member for Fisher), and Sandra Kanck from another place. I thank the members of the committee for their efforts in this regard. It has been a difficult reference. However, we have worked together and 10 out of the 12 recommendations were agreed upon by all members.

I also thank the Secretary, Robyn Schutte, and the Research Officer, Mary Covernton. A lot of work has been put into the report and it should be acknowledged. It is a fair report, and it reflects what was heard in evidence and addresses the concerns raised in seeking to have a balance between the two opposing views. Most references that come before the Social Development Committee are of a contentious nature. They are issues of an ethical and moral nature that test our value systems as well as our legal system.

Voluntary euthanasia would have to be the most contentious of all issues I have had to deal with as a member of the Social Development Committee for almost six years. A report on voluntary euthanasia of necessity deals with the fundamental principles of freedom, human rights, individual autonomy, social responsibility and common good. Such a report also needs to deal with the issue of balancing individual rights with community well-being. Someone once said, 'My freedom ends where yours begins'. This is true of most social issues and is very much true of this particular issue.

The right to die ultimately will be exercised by all of us. Death is a fact of life and, unless we become like Diaphanus, who in mythology sought eternal life, it will not be granted to us, no matter how much medical technology advances. Death is not in question: it is the timing of exercising a right in this matter that is in question. Under the current law in South Australia it is not illegal to refuse treatment and thus hasten death. It is not illegal to commit suicide. However, assisting one in seeking death is illegal, and I agree with the majority report in that active voluntary euthanasia and physician assisted suicide remain criminal offences.

The second recommendation by the majority was that the lapsed Voluntary Euthanasia Bill of 1996 not be introduced. That is not to say that the Parliament would not attempt to introduce other voluntary euthanasia bills. It is their right and I am sure that members will continue to bring bills and the debate will be very much part of the focus of this parliament as it is in other parliaments. The majority committee believes that the greater good of the community should come before individual autonomy and that the vulnerable members of our community should not be put at risk by legislation that aims to ensure the rights of certain individuals at the possible expense of threatening other individuals' rights.

I do not believe that it is possible to draft legislation that would ensure that both the aims of the community and the right to choose the timing of one's death and the protection of other members of the community can be achieved by legislation. If we lived in a homogenous society with a homogenous view of autonomy there would not be a need for such a report or legislation. However, we do not. We are part of a diverse multicultural society with different views and

understanding of autonomy, which makes the task of drafting legislation almost an impossibility.

The decision to oppose the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia follows other democratic countries with similar legal systems such as the UK, the United States and Canada, and is in agreement with the report of the community development committee in Tasmania. I was fortunate enough to speak to the chairperson of that committee, the Hon. Judy Jackson, the present Minister for Health. It was quite interesting to speak to her and note that she had gone into the committee with an open mind and would have been more pro voluntary euthanasia legislation, yet that committee unanimously, like this committee's majority report, opposed the introduction of voluntary euthanasia legislation.

None of the countries which have been through numerous attempts at changing the law have supported the legalising of active voluntary euthanasia. Oregon in the United States has made physician assisted suicide legal in a referendum of the people. The systems of two other countries that the committee investigated were those in the Netherlands and Switzerland. Doctors in those countries are able to practise active voluntary euthanasia without fear of arrest, but neither country has passed an act to make it strictly within the law. In the Netherlands doctors who practise euthanasia must follow agreed guidelines, and in Switzerland people who are dying, wish to end their lives and seek help to do so must be members of an organisation known as EXIT.

Although the majority of committee members could not support legislation for active voluntary euthanasia, it was unanimous in the support of palliative care both in the work that is done and in the great advances that have been made in the care of the dying in recent years. The emotion and passion evident in both proponents and opponents of this very important issue in relation to legalising voluntary euthanasia make it a popular topic of the media. A number of well published cases in the past decade or so in a number of different countries, as well as Australia, have kept the issue very much in the public eye. No doubt that will continue to occur as there are greater advances and increasing life expectancy.

The depth of public feeling about voluntary euthanasia is apparent from the number of submissions and letters received by this committee and the select committee which was originally given the reference. Between them, the two committees received 4 352 responses. In our inquiry, we took into account 3 946 of these responses. The remaining 406 letters or submissions were excluded because they arrived after the cut off date for acceptance or were from organisations or individuals whose signatures were illegible. The breakdown of the 3 946 responses included 3 763 individually written and formal letters, 178 submissions and five petitions. There were 69 submissions from organisations or groups. Of those who responded to the request for submissions, 52.7 per cent were opposed to the Voluntary Euthanasia Bill of 1996 and the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia; 46.8 per cent were in favour of the bill on voluntary euthanasia; and 0.4 per cent either did not specify or clarify their allegiances. Almost 79 per cent of the submissions were from South Australia. The committee commenced hearing evidence on 23 October 1998 and, in the course of the year, listened to and questioned 72 people who gave evidence as individuals. The remaining 31 were chosen representatives of 19 organisations and agencies that have a particular interest in the subject. The committee was very impressed by the calibre of witnesses, protagonists and advocates of legalising

voluntary euthanasia with respect to both the clarity of presentation of their arguments and their commitment to their position.

Committee members also visited Mary Potter Hospice at Calvary Hospital and Helping Hand Centre in North Adelaide to observe the day-to-day operations of two institutions that deal with death, dying and dementia on a daily basis. The committee found that, although there was a strong case by certain sections of the community for bringing forward legislation with respect to voluntary euthanasia, safeguards were a concern to a great percentage of the population—and, indeed, in the majority report safeguards in legislation was mentioned as being of major concern, and also the interference with the doctor-patient relationship.

I would like to look briefly at the history of the increase in autonomy of individuals in South Australia. We are all aware that the 1983 Natural Death Act made it legal for South Australians to make advanced directives against the artificial prolongation of life. The Natural Death Act was superseded by the modified Consent to Medical Treatment and Dental Treatment Act in 1985, and later the Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act of 1995, which is the current law, is considered by many to be one of the most advanced of its kind in the world. I believe that, in a way, the fact that we have this act in place means that there are safeguards in South Australia against the unnecessary prolonging of one's life against his or her wishes, and the case for voluntary euthanasia for the terminally ill has not had the same effect that it would have had if such legislation was not in place.

I would like to briefly refer to some of the media reports and criticisms of the report since it was handed down last week. It is of concern that some say (namely, Dr Philip Nitschke) that it has failed the people of South Australia, as was reported in an article by Leonie Mellor in the *Advertiser*, and that members had already made up their mind before the reference commenced. That is not the case. Members would be very much aware, for example, that the Hon. Terry Cameron from another place had very much an open mind on the issue, and we were not aware of his position until all the evidence was heard and we were well into the report. So, to say that it was a foregone conclusion is wrong. I believe that the report is a fair reflection of what the people of South Australia believe with respect to this issue at this time. I disagree with Samela Harris, who wrote in the *Advertiser* of 22 October:

But the pollies are timid. They passed the buck and called it 'social development'.

She went on to say:

Nope. Those days are done. We are the backwater state with the conservative values.

How can we be the backwater state when we have some of the most advanced legislation to consent to medical treatment and palliative care in the world?

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** My colleague the member for Spence agrees with me (and with the report, no doubt) that we have achieved much in this area since 1983. I believe that the emphasis on palliative care is correct. We must educate the public in this area.

Time expired.

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

## ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: RAIL LINKS

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

That the 35th report of the committee on rail links with the eastern states be noted.

The committee became interested in South Australia's rail links with the eastern states as a result of discussions surrounding the impending development of the Adelaide to Darwin railway link. It seemed timely to determine the adequacy and the usage of Adelaide rail links, especially in relation to freight movement.

The inquiry took place over a period of three months. Seven submissions were received and 14 witnesses appeared before the committee during this time. The committee heard evidence from the key railway stakeholders, who outlined the changes that had occurred within the industry over recent years, and proposed reforms for the future. The committee was concerned to hear of the lack of funding for rail infrastructure improvements, as compared to road, over the last 20 years—and we all knew that: I have said that to this House over many years. In combination with the excise on fuel, this has made it almost impossible for rail to compete with road. But rail has tremendous advantages for freight movements, including greater safety, lower fuel use and lower greenhouse gas emissions. The committee believes that these safety and environmental advantages will become increasingly important in the future. Therefore, the committee believes that funding for the maintenance and improvement of the rail infrastructure should be increased—in particular, improvements on the Adelaide to Melbourne line are essential—and emphasis should be placed on reducing cross looping, minimising curves and increasing the height of the tunnels in the Adelaide Hills. This would reduce the time taken to move rolling stock along this line, making it more competitive with road transport.

The committee investigated the pursuit of an alternative rail route around the Adelaide Hills (that is, from Taillem Bend to Cambrai-Sedan and linking in with Angaston), but there is apparently no evidence supporting this move, at least at this time—although the committee has received several letters about it. Standardisation of the railway lines linking Mount Gambier to Wolsley to Heywood and to Millicent would have economic benefits for South Australia and, again, offer an alternative to road freight movement, ensuring lower transport rates. I hope the member for Gordon will pick up on this. The committee welcomes the extension of the *Ghan* rail service to Melbourne and to Sydney. The committee believes that the availability of passenger train services is important from an ecotourism perspective. The committee also believes that the intrastate tourist trains, such as the *Bluebird* service to the Barossa, are essential to the expansion of tourism in this state.

The committee has recommended that all existing rail lines in South Australia be assessed for tourism and recreation opportunities. Until this has been done, no decision should be made about removing any existing lines. Sir, you have heard me say that ad nauseam in the nine or so years I have been here. I am pleased to report that in the last 18 months to two years no lines that I know of have been removed. The development of an Adelaide intermodal terminal is essential. There has been considerable discussion about its location, but the committee believes that it should be within the vicinity of Dry Creek. The committee does see

value in developing a rail link between Melbourne and Brisbane with an intermodal terminal at Parkes.

Evidence has suggested, as the member for Hammond said a few moments ago, that this would produce new freight opportunities from the eastern states to the Adelaide to Darwin line, further enhancing its viability, particularly as there has been some debate about whether the line from Adelaide to Broken Hill should be upgraded. As a result of this inquiry, the committee has made nine recommendations. The committee looks forward to a positive response to these recommendations. I urge members at least to read the report, those recommendations and the foreword and then to make comment.

I take this opportunity to thank all those people who have contributed to this inquiry, in particular, those people who for many years have kept the lobby process going, the Rail 2000 group and the members of the various rail organisations. I also thank the members of the committee as well as our staff, Mr Knute Cudarans and Heather Hill (our research officer), who have worked diligently to ensure the completion of this report.

Rail is a favourite subject of mine. Personally, I am pleased to see more activity on rail here in South Australia. The announcement that the Yorke Peninsula Rail Preservation Society could cart grain from Wallaroo to Snowtown has a lot of promise. So, 10 points to them and no points to the governments over the years that have chosen to leave the line from Snowtown to Wallaroo redundant. The lines are still there, but nobody chooses to use them. That is a very important rail corridor, which should never have been closed: it should have been upgraded in the late 1960s. All power to the Yorke Peninsula Rail Preservation Society. I know that the member for Goyder is very supportive—

*Mr Meier interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** Yes, the honourable member is actually a member of that society. I hope the honourable member can take our good wishes to that group. If they are looking for another supporter in this place, please feel free to ask, because I will certainly give them all the support I can, along with, of course, the member for Goyder.

There is a strong argument for tourist trains to our northern cities. Bluebird Rail, which operates the Barossa train, should be encouraged to run a few trial trains at least to Port Pirie—and the member for Frome is in the House at the moment. If they do run a train, I can promise that I will be on it—and so may the minister, if the timetables line up. I certainly think that they ought at least undertake trials to Port Pirie and perhaps even to Port Augusta and then on to Whyalla. The lines are there. All they need is the will to run the trains.

I also acknowledge the success of the Bluebird Barossa rail service, which is a real experience. I have now been on the rail three times. It is a marvellous experience and it is very successful; indeed, it is booked out most of the time. I hope we can overcome the problem of getting the train through to Angaston, because the train stops at Nuriootpa purely because the rail lines from Nuriootpa to Angaston have not been upgraded. We have the money to upgrade that seven kilometres of track, but because the state government no longer owns the rail line we are having some difficulty negotiating with the new owner over, first, the legal liabilities of operating on that seven kilometres of track and, secondly, the annual maintenance. I believe that the \$60 000 required for annual maintenance is far too expensive. I would support any move to overcome the problem, even if the state govern-

ment has to take back that line and in cooperation and negotiation with the Barossa council operate the service because, as I said, we have the money to upgrade that track.

I believe that the Kapunda-Freeling line would also be a very successful tourist line. All the infrastructure is still in place; there are some very exotic bridges; and all the old signal and water towers are still there. Even to the rail buff, that line is interesting on its own. I am amazed that a tourist operator has not run a train on that service purely for the ride, if not the destination (which is very good as well). I believe that rail has a future and that our state is vitally dependent on our rail services. The saddest time in our history was when the Dunstan Government sold our SAR (South Australia Railways) and pulled up all the lines. If they were there now, I firmly believe that most of them would be being used today.

Along with this study on the eastern states rail corridor, interstate and intrastate lines are very important. I feel that light rail has a future in commuter Adelaide, because some of us can remember with fondness the old days of trams.

**Mr Lewis:** They were a bloody nuisance.

**Mr VENNING:** They were a nuisance, but I believe that modern trams have a future.

**Mr Lewis:** No, they don't.

**Mr VENNING:** The member for Hammond doesn't agree, but I believe that they do have a future and that at least the Glenelg to Victoria Square line should be extended through the heart of Adelaide to the Torrens Parade Ground, if not the end of O'Connell Street. That would be a real thrill, adding an extra source of enjoyment to the tourism experience in Adelaide, and would also be very useful for moving people from the inner city out to North Adelaide where they can park their cars and enjoy a further shopping experience. I have enjoyed this committee review and this investigation on the eastern states rail corridors. I hope that the government and other people will pick it up and run with it.

**Ms THOMPSON** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE**

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Lewis:

That the 105th report of the committee, on the Adelaide Convention Centre, be noted.

(Continued from 20 October. Page 174.)

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** As I rise to speak on the report of the committee on the extensions to the Adelaide Convention Centre, both because I am pleased to be able to comment on how well the convention centre has done for South Australia since it was established in the time of the Bannon government and to look forward to new developments in the way the convention centre is used in our state, I also express considerable concern about the shape that the extensions to the convention centre are taking and their cost. Members may recall that the committee did bring to the House an interim report about the extensions to the convention centre, because it was concerned that, since the initial hearings on this matter in November last year, the cost of the centre had increased from \$55 million to \$85 million.

We also discovered that some of the surrounding works to enhance the parklands which we had originally believed were included in that \$55 million were in fact not included in that considerable sum of money. I do not think many of us need to know what \$30 million could do in our electorates.

Each one of us would have a list, but it appears that the list relating to icons in the City of Adelaide has taken preference and precedence over members' lists. As we sought to discover why there had been this incredible increase in the price, we received a letter from the Hon. Joan Hall, Minister for Tourism, which endeavoured to explain some of this increase from \$55 million to \$85 million. I will quote directly from this letter so that all members and the community can understand what we are doing with the convention centre. The letter states:

The new building above the car park with its sweeping wall of curved glass and iconic roof form will be visible above the landscape screen, both along the river and from North Adelaide.

I believe that this landscape screen of lovely green grass backed by trees is something which many people regard as a feature of the banks of the River Torrens. Apparently, this area is described as a 'landscape screen' rather than 'trees'. However, it is now to be topped by curved glass and an iconic roof form—and I repeat that it will be visible from North Adelaide.

I am not sure how many of the citizens of the north realise that the pleasant green view that many of them have when they come to work each day will be dominated by an iconic roof form. We hear more about the grandiose nature of this development from the minister's letter when she states:

The government's commitment to a budget of \$85 million to extend the convention centre has been made in response to achieving a high quality design commensurate with the prominence of the site and appropriate to the importance and function of the building in promoting economic benefits to the city and the state.

I do not find the site above the railway lines terribly prominent or important, and it will only become dominant because of the nature of the edifice that is proposed for this site. Of itself, it has no natural attraction, as does the opera house with which this site was compared in evidence before the committee. The minister says:

What is arguably one of Adelaide's most prominent sites demands a design that South Australians can be proud of. . .

There are many things of which most South Australians would like to be proud including hospitals that work, with no long queues, where we do not have to build more waiting rooms, and where the form of the hospital fits the function. We are hearing a bit about form fitting function in relation to this proposal in that we are told:

The key design and layout objectives agreed to in the proposed new facilities will meet all of the centre's operating requirements, providing: a multi-purpose venue with pillarless floor space; high ceilings to international best practice; built-in flexibility; and more portable wall configurations and meeting room size combinations.

All those functions sound as though they are relevant to a modern convention centre. In the evidence, we heard that the demand for convention centres these days places considerable emphasis on both exhibition space, which requires quite high ceilings of about nine metres, and dining facilities. It appears that holding dinners for 3 500 people in one place is desirable in the convention market. I would rather have a more intimate dining ambience. However, much of the *raison d'être* for this vast edifice is to enable these large dining events to occur as part of international conventions.

This information emerged during the course of the evidence. It was originally put to us that the proposal related to exhibitions, but when we examined a number of bookings that were put before us—and we were pleased to see those bookings—it emerged that it was not the exhibition spaces that were required but the vast dining spaces. I think the

taxpayer would be a little more concerned to learn that we are building a giant dining room at a cost of \$85 million than spending that huge amount of money on exhibition space.

Overall, we find that we are looking for something that is an icon on a supposedly prominent site. A \$55 million option was described in evidence as 'boxlike' and therefore not likely to attract repeat business and sustain Adelaide in the top 10 convention centres in the world. Keeping us in that prominent position is important, but we have not achieved that position with an iconic roof form and sweeping glass walls. We have achieved it because Adelaide has something to offer. The convention centre has something functional to offer. Its staff and its organisation are superb—and the city of Adelaide is superb. We do not need glass walls and iconic roofs to bring people to Adelaide; we need to spend our money in a way which reflects the needs of the community for both economic and social development.

In the light of all the evidence about risk analysis—whether or not the risk would be decreased by spending \$85 million instead of \$55 million—I am not convinced that this state is making a wise decision to build an \$85 million convention centre extension. It is only an extension—the guts of the centre is still there. The service, standards and organisation are still there, as is the city of Adelaide.

Sure, it will bring in some great new conventions, and we will all be excited by them—I commend all those involved in achieving them. However, I am concerned about the cost (plus an extra \$30 million) of this intrusion into a private space that belongs to the city of Adelaide. It will not do anything significant to link North Terrace and the river bank in a green way which many of us would like to see. For those who are interested in the David Jones sculpture, it will put that piece of work at risk. The information we have is that that area is earmarked for development very quickly. This is a quiet contemplative area along our river bank which is in danger of being lost to the community.

Time expired.

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** I wish to make a few comments in support of the committee's report. I would like to begin, as did the member for Reynell, by congratulating the Adelaide Convention Centre for its performance over the years in which it has been in operation. The Adelaide Convention Centre was an initiative of the Bannon government. It has been most successful, it continues to be so, and it plays an important part in its contribution to South Australia's important tourism industry.

We have been told that Australia has 14 per cent of the overall global market share of international conventions and that South Australia has 17 per cent of the national market. That, of course, is well in excess of our State's share of the wider tourism market. So, we are doing well in this area. This success is due to a number of factors, including the availability of a high quality convention facility and the relative ease of travel within Adelaide, cost competitive accommodation, and the whole issue of the ambience of Adelaide itself and its reputation as a nice place to be with good food, good wine and friendly people. I also pay tribute to the way its marketing has been managed and the fact that it has been able to go out and get the business and is going ahead well in that way.

In relation to the extension, I do share some of the concerns that my colleagues have outlined, and they come in four main categories. First, I refer to the cost. We went into this project believing it would cost \$55 million. The final design put to us on the project is \$85 million for an extension.



That is a lot of money. Obviously we are always balancing the costs and benefits of where we place money. There is huge pressure on every dollar that the state has. It did concern me that we had a \$30 million increase on this building. Committee members all accepted that an additional 7 000 square metres in floor area was the optimum increase required, but we understood that this could be provided at a cost of approximately \$30 million less than the proposed project. That is concerning, particularly in light of the other pressures that we are all only too well aware of on the South Australian budget and the needs in our community for funding.

Secondly, as to the design of the centre, I have some concerns, as do a number of other people, about whether this design is the right one. Perhaps design is something on which all of us will never finally agree, but I must say that I do have some concerns. I am not sure that it will fit in at all with the other buildings and the overall plan of that area. It remains to be seen. In five years, when it is up and running and we can see it, we will think back to this time when these concerns were raised.

Thirdly, the committee was also concerned about the lack of consultation in relation to the project. We were told about a public meeting which, I think, 130 people attended, but I really believe that the community in general were not—

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Ms STEVENS:** That is true, the consultation was about the master plan, not about this centre. I believe it is quite correct that the general community has little idea of what is proposed here. I really believe that it has had virtually no opportunity to have an input into something that has been labelled another 'international standard iconic development'. I would have thought that something that went with that label should have attracted considerable community interest in its design, the way it would look, how it would work, how people would relate to it, etc., but none of this really happened in relation to this building.

Further, with respect to access to the river, we were pleased initially to learn of the plans for this and then disappointed to see that in fact this project was not going to deliver that feature and that we would have to wait a number of years until other stages of the total project were implemented before that happened. That is a disappointment.

The final point we made—and we have made this point in many of our reports—was that, again with this project, the Public Works Committee was faced with a task to evaluate a proposal according to our terms of reference, and we were up against a deadline because, with this project, bookings had already been confirmed for September 2001, and those bookings relied upon the project's being completed in August 2001. This meant for us that that completion date required a tender call for piling and associated works to occur in mid-August 1999, and again we came right up against that deadline and that dilemma of: do we hold this up and put at risk these bookings and the associated problems, or do we complete our report prematurely? This has happened to the Public Works Committee on many occasions. It would be terrific if government departments would plan appropriately and give us the opportunity to do the job we are entrusted to do and to be able to do it properly.

**The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism):** As we know, South Australia boasts many great success stories, and one which stands very tall in that pack is the Adelaide Convention Centre. With its extraordinarily committed and

professional team led by Pieter Van Der Hoeven who has received many tributes and plaudits this afternoon, it has consistently delivered strong operating results, and its role in helping Adelaide to attract some 17 per cent of conventions is due recognition as one of the top 10 convention centres in the world. We have to acknowledge that the Adelaide Convention Centre is truly a great success.

It is quite rare, and understandably so, that I ever give much credit (in this place anyway) to the former government, but I am happy to acknowledge the success that the Convention Centre, opened in 1987 and the first of its kind in Australia, has been, and to acknowledge the many benefits in terms of generating economic activity that this facility has brought to our state. I do welcome the support for the expansion of the Convention Centre that the opposition has expressed, despite the remarks from the member for Reynell.

Today I would also welcome the 105th report of the Public Works Committee, being the final report into the Convention Centre expansion. Although the report contains some issues that I intend to address today, I am pleased that the Public Works Committee has recognised the clear need for the expansion and for our Convention Centre, and I thank members for their support. The high demand, coupled with the changing nature of conventions in an ever-increasing need for exhibition space, has forced the Convention Centre to turn away business in recent times. We know that this is a tragedy. To maintain our position as a top 10 destination for conventions, we must answer this demand, meet these challenges and expand the Convention Centre, which is what we are doing.

As has been noted in the report to the House, in the 18 months to April 1998, events involving more than 40 000 people had to be referred interstate. Given the benefit to the economy derived from each delegate to a convention, this is clearly not a desirable situation. The extension before us will increase the capacity of the Convention Centre by around 110 per cent and significantly increase the available floor space for exhibitions. As a direct consequence of the announced expansion, the Convention Centre has already been able to book business worth more than \$100 million to our state's economy involving some 63 conventions and exhibitions, and I congratulate Pieter and his team for their clear determination to make this such a success.

The final report has made some comment regarding the price of the extension and questioned whether it could have been done for less. There are two particular issues I intend to address in relation to this: the ultimate functionality of the extended Convention Centre; and its status as an icon in our city, both of which are integral to the government's Riverbank Precinct Master Plan. First, I draw member's attention to the construction phase which will generate an estimated 1 300 full-time equivalent jobs, and the investment of the significant dollars into South Australia's economy of course will bring extensive economic benefits and future job growth. Estimates conclude that the benefits of the expansion will be an additional \$45 million in economic activity and 800 full-time equivalent jobs by the year 2005, and that these will increase to an additional \$81 million in economic activity and 1 500 full-time equivalent jobs by 2011.

All up, these extensions will repay their capital value in economic activity to the state within just three years. However, these economic returns could be discounted and would be at greater risk of not being achieved if we were to build a lesser standard convention centre, and it is on this point that I will address the importance of the functionality

of the design. Adopting a least cost approach that merely sought to maximise floor space would unquestionably harm the enviable reputation of our convention centre. It currently enjoys repeat business of some 60 per cent, which is an extraordinarily impressive figure. However, they are unable to provide the flexibility of options for repeat customers that is required to maintain this fabulous level of achievement.

Most of the key operating requirements for the centre that are currently missing will be met within these extensions, and they are: a multi-purpose venue with pillarless floor space; 10.5 metre ceilings that meet international best practice; the ability to accommodate 4 870 guests at once in five separate banqueting rooms; newer, larger kitchen facilities; built-in flexibility for different conference and exhibition configurations; more operable wall configurations and meeting room size combinations, plus built-in in-floor water, power, communications and waste disposal services.

These assets make it easier to sell the convention centre to clients; they will provide unquestionably better service and I am sure that they will bring them back here more often. This design offers functionality and a flexibility that could not have been achieved for more basic models and, purely from an internal perspective, it will help ensure greater returns. From a marketing perspective, the quality exterior design that the government has chosen will also help bring greater returns. If we are to continue enjoying the levels of success we currently boast, we must offer a quality and attractive convention destination. We have all the right foundations: a unique state, elegant city and the perfect location for the convention centre nestled between the cultural boulevard of North Terrace and our city riverbanks. To be frank, that is why this site does deserve a stunning building designed by highly respected architects, with the input of local and international experts, which complement other riverbank icons such as the Festival Centre.

The aesthetics of a centre such as this are important to business and our pride as a city. This convention centre occupies a place in the scenic heart of Adelaide, and the extension will deliver much more than just additional floor space. It will also feature a sculptured roof form, complementing the Festival Centre roof shells, with sweeping walls of glass; a glass wall, creating direct visual connection between the river and the reception, function, restaurant and public space in the centre; a dramatic, curved entry canopy, providing a pedestrian north-south link; an entrance from North Terrace which will eliminate the traffic bottleneck of the Hyatt forecourt; and the connection of the old and new buildings through a glazed and light filled winter garden atrium, providing large pre-function areas.

This new convention centre will be the first stage of the implementation of the Riverbank master plan. That is extraordinarily important, because Riverbank will bring another part of our city alive and provide a special new environment to extend our reputation as the premier stable for conventions, festivals and major events, which we know are important to us as a state.

I note that the committee has expressed some concern that decking over Festival Drive and terracing down the Torrens River edge has not been included in this proposal. However, as committee members would appreciate, the government had to draw a line on the difference between this project and the complete Riverbank development to ensure funding of this important economic investment so that the money could be found now. I look forward to details of further stages in the Riverbank redevelopment being finalised and released to the

Public Works Committee and to members over time. What we have before us now for the convention centre expansion is a grand project. Our government is committed to build a quality building, not a tin shed. Perhaps it could have been done more cheaply, but we would not have been able to achieve the external appeal at both the North Terrace and riverbank frontages. We would also have lost a number of internal assets such as pillarless space, high ceilings, better kitchen facilities and more discrete servicing functions.

I believe we have selected the best possible option that provides clear economic benefits, a quality and functional centre, an iconic building befitting the status of a federation project which the Premier has given it. I sincerely thank again the Public Works Committee for its positive comments on the need for the convention centre expansion, despite a couple of the remarks made by the member for Reynell. The status and high regard with which the centre is held internationally is a credit to the professional and successful operation led by Pieter van der Hoeven and his magnificent team, and I offer them my congratulations and tell them that their enormous contribution to this state is greatly valued. The Adelaide Convention Centre has enjoyed many successes over the past 10 years. I know that, with the completion of this expansion by August 2001, when visitors will be arriving in our new airport and visiting our new wine centre, we can all look forward to even bigger and better successes from our new convention centre.

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** I wish to make a brief contribution as shadow Treasurer. I concur that there is no doubt that this will be a splendid convention centre which will clearly be a significant and grand structure. I want to make the point that a substantial proportion of the new convention centre is unbudgeted, and the Premier himself acknowledged that in the estimates committee earlier this year. As shadow Treasurer I am concerned that, from a budgetary point of view, if the government wishes to spend this amount of money on a convention centre it must be budgeted for properly and must not contribute to budget blow-outs or significant cuts elsewhere within government. The Premier indicated that he would make some savings, nips and tucks here and there to pay for it. I hope he is correct, and through the course of this budget cycle we will be looking to ensure that that is the case.

I am sure that, whilst he would not have said it publicly, the current Treasurer would have said privately within the cabinet room that, if you are to spend more than you originally budgeted for, it has to come from somewhere. We can have the world's greatest convention centre if we pay for it. I hope the government offers prudent financial management to ensure that this does come within existing resources and does not in any way contribute to a budget blow-out, and that the savings the Premier indicated he would find to fund this project are found. There are stresses on our budget, as evidenced by the emergency services levy and a number of over expenditures that are being identified in the budget process. I make the point that as much as \$30 million of this is not budgeted for, as the original budget indicated, and that is an issue of concern. I dearly hope the government will do what it said it would do and identify sufficient savings from within its resources to pay for it; otherwise, we will have another significant budget blow-out, and that should concern all of us.

Motion carried.

## HIGHWAYS (ROAD CLOSURES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I move:

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

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

Leave granted.

The aim of this Bill is to introduce a measure to make it explicit that any action that a Local Government Council takes, or has taken in the past, to exclude vehicles generally, or vehicles of a particular class, from a road under the 'care and control' of the Commissioner of Highways has no effect after the commencement of the provision, unless the Commissioner determines otherwise.

As background, Local Government Councils' road construction powers are suspended when the Commissioner of Highways issues a Notice pursuant to section 26 of the *Highways Act 1926* to the effect that the Commissioner intends to take over the maintenance and repair of a road for a term. This process is known colloquially as the Commissioner taking over 'care and control' of the road concerned. The original purpose of this section was to provide the State Government with the capacity to rectify deficiencies in Council roads. However, for many years it has been the statutory mechanism by which the Commissioner takes over care and control of the strategic network of major arterial roads throughout the State.

Suspension of a Council's powers when the Commissioner issues a Notice pursuant to section 26 of the *Highways Act* does not extend to the suspension of the traffic management powers presently contained in the *Local Government Act 1934*. Nevertheless, bar one recent exception, in the 73 years of operation of the *Highways Act* Councils and the Commissioner have always been able to reach an understanding that the metropolitan road network can accommodate a variety of traffic movements—from pedestrians, cyclists and cars, through to commercial delivery and heavy freight vehicles.

Unfortunately, this understanding has now been placed in doubt by the actions of a Council, making it necessary for the Government to take immediate steps to ensure the continuing integrity of the strategic road network. The economic, budgetary and social significance of developing and maintaining an efficient arterial road network cannot be overestimated. In particular, because of our distance from interstate and overseas markets, efficient freight transport movements are critical to the viability of business in this State—and to the retention and growth of jobs in our manufacturing, retail and export sectors.

A related concern is the adverse impact on neighbouring Council areas which would inherit an influx of traffic if another Council is allowed to proceed unchecked to exclude vehicles generally, or a particular class of vehicles, from the State arterial road system.

Overall, the Government will not tolerate a Council, acting unilaterally, undermining the integrity of the strategic road network—or, in turn, to burden other Councils with extra traffic through their areas.

The main features of the Bill provide:

- 1 That any action taken by a Council before the commencement of the new section to exclude vehicles generally, or vehicles of a particular class from a road under the care and control of the Commissioner, will cease to have effect when the new sub-section comes into force unless the Commissioner determines otherwise; and
- 2 That any action taken by a Council after the commencement of the new sub-section to exclude vehicles generally, or vehicles of a particular class from a road under the care and control of the Commissioner, will not have effect unless the Commissioner determines otherwise.

Road closures or traffic restrictions in force in respect of roads under the care and control of Councils will not be affected.

The amendment is consistent with a new provision in the *Road Traffic Act 1961*—namely a new section 32 which was inserted by the *Road Traffic (Road Rules) Amendment Act 1999* and assented to on 5 August 1999. It is due to be proclaimed on 1 December 1999 and specifically requires the concurrence of the Commissioner where a Council proposes to close, or impose traffic restrictions on, a road under the care and control of the Commissioner.

I commend the bill to the house.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title*

*Clause 2: Commencement*

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

*Clause 3: Amendment of s. 26—Powers of Commissioner as to roads and works*

Clause 3 proposes an amendment to s. 26 of the principal Act to provide that where a section 26 notice of the Commissioner's intention to take over the maintenance and repair of a road for a term is given, or has previously been given, then, during the term of the notice or the balance of that term, any action that the council takes or has taken to exclude vehicles from that road is not or ceases to be of any effect unless approved by the Commissioner by notice in writing to the council.

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

## MOTOR VEHICLES (HEAVY VEHICLES SPEEDING CONTROL SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I move:

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

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

Leave granted.

The aim of this Bill is to introduce a scheme for the management of speeding heavy vehicles. The scheme will help reduce the incidence of speeding among heavy vehicles by making the registered owner of the vehicle responsible for repeated speeding incidents. Extending responsibility for speeding from drivers to owners, and introducing penalties which impact on the operation of a transport business will improve road safety in rural areas and prevent some businesses from operating to the disadvantage of those with good driving practices in place.

The amendments incorporate a staged set of penalties approved by Transport Ministers at the Australian Transport Council in November 1997. The penalties target the registered owners of heavy vehicles repeatedly detected driving at 15km/h or more over the speed limit for the type of vehicle, over a 3 year period. Penalties will range from a warning to suspension of registration for 3 months. The scheme recognises that owners often pressure drivers to speed, but that speeding penalties only target drivers.

Similar schemes have been introduced in New South Wales and Victoria and by the Commonwealth in relation to federally registered vehicles in the last year. The details of the schemes are different. The fact that there are discrepancies in the schemes has been raised with the Commonwealth Minister for Transport and Regional Services, who has responded indicating support for any moves to bring the schemes closer so as to ensure maximum national uniformity.

The scheme will allow for a hierarchy of penalties to be imposed on heavy vehicles exceeding the speed limit for the type of vehicle by 15km/h or more within a rolling three year period as follows:

- the first breach will incur a warning
- the second breach will result in the owner being required to demonstrate that the speed limiter is operating effectively
- the third breach will result in a 28 day suspension of registration
- the fourth and subsequent breaches will result in a 3 month suspension of registration.

Where a vehicle is not already required to have a speed limiter fitted, another step will be added, so that the second breach will result in a requirement that a speed limiter be fitted, the third will result in a requirement that the owner show that the device is operating effectively, the fourth will result in a 28 day suspension and the fifth and subsequent breaches will result in a 3 month suspension of registration.

Once a driver of a vehicle registered in South Australia has expiated or been convicted of a relevant speeding incident, the Registrar will record it on a register, showing the date and place of the offence. The Registrar must notify the registered owner of the entry. The registered owner will have the opportunity to challenge the accuracy of the register.

If the Registrar requires a speed limiter to be fitted to a heavy vehicle within a certain time, the vehicle must not be driven on a road after this time unless a speed limiter has been fitted and is operating effectively. Contravention of this requirement will be an

offence and the driver and the registered owner will each be guilty. It will be a defence for the driver that he/she was not the registered owner and had no knowledge of the requirement to have the speed limiter fitted. It will be a defence for the registered owner that in consequence of an unlawful act the vehicle was not in his/her possession or control at the time of the alleged offence. Under the *Motor Vehicles (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 1999*, passed in the last session of Parliament, an aggrieved person has the right to an internal review of the Registrar's decisions followed by further right of review by a court. Those review provisions will also apply to this scheme.

Suspension of registration will only apply to a vehicle if the offences occurred within the previous 3 years and there was a continuity of registered ownership over the period of the offences whether the same person or associated persons appear on the register as registered owners over the period. Interstate experience has been that contrived transfers are often made solely for the purpose of escaping the suspension of registration. The extension of the scheme to include associated owners will largely close a major avenue for the avoidance of the sanctions. 'Associated person' will mean spouse, brother or sister, child, parent, person living in the same household, persons in partnership, person in trust relationships as well as related companies. A transfer of vehicle registration to a non-associated person will clear all speeding incidents from the register.

Suspension will not alter the expiry date of the vehicle's registration, nor will registration be able to be cancelled, transferred or renewed during the period of suspension.

There is provision for recognition of corresponding schemes operating in other jurisdictions so that an offence in another jurisdiction will count as an offence here and the Registrar will report offences committed by vehicles registered in other jurisdictions to the appropriate registration authority.

This scheme will replace existing measures in the *Road Traffic Act 1961* to control speeding heavy vehicles and a necessary consequential amendment to that Act is included in the Bill.

There will be a publicity campaign directed to the road transport industry advising it of the details of the scheme. The scheme targets what might be called the rotters in the industry—responsible sectors of the industry have already indicated their support.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Clause 1: Short title

##### Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

##### Clause 3: Insertion of Part 2A

#### PART 2A

#### HEAVY VEHICLES SPEEDING CONTROL SCHEME

##### 71C. Interpretation

This proposed new section contains definitions of terms used in the proposed new Part 2A.

'Heavy vehicle' is—

- a bus with a GVM over 5 tonnes
- any other motor vehicle with a GVM over 12 tonnes
- a motor vehicle of a prescribed class.

'Bus' is a motor vehicle built mainly to carry people that seats more than 9 adults (including the driver).

For the purposes of the new Part, a heavy vehicle is to be taken to have been involved in a relevant speeding offence if—

- a person has been convicted of an offence in this State of driving the vehicle at a speed 15 kilometres per hour or more over the speed limit applying to the vehicle
- a person has expiated an offence in this State in respect of which an expiation notice has been issued alleging that the vehicle was driven at a speed 15 kilometres per hour or more over the speed limit applying to the vehicle
- the registration authority under a corresponding law has notified the Registrar of an offence in another State or Territory involving the driving of the vehicle at a speed 15 kilometres per hour or more over the speed limit applying to the vehicle and a person has—
  - been convicted of the offence or
  - paid the amount payable under an infringement notice or penalty notice issued under the law of that State or Territory in respect of the offence.

##### 71D. Registrar to register relevant speeding offences

The Registrar of Motor Vehicles is to register in the register of motor vehicles details of each relevant speeding offence in which a heavy vehicle registered under the principal Act has been involved.

An exception to this will be made for vehicles that were stolen or otherwise unlawfully taken from the control of the registered owner or operator when the offence occurred.

##### 71E. Notice to be served on registered owner

When an offence is registered in relation to a heavy vehicle, the Registrar is to send a notice to the registered owner that—

- describes the entry made in the register; and
- if the vehicle is not already required to be fitted with a speed limiting device, contains a statement of the Registrar's obligations under the new Part with respect to the fitting of speed limiting devices; and
- contains a statement of the Registrar's obligations under the new Part with respect to the suspension of vehicle registration; and
- advises of the right to apply for the review of decisions under the new Part.

##### 71F. Removal of entries relating to offences on certain change in registered ownership

The Registrar is to remove from the register any entry relating to an offence registered in relation to a heavy vehicle if the registered ownership of the vehicle changes completely and no newly registered owner is an associate of a previously registered owner.

##### 71G. Correction of register

The Registrar may correct the register at any time on application or on the Registrar's own initiative. A decision of the Registrar on such an application will be taken to be a decision on a review under Part 3E and hence may be appealed against to the District Court under that Part.

##### 71H. Requirement to fit speed limiting device

The Registrar is to require the fitting of a speed limiting device to a heavy vehicle if the register records that the vehicle has been involved in a second speeding offence in three years. This applies only to heavy vehicles not already required to be fitted with such a device under the vehicle standards. It will be an offence punishable by a maximum fine of \$2 500 if such a vehicle is subsequently driven on a road without there being an effectively operating device fitted to the vehicle in accordance with the Registrar's requirement.

##### 71I. Requirement to satisfy Registrar as to fitting and effective operation of speed limiting device

The Registrar is empowered to require the registered owner of a heavy vehicle to satisfy the Registrar that a speed limiting device is fitted to the vehicle as required under the vehicle standards or by the Registrar and that the device is operating effectively.

The registration of the vehicle may be suspended by the Registrar if the owner fails to comply with the Registrar's requirements under this provision.

##### 71J. Suspension of registration

The registration of a heavy vehicle is to be suspended if the register records that the vehicle has been involved in multiple speeding offences during a three year period.

The number of speeding offences that will trigger the suspension is—

- three (including the last offence) in the case of a vehicle required to be fitted with a speed limiting device under the vehicle standards
- four (including the last offence) in the case of a vehicle that has been required by the Registrar under the new Part to be fitted with a speed limiting device.

The period of suspension varies according to whether the vehicle's registration has previously been suspended in the three year period as a result of a speeding offence—

- 28 days if the vehicle's registration has not previously been so suspended
- three months if the vehicle's registration has previously been so suspended.

##### 71K. Registration not to be renewed, transferred, cancelled, etc., during period of suspension

The registration of a heavy vehicle cannot be renewed, transferred or cancelled during a period of suspension under this scheme nor can the vehicle be re-registered during such suspension.

##### 71L. Notification of relevant speeding offences to other registration authorities

The Registrar is required to notify the registration authority under a corresponding law if a heavy vehicle registered by that authority is involved in a relevant speeding offence in this State.

*Clause 4: Amendment of s. 98Z—Review by Registrar or review committee*

Section 98Z, which allows for the review of various specified decisions of the Registrar, is amended so that the review and appeal process will apply to decisions of the Registrar under the proposed new Part 2A.

*Clause 5: Amendment of Road Traffic Act*

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the *Road Traffic Act* removing section 81 of that Act. That provision will be replaced by the new section 71I proposed to be inserted in the *Motor Vehicle Act*.

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

**Ms THOMPSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

*A quorum having been formed:*

### STATUTES AMENDMENT (UNIVERSITIES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 29 September. Page 33.)

**Ms WHITE (Taylor):** This bill alters the three university acts and the Ombudsman Act, and the opposition has studied it very carefully, as it does all pieces of legislation. Many people do not realise that the state government has a legislative role in the three universities in this state because their founding legislation is state legislation. Universities across the nation have been in the news in the last couple of weeks, and in this House last week I spoke about the opposition's disappointment with the secret plans of Dr Kemp, the federal Liberal minister for higher education, that had been revealed. He had obtained permission from cabinet to prepare a submission, despite prior election promises, that would see the deregulation of university fees, the implementation of a voucher subsidy system for university education and the introduction of student loans at market interest rates. It took almost a week for the Prime Minister to back down on that plan.

It is appropriate that the state should have a role in our universities. Only today at an open hearing of the Economic and Finance Committee with the Auditor-General, the member for Fisher commented that he thought the state government should have a greater role overseeing the expenditure of university funds. I bring that up only to mention it and because there is a view, not necessarily held by the opposition, that perhaps the state does have a greater role to play with respect to our universities.

As a member of the Economic and Finance Committee, I can advise the House that it is currently investigating the issue of state government assistance to industry. Witnesses who have appeared before the committee on that reference have included the university vice-chancellors, so we are taking an active interest in the very important role that the universities play in the economic development of South Australia. Alas, the bill before us today is very small. It alters one line of each of the university acts and makes some consequential changes to the Ombudsman Act.

It essentially deletes the reference to the Visitor to a university, who in this state is the South Australian Governor, Sir Eric Neal. It is a traditional office and I notice in the minister's second reading explanation that he refers to the office of the Visitor as an archaic one. It is a ceremonial role but there is also a dispute resolution function. The proposal contained in this bill is that it would be more appropriate if

the Ombudsman took on that dispute resolution role, particularly given that the disputes that arise really concern the internal management of the universities.

The Governor's powers with respect to dispute resolution on university campuses are limited. When a dispute is taken to the Governor, the government employs a QC to act on behalf of the Governor to facilitate that dispute resolution. It is a ludicrous situation really and this bill proposes that the Ombudsman take on that role. I have spoken to various members of the universities in passing at recent events and they have commented that the ceremonial role that the Governor fulfils will continue and that the Governor is welcome as a visitor to the universities in this state. Therefore the Governor will retain access to the universities and he will be able to maintain an interest in their affairs. I believe that Sir Eric Neal has done a very good job for this state in terms of his promotion of young people in a whole range of areas, and a week or so ago I attended a garden party at Government House to farewell international students who had been studying at South Australia's universities.

I hope that, in implementing this change, the government will provide resources to the Ombudsman so that his office can perform this new function. I know from my business dealings with the Ombudsman through freedom of information requests and from asking him to adjudicate on a whole range of issues on behalf of my constituents that the resources of his office are stretched. If this legislation is assented to, it would mean that the Ombudsman would have yet another function to add to his workload. I ask the minister to respond to my comment as to whether the resources of the Ombudsman's office will be increased to handle the extra workload that will result from the passage of this bill. Should the minister agree to answer my question in his response to me at this stage, because the opposition is in support of this bill I would be happy to proceed immediately to the third reading. If the minister would like to address that issue we could go to the third reading.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training):** I thank the member for Taylor for her contribution. This is a very simple bill, which recognises the fact that in this day and age it is more appropriate for the Ombudsman than the Governor to deal with any appeals. In the previous situation the Governor was supplied with a Queen's Counsel where any appeals have come to him and the government has paid for that Queen's Counsel advice for the Governor. However, given social issues within the community and how they have moved on, the time is right now for this matter to be dealt with by the Ombudsman. In saying that, the Governor does not lose any of the ceremonial duties that he or she currently has within the three universities. Nothing changes in that area; it is purely the matter of the right to appeal to the Governor.

In answer to the member for Taylor, I do not have any figures on how many appeals there may have been to the Governor over the past few years in terms of additional resources going to the Ombudsman. I would be interested to find that out myself in terms of what likely call there is to be on the Ombudsman in this situation. I undertake to look into that matter and see whether there is a need to increase the resources to the Ombudsman to ensure that he can adequately deal with any appeals that might come up. In my term as minister I have only seen one that has reached the Governor,

so I do not believe there would be a requirement for further resources going to the Ombudsman, but I will take to get that information and get back to the member for Taylor.

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

### COMMONWEALTH PLACES (MIRROR TAXES ADMINISTRATION) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 29 September. Page 35.)

**Ms WHITE:** Mr Speaker I draw your attention to the state of the House.

*A quorum having been formed:*

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** I rise to speak on the government's legislation on the commonwealth mirror taxes legislation, which is appropriately titled Commonwealth Places (Mirror Taxes Administration) Bill. This is a small but important piece of legislation and follows, from memory, the 1996 High Court decision of *Adler International v. the State of Victoria*. This High Court decision, as many would be aware, ruled that it was unconstitutional for the state government of Victoria to be levying stamp duties at the time and the High Court ruled that the state government of Victoria simply could not do it because it was on commonwealth land. I think from memory it was Melbourne Airport, maybe Tullamarine. It was shop premises at Tullamarine Airport and the company was successful in appealing to the High Court.

Why these companies keep doing it is anyone's guess because there is nothing surer in this life than death and taxes and, if companies want to take governments to the High Court to find that we do not have the power to levy such taxes, we will always find a way to come back and do it. This is what has happened here, similar to what has happened with tobacco and other franchise fees—we have found another way, that is, simply to have the commonwealth government collect the appropriate FID taxes, payroll taxes and stamp duties.

This legislation simply allows the commonwealth to collect those taxes on our behalf and have those taxes paid to the states. It really is a piece of administrative work and it sends a signal to those people who want to take on the constitutional right of governments to apply certain taxes and charges. Good luck, it is their right to go as far as they wish in challenging these taxes, but at the end of the day I suspect it is money paid to lawyers with little or no gain because ways are found by state and commonwealth treasurers and we are a club at the end of the day and we band together and make sure that somehow we get that money.

I know of one case going on here in South Australia at present as it is before the courts. I shall not comment on it other than to say that a particular company is challenging the right of governments to levy certain fees and I suspect that people need to be aware that if they are successful in these actions there are ways for governments to ensure that we redress that and collect the money anyway. With those few words that I have given—a fairly comprehensive detailing of the legislation and no doubt impressing my colleagues with my instant memory of the 1996 High Court decision of the time—I have said enough. We support the bill.

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

Hart for his contribution. He is quite right in saying that this matter arose from a case of the Victorian government imposing stamp duty on a business transaction that occurred at the Tullamarine Airport where a business changed hands and questioning ensued as to whether the state could impose that stamp duty with the business being on commonwealth land. This legislation merely mirrors commonwealth legislation. All other states have now enacted this mirror legislation. We will be the last state to do so and it ensures that those taxes collected by the commonwealth are passed on to the state.

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

### HOTELS NEAR SCHOOLS

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I lay on the table a ministerial statement from the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning entitled Hotels Near Schools.

### YUMBARRA CONSERVATION PARK

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. D.C. Kotz:

That this House requests His Excellency the Governor to make a proclamation under section 43(2) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 that declares that rights of entry, prospecting, exploration and mining under the Mining Act 1971 may be acquired and exercised in respect of that proportion of the Yumbarra Conservation Park being section 457, north out of Hundreds, county of Way (Fowler) and that a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting its concurrence thereto.

(Continued from 19 October. Page 135.)

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

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to enable members to ask questions of the minister about exploration and mining in Yumbarra Conservation Park.

Motion carried.

**Mr HILL:** I move:

That the Speaker do now leave the chair and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to enable members to ask questions of the minister about exploration and mining in Yumbarra Conservation Park.

Motion carried.

In committee.

**Mr HILL:** Why has the minister chosen to ignore key recommendations from the 1997 select committee that looked at the reclamation of Yumbarra Conservation Park? The recommendations about which I am particularly concerned (and I refresh the minister's memory) were that reclamation should be provided only for exploration; and, secondly, that the park be reclaimed for a limited period of up to three years, the understanding being that if no viable mining deposits were found the park could then regain its protected status. In the minister's speech the other day she pointed out quite clearly that it is the intention of the motion not to do either of those things. Can the minister explain why?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** This is a question that is easily answered in terms of the nature of the times in which we live, the requests made and the community needs. In this instance, we have many different changes of attitude throughout our communities, and in terms of regional development it is certainly a proposal that is supported in many of areas. So, in terms of what the select committee chose to recommend,

most of those recommendations were very supportive of the means by which we have moved this proclamation to date. However, in terms of the areas where we have not picked up the select committee recommendations, I believe that it does, in fact, reflect not only community needs but also community attitudes today, and I do not believe that we are in great contradiction to the select committee recommendations in terms of the moves being made here by this parliament.

**Mr HILL:** What a lot of nonsense. The select committee report was very clear that those matters should come back from the parliament for resolution. My second question goes to part of the answer that the minister just gave when she said that further consultation had meant that those original conditions were no longer relevant. I have been informed by various people in the conservation movement that neither the minister nor her department have made any formal approaches to the peak conservation groups this year in relation to their concerns about the environmental impact of removing protected status from an acknowledged valuable ecosystem such as Yumbarra—and I refer the minister to her own Wilderness Advisory Committee's report.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** In the first instance, I suggest to the member for Kaurna that, if the Labor Party is evolving new policies in relation to mining in national parks, I think this parliament would be very happy to hear it—as would the people in regional areas, the industries that relate to mining and the environmentalists throughout this state. During the period 1985 to 1993, some 24 different parks were jointly proclaimed, all during the time of a Labor government. There was only one that was singularly proclaimed, and that was early in the 1960s. Since then, while the Labor Party was in government, it chose to take another view, or another line, and it chose to jointly proclaim all the parks that became national parks or conservation parks. That enabled mining to occur.

I think the important thing about this debate at the moment is how to manage any of the environmental aspects of any proclamation that is accepted by the parliament as we debate this motion. So, in terms of the environmental aspects, I can assure the honourable member that, as the Minister for Environment, it is my role and my responsibility to make sure of all conditions that will minimise environmental impact with respect to any mining that takes place today. That is the role that the draft proclamation outlines very clearly in a great number of areas—the type and the necessity of environmental conditions with respect to any mining that may take place after this parliament makes its decision.

**Mr HILL:** What a non-answer. I ask the minister about consultation and she drags a red herring across the trail and talks about various pieces of legislation that were enacted by a previous Labor government. The fact that the minister did not answer the question, I suppose, proves a point: that she has not been consulting with the conservation movement about this at all. I ask again: why has the minister not consulted with the community over the past two and a half years since the select committee reported to parliament—in particular, the conservation community—about the changes and the consequences of these changes? The minister proudly comes in here, as do all of her colleagues, and says how she is listening to the community. Why has she not been listening to the community in relation to this issue?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I am amazed. The member for Kaurna rises in this place and makes false accusations, when he is well aware, in terms of community consultation, that not only this minister but other ministers of this government have

talked to all communities that are involved or have any interest at all in this proclamation. I also suggest to the member that he is well aware that we have spoken to these people, because it is my understanding that a great number of individuals from different community areas—particularly those that are involved in the Ceduna area, through regional development, the Aboriginal community—all the different people who are involved as stakeholders with an interest in this proclamation—have also visited the member for Kaurna. As a result of the discussions that he had (as was intimated to me after he had those discussions) he would know exactly how much consultation took place, and he would be aware of the support that has come from all those groups to move forward with this proclamation. So, for the member for Kaurna to stand here and make false remarks is really belittling his type of contribution to this debate, which in itself is a reasonably sensitive one—a fact which I would ask him to consider.

**Ms KEY:** My question relates to consultation with the Aboriginal people who live in the area concerned. Can the minister outline the consultations that have taken place since the handing down of this select committee report in relation to this new legislation?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I can assure the member that all areas, as I have said, including the Aboriginal communities involved, have certainly been—

*The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** No, the Wirangu group, in particular, who have tribal connections to that area. In fact, a representative of that group was here in the city just a matter of a week or 10 days ago. That group is also having continuous discussions with us—and discussions of support. It is one of those issues that has its sensitivities most certainly in terms of the environment when you mix it with mining. However, the community group has been extremely supportive; in fact, there are letters of support from all the different groups. I am quite sure that members of the opposition have also received these letters of support.

The select committee reports that it received evidence at the time from the Wirangu tribe through the elder, Mr B. Ware, and from local farmers. Local Landcare groups were also consulted and gave evidence. At that time when the select committee was debating this issue, taking evidence and waiting for the recommendations, all those people expected that in fact this project would proceed. So, they were extremely disappointed at the time when nothing came of the recommendations. I can assure the member that in terms of consultation this is not just one that was conducted recently: it is a matter that has gone on for some considerable time with total support from all those areas I am talking about.

**Mr McEWEN:** I wish to foreshadow some concerns with the conditions as specified in the proclamation. In so doing, I bring to the minister's attention some concerns about the biological assessment of the area, noting that in the parliamentary select committee reference was made to two biological surveys and concern raised about both of them, and to note that in bringing this matter to our attention in the House you referred specifically to the 1995 survey of March. Given that I believe a spring survey is essential, particularly in terms of plants, reptiles, birds, mammals and insects, is it possible at least to do a one-off spring survey prior to giving the authority to the Minister for Primary Industries to move forward with any approvals? I note that under the proclamation you need to give written approval before the primary industries minister can act. Is it possible within the conditions

to be clearer about the need for another biological survey, particularly in the spring?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I thank the member for his very important question, particularly as it relates to the role that I play as the environment minister. I can assure the member that the conditions of exploration licence are probably some of the most stringent in the country. At the present moment in terms of exploration licences and approvals to mine, the conditions and the requirements are set down under a series of guidelines that have been developed over the years. They make these particular moves with regard to mining and the environmental impact an absolute necessity in terms of how exploration activities even begin.

If the explorers are granted an exploration licence over the central portion of Yumbarra, they will also be required to undertake a biological survey of the target areas they plan to explore. That survey will highlight any rare or threatened flora or fauna that they will need to avoid and will determine the different ecological communities and the land forms, of course, in which they want to work. These aspects will assist in managing any environmental impacts and in planning to ensure that any impacts are minimised and transitory. The survey will be managed by an environmental professional who is acceptable to my department and therefore to me and who will undertake this work using the standard procedures for biological surveys. Data collected will be in a form that is compatible to existing biological databases.

The survey will be in a targeted area and will be supplementary to the previous biological surveys that have been undertaken in the region. I am sure the member, as I know, is well read on the subject and knows that in 1992 there was a biological survey of the Yellabinna region in South Australia and also a biological survey of Yumbarra Conservation Park. To avoid duplication and to provide additional biological data for the area, the Department of Environment and Heritage and the explorer will work together to ensure that the survey will establish useful additional information and will assist again in determining the conditions of activity approvals. This will also involve ongoing monitoring, which will occur periodically during any operations that are licensed, under the supervision of Primary Industries and Resources SA and the departments of environment, heritage and aboriginal affairs.

The conditions on an exploration licence will include not only the standard conditions but conditions relating to exploration in parks; indeed, the conditions are already spelt out in the proclamation itself. The licence will include conditions—which is the purpose of all this—to ensure that environmental impacts are in fact minimised. I can suggest some of the means by which these conditions apply in a practical sense. The licensee must ensure that use of vehicles in connection with operations conducted under the licence other than on existing roads or tracks or tracks approved by the director are kept to a minimum. Prior to entering the Yumbarra Conservation Park in order to carry out exploration operations, written approval must be obtained from the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Environment and Heritage. An application to carry out such operations must be supported by a declaration of environmental factors (DEF), and that will be lodged with the Director of Mines.

When the Director of Mines has approved a code of practice or guidelines for the environmental management of mineral exploration in the given area, the company will be required to adopt them or provide an alternative document of

the same standard as approved by the Director of Mines. This licence will also contain the conditions that are in the draft proclamation, including sections 6 and 7. If the member looks at sections 6 and 7 he will find that about 2½ pages of very specific and significant conditions are placed on that licence, remembering that at all times any approvals and conditions must come back to the Minister for Environment before those conditions are signed off and any exploration or mining takes place.

**Mr McEWEN:** First, I was actually interested in the minister's answer but, due to lack of courtesy in the House, found it very difficult to hear the minister. If someone asks a question in the House they should be given the opportunity to hear the answer. Having said that, I return to the question, because I do not believe that it was answered. Again, I did not have the opportunity to listen to every word. I am asking the minister for something over and above what she has alluded to. Yes, I accept the conditions that will attach to a licence and I accept the relationship between the two ministers in that regard.

I foreshadow that I want to insert another condition in the proclamation, but I will not go as far as to ask for a fully backed experimental design, which will take three years. However, I return to the point that I do not believe that the data suite is yet in place to allow these other conditions to be implemented fully. I do believe that that data suite should be put in place by the government. It is the government's and the minister's responsibility to ensure that at least one spring biological survey is concluded to add to the database, because the database is insufficient. There will be some difficulties with interpreting the conditions under the exploration permit, as it were, without having that other bit of information. I will not go as far as to say that I think that ought to be in place before any mining exploration, because I think that running concurrently there could be some ground-truthing of the remote sensing. I would not mind if during next winter the government ground-truthed that remote sensing. I am talking about a qualitative rather than a quantitative assessment at this stage.

However, before you move on to exploration and a quantitative assessment of the anomaly, I think that the full data suite in terms of the biological assessment of the area must be in place. As the reproclamation stands at the moment, I am not confident that that will happen. I understand everything that the minister says, and I am confident that the conditions that prevail once a mining licence has been issued are satisfactory, but I am not confident about the stepping off point. So, I ask that we consider another condition in terms of a spring biological survey to add to the data suite.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I am glad that the honourable member reminds me that there is a little more to the question than I have already said. Let me assure the honourable member that over the past 10 years the whole of this State has been subject to biological surveys—and the database is established. In terms of actual mining or any exploration licence that may be issued, under the conditions in the proclamation there is one thing that will need to be undertaken first.

I should have been more explicit earlier, but I am quite sure that if this proclamation goes through this will be declared a major development. Under those circumstances and under any other circumstances on which I would sign off, this will demand a full major environmental impact statement. All the aspects that the member has rightly brought up will be addressed under that impact statement. That will be done in



conjunction with the department, primary industries and the explorer.

The DEF that I mentioned which the explorer will conduct is a means of looking at any additional information that may be required outside of anything that is determined under those surveys that will now also be conducted under a major environmental impact statement. So, in terms of determining the biological values of that area, I assure the honourable member that immense surveys will be conducted from all sides of our position before any conditions are framed to meet any particular climatic soil conditions or mining exploration requirements in that area. That will give us the information that we need to be able to frame a specific set of conditions for any mining that might take place.

**Mr McEWEN:** I do not accept fully what the minister says. I again direct the minister's attention to the report of the select committee on the reclamation regarding gaps in the data, because with reference to the two biological surveys it clearly states:

Neither biological survey took an accurate account of the numerous short lived plant species that make fleeting appearances during favourable conditions. Those surveys were conducted during dry periods.

Clearly, there is a gap in the database regarding this specific matter, and I do not believe that the EIS process will pick that up. This is complicated by the new federal legislation (the national biodiversity legislation) which will come into effect from 1 July next year. Under that legislation, should the government directly or indirectly be responsible for having any significant impact on any of the species listed under 'endangered or vulnerable species', the fine is \$5 million.

Surely we will not put at risk \$5 million because after the event we find that in issuing a mining licence we were responsible for having a negative impact on an endangered or vulnerable species having not established in advance that we were likely to have such an impact. I am not suggesting that we will; I am just saying that we would be exposed to enormous risk.

Under Senator Hill's new legislation, the state will find itself in an awkward predicament. I have taken the opportunity together with my colleagues on the crossbenches to spend some time discussing this matter with Dr Hugh Possingham. On other occasions, I have had the pleasure of taking advice from Dr Possingham and I find his views particularly balanced in terms of the competing interests of conservation and development. Certainly in terms of many of the regional forest agreements, he has gained enormous respect Australia wide. I find that his good counsel is particularly balanced.

Dr Possingham has said to us on the crossbenches that he supports what we are saying about this gap in the database and sees merit in proposing that as a condition of this reclamation. I think he would like to go further in terms of a total backing under that experimental design, but we think that is an unrealistic request. You will not do that inside three years, but we think that it would be a reasonable request to say that we should not do an assessment of that anomaly prior to but concurrently with a winter assessment next year keeping in mind, as one of my colleagues in the Labor Party said recently, that we might find that what we actually have is fairy floss, so we will go no further.

When we actually go to ground-truth something for which we now only have some feel in terms of remote sensing, we might find there is no point in going any further. So, we want the government—

*Ms Rankine interjecting:*

**Mr McEWEN:** Again, we will choose to accept the advice of Dr Possingham in preference to some of the advice that I might receive in this chamber on that matter. I come back to the point. The reason I would like the government to take responsibility for this is because we may find there is no interest in this on behalf of miners. We might get to the point where no-one is interested in taking on exploration or developing an EIS for mining. However, I still believe that it needs to be done. It is not a big job—we are not talking about something that is significantly onerous in terms of resources—but we are clearly talking about a responsibility that we cannot hand over to a private entity.

This is a responsibility that we must accept as a government in terms of managing in a responsible way what to some people is an horrific event. To some people reclamation signifies the end of life as we know it. We are saying to those people that we must at least move forward in a responsible way, and we will come back and say that we cannot see that anything other than another biological survey conducted by the government is responsible in terms of moving forward on this reclamation.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I can only concur with the majority of what the honourable member says. Again, I assure him that, in terms of the processes that will be undertaken, each of the aspects about which he is concerned will be addressed. This will be done not just by departments or agencies of government but by independent assessors. The Declaration of Environmental Factors (DEF) to which I referred must include a description of all the aspects of operation and location. It must look at any additional information that may be provided in terms of the biological value of a particular area. It must determine all the things that the environmental impact statement will also look at, and it must make sure that field procedures avoid or minimise the impact on the environment. That will happen after a full range of surveys to determine the biological values of flora and fauna within that region.

I assure the honourable member that this is not a matter of outside groups or individuals who believe they hold the only tenet of expertise and, therefore, compassion for the environment. I, too, on a personal base, have strong involvement in and support for all environmental matters. As the minister responsible for this act, I also assure the honourable member that, in bringing this motion to the House, my responsibilities relate to the environmental aspects of any mining that takes place.

I will use every tenet of the act and every tenet of every clause in every line in the responsibilities of the act to make sure that those responsibilities are carried out not only in a compassionate but a practical and reasonable manner to ensure that the environment is protected in the best means possible. Therefore, I can only concur with the member's comments, because his concerns are my concerns. They are the ones that will be addressed, not only through the areas we have spoken about but through framework to be devised that will improve and expand the guidelines already set in place, on conditions of licence for any movement at all that is an adjunct to or in opposition to the environmental aspects of Yumbarra.

**Ms KEY:** I notice in the select committee report an issue with regard to environmental risk. On page 99, it states:

This area is of high conservation value for a number of reasons. It is the biggest area of mallee associations left in Australia, the largest contiguous mallee association—its biological variability, the number of endangered species and rare species, and also the

additional significance because of its isolation and lack of disturbance.

That is identified to have come from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Obviously there are members in this chamber who were part of this select committee, and I was not, but I am interested to know why the minister would be looking at the state's co-funding with the federal government a research program into rare and vulnerable species, the sandhill dunnart, while at the same time proposing to open up an identified likely habitat for that particular rare and vulnerable species. Could she explain why on the one hand the government is co-funding a project on a research program and on the other hand looking at exploration and mining in the same area?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** If I understand correctly the intent of the question, the member is suggesting that, because we have a motion before Parliament to look at accepting mining in an environmental area, all aspects of the environment should be put aside and not considered because we are dealing with just one aspect. The dunnart is an endangered species that has not been seen or found for a long time. I think it is an extremely important project for state government moneys to be involved with commonwealth government moneys to enable a project such as this to determine throughout the whole of the arid areas in South Australia—and this project is also combined with Western Australia; it is not just an area of 105 000 hectares that is Yumbarra, but tens of thousands of hectares—the existence of the dunnart—where it may live, whether there are any populations of it still around, and to what degree it is vulnerable, rare or endangered.

That is an excellent project for this state to be involved in, because it is purely environmental. It is an extremely important part of the history, in terms of ecology, of this state to know this information. I see no reason why it should even be suggested that these types of environmental projects should be put on hold or are considered not worth while, because we are actually looking at a very specific area of the state and determining whether this parliament does or does not wish to jointly proclaim it. I can only suggest to the member that one aspect does not necessarily relate to the other in the terms of her question.

With respect to her comments from the select committee report, I also note that immediately following the words she quoted it states:

Yumbarra is not so unique that you have to set it aside.

So, although obviously there are areas of contiguous mallee throughout this whole region, the fact remains that the select committee itself made almost a negative comment in terms of its uniqueness. That is the select committee's report, and that is their opinion. I may not even agree with that comment, but the fact is that the honourable member chose to quote from it and I am quoting it back to her. However, that does not necessarily mean that I hold that particular view.

**Ms KEY:** I also referred the minister in my last question to the national wilderness inventory and the comments made there with regard to high wilderness quality and national significance, as well as the fact that even small areas of disturbance may adversely affect wilderness quality. It also states that mining would have a negative impact on the area. I can understand the minister's point about selective quotes being used, and I have no problem with that point, but I was trying to connect my last question with the matter of why there would be funding in connection with a particular rare

and vulnerable species in the same area. That is why I was trying to draw that comparison. In noting what the report said, it seemed to me to be a reasonable question.

My third question is about the biological survey work. I notice that the minister stated in response to a question asked earlier that survey work would be undertaken by the explorer rather than by officers of the department. Why would this be the case, and does this cause a problem in regard to the separation between the regulator and the proponent? Could the minister enlighten us on that issue?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I would also remind the honourable member that there were two parts to that particular answer. It was not just a matter of the regulator itself using independent people. PIRSA and DEHAA would also be working in conjunction with the environmental aspects of the impact statement. However, in terms of the independent assessor, the Department of Environment and Heritage will actually introduce a new position for a scientific officer who will also work with that independent assessor, and at all times there will be monitoring and evaluation; and, if any areas need further investigation than perhaps that involving the independent assessor, the scientific officer is there as another form of protection on my behalf to ensure that I am receiving good reports from what is being done within that area as a result of the biological survey.

The member also asked me earlier about community consultation in particular with Aboriginal people. I do have a letter that I would like to read into *Hansard*. Signed by Milton Dunnet, the chairman of the Wirangu Association, and directed to the Deputy Premier, it states:

re: Letter of support for mineral exploration in the Yumbarra Conservation Park.

Following your visit to Ceduna and the support expressed by the Wirangu delegates for mineral exploration/mining with the Yumbarra Conservation Park I would now like to advise that the Wirangu Association met and has advised me to inform you that it fully supports mineral exploration in the Yumbarra Conservation Park and also the reclamation of the park for those purposes.

In particular, we refer to the area identified in the north west region of the Yumbarra Conservation Park and which is currently sought for mineral exploration. However, there needs to be ongoing consultation from the mining companies and the government with the Wirangu Association, who represents all of the Aboriginal people, who are the traditional owners of the land upon which the mineral exploration is proposed.

The Wirangu Association likes to express that in the event that the exploration is approved we would like a guarantee that Aboriginal employment is assured. For the local community to obtain benefit from mining or exploration it is important that the local people have access to education and training opportunities so that a local pool can be developed in conjunction with ATSIC funded organisations.

A high proportion of our people are unemployed with limited opportunities available locally for employment. This has resulted in a drift from our community to other centres separating our families and children. Exploration/mining will provide direct benefits into the local community and the state.

There is little doubt that if mining goes ahead it would act as a catalyst across a much broader range of commercial and community activities. We regard the protection of our culture as a number one priority and we also care for the environment. We therefore wish to state that any reclamation of the park for mineral exploration must, and we stress must, be contingent upon an Aboriginal heritage survey being conducted with members of the Wirangu people. In fact we believe that the Wirangu people must be utilised throughout the survey and that any appointment of consultants must be under the direction of the Wirangu people and must have worked with the Wirangu people previously.

Thank you for visiting the area and hope that when visiting you will call upon us again.

In terms of the consultation that was requested, it was appropriate to read this copy into *Hansard*, because I am

quite sure you can glean from the tenor of the letter the absolute support that is being expressed throughout the Aboriginal community.

**Ms BREUER:** I have spoken often in the House on issues relating to regional South Australia, and this park is part of my electorate, so of course I have a particular interest in it. I have spoken of the economic depression in regional areas of South Australia, and this is a major problem in Ceduna and requires a lot of attention in that area. One of the issues there that I want to point out is the population decline in the community there. In 1991 for the District Council of Ceduna (which is Ceduna and its surrounding area) the census figures referred to 4 476 people; in 1996 they had dropped to 3 559 people; and the Ceduna council is very aware that there has been a significant population drop since there then. The reason is the depressed state of the area and the fact that people are moving away to bigger cities, particularly Adelaide, to find employment. So, if mining or exploration in this park is to go ahead, then I would want maximum benefit to the community from the mine.

I was interested to hear the minister reading the letter from Milton Dunnet, and I also spoke to him on these issues last week. He believes and has been told that Aboriginal people can expect to get 25 per cent of the jobs that are created there. I would fully support this but I would like to know what guarantee the minister can give that these jobs will go to Aboriginal people, considering that we are talking about a company coming in and doing this exploration work. Is there any way she can guarantee Aboriginal people will be given these 25 per cent of jobs?

**The Hon. G.M. Gunn:** Good question.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** It is a very good question. When the Ceduna delegation visited here just a week ago, Mitch from Wirangu was also representing that point of view. I have no means of guaranteeing that whatsoever and I say that quite clearly, but I would hope that all stakeholders would make sure that whatever mining company ended up with the licence made efforts to promote the development, training and mining skills that will be utilised at different levels, if mining is the outcome. If the magnetic anomaly is something that can be mined and we move into that last stage, there will be a great amount of work for many people throughout that area. As we go through that process and find out whether it will be a major development, it will be up to each and every one of us to start making sure that local people are employed. I believe that can be encouraged through the mining companies.

From what I recollect, there will be 10 to 20 different positions that will look after the more scientific and technical aspects, but thereafter all other positions will use varying degrees of skill. Part of the framework that is being developed within the department at the moment is encouraging the mining company to set up training and development of the skills of local people so they are able to take up any of the positions that may become available through the end result of a major development. I can assure the member for Giles that it is something that we agree with. We cannot guarantee it will happen, but I assure her that it is something we will all be working towards and encouraging on the ground. As I am sure the honourable member knows, that goes for the Ceduna council and the regional development group, who are all supportive of attempting to do just that for Aboriginal communities: to get the highest level of employment possible within that area for Aboriginal people.

**Ms BREUER:** Even if 10 or 20 jobs are created, I am aware of the spin-offs to local communities from those jobs, because it means that positions are created in communities. One of the issues concerns possible royalty money from anything that is found there. Is there any possibility that the state government can give this money back into that community to create further jobs in the region, or use it to further protect and enhance the unique features of that area, perhaps increasing the number of park rangers who are able to work in the area? Can the money from the royalties be injected back into that community? I know that over the years BHP in Whyalla has put many billions of dollars back into the South Australian economy, but we have seen very little of it in our area.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I thank the honourable member for her continued interest in the area that she represents. As the Minister for Environment and Heritage my responsibility is for the environmental aspects. At this stage I cannot address any contracts that may be entered into later down the track. This measure sets out to do some very specific things, and they do not address hypothetical situations in the immediate short term. We have a series of processes that are yet to be concluded, including parliament accepting the motion in the first instance, before we move through the different processes to determine whether mining should occur within that park, if the magnetic anomaly proves that there is mining value within that area. I cannot predict the contract negotiations that may occur with royalties down the track.

I can say to the honourable member—and I am sure she is well aware of this herself—that, if in fact this development does take place, I am advised by the Ceduna council and regional development board that a series of other developments are sitting almost on hold within that area that are about to jump forth and be initiated with several million dollars worth of development investment waiting to see whether this proclamation is accepted by the parliament. So, the very fact that support for this will generate development within the Ceduna area and in the existing regional areas in itself I am told by the Ceduna group—

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I would suggest to the honourable member that it sounds very much as if the people in the local community feel that there will be a multiplier effect from the development out of Yumbarra because of the need to be able to supply different components and accommodation that will be required by industry and many other aspects. I am told that a major development is being considered there, if the development of this area starts to take a positive direction.

**Ms BREUER:** With respect to some of the Aboriginal issues in the area and following discussions with Milton Dunnet, what guarantee can be given to the Aboriginal community there that the water holes and a number of women's sites in that area will be totally protected, not just from mining damage but also from the opening up of the area, given the fact that people will be able to access that area much more easily than they can at present?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I thank the honourable member for her question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Yes, I am searching because there are some specifics in terms of guidelines and frameworks where I could identify totally to the member exactly word for word what is set down to protect those very areas. The member has asked a very serious question and I can assure

her that Aboriginal sites are protected under law by the Aboriginal Heritage Act. That is their protection in terms of the determination of where relevant or significant sites exist, so the act gives that very high level of protection. That concern was raised with me by the Aboriginal representative and we were able to allay his concerns by pointing out the different aspects of protection that are offered under the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

The advice contained in the primary industries guidelines in relation to all mining tenets states:

An owner or occupier of private land, or an employee or agent of such owner or occupier, who discovers on the land—

- (a) an Aboriginal site; or
- (b) an Aboriginal object or remains,

must . . . report to the minister giving particulars of the nature and location of the site, object or remains.

For any breach of that provision by a body corporate there is a \$50 000 penalty. In other cases there is a \$10 000 fine or imprisonment for six months. The guidelines also state:

- A person must not, without the authority of the minister:
- (a) damage, disturb or interfere with any Aboriginal site;
  - (b) damage any Aboriginal object; or
  - (c) where any Aboriginal object or remains are found;
    - (i) disturb or interfere with the objects or remains;
    - (ii) remove the object or remains.

There is a series of means by which Aboriginal artefacts, sites, cultural aspects and heritage aspects are protected under the act. In all mining tenets, all these conditions are placed on the miner or explorer under the Aboriginal Heritage Act. They are placed as conditions on the licence.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I have some concerns with this issue, but so that the member for Schubert can relax and stay firmly seated in his chair and so that the member for Stuart does not get too excited as well, I advise that I support the principle underlying what the government is trying to do, but I have some quite serious concerns about the process and the way it is being handled, and I will talk about some of that later. I have some questions to put to the minister to clarify in my mind exactly what the government's intentions are.

My questions concern the lack of work that has been done on biodiversity studies. The member for Schubert is carrying around the select committee's report which refers to a two-week study that was undertaken in the autumn. All the information that I have to hand from people with expertise in this field suggests that it is imperative that any work of this sort be done in the spring because studies done in the autumn, particularly after a dry spell, might miss a lot of the biodiversity in the area. Does the minister accept, and is it accepted within her department, that a full before, after, control and impact study (a BACI study) is the accepted methodology of working out exactly what we have before we start and what impact any activity has in an area?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I again assure the honourable member that environmental impact studies are done thoroughly in the first instance to determine any aspect of ecological or biological disturbance that might be caused and would be an impact on the environment. Those assessments are conducted prior to any exploration, in the first instance, that might take place. If in fact exploration were to go ahead under the conditions I spoke about before, continual monitoring and evaluation would take place throughout this whole process until we come out at the other end, when a mining licence is considered. That is a different process but, through all of this, environmental monitoring continues and, therefore, information is collected on an ongoing basis.

I am told by people in primary industries that South Australia has just under 2 000 mining and exploration licences, and that is the reality of the mining industry in this state. They are all operational. Over 1 600 licences are mining licences and 50 per cent of those would be productive at the moment. Environmental assessments had to be done before any one of those mining tenets was allowed to move towards the environment in a mining sense.

I invite the member to look through the draft proclamation and the individual items that are outlined. If we take any one of those clauses and turn it into an operational, on-the-ground management control, I am sure that he would think, as I do, that what we ask of mining companies is excessive. I do not have any problems with that because I believe that the more stringent we are the better the effect will be on the environment because the impact will be less.

In terms of how we in this country and particularly this state deal with all aspects of licence conditions, the member could get a better idea if he looked at the interpretation of each of those areas within the proclamation that we will seek from the mining company. At all times the mining company must also do its own environmental audit, which will be checked by our scientific officer, and that is a direct link to the Minister for Environment to ensure that all of these aspects that we are talking about are well and truly taken into consideration.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** My next question is a very simple one. The minister referred to the draft proclamation, and I want to know its status. How important is the word 'draft'? Is this a final draft? Has this draft been approved by cabinet and is it what the parliament can expect the proclamation that goes to Executive Council to look like?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** It is a draft proclamation. If the houses of parliament accept this motion, it will be the proclamation.

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

**Mr WILLIAMS:** The third of my questions that I will put to the minister, who has referred the House to the draft proclamation document, draws her attention to clause 6(a)(i), which says:

- (a) The miner must employ an appropriately qualified person approved in writing by the national parks and wildlife minister—
  - (i) to survey the condition of the environment in the vicinity of any proposed exploration activities prior to any drilling, geological sampling or earthmoving activity.

That is fine in itself, but could the minister give us a better definition of the words 'in the vicinity of', as I have been led to believe that it is critical? I would like the parameters defined a little better. I have some concerns also with the second part of the sentence, referring to 'prior to any drilling, geological sampling or earthmoving'. My understanding is that a vast array of activities could be undertaken even prior to drilling. I would also like a definition of 'geological sampling': does that mean taking surface samples or samples from a drill hole? Why is there not a condition in there that covers matters such as going in and making tracks and carrying out anything that might seem to be even a benign activity in the area? Will the minister enlarge on what is meant by that and define 'vicinity', and also explain why the survey is only needed prior to those more advanced types of exploration technique?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I appreciate the honourable member's question. He may recall that I spoke earlier about

the fact that an appropriate qualified person had to be approved in writing by the minister looking after the national parks and wildlife area. The conditions set out in clause 6(a)(i), and those relating to the honourable member's question define to a degree some of the activities obviously necessary in terms of mining exploration. They are not definitive, as to be definitive would require assessing in the first instance that a specific activity had already been determined. That would have to be determined on the basis of the geological activities proposed by the mining company in the first place. The target area would be one where they believed they had to conduct some form of activity, whether it be any of the specified areas within that clause.

The targeted area would then be determined according to the knowledge of the mining industry in terms of to what degree and by what means they would need to use detection equipment to determine whether the area was suitable for their purposes. However, in terms of being more definitive, primary industries over the years that it has been dealing with mines and ore areas related to mines has developed sets of guidelines—and I talked earlier about setting up frameworks and guidelines to suit the conditions that would need to be addressed in any of these mining activities within Yumbarra. Perhaps I could advise the honourable member of some of the more definitive actions that become the conditions on licence that would reflect on clause 6(a)(i) in terms of his concern about geological sampling or, in particular, earthmoving activity. The area we are considering is a narrowed area with sand definitions, and one of the sections of the guidelines prepared by PIRSA, under the heading 'Terrain specific requirements in relation to sand dunes' states:

Sand dunes generally rehabilitate well if they are not cut too deeply. Major cuttings or alteration of the dune form can cause blow-outs in time; [therefore, the actions that would be conditions are to] avoid dune crossings and travel along interdunal corridors if possible; if dune crossings are unavoidable they should be undertaken in a manner which minimises vegetation and soil disturbance; consider the use of tracked vehicles for sandy country; low dunes should be crossed at right angles whereas steep dunes should be cut at lesser angles, whichever causes the least disturbance; do not use sand from the cut to form a ramp into the interdunal corridor; push the sand to either side of the cut along a dune face if dune cutting is required (this will enable the sand to blow back over time).

That gives the honourable member an indication of many of the conditions that relate to the very specific area of Yumbarra and the conditions within the guidelines which take every aspect of movement in the park and define it in a condition that ensures the least possible impact on any area of exploration.

In another area it talks of constructing an access track. They again give definitives in terms of what will become conditions:

Bladework for access tracks should be kept to a minimum. Track preparation should be only be sufficient to meet the needs of exploration vehicles. Wherever possible, vehicles should be driven across the unprepared terrain, i.e. 'surface trafficking', particularly in areas of low or sparse vegetation, gibber or scree surfaces. Where there are no established tracks and it is intended to traverse the same ground more than once, the same wheel tracks should be used each time. Where vegetation or terrain makes surface trafficking impractical, consider the following methods:

It goes on to describe different means again of implementing a mining or exploration activity by considering all aspects that keep the impact of the exploration or movement in that area to an absolute minimum. These are only just a few of many different conditions set out in guidelines quite succinctly relating to all forms of mining activities in any environ-

mental area. I hope that that alleviates the honourable member's concern. Clause 6(a)(i) talks not in terms of generalities but about very specific areas. The definitives are not within that clause of the draft proclamation but are in recognised conditions set out in frameworks and guidelines that are acknowledged world wide as being best practice in terms of any mining activity relative to the environment.

During one of the first questions the member for Kaurna asked of me this evening he was somewhat disparaging about the answer I gave him in relation to why we were not picking up all the recommendations of the select committee. I advised him that attitudes had changed as have mining practices, and certainly the people on the ground who are the stakeholders in this whole proclamation bid have sent in letters and faxes to this House, recognising that this debate was to take place tomorrow. Understanding that the debate is now taking place tonight, they have sent through faxes to the House wishing me to advise members of their opinions, their feelings and their desires on this particular motion before the House. I have a letter from the Spencer Gulf Cities Association, signed by the secretary, in support of Yumbarra and congratulating the government on moving this motion and seeking that all members support it.

Some 184 letters have been received from individual people throughout the Ceduna and regional area, all strongly urging us to support the reclamation of Yumbarra Conservation Park, as it is critical for the long-term well being of regional South Australia. A fax also came through in the form of a letter that is on its way to me, to the member for Kaurna, to the Deputy Premier, to the member for MacKillop and to the two Independents in the Legislative Council. It is a letter from the Ceduna District Council, but it is on behalf of the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association. The letter states:

Further to earlier submissions on the above issue, the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association wishes to reconfirm its formal support to the further investigation and assessment of the mineral potential of the central region of Yumbarra Conservation Park.

I should hasten to add that the support is both unanimous and unconditional amongst the 12 member councils of this association, namely the three cities of Port Lincoln, Port Augusta and Whyalla, as well as the nine district councils of Ceduna, Cleve, Elliston, Franklin Harbour, Kimba, Le Hunt, Lower Eyre Peninsula, Streaky Bay and Tumby Bay.

Those 12 member councils constitute big business in their own right—

- They represent a population of 70 500 people.
- They directly employ 500 people and indirectly create jobs for many more.
- They have a gross expenditure in excess of \$52 million.
- They cover an area of 4.54 million hectares.

In other words, the sentiments expressed in this letter of support represent the feelings of the majority of the people living in the northern and western part of our state.

In 1993, this association established the Eyre Regional Development Board as a controlling authority. The charter of the ERDB is an economic one, namely 'to promote, encourage and develop commercial activity throughout the Eyre region of South Australia, to increase the economic viability of the region and to maintain and generate employment opportunities within the region'.

There is absolutely no doubt that a significant mineral find in the western part of our region would achieve all three core objectives.

As a general philosophy, this association believes that Eyre Peninsula's future growth and prosperity will heavily rely on enhancing our performance in traditional industries; however it is mining that is likely to provide our region's best shot at real and significant economic growth beyond 2000.

The primary impact of a major mineral discovery on Eyre Peninsula would be considerable in terms of both generation of economic activity and the creation of jobs.

However, the secondary or multiplier effect of such a development in our region would act as a catalyst across a much broader range of commercial and community activity, namely—

- Economic growth in rural townships.
- New business and support industries.
- Stimulation of existing business, manufacturing and service sectors.
- Value adding opportunities.
- Export growth.
- Improved infrastructure, with particular reference to ports, airports, rail, roads and transport facilities.
- Diversification of Eyre Peninsula's traditional economic base.
- Better community services and facilities.
- Reversal of population drift that is witnessing the loss of vital skills of Eyre Peninsula's young and not so young.
- Improved level of telecommunications and information technology.
- Spin-off effects for existing industries of farming, fishing, aquaculture and tourism.
- Breaking down the barriers of distance.
- Putting Eyre Peninsula on the map in both domestic and global markets.

All of the above directly align with the central philosophies and future strategies of both the association and its Regional Development Board.

We would also suggest that many of the above economic and community benefits are reflected in the recommendations of the South Australian Regional Task Force report released in April 1999.

It is conceded that, if a large mineral discovery is located in the central region of Yumbarra Conservation Park, subsequent mining activity will require close and careful environmental management.

However, if the find is of major significance, it would be the recommendation of this association that a dedicated park management fund be established for the ongoing maintenance of the environmental and heritage values of the Yumbarra Conservation Park.

Eyre Peninsula has the opportunity to tap into the rapidly growing ecotourism market segment.

Currently, Eyre Peninsula's vast network national and conservation parks are sadly under-resourced, in terms of both human and infrastructure needs. And yet the conservation movement who have been so vocal about the reclamation of a small part of Yumbarra has been strangely silent about the slow but inexorable decay of some of Australia's most magnificent tracts of wilderness.

It would be the wish of this association that any excess royalties collected as a result of a park management fund could be channelled in this direction.

The biological survey classifies hundreds of species identified in the remote western part of our region. The Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association would like to add just one more to the list—*homo sapiens*.

And across Eyre Peninsula there is a very large group in this latter category that is asking to be listened to—

The people of Ceduna, and its innovative and hard working council.

The people of Eyre Peninsula.

The elected members and professional staff of our 12 member councils.

ATSIC and the Far West Aboriginal Working Party.

Board members and target teams of the Eyre Regional Development Board.

The indigenous people of this vast western region.

The people of the bush are sending to you a strong and undiluted message. We would ask that this signal is not destroyed by static generated by third parties of vested interest, who have little or no interest in the long-term economic and community well being of this vast peninsula region.

The letter is signed off by Vance Thomas, the executive officer. I think that that letter entirely speaks for itself.

**Ms WHITE:** I would like to ask a question in relation to what I suppose one would call the land swap deal with Wahgunyah for Yumbarra. I note that, in the recommendations of the Wilderness Advisory Committee (which is a statutory body), there was advice that more of the Yellabinna mallee wilderness (of which Yumbarra is a part) should be protected, not reduced, as is proposed in the current motion. I must admit that I am somewhat cynical about heritage land

swap, environmental land swap scenarios. To my own personal way of thinking, an area stands on its merits or it does not, and the trading for environmental areas in another part of the country does not quite wash with me—but that is not a view necessarily of the party; that is a personal view. Why has the minister offered to increase the status of protection in Wahgunyah Conservation Reserve and part of the Nullarbor National Park when that is, as I understand it, an entirely different bioregion to Yumbarra?

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Thank you. I am very pleased that the member has recognised this aspect, which is all part of this motion and, therefore, the reclamation. The area of Yumbarra that we are attempting to re proclaim covers some 105 000 plus hectares. That is just a very small part of the whole area, which comprises almost 3 million hectares of mallee which, in biological terms, is a contiguous group of mallee. Therefore, as the environment minister who is bringing this motion to the parliament, I unashamedly suggest to the honourable member that, in terms of its being a whole of government decision to look at the reclamation of this park, I am quite happy to be able to stand here and say that it was an opportunity for this government to look to increasing the area that we could perhaps proclaim wilderness in the long term but singularly protect, exclusive of mining, and put away several areas which, in hectareage, amount to some 137 000 hectares in exchange for the area that we are re claiming. As environment minister, I had to attempt to at least put in place some form of arrangement that would improve and increase the protection of, obviously, other very significant areas of the state. Wahgunyah and Nullarbor National Parks, in fact, have some very exceptional areas of the state that I consider are worthwhile negotiating about with government. When a move is being made to look at mining and exploration in this section of Yumbarra, it is quite pleasing to know that government has accepted that it will exchange 137 000 hectares of two very special places of the state.

The Nullarbor National Park already has some protection, but it is a very special park inasmuch as it has the largest semiarid cast landscape in the world and environments of the Nullarbor Plain. We will be conserving endemic cave dwelling species and other endangered wildlife, and we will look in this area to conserve the largest population of southern hairy-nosed wombats in Australia. The Nullarbor station was acquired to protect habitat for hairy-nosed wombat. The Koonalda station was acquired to protect important cave features as a result of the Nullarbor biological survey in 1984 and to have more of the region represented in the reserve system.

The park contains the spectacular coastal cliffs along the margin of the Nullarbor Plain. The coastal strip has coastal mallee scrub land interspersed with open, grassy areas, and other sections of the Nullarbor Plain, which is 10 per cent of the park. This park contains the majority of cast features of the Nullarbor Plain within South Australia. There are also many Aboriginal cultural sites associated with the particular cast features in that area. The Wahgunyah Conservation Reserve is located on the far west coast of South Australia between Cape Adieu and the Head of the Bight. It is approximately some 40 400 hectares in area, and it was first dedicated as a conservation reserve in 1993.

The physical setting of Wahgunyah falls mainly within the Nullarbor Plain environmental region and includes the westernmost edge of the central mallee, plains and dunes

environmental region. It conserves approximately 56 per cent of the Bight Environmental Association, which consists of a complex coastal section of dunes, lagoons, cliffs and tidal flats. Further inland, the reserve conserves about 13.5 per cent of the Chintumba Environmental Association, and that consists of calcarenite plains with low hills vegetated with either low chenopod shrublands or open mallee scrub and a mixed chenopod shrub and grass understorey.

That is just a very quick resume of the potential for much of the biodiversity value represented in each of these two different areas. I certainly make no apology whatsoever: this is an exceptional means by which an environmental minister in this state can arrange another 137 000 hectares under single dedication so that no mining takes place in either of those two areas.

**Ms WHITE:** Why has the minister nominated Wahgunya for wilderness protection? As I understand it, even the minister's own statutory body, the Wilderness Advisory Committee, has not sought formal nomination for Wahgunya over other areas.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** In fact, that statement is quite incorrect. There has in fact been a wilderness advisory nomination for Wahgunya as a wilderness area.

**Ms WHITE:** The impression that one might get from listening to the minister's answer to my former question is that she seeks to be at the cutting edge of wilderness nomination criteria. Why has the Wilderness Advisory Committee's report on the Yumbarra region been with the minister, perhaps gathering dust in her office, for the last three years?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** The member might be confusing the fact that we are talking about preserving areas and excluding mining as opposed to those that will enable mining. This is why we are looking at these particular areas now. By singly declaring or dedicating Wahgunya and the Nullarbor it means in the first instance that mining cannot take place. In terms of looking at wilderness, that will still be a process which involves the community in consultation to determine whether in fact wilderness is accepted throughout the community areas, and on their recommendations the government would take that into account. However, the imperative in this at the moment is the fact that, by securing these two areas, excluding mining is a great bonus to the environmental biodiversity of the state.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** If parliament votes for de-gazettal and re-proclamation before a biological study, what comeback would we have if a future study reveals significant findings for the ecosystem?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** In the first instance, no mining would take place without the biological survey first being undertaken. Any discoveries would be protected because of the nature of that particular discovery. Again, it comes down to making sure that any exploration is the first aspect of this whole process, if in fact de-proclamation takes place. The biological survey through the environment impact statement, through the DEF that will be undertaken by the explorer, will give us an indication if there is anything other than what we know now about Yumbarra to be found. If that is the case, there obviously are ways that you would declare areas that would be protected. However, with the surveys that have been conducted in the past there is scientific analysis of those biological surveys which does not consider that we are in effect about to discover anything that is of greater significance than what we are already aware of.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Will the minister detail what consideration her department has given to the exploration and

mining processes that may occur within the park? What assessment has the minister's department undertaken about the protection of the conservation values of this mallee wilderness? What advice did the minister's department provide to her on this matter?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Once again, I can only restate that biological surveys over a period of time now have determined to the greater degree, as far as the experts and the scientists can determine, the significance of biological flora and fauna within that region. The park already has protection under national parks and wildlife. The means by which we would move in terms of protecting the environment would be clearly outlined, once again, in all the conditions of licence that have been worked through over a number of years not just in this instance but in many other instances where exploration and mining already take place within the state. I said earlier that primary industry figures show that a combination of just under 2 000 exploration and mining licences are already out there and being undertaken, with about 50 per cent (or 1 500) of the mining licences being productive at this point.

Each and every one of those licences operates in areas of the state where, in many instances, the same form of protection is already offered under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. The conditions that support and protect the environment—the means by which mining explorers operate—are stringently observed. One of the decisions that has been made through the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs is that a scientific officer will be employed full time to be with those who conduct the surveys and during any exploration throughout the next few years whilst all this is occurring. If any areas at all may have been overlooked and there is something that scientists have missed in the past, those people will be on the spot to relay that information directly to me.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Will the minister explain the apparent disparity between her careful consideration and consultation on the proposal to expand commercial usage of the Belair National Park with the somewhat secretive and pre-emptive processes behind stripping Yumbarra of its protection—

**Mr Venning:** You were there.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** I know I was, and that makes me even more concerned.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** If I may continue—from even more damaging exploitation. Is Yumbarra more expendable because unlike the Belair National Park it is not situated within the marginal electorate of a Liberal MP?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I am disappointed that the member for Torrens indulges in a totally political suggestion that has absolutely no relativity to the subject at hand. I am happy to say to the honourable member—although this does not form part of our discussion tonight—that it is unconscionable for anyone to direct any disparaging comments to the government on the matter of Belair because the proponent withdrew the proposal.

The government has a responsibility to look at the proposal of any proponent. If the government does not look at a proposal, it may incur liability. However, in this instance, the proponent withdrew the proposal which was still only in the concept stage. So, I am happy to put that little myth to rest. A second myth is that no protection is being removed from Yumbarra: it is still a protected park under the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

*Mr Hill interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I will explain to the member for Kaurna, because again he seems to have conveniently forgotten, that from 1985 to 1993 the Labor Government jointly proclaimed 24 parks. The member for Torrens may ask why that is relevant. It is relevant because by jointly proclaiming those 24 parks mining was enabled to take place. However, the environment was still protected. What is so different when the honourable member comments about supposed non-protection is that this motion seeks to enable exploration and mining in Yumbarra. If deproclamation goes ahead, this park (which has been jointly proclaimed) will still have protection.

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** No, not at all. It was a joint reclamation.

**Ms RANKINE:** In a written submission to the select committee by the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs mention is made of the fact that no management plan had been adopted for Yumbarra Conservation Park nor any plans for the adjacent reserves. Have those plans been completed?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** That is right—the question is fair. The government is responsible for 21 million hectares of land which covers 300-odd parks and conservation reserves throughout the state. Over the years, little has been done to protect many of these parks by way of management plans. However, once again, this government has continued to move through the parks with no management plans and it has progressed until it has reached the point where I think about 34 management plans have been completed since about 1994. Once we have dealt with this motion, a management plan will also be developed for Yumbarra, because one of the conditions under the exploration or mining licence will be the necessity for an explorer to take into account all that the management plan has assessed as requirements for management throughout the park.

In every other area of the state that is a condition of licences that are granted to exploration companies. The need to provide protection not only in respect of the conditions that are placed on the licence but the management plan as well have to be taken into account by the explorer. Yumbarra will be no different. Once we know what the future holds, a management plan for Yumbarra will be assessed by the community and put into place, and that will become part of what the explorer needs to take into account.

**Ms RANKINE:** Have management plans been developed for the adjacent parks so that there will be no change to their status?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Are you talking about Yellabinna?

**Ms Rankine:** Yes.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** No, Yellabinna has no management plan, but that will form part of this process once it has been identified. What you have now is the suggestion that we may have to deal with different circumstances in the future. There is no point in looking at a management plan which will have to be altered or amended, because that is a lengthy process. It needs to go out to public consultation, and that process takes three months. When circumstances are developing that will perhaps change the requirements that a management plan would determine, there is no sense in doing it twice or three times.

In terms of where we are going with this whole process, if deproclamation comes into being the circumstances of

management within the area of Yumbarra will be quite different from what they would be if deproclamation were not to take place. Yellabinna will be included in that whole area, because when you go out to do a management plan, particularly in a remote arid area with a lack of population, you will have to take into consideration a much larger area, and that will come under a management plan.

Under the current law, a management plan is the legal document under which parks operate. That is why it is important to get management plans up and running that determine the requirements and needs of a park according to local community input. That is all part of the management process.

**Ms RANKINE:** Can the minister advise why she is seeking to open up the whole central protected area of the park, when the initial advice from the Department of Primary Industries—or Mines and Energy as it was known—was to access just the upper third where the anomaly lies?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** In terms of exploration and the magnetic anomaly that has been observed through the aerial surveys, it would seem on a whole of government decision—and that includes primary industries and all other agencies—to be of far greater benefit to look at an area beyond the specific of the anomaly. No-one yet knows what that anomaly means in terms of distance or value, so it would seem of far greater benefit to enable an area that can be explored once we have gone through this whole process of deproclamation.

**Ms RANKINE:** In 1995 the then Director of Minerals in the Department of Mines and Energy, Ric Horn, outlined his concerns over the motives of the current government in its approach to reproclaiming Yumbarra, and cited Lake Gillies Conservation Park and the Flinders Ranges National Park as protected areas of better prospectivity. What guarantees do we have that the parliament will not also be asked to strip away their protected status?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I have no knowledge of Mr Ric Horn or any comments he might have made or any credibility that might be based on those particular comments. Also, it has been pointed out that I have been using the term ‘deproclamation’ when we are talking about ‘reproclamation’. I would hate to exacerbate the concerns of the member for Torrens because we are not deproclaiming. What we are doing is reproclaiming. Therefore, that in effect does hold the conservation, the protective status, that we are talking about. I apologise if I have been using the word ‘deproclamation’ rather than ‘reproclamation’.

Committee reported completion of examination.

**Mr HILL (Kaurna):** The opposition is opposed to this motion which, if it were passed, would allow exploration mining in Yumbarra Conservation Park. With this move, the government goes considerably further than the 1996 select committee on reproclamation of Yumbarra Conservation Park which recommended, amongst other things:

- that only exploration should be permitted;
- that there should be no mining until the parliament had been consulted again;
- that only one third of the park area should be proclaimed;
- that more biological survey work should be done;
- that a sunset clause of three years be put in place so that the park could revert to its original status should no mineable deposit be found; and
- that exploration be carried out under the Director of Mines.



In particular, the findings of the select committee report stated:

27. It is not appropriate to commit the government to approve mining in Yumbarra without any capacity to judge the significance of the development and its impacts.

28. The parliament has a right to seek further information on management and access issues including procedures and measures to minimise impact on the environment, Aboriginal interests and exploration works program, prior to considering a motion for reclamation.

This motion goes much, much further than those recommendations. It downgrades the whole park in perpetuity before a proper biological survey has been done, and it allows full scale mining. Why has the government gone further on this than the select committee? There is only one conceivable answer. Because it thinks it has the numbers to do so. I say to those members opposite who are uncomfortable about what the government is doing and who think that a biological survey should occur before mining is permitted to vote this measure down, force the government to listen properly and make it come back to the House with a motion more in keeping with the select committee report.

The question should be asked: What is Yumbarra Conservation Park? Of the 3 million hectares of mallee in far western parks, only 106 000 hectares is protected from mining, all of it in the Yumbarra Conservation Park. That is less than 4 per cent of the total. Some 96 per cent can be open to mining. It is curious that that 4 per cent is where the government wants to allow mining. Yumbarra is there to conserve mallee. If the government had proposed a better way of preserving mallee, for example, by adopting the recommendations of its own Wilderness Advisory Committee—and that recommended excluding 1.2 million hectares of mallee from mining—then the opposition would have been prepared to consider a change to the status of this section of Yumbarra containing the anomaly.

I believe it would have been possible for the government, through listening and proper consultation with the local community, Aboriginal interests and the conservation movement, to produce a win-win result. The point is that this government has not properly consulted with the community. Dr Tim Doyle, the outgoing head of the peak conservation organisation, the Conservation Council, which you would have thought would be consulted over such a major change in status, says in his letter to me of 15 October:

The environment minister has not consulted with the community on what is a major change to the management of the arrangements of this park, despite Yumbarra's status as a conservation park listed on the national wilderness inventory and nominated for declaration as a wilderness protection area.

He states further:

We are concerned that the parliament and the people of South Australia are not being provided with any information on the likely impacts of the proposal on the park. Exploration will involve drilling over a large area, and then should an economic deposit be found, full-scale mining will occur. An open cut mine may be the result along with roads, tailings waste and significant use of the region's scarce water resources. On-site processing, given the remoteness of the area, is also probable.

The government did not want to properly consult with the various interest groups and work for a win-win solution. It wants conflict. It wants to be seen as hairy chested on this. We know that this position is based on politics. We know this because Ric Horn, the former director of mining, tells us so. I would like to read into the transcript a memo from Mr Ric Horn, Director of Minerals at the time in the Department of

Mines and Energy, to the CEO, dated 24 October 1995 (DME minute 253/93):

Subject: Yumbarra Conservation Park.

First of all, following our altercation of the 12 October 1995, let me make it quite clear that I do not agree with the approach being taken by the minister and others in seeking reclamation over the entire core area of Yumbarra. I believe that it is unnecessary from a prospectivity point of view and could seriously hinder our efforts to gain access to more highly prospective parks such as Lake Gillies and the Western Flinders Ranges.

The Yumbarra Conservation Park anomaly was identified in 1992 after the early flying of the SAEI aeromagnetics. The reclamation was only sought after the area covered by the anomaly was applied for under exploration licence. If the minister is so anxious to reclaim the whole park, then the government should be considering joint proclamations over all other parks, a situation I believe is logical but ludicrous.

Reasons for my concern about reclaiming the entire park are:

- Western Mining Corporation have withdrawn their application for an exploration licence over portion of the park leaving Dominion as the only applicant. WMC cited lack of prospectivity outside the main anomaly as their reason for withdrawing.
- There are other parks in the state which have higher prospectivity and require a joint proclamation, eg Lake Gilles for lead-zinc and the Western Flinders Ranges (MVT Pb-Zn deposits). If we go for joint proclamation over the entire Yumbarra then all parks within South Australia should be reclaimed. We risk not being able to get access to more prospective parks than Yumbarra if we proceed with full reclamation.
- MESA and the mining industry will not be trusted by agencies and organisations such as DENR and the Conservation Council in future and it will be more difficult for us to explore in the more highly prospective parks referred to above.
- The prospectivity of Yumbarra is unknown. There are no indications of mineralisation other than an aeromagnetic anomaly. Outside that anomaly prospectivity is considered to be low. There are no companies interested in the area away from the magnetic anomaly.
- An Aboriginal native title claim has been lodged over the entire park which is unallocated Crown land. The NT claim has a fair claim of success further restricting access.
- Government and the mining industry must recognise there are areas of the state which are 'no-go' areas, ie, areas which should be, or could be, reserved for all times. We preach economically sustainable development and yet we are now seeking to open up the entire Yumbarra park for mineral exploration and development. Why not go for all parks and reserves being accessible, even Belair Recreation Park, or the entire Flinders Ranges National Park?
- The purpose of attempting to have a portion of Yumbarra reclaimed was to allow us to trade off against other parks where we desire access. MESA must be prepared to give areas to the reserve system if we are to gain access to the more prospective areas of parks. Lake Gilles has good indications of lead-zinc mineralisation and we do not have access to that ground at present. It is more highly favoured than Yumbarra.
- Finally, I have not been consulted by the minister or yourself following the decision to go for reclamation of the entire park. I believe that the reclamation is for political reasons, not prospectivity or economic reasons. We should not lose sight of what we are promoting, ie, the prospectivity of the state, South Australia as a place to explore.

In view of the obvious disagreement with the approach being taken, I believe that I should not and must not in any way be involved in future discussions on Yumbarra.

It is signed, Rick Horn, Director of Minerals. What an indictment of this government! This man wants prospectivity everywhere, yet even he is saying that the reclamation of Yumbarra is a bad idea, because he believes it will limit the ability of the government and the department to mine in other areas.

Horn's statement leads to one of the many reasons for objecting to this motion: that of precedent. Horn's letter makes clear that the mines department wants to mine in other protected areas, such as the Flinders Ranges. Members might be surprised to learn that already mining interests can access

95 per cent of the state, including 75 per cent of the park system. One wonders whether there is any part of this state that the mining industry thinks should be protected. As Rick Horn says, there must be some no-go areas. Is there any part of the state that the state government thinks should be protected from mining?

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

**Mr HILL:** Oh; Minister Kotz wakes. What about the minister whose job it is to stand up for the environment? Is there any part of the state that she believes should be excluded from mining? I would like her to tell us. She is not a defender of her portfolio; rather, the minister is a conspirator with the pro-development lobby in government to exploit the environment and downgrade protection wherever possible. No wonder the Wilderness Society has called for her resignation. The society has this to say about her:

Minister Kotz's unparalleled kowtowing to vague mining opportunity in Yumbarra Conservation Park demonstrates a complete lack of defence for the conservation status of the park. This reveals her real position as de facto minister for mining in the Olsen government. In tabling the Yumbarra proclamation... the minister showed the contempt that her government has for nature protection in this state.

Yumbarra has now been protected for 30 years. The passing of this motion will create a precedent which will be used by the mining industry and future governments to allow exploration and mining anywhere in this state, including areas currently protected as stated in Rick Horn's memo, such as the Flinders Ranges, Flinders Chase on Kangaroo Island, Belair National Park, and so on.

I went to Yumbarra on the invitation of the Deputy Premier, along with a number of members from the other place. I understand that the only reason that I was invited was that the Hon. Nick Xenophon would not go unless the opposition was also given an invitation, and I thank him for that. I was grateful for the opportunity to be flown over the park and then to be driven to the edge of the park. Interestingly, the rangers would not allow the delegation to drive through the park to the site to see the anomaly, because they believed the vehicles would cause too much damage to this fragile environment.

Some people visiting the park would say, 'Why bother worrying about this area? It is only pretty ordinary scrub; there are no waterfalls, no lake, no rivers, no very tall trees, no koalas, no other cuddly creatures that would capture the hearts and minds of a 6 o'clock news service.' To take this position, however, is to miss the whole point about protection. It also ignores the immeasurable beauty of the area, which is in the fine detail of the desert flowers and small creatures which live there. We need to protect all unique and fragile parts of our environment, not just the parts that end up on tourism posters. This region is incredibly fragile and, because of the very low rainfall, slow to recover from damage. It is also home to a number of threatened species, including the rare and vulnerable sandhill dunnart, which has been referred to previously.

The full extent of the local biology is not really known, because only very minimal biological survey work has been done in the park. The minister herself seems to recognise this by allowing in her motion for a further biological survey, but at the same time as exploration occurs and after mining has been allowed. What is the point in closing the stable door after the horse has bolted? In any case, to mix my metaphors, to have the survey done by the mining companies is surely an example of putting the poacher in charge of the game. If

this minister were serious about her job as environment minister rather than being an apologist for interest groups that want to exploit the environment, the very least she should be arguing is that a biological survey be completed before this motion is considered by the parliament.

It is not as if this is a new idea: we have had about three years since this select committee report was put to the parliament. A number of biological surveys could have happened in that time, but they have not. The minister will not do that, because the government does not really care about the outcome of the survey; it is merely a sop, as is the farcical proposal to offer Wahgunyah conservation reserve as an exchange for the reproclamation of Yumbarra. I have no objection to making Wahgunyah a national park; it should have been assessed on its own merits, however. It has nothing to do with Yumbarra and the landform that Yumbarra protects. Interestingly, the minister advised the House in a speech on 19 October that, before proceeding to make this area a wilderness protection area under the Wilderness Protection Act, the government will undertake 'full public consultations', 'because this government is a government that listens to the people'. In other words, they want to find out whether there are any objections to increasing the status of Wahgunyah, but they are not interested in listening to the objections of those opposed to the downgrading of Yumbarra.

One of the arguments the government puts for the reproclamation is the financial and employment bonanza that will somehow be created in Ceduna. Naturally enough, this community, which is desperate for development, has taken the bait, and who can blame them for that? I certainly do not. The opposition knows how difficult it is for rural communities. However, given the relatively specialised nature of mining jobs and the lack of guarantees given by the minister under questioning tonight by the member for Giles, it is something of a cruel joke to hold out to local people that there will be many opportunities for them. The government claims that local Aboriginal people support the project. I have spoken to a couple of Aboriginal people who do strongly support the project, including a former senior public servant who is now on a retainer to a mining company. The local Aboriginal people have been told that 25 per cent of the jobs created will go to Aboriginal people. As I said to one of their representatives who visited me, 'I hope that you've got that in writing.'

In any event, it is clear that Aboriginal people are not united in their support for this move. The opposition has recently received correspondence from a lawyer representing the interests of an Aboriginal man who is challenging the move. I refer to a letter that Mike Rann received a few days ago from Jaak Oks, who is a barrister and solicitor. The letter was passed on to me, and it states:

Dear Sir: re Yumbarra conservation park. I advise I act for Mr Ted Roberts, native title claimant No. SC95/5 with respect to current proposals to de-gazette the area within Yumbarra national park to permit exploration and mining.

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

**Mr HILL:** Is Mr Gunn having a go at this gentleman? The letter continues:

I have been instructed by my client to write to you to express my client's concerns as to the proposal in that my client sees that this will affect a number of sacred sites within the conservation park which my client would wish to protect. It is also my view that degazetting the area will affect my client's native title rights in that it will affect my client's right to negotiate. My client trusts that his interests will be considered when a final decision is made on this matter. Yours faithfully, Jaak Oks.

The opposition is also in possession of a letter from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement to the Premier regarding the issue and, in particular, a newspaper story of 23 March 1999 entitled 'Aborigines back mining in park'. The letter says that this claim is misleading and I will briefly read from it, in part:

An article was published in the *Advertiser* newspaper on 23 March 1999 entitled 'Aborigines back mining in park'. It is misleading to the extent that it treats Aborigines as a generic and homogenous group. Its contents rely on the assertions made by one Aboriginal group, the Wirangu Association. The days in which Aborigines are referred to and treated as a generic group must end. The government of South Australia, members of parliament and stakeholders should recognise that there is a multiplicity of Aboriginal groups with interests in the Far West Coast region. All Aboriginal groups in the region must be consulted before it can be asserted that the degazettement of the park is supported by Aboriginal groups.

On the issue of Aboriginal support, I would say to those Aboriginal people who do support the re-proclamation that they should be very nervous and careful for the precedent that this change in land use creates for their own security on Aboriginal lands. If a government can change the nature of a conservation park to allow mining, what is to stop it passing laws to allow development on Aboriginal lands?

The government's treatment of the issue of Yumbarra stands in marked contrast to its spectacular backflip over Belair National Park yesterday, when it announced that after listening—the Liberals' new catchphrase—it has decided not to go ahead with the extensive development plan for part of that park site. We know to whom the government has been listening: it has been listening to the nervous members for Davenport, Heysen and Kavel, who are worried about Democrats breathing down their neck. As those members know, the hills are alive with the sound of Democrats campaigning, and they have plenty of issues to campaign on: for example, the Mount Barker Foundry, radioactive waste storage, the government's broken promise over a hills face park, and the Belair National Park.

While the government might have listened to the screams of disapproval from hills voters over Belair, what they do not understand is that those same people oppose development in all national parks. This is a very powerful issue which will be used against the government by the Democrats and the opposition in its marginal seats, the number of which is growing month by month, issue by issue. The government will suffer pain over this issue. It cannot expect to blow away 30 years of protection of Yumbarra and create a precedent which threatens every national park in this state without suffering collateral damage.

The government's listening on this issue is very selective and based only on very narrow survival instincts. People are not stupid. They see through this government. They know that government members are vandals when it comes to the environment. I urge members to say no to this piece of environmental vandalism.

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** Late last year I visited Yumbarra National Park with a group of people from Ceduna and Minister Rob Kerin to see for myself the area where the proposed mine would be. I knew from reading the report what to expect but I wanted to see the park and hear what the community representatives, council members and Wirangu Aboriginal leaders from the area had to say. There was a feeling of excitement and hope in everyone present as the

possible future of the area was discussed and what it meant for the people who live in the region.

Although the park itself is not in my electorate, many of the jobs will be, and I felt that same feeling of excitement when I first saw the colour photograph showing the aerial survey. The anomaly that was the cause of all our speculation was shining bright red in an area of blue that was the rest of Eyre Peninsula. Here was the way of creating the number of jobs for the people of the region that would secure its future. For every job at the mine, it is expected there will be three to four more in the town of Ceduna and Eyre Peninsula to supply support services. If we add on the families who will arrive with the workers, it is quite possible to envisage a 3 000 increase in population, with even a modest size mine, and this one is expected to be big.

I did a business plan for Eyre Peninsula before I was elected to parliament in 1993 that showed that the survival of the towns on Eyre Peninsula depended very much on getting more jobs as quickly as possible. The traditional industries of sheep and grain have been cut to the bone with low prices and drought. Without these core jobs it would not take long before a town could not justify people remaining in many of the service industries and, when people such as teachers leave, families go with them. It is a vicious circle. Fortunately, the opposite is also true. However, it is often harder to get people back than it is to lose them.

I vowed at the time that I would not let another town on Eyre Peninsula die without a fight and I identified for towns the industries that I thought could be the source of their survival. With a coastline longer than Tasmania's, fishing and aquaculture were obvious, as were tourism and the retirement industries. The value adding of products and diversification within industries were all possibilities. The big unknown was the mining potential of the region, known to be part of the Gawler Craton geographic area. Gold, diamonds, coal, copper and even oil had been spoken of since I was a child growing up in the region. However, nothing significant had ever eventuated.

At the 1997 election, I became the member representing Ceduna and I saw for the first time the colour photograph of the anomaly. Along with many other people, I felt anger and frustration as obstruction has delayed the due process that has to be undertaken before we can even look at what is beneath the surface. We have not been able to verify that what was being shown on the survey was worth a second look. All the expense of the aerial surveys, all the expectation, yet an accident of fate denies us the ability of even finding out what is there.

Covering a huge 4 million hectare area of mostly sand dunes and desolate mallee scrub stretching as far as the eye can see is the Yellabinna Regional Reserve, similar in size to the state of Victoria. In this is a much smaller area of 327 000 hectares called Yumbarra Conservation Park in which there is an even smaller area of 26 650 hectares where, by that accident of fate, mining is not allowed. To me and to many others it is unbelievable that it is not a simple matter to work out some way that this 0.65 per cent of the total area cannot be opened for investigation and possible mining of an even smaller part of it. If it was located almost anywhere else in the reserve it could be mined.

As usual, most of the opposition comes from a small but very vocal section of the community. Some come from the Wilderness Society with its approximately 500 members, or 0.035 per cent of the state's population, and also from a small proportion of the Conservation Council, an umbrella

organisation for 60 member groups that altogether represent about 4 per cent of the state's population and many of whom, I feel sure, would support this motion. In addition, to offset the very small loss for those who consider this is such an important matter, the minister has offered Wahgunyah Conservation Reserve and a section of the Nullarbor National Park to be proclaimed to prevent mining.

An additional biological survey would be carried out that would be funded by the mining company before exploration and mining begins. Ongoing monitoring and rehabilitation of the area will also be required. I understand that funding from the mining operation would be made available to be put back into the better management of the parks. As one young person said to me, to oppose mining in the park would be unreasonable and unforgivable. We have to have balance and this does not mean that anyone misses out.

People who have the opportunity of many educational and health choices and an excellent prospect of being in a job if they want one are denying the people of the Ceduna area a similar opportunity because of their ideological bias. Most of the people who will benefit from this mine cannot afford such ideological luxury and, until they too have the benefits that people living in our society should expect, none of us should deny them the opportunity.

The Labor Party policy against mining is even more ironic when it is put in the context of the Labor Party's dilemma of having to heed the word of their union masters where word has it that the normal party conference would have overturned the current policy and allowed mining. However, again due to an unfortunate intervention for the people of Ceduna, the Ralph Clarke branch stacking embarrassment stopped this year's October conference from taking place. With this cancellation was lost the opportunity for the member for Giles, Lyn Breuer, and the Australian Workers Union powerbroker, Bob Sneath, to make the party see sense.

Comparisons can easily be drawn between the Yumberra experience and what happened back in 1982 when it took a Labor member, Norm Foster, to cross the floor to allow Roxby Downs to go ahead and allow the subsequent benefit that has accrued to the people there. Meanwhile children in the Ceduna district are growing up without the prospect of work and all that employment means in our society. They do not want to leave an area where they feel part of the community and where they have their support networks to go and try their luck in the cities where the dice is often weighted against them. However, many do.

Over the past few years the number of school children alone has dropped from 910 in 1984 to 527 children attending the Ceduna Area School today. In a letter of support to me from the Chairman of the Wirunga Association, representing the traditional owners, Milton Dunnet (Mitch to many) says:

A high proportion of our people are unemployed with limited opportunities available locally for employment. This has resulted in a drift from our communities to other centres, separating our families and children. Exploration and mining will provide direct benefits into the local community and the state.

The low value of the commodities such as grain and wool, combined with the unreliability of the weather, mean that the traditional income sources will not improve in the near future. Ecotourism, the proposed salvation for the area, is gradually beginning to happen, particularly with the whales at the head of the bight. However, the town would have to support five star accommodation to really tap into this and to be viable the accommodation would need to have a larger supporting population such as would be achieved by mining.

When we visited the park one of those present was an Aboriginal man who had begun to take a leading role within the local community but who was killed soon after. In his obituary the local paper, the *West Coast Sentinel*, said that at the time of the Yumberra delegation he told of his hopes that mining could create jobs for all in the Ceduna community, not just Aboriginal people. Many of us echo his hopes and trust that people who have a sense of justice and that wonderful Australian trait of giving everyone a fair go will support this motion and, on 9 November, when this motion is due to be debated in the upper house, support those people who will face opposition to their stand—Terry Cameron and Trevor Crothers—who have recognised that many of the leaders in their former Party have become divorced from the reality of the struggle of the ordinary people who live and work in our wonderful state of South Australia, particularly those who live and work in the more remote parts of regional South Australia well away from them, parts like Ceduna that most of them would never have visited, except possibly on their way to Perth. I support the motion.

**Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens):** I was a member of the select committee on this matter and know the work and commitment that was put into investigating the advantages or disadvantages of exploration or mining this magnetic anomaly. I would like to quote from the select committee report and to quote the presiding member's words in the foreword as follows:

The select committee was formed on 10 April 1996 and met on 16 occasions over a period of 11 months. It received 249 written submissions, 236 telephone calls to the Yumberra hotline and heard detailed evidence from 20 individuals and groups. The committee visited the park on 16 May 1996 to examine its flora, fauna and topography and held eight public meetings, including one in Ceduna attended by over 80 persons on 8 August 1996. While it appears that many views on development and conservation are simply irreconcilable, it is clear that both the economic future of South Australia and the care of its parks and reserves are important issues for many South Australians.

That is quite so. In our findings in the report, points 28 and 29 say—and the member for Kaurana made mention of this, but it is worth repeating:

It is not appropriate to commit the Government to approve mining in Yumberra without any capacity to judge the significance of the development and its impacts and the Parliament has a right to seek further information on management and access issues including procedures and measures to minimise impact on the environment, Aboriginal interests and exploration work program prior to considering a motion for reclamation.

**Mr Venning:** On the last day that was put there. It was purely a sop, wasn't it?

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** No, it certainly wasn't a sop. I know you will have your go. Point (e) of the recommendations states:

Prior to exploration full consultation be required with local Aboriginal communities as required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988.

This particular procedure is often ignored and we have certainly seen that with the Hindmarsh Island bridge debacle.

**The Hon. G.M. Gunn:** John Bannon was the architect of that.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Nothing has changed. That is what you need to understand. You can say that things did not happen in the past, but you have been in government for some six years and nothing has changed. Consultation processes do not occur. You do not want to do them, so you just say, 'It

wasn't done before; I'm not doing it now.' Point (f) of the recommendations states:

Members of local Aboriginal communities be employed where practicable in exploration activities.

That is in the report and, while I would support that, I do not believe that that will occur. People say that it will, but I have a real concern about that because I do not think it will happen. I do not think many people will be employed, actually.

**The Hon. G.M. Gunn:** So, you are opposed to the whole process—yes or no?

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Yes, I am opposed to it—I have said that before. I said that during the deliberations of the committee once we started to investigate the matter.

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

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** That is not so. I certainly looked at the issue and examined it, but I have concerns and have expressed them quite strongly. The Presiding Member in his contribution to the report, in speaking in this House made the following statement. I went back and read through most of the contributions made in this House on this matter, as well as rereading the report. The Presiding Member said at that time:

It is not unique and again I think that the members of the committee would agree with that observation.

That certainly was not a view that I shared with the committee. I think some members of the committee do believe that the area is indeed unique.

We would accept that this is not a Daintree region but it has a uniqueness about it that is special, and it should be protected. I did agree with the presiding member's comment that if we want to keep the park in a pristine state we must deal with its management and visitation access issues. That is absolutely a fact and it is imperative for a region such as this that is so fragile. When fire passes through the region, it takes years for regeneration to occur. If we have mining trucks passing through, the damage that they will create, I believe, will be irreparable. Even with the techniques that we have today, it will damage the region, it will damage the park, and we will not be able to fix those things.

As I said, I found working on the committee a most interesting experience, and I came to learn to appreciate the beauty and the value of a region such as this. It does have a value within our whole environment. In my contribution in the report I said—and I said this very early in the piece:

I could not, however, accept that reclamation of the park is in the long-term interests of this state or the nation as a whole because of the precedent it sets. There is no tradeable area to replace the park; in other words, there are no surrounding areas that have been so protected that we can use to replace it.

Those other areas have been used; they are not the same. This area is different. One of the things that we heard in the course of the evidence that we took was that mining will create jobs for local folk. We have heard that again this evening. They feel that their towns will prosper. Some of the comments made to us were (and the member for Schubert can confirm this) that the local footy team, the guides or scouts groups will increase in number and farming children will not leave the town because they will find jobs in the mining industry. We would like to think that that would be the case but I do not believe that it will be. I think it just gives people a false hope. Mining is a specialised industry, as we know. So, it will create some jobs, a few in the town—it will inject some money into it—but it will not be the saviour of Ceduna; it will not provide full-time, sustainable jobs for those people.

It is absolutely false to say that to people. It gives them false hope. They build on expectations which do not come to fruition.

I am not saying that we should not do something about this matter, but I think that there are other ways to look at improving that region. Why do we not look at tourism? It is a beautiful area. There are other opportunities there. In fact, I think that during our trip there the member for Schubert said that it would make a great tourist spot. I think we talked about things that could be done with the harbor. I know that it takes money—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Yes. But that is an option that we can look at—the tourism aspect of it. The Minister for Tourism tells us all the time that tourism creates full-time, sustainable jobs. That will keep farming children there. As I said, if we are serious about this, I think we should look at that issue.

In the report, members will see that the Australian Heritage Commission opposed the reclamation and advised the committee of the following:

The National Wilderness Inventory, established by the Australian Heritage Commission to identify wilderness quality across Australia, indicates that except for the southern margin of the park and an access route part way through the park, the area is of high wilderness quality, level 20, the highest rating used. The registered area constitutes a part of a larger area of high wilderness quality in this region that is considered by the commission to be of national significance. The Yumbarra Conservation Park is of sufficiently high wilderness quality and sufficiently large size to warrant its designation as wilderness.

The protection of the national estate values of the area is best served by the management of the conservation park for conservation and wilderness protection purposes. The Australian Heritage Commission is therefore of the view that this would best be achieved by excluding mining and intrusive mineral exploration from the area covered by the existing park.

This was a good report—

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** —and the member for Schubert knows that.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** It was a good committee.

**Mr Venning:** Weren't you derailed?

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** We were not derailed. We looked at these issues and talked about them. The former member for Playford (now Senator Quirke), who—

**Mr Venning:** What was his point of view?

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** If we want to talk about his point of view, the member for Schubert might recall that, when we were driving along a track and the Senator spotted a flower growing on the side of the road, he insisted that the truck stop and he jumped out, bent over and kissed the flower. That was a side of the Senator I thought I would never see.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Those are the kinds of disparaging remarks about the region that some members opposite make. They will not value a region such as this. The comments that were made—'We saw a kangaroo or two' and that sort of thing—detract from the value of the region.

**Mr Venning:** There were no kangaroos there; there's no water.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** There were.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** I still stand by the comments that were expressed through the committee and the comments made by the member for Kaurna. I oppose the motion.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** I strongly support the motion before the House, because this will give the people of Upper Eyre Peninsula and the people of South Australia the opportunity to benefit if the mineral resources that are there can be proven. One of the interesting things about this whole process is that the aeromagnetic surveys involved were carried out with the consent and at the direction of the Labor government. Why would it have allowed these aeromagnetic surveys to take place across this vast area if it had no intention of developing any potential resources? We all know that the Labor government spent a great deal of money, and it announced the results of those aeromagnetic surveys with great fanfare. It could not tell people often enough what it had found out there.

**An honourable member:** You're making it up.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Of course, we know that the honourable member believes in fairies at the bottom of the garden if she believes in that sort of nonsense. Why would you spend millions of taxpayers' dollars if you were not going to develop it? That is the first point that we have not heard from the member for Kaurana; we have not heard him address that matter. Perhaps his advisers have not thought of that.

Let us come to the next point in this ongoing saga. Anyone would think that we are dealing with a small, narrow piece of land. There are hundreds of thousands of square kilometres of uninteresting stunted mallee, sandhills, porcupines and, if you are lucky, an odd lizard or two. If it were a warm day, you would not want to be there, because there would be plenty of flies and a few sandflies; it would not be a very pleasant place. I have been there on two occasions, because for the overwhelming majority of the time that I have been in this place I have represented the area. I have flown over the area on many occasions.

**The Hon. R.G. Kerin:** Have you been out there door-knocking?

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, friends of mine live pretty close.

**Ms Breuer:** You haven't got any friends.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** You don't want to judge everyone by yourself.

*Ms Breuer interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I have friends who live particularly close to that area in what is probably the closest farm to it. The family is well known in the sporting field in this country.

**Mr McEwen:** The Borlases.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Yes. The honourable member is out of his seat and he is out of order. On this occasion he will have to stand up, be counted, tell us exactly where he stands and whether he will put the interests of South Australia first, unlike the member for Kaurana. The member for Kaurana had his first opportunity tonight to show some true leadership. We understand that the member for Kaurana is positioning himself for great things in the future. Tonight, here was the test to see if this new member has what it takes to be a leader, to take courageous decisions. At his first opportunity he has failed. He has succumbed to the irrational pressure of a small minority of agitators, of ill-informed critics and of do nothing organisations. That is what the honourable member has succumbed to. He has forgotten about the blue collar people, about the rural communities and about the workers in this state. All he has done tonight is pander to a small group of ill-informed malcontents who have no regard for the welfare of the people of South Australia.

The Labor Party has a history of opposing projects which are in the interest of the people of this state. I entered this parliament in 1970 when the prevailing issue was whether we should build a dam at Dartmouth in Victoria to protect and guarantee our water supplies. The Labor Party opposed it. Fortunately, that came to fruition—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, you should stay there; he did not go there long enough. Members opposite have a lot to learn.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** And he led with his chin. If the honourable member stays in this place long enough, hopefully he will gain a little wisdom. Then, of course, the Labor Party opposed at great length the Roxby Downs development. They opposed it and did everything to stop it. They marched in the streets. The now leader talked about mirages in the desert; and we had the anti-uranium protests. Fortunately, the then Liberal government was successful and brought onstream a great project for the people of this state. Labor members blocked the development of the Honeymoon and Beverley uranium projects for years. There are a lot of people who have jobs as a result of that initiative. I remember visiting Honeymoon in the late 80s when under Bannon—

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Was that your second honeymoon?

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, the honourable member is yet to have his first official honeymoon!

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is out of his seat.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** If the honourable member does not like what I am saying he does not have to stay, but his colleague will have to stand up in this House and tell us how she will vote.

**Ms Breuer:** I'll tell you.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** We will be waiting with bated breath. Or will she run Eddie Hughes out on the radio again to be the hatchet man? However, they have opposed all these major projects, contrary to the best interests of the people of South Australia. Why? Because they have taken it upon themselves to cut themselves loose of the blue collar workers of this state. I recall some years ago going to Roxby Downs for a parliamentary select committee hearing. I will never forget it, because former members Dr Hopgood and Mr Payne were on the select committee. When we went into the canteen late that afternoon on a pretty hot day with people who had been working very hard out in the sun, one gentleman stood on the table in the middle of the canteen and said 'Who of you are for us and who are against us?' He pointed me out. I said, 'You can talk to me; we are in favour of it.' He then addressed some very colourful language to Dr Hopgood, which I am sure he clearly understood. The honourable member did not stay long to have a drink or to join in the hospitality: he slunk out the back.

On this occasion the members for Kaurana and Giles will not be able to slip out the backdoor as Dr Hopgood did on that occasion. They will have to front right up. If the member for Kaurana has leadership ambitions, he will have to stand up tonight. Will he put the interests of the people of South Australia first and foremost, or will he pander to a small irrational minority? I would be interested to know what the member for Giles thinks about the Spencer Gulf Cities Association, because I have a copy of a letter written on 29 December which is addressed to the minister and which states:

On behalf of the Spencer Gulf Cities Association, I extend congratulations to you and the government for its decision to seek to have state parliament agree to allow for exploration and test drilling to be undertaken within the Yumberra National Park on Eyre Peninsula.

The issue of the exploration and test drilling of the major magnetic anomaly which has been detected by aerial magnetic survey in the Yumberra National Park has been the subject of discussion at a number of recent meetings of the Spencer Gulf Cities Association. At the last meeting, it was resolved to draw to the attention of the major political parties and all Independent members of the parliament the association's view that exploration and test drilling of this magnetic anomaly should proceed. The advice provided to parliament on 28 September that the government intends to seek to have parliament agree to such a course of action is welcomed by the association. It is sincerely hoped that sufficient members of parliament will agree to the government's proposal, and thus allow for the proposed works to be expedited.

Once again, I extend congratulations on the decision made by the government in relation to this matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Ian McSparran, Secretary.

I have another letter that was written to the minister from a Mr Birch—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Look, I could get hundreds of letters for you. The letter states:

I am aware of the recent tabling of the legislation for the re-proclamation of the Yumberra Conservation Park. As a local person in the Ceduna community I would ask you for your support on this issue. It is very important to our community and we have been long hanging in the hope that exploration and mining would be allowed to happen. Our community has been victim of the rural population drift to the metropolitan areas with the centralisation of government activities. . .

The Yumberra and Yellabinna region is the size of Victoria (4 million hectares) and the effect of exploration and mining in the area would be negligible as the size of the anomaly can be likened to a 'pin prick'.

It is clear—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, the honourable member seems to have worked himself into a considerable lather over nothing. The honourable member appears to be trying to justify a guilty conscience.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** The honourable member is waffling on and mumbling under her breath, but at the end of the day she does not have the political courage to stand in this place and put first the long-term interests of the people of South Australia and Upper Eyre Peninsula. Instead, the Labor Party, the honourable member and the member for Kaurna have adopted a mean, miserable, shortsighted and nasty attitude based purely on the narrowest of political point scoring exercises.

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Not only is the honourable member out of his seat, he is out of his depth—and he is obviously out of order, but he cannot help that because—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will return to his seat if he wishes to take part in the debate.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I am easily put off, and I am rather shy when addressing these matters.

**Mr Koutsantonis:** You're a shy, retiring type.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I am a shy retiring type, but on these rare occasions when I take to my feet in the chamber, I do so to ensure that the interests of the people whom I have had the privilege to represent for 27 years are protected. I

know of the number of young people who have left those areas and the number of people who have got jobs at Roxby Downs and who are getting jobs at Beverley and Honeymoon. I know of the services that will be provided at Beverley and Honeymoon. The honourable member has been there. I wonder whether he gave those people an assurance that a future Labor government would allow them to continue, because Mr Beazley has not said that.

An interesting thing that struck me when I visited those two places was the attitude of the people: they are so pleased to have jobs, and they are appreciative of the fact that they have long-term employment prospects. That same attitude and sense of expectation exists in the Ceduna area. If we can get exploration and mining, the opportunities to create a better future for that part of South Australia are enormous. The Labor Party's adoption of such a negative narrow-minded attitude is something that I cannot understand, because if you fly over this vast area you will see that no harm whatsoever will be done. Only a fool would think that you could do any significant harm to this area.

If we were talking about knocking down 20 000 or 30 000 hectares, that would be one thing, but we are talking only about a very small intrusion which will create great benefit.

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I do not know whether the honourable member thinks that governments can raise taxes and get fees out of hot air? If they could, they would get plenty from the Labor Party. At the end of the day, someone has to go out there and earn some real wealth. The only way you will do that is by creating opportunities and allowing people to invest and develop. Not only does Beverley have a mine, but it will now get a new airstrip and an air service will be provided to that part of the state. People in the vicinity will get power which they never thought would happen. The same thing will happen at Honeymoon and Ceduna. It is clear that there is the prospect of getting a better port—

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** If you want to have ecotourism, you have to have roads. Is the honourable member talking about putting roads through there, because—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** The honourable member ought to have a look in the mirror. I suggest to him that if he thinks that defeating this process is in the interests of South Australia then the people of this state will judge him as politically irresponsible.

**An honourable member:** And very naive.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** And very naive and negative. I look forward to this development taking place. It is clear that the Labor Party and the member for Kaurna have neither the political courage nor the fortitude to stand up to minority pressure groups. It is clear to the people of this state that, if we were unfortunate to have them occupying the Treasury benches again, this would be a do nothing, no development state, and there would be no opportunities.

I commend the minister and the government for the step that they have taken. It will be like Roxby Downs, Dartmouth, Honeymoon and Beverley. It will be of great benefit to this state. It will be long term and it will create opportunities, and those who oppose it will bear the condemnation of future generations.

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** How could you follow a performance like that? I want to talk about the issue for people in that

area. As I said earlier today, Yumbarra is in my electorate. I have many concerns about this motion and the benefits for the community if exploration is to go ahead. One of my major concerns is that I must concur—although I do not very often—with the member for Stuart on the issue of young people moving away from the area to other regional areas or the city (predominantly Adelaide) never to return to their home base.

This has all sorts of implications for the community. Families are split up, and one of the issues that has been brought home to me in the past couple of days is the impact that young people moving away has on sporting communities. Teams never get anywhere because all the good young people move away when they start to get to the stage where they can make an impact in the sporting arena. I also mentioned today the population decline in this area: over 1 000 people have disappeared in the past four years. This is an ongoing problem for all regional cities.

Tonight, the minister read a letter from the Spencer Gulf Cities Association. I attended the meeting where the decision was made to support mining at Yumbarra. In fact, I took part in the debate that occurred at that meeting. Spencer Gulf Cities involves a part of the state that is very dear to my heart. Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Pirie, Roxby Downs and Port Lincoln councils are involved.

Another letter was read tonight from the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association which has also been part of my life. Eyre Peninsula is very close to Whyalla, it is a part of Eyre Peninsula, so people in those communities are well known to me. I know families and people throughout those communities. I have worked with the councillors during my time as a member of the Whyalla City Council, and I have worked with the councillors from the Eyre Peninsula LGA. So, that also has a major impact for me.

These letters support mining in the Yumbarra park for various reasons but predominantly because of the impact that will have on those communities. This is my lifeblood, and these people are my people. I understand why they support mining in the Yumbarra park. The AWU supports mining in this particular area: both the Adelaide branch and the Whyalla-Woomera branch have expressed their support for mining in that region because of the benefits to the people in those communities.

The member for Stuart spoke at length. Today, I heard one of the members ask where the member for Peake received his elocution lessons. He cast aspersions on the member for Peake. I think he has probably had elocution lessons from the member for Stuart because often it is difficult to understand what he is talking about. If you see two people talking and one of them looks bored, you know that the other one is the member for Stuart.

The honourable member wants to know how I will vote tonight. I have no choice. ALP policy on this issue is that we do not reproclaim conservation parks. What do I do in this instance? Do I cross the floor? I have made a commitment to the ALP. I joined this parliament as a member of the Labor Party, and I abide by party policy. I signed an agreement that I would abide by party policy—and I have no problem with that. My heart is with the ALP. I totally support the ALP and its policies. If I were to cross the floor, I would become an independent member of this parliament. I am not prepared to do that to the people who voted for me as an ALP member.

I was elected as an ALP member, and I am not prepared to forgo that. I believe that I can do more as a member of the Australian Labor Party in this parliament, particularly after

the next election, when I believe that the ALP will be in government. So, I will abide by party policy on this issue.

However, I do not know what the prospects are for people in that community if Yumbarra were to go ahead. Nobody knows what is there. I have asked many experts on this issue, but nobody seems to really know. I thought perhaps they did and they were not saying, but I truly believe that nobody knows what is there. Perhaps it is gold. I am told that it is not uranium. There is a possibility of iron ore, but I am also told there is not a strong enough magnetic field. Perhaps it is fairly floss, as we were told earlier today. Maybe it is something big, but until we have an investigation and exploration of that area, I guess that no-one will know.

When I was over in that area recently, I was impressed by the vastness of the particular area of the park that is involved. A local farmer said to me, 'Really and truly, it's just an area that nobody wanted before because you couldn't do anything with it, and that's why they made it into a park.' This is an example of the fairly common mentality of people in that area. That is what they believe the area is about. Perhaps they are not aware of the uniqueness of the area, because they are living in that area and do not understand some of the issues that the conservation societies have put forward. They do not understand what an incredible area they have there. Certainly that is how people feel in the local area: it is just a park; it is just something that is part of their existence over there.

It is a vast area, and I was interested to hear the member for Stuart also talk about flying over the area. I have flown over it and seen the vastness of it. I have also been there and had a look around the area. The mining part of this park is only 1 per cent of the total park area. Surely we can look at other areas in that particular part of the state which could be used as a trade if this area were to be proclaimed. With new mining techniques, how much damage environmentally would there be in this particular area of just 1 per cent of an absolutely huge area of the state? I think many people have great difficulty comprehending that fact. They have not been to that park and do not comprehend its vastness.

I received some answers to the questions I asked this afternoon of the minister, but there were no guarantees about employment. When I asked about jobs for Aboriginal people, she was able to give no guarantees. We would very much like to see 25 per cent of those jobs go to Aboriginal people, but there are no guarantees that it will happen. We do not know how many jobs there will be for local people if the area were to be opened up. I know that even 10 jobs in a community has a major spin-off for that community. I believe that the community would benefit greatly from this mining. I believe that a commitment in this respect would bring hope to a depressed community and to regional South Australia. I also believe that there would be jobs for young people, and I believe that there would be spin-offs for the region.

I refer again to the Penong area and the gypsum mine which operates there, involving some 40 jobs. It keeps that community going and has a major spin-off for the areas surrounding Ceduna. I know that a lot of farmers, as well as young people, go and work in Penong and do seasonal work on the farms. It does certainly assist and keep a community going. Regardless of how many jobs it will create, it will have an impact on the community and give hope to that community.

I sympathise not only with my colleagues in the Labor Party, but also with the Wilderness Society and other conservation groups. I am horrified at the prospect of conservation parks being opened up. When I think of areas



in Australia, perhaps in the Northern Territory, the notion of mining going into those areas does horrify me. But that is an impartial view I have; I am not personally involved in those particular areas. In this area, I do have a personal interest. I know how these people feel. I know the problems that they have. I am from the bush. I come from a very depressed town, so I understand how important these issues are and how important employment of any kind is to people in remote and regional South Australia. I understand the issues. I understand the problems of people out there. God knows, I have certainly been outspoken enough about this and got myself into all sorts of hot water because of it. I am prepared to stand up and say what I think, and it does get me into trouble.

We are unique in remote South Australia, and Ceduna is remote South Australia. It is 10 hours from Adelaide. I was interested to hear a story last week from people in Ceduna who were telling me about a group who wanted to travel over from Canberra. They asked the Ceduna people, 'If we fly to Adelaide and hire a car, how long would it take us to get to Ceduna?' When they were told it would take them 10 hours, they were absolutely horrified. They had no concept of the distance involved and the remoteness of Ceduna. It is unique and beautiful country and should be preserved. I know this because I travel some 2 000 kilometres a week. That is what I have averaged in the last two years. I do not fly in and out, like the member for Stuart does, and pay a fleeting visit: I actually drive.

I believe that tourism has prospects in those areas. Certainly it is a major prospect for them, but unfortunately most Adelaide people will not take the time to travel over there. A 10 hour trip for people to go to that particular area of the state would kill them! They would not cope. They would have to have three stops on the way.

Surely there is some compromise, some way that this project can go ahead and give these people in the area an opportunity. It has been a very difficult decision for me. It is the first time I have really had to consider my role in the Labor Party—where I stand, and how prepared I am to stick by the Labor Party, to stick to my beliefs and give my total support to the Labor Party. But ultimately, I believe for the betterment of my electorate, I am far better off staying with the Australian Labor Party, and I am far better off for my community. Therefore, I am not prepared, as the member for Stuart would love me to do, to cross the floor on this particular issue. This House tonight has to make some difficult decisions which certainly will affect people's lives in that particular area of the state. They are also decisions which the rest of regional South Australia I believe will look at very carefully. So, it is a very difficult decision, and I hope that all members treat this matter seriously tonight and that somehow, for the betterment of the people in regional South Australia, those decisions will be made.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I support the motion. I thank the member for Giles for the way she has looked at this issue over time. It is a pity that democracy is not always quite alive and well within the Labor Party, but I support the fact that she has been very helpful. She has given good support to the people over there. There is absolutely no doubt about the support of the community of the West Coast on this issue and its importance to that community. As has been mentioned earlier tonight, that support well and truly goes across all of Eyre Peninsula, and whether you talk to the mayors and councils in Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Pirie or the other areas of Eyre

Peninsula, you will find that there is terrific support for this whole Yumberra issue.

The issue has been of enormous local interest over a period. A particular group of people at Ceduna have taken a very proactive role in making sure they look at the issue in its entirety, including the options available for the community, and I refer to Mayor Peter Duffy, CEO Tony Irvine, Jane Lowe—who has been terrific at keeping people focused on the issue, Mitch Dunnet, Bob Ware and many others who have done an enormous amount of work. Quite a few members of parliament have been over there and have been extremely well hosted. These people have made sure that the MPs have had access not only to Yumberra but also to a lot of local people whilst they have been there.

There has been some anxiety in the community over there that what they might call the 'city state mentality' may prevail and deprive them of what they really want. I ask parliament to listen to the locals. The locals are the people who know the area. They are the ones who will feel the greatest impact, whichever way any decisions made here today will go. They best understand the importance of that area. It is all right for us to sit here and talk about whether or not it is significant in the scheme of things over there, but those people and particularly those who live nearby, such as the Borlase family and others who live close to the park, understand it; they know the area better than anyone else.

The area has had mixed economic fortunes. It is a marginal farming area, which has found it difficult with the cost price squeeze. Up to October it has been the driest year for 40 years, so they have been doing that hard. Aquaculture has given them a glimmer of hope, but there is a lot of excitement about mining and what Yumberra might be able to do for them. There is certainly a major anomaly there, from the aeromagnetics.

It is a section of South Australia that in the past has often felt forgotten and ignored. This government will not be guilty of depriving it of this opportunity, and neither should the parliament do so. The level of local support is very high, and they do not deserve to be deprived because groups in Adelaide have a double standard, allowing development and comfort here in Adelaide whereas out there they can do without. Nowhere has that been so evident as in the response of the Democrats to this issue. The Hon. Mike Elliott was on the air recently raving about the survey he took at the Adelaide show as to whether or not there should be mining at Yumberra. I would say that 98 per cent of the people wandering around the Adelaide show would not know where Yumberra was and even more would never have been in the area. It was quite ironic that the Ceduna show was on one or two days after he was on the air, and if he wanted a true indication perhaps he should have taken his survey to the Ceduna show. Then again, he held a public meeting in Blackwood, so I suppose that says something as well.

I will give an even more blatant example of similar areas to Ceduna where the Democrats and increasingly the ALP, unfortunately, want to deny development in a range of industries such as mining, aquaculture and others that require changes of land use and development approvals. The Democrats are greatly concerned over any land clearance or development in regional areas. In fact, they see themselves as the great guardians of the environment of South Australia. It is easy for them, but what about the thousands of landholders and others in regional areas who make up our land care groups, soil boards and a whole range of other organisations, not to mention the very real fact that many of the

landholders who are looked upon with suspicion by the Democrats and some of their mates actually put large amounts of money, time and land into projects that make a real contribution to our environment and its sustainability.

The Democrats talk about it; regional South Australia actually does it; yet the Democrats seem always to claim the high moral ground. Recently we have seen the construction of the tunnel in the Adelaide Hills. That is a marvellous project and a real boost to the local community, as Yumberra would be for the people of the Ceduna region. Isn't it interesting to see the Democrats so strongly opposing aquaculture, development and exploration, as they are at Yumberra? They are well known for opposing almost anything where native vegetation clearance is required, yet the tunnel is obviously an enormous convenience to many of the Democrat constituency. They reckon that is great. It is an important project for many people, not only in the Hills but also in the mallee and the South-East. However, I question the consistency of the Democrats' attitude to the tunnel and their opposition to Yumberra. The far west would be deprived of the opportunity to know whether Yumberra holds the key to a better future, yet where were the same people when hundreds of trees and other plants were sacrificed to build the tunnel? It is amazing how a bit of direct benefit can bring about a change in attitude.

I plead with both Houses of this parliament not to deprive the people of the far west of the opportunity that Yumberra holds for them. The support extends a long way east from Ceduna, and this has been a major agenda item over the past couple of years at the Spencer Gulf Cities Association and more broadly in the community. It has also been constantly stated that the passing of this motion sets a precedent which would allow mining in other national parks. This is not a change in legislation allowing mining in areas not previously allowed: this is a specific motion to the central Yumberra area and does not alter in any way the status of any other area.

I also believe it is somewhat unfair of groups opposing the motion to so easily reject the idea of a trade-off, whereby a greater area will be precluded from exploration and mining. I know it is not exactly the same vegetation type or has the same range of biodiversity, but I also put to the House that this does not mean that it is not a positive move as far as environmental value goes. I know that argument will not please the opponents of Yumberra, but it is a factor which, while opponents may debate it, cannot be ignored.

I congratulate the people of the Ceduna area on the manner with which they have handled this issue. They have been totally up front with all members of parliament and very involved in local negotiation on the issues of native title and Aboriginal heritage. All involved can be congratulated. It really shows that, when all parties are focused on an outcome of mutual benefit and have a sense of goodwill, much can be achieved. I strongly support the motion.

I move:

That the time for the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I have heard some very interesting speeches tonight. I was personally disappointed by the member for Kaurna's speech, because I had him on a pedestal, and many members know that. I thought that tonight we heard the same old basic Labor line. Wasn't it refreshing to hear the speech of the member for Giles? Her loyalty to the

Labor Party stays supreme, but she spoke her mind tonight; she spoke the truth. She told us what she feels and knows about jobs in her area. When I leave this place in years to come, certain members will stick in my memory. I was pretty impressed with that speech of the member for Giles. I listened to it and appreciated it, and I felt sympathy that again the laws of the Labor Party claim another victim. She is on the record, and that gives her some credibility, but I wonder now whether Labor will let her swing in the breeze by calling 'Divide!' at the end of this debate.

The member for Kaurna talked about Belair; that brought a total red herring into this issue. We are talking about reclamation only of this area; nowhere else; no other park; just this one. This one that we are talking about happens to be the one where the anomaly is. This action taken by the Labor opposition is once again a head-in-the-sand action. I am very much in favour of exploring this region, as I have always been. As the member for Giles just said, after we find out what is there, then we can reassess. This is no different at all from Roxby Downs. This will provide jobs in an isolated region and money for our economy. If there are diamonds or gold under this region, should we therefore leave it there to protect this two metre high scrub, which is half burnt by bushfires? What about the local economy? I remind the anti-miners over there that everything is either grown or mined.

As members know, I was a member of the select committee, and I was a little bit surprised to hear the member for Torrens' speech tonight because she was also a member of that committee. We did a very thorough job. I went to the park twice with the committee and once on my own behalf with the former member for Playford, now Senator Quirke, to find the hidden jewel that Labor talks of, to find the animals in the off season, to find what was supposed to be there. We did not find anything. The evidence given to the committee was overwhelmingly in support of allowing exploration. We took evidence twice in Ceduna. I saw and heard all the local people, the local Aboriginal community and the farmers, and all with one voice they said that we should give it a go because it would create local jobs.

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Torrens will come to order!

**Mr VENNING:** A visit to the area by anybody with an open mind and open eyes will reveal low mallee scrub with rolling sandhills. Like the Deputy Premier, I will also mention the Democrats' comments, the rare native fowl and other things. The former member for Playford and I went particularly to look for the native fowl. We found one nest, the same one that everyone else has seen and the same one that has been photographed over and over again. That nest had not been inhabited for four or five seasons. It is probably not there at all now, it has probably gone altogether.

I should have rung John Quirke tonight and got him to fax me a letter. We scoured the region and all we found was the one nest, which had not been used for years. It was the same one that was not far from Goog's Track, which we see in literature purporting to save the species. As the member for Torrens said, we found one, quite nice flower about four or five inches high right in the middle of the track. We knelt down and had our photograph taken with it.

The area is the land known as Yellabinna mallee. Yumberra Conservation Park and Regional Reserve, Pureba Conservation Park and the Nunyah Conservation Reserve all lie in the area—thousands of hectares of it. It lies on the

geological or tectonic feature known as Gawler Craton. I was parliamentary secretary for mines and energy at the time, so I took a great interest in it. The particular area in which this anomaly can be found was discovered by the South Australian Exploration Initiative, which was an initiative of the previous Labor government, and it just happens to be in this restricted area. It is a couple of hundred hectares in the middle of thousands and, as somebody said, it is a mere pinprick.

When we flew over it we could see that a fire had gone through half of the park, and the member for Torrens can back me up on that. About three quarters of it had been burnt. When I went back the following year small growth could be seen, but it would take a long time for the mallee to grow to the 2 metres that it had been before. The area was devoid of native animals and we saw few if any birds.

The proclamation under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972, which established the central portion of the Yumbarra Conservation Park, contains no provision for mining exploration. The park covers an area of approximately 327 589 hectares, or 3 276 square kilometres, which is 8 per cent of the 4 million hectares of sand hills and rolling mallee which forms the Yellabinna Association.

**Mrs Geraghty:** I bet you used a calculator.

**Mr VENNING:** I did use a calculator. That is a massive amount of land and it goes for ever. It is devoid of water—it is virtually devoid of anything. In fact, 95 per cent of this state would have more significance than this piece of land. Why was Adelaide built here? Because it has significance. I am just amazed at all this hot air about this massive area, of which we are interested in just a small piece. Exploration licence application No. 142—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members have had a pretty fair go this evening. The honourable member is entitled to be heard in silence.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** I heard the member for Giles in silence.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the member not to inflame the situation and to continue with his presentation.

*Mr Clarke interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Ross Smith will remain silent.

**Mr VENNING:** Thank you for your protection, sir. I did listen to the member for Giles in silence. Exploration licence application No. 142/93 covers an area of 37 900 hectares of which 26 650 hectares lies within Yumbarra.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr VENNING:** Item 17 of the report, as the member for Torrens well knows, is quite clear and there is no need for debate. It states:

A biological survey of Yumbarra Conservation Park has established a practical baseline database and found that, while this park is a significant part of the state's mallee ecosystems and environmental heritage, and is located centrally on both north-south and east-west biogeographical transitions in the Yellabinna mallee, there are unlikely to be elements of the ecosystems in the central area of the park that are not also represented elsewhere in the park.

That says it all. It is a huge amount of land and we are talking about a small piece of land that is no different from anywhere else in the park. Items 27, 28 and 29 of the report all say a similar thing. Here we are getting in knots, but members should read this report.

The locals were consulted and gave evidence. The local Aboriginal groups were also consulted and gave evidence, including the Wirangu tribe through their elder, Mr B. Ware, and the member for Torrens heard his evidence. The local farmers and land care groups were also consulted and gave evidence. I am sure that every member of the select committee, except one, the member for Torrens, was expecting the go-ahead to allow exploration only at that time. The member for Torrens was looking to agree if a compromise could be reached with other land. That is what the honourable member agreed to. I wrote this note at the time, so I am not trusting my memory. The member for Torrens agreed that she would negotiate another piece of land and then she would consider agreeing.

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** We were discussing that option but, on the last day—and this is as true as I stand here—the then member for Playford announced that he had been rolled in caucus that morning, despite all our work, and he said that he could not support the line that the committee was going to take. The member opposite is silent. We then submitted the extra finding, No. 29, which turned the whole thing around to ensure that the matter went back to parliament and it could seek extra information. I was pretty cross at that time. The government had the numbers to crunch the decision but Chairman Stephen Baker, after getting advice, advised the committee to change the last few recommendations which meant that we would further prolong the consultation period, which is now 2½ to three years on. How suspect the institution of parliament is. The evidence was totally overwhelming, yet it did not happen.

The Dominion Mining Company has been most patient. It has been waiting for 10 years on this issue. This is a farce and it is a fiasco. Members who have any doubt should look at recommendation 17. Page 64 outlines the Aboriginal support for the proposal, as follows:

Aboriginal support for mining (District Council of Ceduna 58):

- Providing conditions on full consultations are met, local Aboriginals are in favour of the exploration going ahead
- Aboriginal communities feel that exploration opportunities provide the best hope for job development
- General discussion has indicated that the Koonibba community has no adverse comments on the exploration proposal
- Aboriginals do not live in the area of the magnetic anomaly, but it would be visited by those from Koonibba.

Everywhere we look it is obvious. I am very cross when I consider what has happened and I have made several speeches since the select committee reported knowing that this would happen. I told Stephen Baker that 3½ years ago. We should have crunched the situation. At the time five and a half members were in favour of this.

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** I say 'half' because you were undecided. You can read this later and dispute it with Senator Quirke. Quirke was a strong supporter of this, but he came in on the last day and said that he could not do it because the people in the Caucus, who knew nothing of the issue and had not sat in on all the evidence, said that according to the rules you can't support this. Of course, they backed off and we put in these two soft resolutions at the end, which was wrong. We, the government of the day, erred badly. I told the then minister and chairman of the committee, Stephen Baker, a friend of mine, that we were making a serious mistake. We should have crunched it 3-2 at the time. I do not believe that

John Quirke would have been unhappy. Politics again were getting in the way, as they did with Roxby Downs.

It is, of course, in an area of jobs drought. Who works in the mines—often the blue colour workers, the majority of whom used to vote Labor. As the member for Giles said, this is about jobs, and who works in the mines—it is not the white but the blue collar workers, most of whom used to vote Labor. This, in my book, is indeed a farce. It gives me no confidence in the process of parliament. Many members opposite privately support the rezonement of Yumbarra. We have heard one member put it on the record tonight, and all credit to her. As the member for Stuart said, it was a Labor government that found this anomaly in the first place with its aeromagnetic surveys. After finding it they go to water.

Labor is voting against motion this knowing that it will pass. It is pandering to a very noisy minority out there. About 90 per cent of this state comprises land that is more significant than this area. I am happy to support a biological survey taken in the opposite season to the one undertaken previously. I am happy if members approach the same people responsible for the other report, which was done in a short time. It was done by Messrs Owens, Hudspeth, Robinson, Dobrzinski, Armstrong, Pedler and Lang. I am happy for them to be re-engaged to do another report in the off season, as long as it does not delay the process. If they can do it in conjunction with the rezonement I am quite happy, because I think it was a good report. It was done quickly and to the point. I have no problem with it at all.

I hope that common sense will prevail and that we will support this, as I always did. I want to at least find out what is there. We have talked for 10 years and we know that there are anomalies, but we are not prepared to find out. I commend the motion to the House. I commend the minister for her patience and diligence and commend members opposite who privately would support this. If they have any courage at all they will not call 'divide' on some of their loyal members. I certainly support the motion.

**Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith):** I will be brief.

*Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:*

**Mr CLARKE:** Don't tempt me. I would like to support the comments of the member for Kaurana in this matter and the member for Giles, my colleague in whose electorate the park is located. I had some interest in this matter arising back in the last parliament when my good friend and colleague, now Senator Quirke, was the shadow minister for mines and energy. He spoke to me on a number of occasions about this issue. He was very convincing and I largely agreed with many of the informal conversations I had with him. Indeed, relations were so good he offered to take me out on a few shooting trips with him and the member for Stuart. I would have enjoyed that but I was a bit worried about which target he would use. I agreed with the then shadow minister for mines and energy with respect to his views on that conservation park. The select committee's report was the sensible approach in that it has always been my belief that there should not have been any prohibition on exploring that part of the park where the anomaly exists and the mining industry thought that there might be something worth while to exploit.

To go back a step, the Conservation Council's view at the time of the last parliament was that you should not even be allowed to go and explore to see what there might be: it had to be absolutely pristine and not be touched. My view and that of now Senator Quirke and the former member for Giles, who was also a former minister for mines and energy, was

that you should at least be allowed to have a look to see what was there and then make a decision as to whether or not what was under the ground was commercially exploitable. If you wanted to introduce mining, it was a question of, first, whether you should mine; and, secondly, if you did, what safeguards would need to be introduced. It was a two-stage process. That would have been a fairly sensible proposition because I think that, if people were allowed to go in and explore in the first instance and found something valuable and of some worth to the community in terms of jobs, royalties to the state and the like, there might have been greater community acceptance of the exploitation of those mineral rights, building in the necessary safeguards.

One of the concerns I had in those meetings in the last Parliament with the members of the Conservation Council, who argued against even going in to have a look and explore what was in the conservation park, was that you could do nothing with that conservation park, not even go in and look to see what was there. I cannot reconcile myself to that type of view. I also have difficulty in reconciling myself with some of the views that have been expressed at times by various green groups, not only in this state but elsewhere, as their appetite is insatiable on some occasions with respect to conservation matters, to the point that you could never look anywhere in the state or mine anything in terms of generating wealth for the community.

I only have to look at the recent example in New South Wales with Bob Carr, a former minister for the environment in that state who, as Premier, is probably the greenest Premier that New South Wales has ever had. Despite all the efforts he made with respect to saving the forests in New South Wales and having to balance the competing interests of the timber companies and the workers employed in those areas who had limited opportunities for employment elsewhere, he nonetheless went out on a limb to make a very good deal with respect to the conservation movement in New South Wales on that issue. But they still stuck it up him—they were not happy with that. They not only had to have the whole loaf of bread, they had to have the bakery as well. That is what alienates the more extreme green movements from the broader community when there is nothing you can do to satisfy their desires, when in fact we have a modern society that involves compromises or invasions on the integrity of some parts of the environment at times for the overall greater good of the community.

Another thing that I would like to mention is the fact that many people, including those on our side of the House, the Democrats and others, all know that, when we go back to our electorate offices we have unending demands, quite rightly, from our constituents for our schools and our hospitals to be improved, for more police on the beat and for more employment creation opportunities and programs to be initiated—more than I have the time to speak about tonight. Yet, what we do not turn our mind to sufficiently is the generation of the wealth in terms of being able to pay for that additional provision of services. We do have to turn our mind to those things.

I do not believe (I am not a rapacious miner) that the mining industry is all wonderful. In fact, I am a great admirer of the old Rex Connor, and I knew what his attitude was towards the mining industry—that it exploited Australia's mineral resources and gave very little back in return by way of royalties compared to the costs the taxpayers had to pay in terms of providing the necessary infrastructure for those mining industries. They used us as a quarry rather than also

using it as a value adding component to our overall national economy. So, I do not carry any truck for the mining industry per se. However, at the same time, we need very carefully to look at what resources we have available in this state and not blindly turn our back to the chances of exploiting it. If we had done that 100 years ago there would not be a city of Whyalla, because we would not have touched the Middleback Ranges—I do not know if there are any Middleback Ranges any more; I think we have probably levelled them by now through exploitation in taking out the iron ore. There would not be the Mount Tom Prices and various other mining activities that have taken place in this state and elsewhere.

However, in terms of this proclamation, I can understand why the government is doing it: it knows that it has the numbers upstairs, so it might as well go for the whole hog. I think it would have been far better off to follow the advice of the select committee and allow exploration first to determine if there is anything there and what the value of it is, so that we can talk to the community generally and say that, on balance, it is a worthwhile project to go ahead with and what environmental standards will have to be complied with, so that all sections of the community can feel comfortable, even if they are not totally happy with it, as far as the end result is concerned.

I wish to reiterate my view that it is all very well for some segments of the community to say that you cannot develop and do anything and yet demand Rolls Royce services on a Volkswagen budget. You cannot do it, and the fact is that the people of South Australia have had enough of the cuts to their basic services. They want them restored to the levels they previously enjoyed, and better—and why should they not have it? Our task is also about creating the necessary economic climate and the wealth generation in this community so that we can provide those essential services to members of the community. Therefore, I join with my colleague Senator Quirke, who I am sure would echo the same views as I have with respect to this matter, because he was quite persuasive when he was shadow minister for mines and energy on this issue in the last parliament.

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** The debate ought to be about the pursuit of knowledge. Knowledge acquired, whether it is about the ecology or the geology of any place, is still knowledge. Knowledge that enables us to understand the ecology—what it contains, what it therefore can contribute to the future of biodiversity from any given location to ensure a survival of that part of the fabric of life itself—is of no greater merit than knowledge about the geology of the same location. In some measure, anyway, the two are interlinked. Indeed, there would not be any life on this planet if there was not a planet in the first place. Notwithstanding the fact that we are part of life on this planet, we are equally a part of the planet. We know that, in terms of compassion for those other human beings, which all of us, validly or otherwise, consider to be the dominant species, we are entitled to continue to survive, and not only survive as a species, but that any individual born should have equal rights with every other individual so born. We set out in our society to provide that: we set out in our society to encourage other societies to do likewise. We cannot do that unless we objectively pursue knowledge about the planet on which we live and the laws of nature which govern our surroundings and enable us to exploit those surroundings in a sustainable way.

Mining is a sustainable activity because, if it is done in a way that does not threaten the ecology of the situation in

which it occurs, it enables that society of human beings to continue to acquire adequate prosperity to support the cost of educating all individual members of that society. You cannot have a civilisation unless you have an economy that is capable of producing time out for the younger generation from work sufficient to enable them to be educated. We, of course, go further than that and say that you cannot support a civilisation that not only does that much but also provides for the opportunity of actualisation of each individual, so that all of us, as educated adults—by whatever degree, person to person—have the opportunity to express ourselves, to be as creative as opportunities permit. None of that is possible unless you acknowledge that there is a need to mine.

When I look around me in this chamber, Mr Speaker, I see you wearing spectacles. Whether those lenses are made from silicon oxide or from a polymer does not matter; they came from mining. The frames, whether they are made of a polymer and coated with metal, or made with metal, came from mining. I see the clothes that you are wearing, sir. They could not have been woven—indeed, the textile could not have been produced into fibre that was capable of being woven—if we did not have a mining industry to make the machinery that made it possible. I look across the chamber and I see other members dressed in the same way and using the same advantages that are obtained from mining.

I remind myself that less than a few hours ago we were sitting in a dining room, the tables and chairs of which are made of timber. That could not have been harvested and milled to make the furniture that we had as chairs and tables unless we had been mining to provide ourselves with the tools. We could not have eaten the food in the civilised way in which we did unless we had mined the metals from which we made the cutlery and mined the clay, the kaolin, from which we made the crockery and, indeed, mined the materials that we use in the kitchen to cook the food and mined the materials that we use to make the tractors and other equipment to grow, harvest and transport the food to get it to our dining room to sustain us.

Anyone who thinks, therefore, that mining is evil and wicked is living a lie. They could not even begin to save themselves from the disease from which they are likely to suffer early in their life if they did not have surgical instruments obtained from mining to protect them and to make the process of manufacturing the drugs that would help them overcome the affliction from which they might suffer unless there was mining.

Therefore, the mining industry is axiomatically acknowledged by any reasonable person as a basic, essential part of a civilisation. So, the pursuit of knowledge about what is within those few hundred metres of the surface of the earth's crust in any given set of circumstances is as important as the pursuit of knowledge about what lives on the surface, place to place, country to country, ocean to ocean, across the planet. We are kidding ourselves if we see our presence and our future in any other terms. Anybody who tells the community at large that mining is evil, wicked, undesirable or in some measure to be avoided is a fool. Anybody who says that mining can be undertaken without regard for the impact it has on the fabric of life is equally a fool.

So, I do not say *carte blanche* that you can go ahead and do what you like, because that is as irresponsible in the context of winning resources, recruiting the raw material and the substance of which civilisation is made, as it is with somebody who sees the same thing in terms of social behaviour in urban settings. It is foolish to engage in an

activity which is not sustainable in perpetuity. This motion does not seek to do anything other than enable an activity to be undertaken that is sustainable in perpetuity. All the other safeguards are already in place in law to prevent the sort of rapacious exploitation of naturally occurring anomalies (we call them mineral deposits) in the earth's crust in other societies. We do not have that approach, and we have put in law the means by which we can prevent from happening that which occurs in those less civilised countries on this planet. We are encouraging them to follow our example.

If our example is to be relevant to their future, our future and, indeed, the collective future of humanity, it must be based on good science and on knowledge. The first step to take then is to discover why the anomaly has occurred in the aerial geomagnetic surveys that were taken over the Yumbarra area. I leave it to good science to discover and document what might be there. I support this proposition so long as it ensures that we know what it is that might be put at risk.

We now know that it is possible to recover what might otherwise be seen to have been lost, simply because we have continued in the pursuit of knowledge. So, I say to members in this chamber, whether they sit on this side or the other, that the romantic notions of what we might think is or is not there ought to be tempered by our knowledge that we can discover what is there, both living on the surface as well as beneath the surface, without sacrificing either. In the process of doing this, we can determine whether or not it is possible for us to generate employment for responsible human beings to exploit anything that might be discovered there without destroying life already there which makes a realistic contribution to the fabric of life and to the survival of biodiversity in DNA, across the board, on this planet.

We ought not argue that the environment of Yumbarra is in any sense pristine. By some measure, it is less disturbed than other places, and by another measure it is more disturbed. It has been disturbed a hell of a lot since Europeans arrived on this continent—and not because anything any one member of the species *homo sapiens* has done in that locality but because of things we did elsewhere. *Homo sapiens* from Europe brought rabbits, cats and foxes. They brought a host of other vegetation, a number of species, as well as insects. The end result of the introduction of those species was destruction of what was there prior to Europeans' arrival.

That is no different from what happened 10 000 or 12 000 years ago when the so-called Aborigines arrived, hopped into the environment and started burning things. That changed the structure of native vegetation on this continent and the kind of life forms of animals and insects that could survive inconsequence of what they did. They were foul butchers of the environment compared to what has been done by Europeans in the last 200 years. The number of species that were lost when the so-called Aborigines arrived here 10 000

years ago is far greater than the number of species that are at risk or have been lost already since Europeans arrived. The Aborigines did not bother to do anything about it: they just went on doing things the way they thought they ought to be done. They burnt the landscape when it suited them to get fresh growth so that they could go out and catch the game more easily and so on. I do not say that is good or bad: I just say that it happened. There are a lot of other things that just happen, too: you see them on T-shirts as slogans.

We do not need to be that, if you like, inane about it, but we ought not to argue that there is some great benefit to be derived by keeping Yumbarra without knowing what it is we are keeping, arguing that it has never been changed, that Europeans have not had any effect on it. I can tell you that they have. Rabbits have eaten the hell out of it, and cats and foxes have knocked off whatever other small animals and ground-dwelling birds were fortunate enough to survive the impact of competition from rabbits for their food. I do not know how many weeds there are because that has not been documented, but it jolly well ought to be.

I therefore say to those people who call themselves greenies in the extreme context to think again. They are all part of this planet, and their survival, education and knowledge depends on the rest of us continuing to acquire it and therefore having the ability to create the prosperity that enables education to be a substantial pursuit of the development of the mind and knowledge of surrounding circumstances in the society of which they are part.

Coming back then in simple pragmatic terms, having canvassed those basic values during the course of the remarks I have made today, I say that, as long as we pursue knowledge about the geology and ecology and make a balanced judgment on the basis of that knowledge about whether we ought to do anything about the knowledge that we acquire of the geology once we have assessed the likely consequences for the ecology, then we can proceed. Unless we do both, by some measure we are acting irresponsibly. Doing both means just that: discovering what is there and doing it below the surface as well as upon the surface. Anyone who argues that either takes precedence over the other is kidding themselves.

Anyone who puts the view that nothing ought to be done in one area of science for fear that it might mean that another romantic concept of the relevance of the other area of science is acting irresponsibly to the point where they are immoral because they are claiming that the other science has no relevance to their existence and future welfare. Both are important.

**Mr De LAINE** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10.20 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 28 October at 10.30 a.m.