

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 9 November 1999

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

**ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY
(FINANCIAL COMMITMENT) AMENDMENT
BILL**

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

DISABLED CHILDREN

A petition signed by 515 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the government to provide funding for continence aids for children with disabilities was presented by Mr Scalzi.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that written answers to questions on the *Notice Paper*, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 3, 19 and 28; and I direct that the following answers to questions without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

MULTICULTURAL YOUTH OFFICERS

In reply to **Ms KEY** (30 September).

The **Hon. J.W. OLSEN**: The Minister for Youth has provided the following information:

In early March 1999, information packages and application forms calling for applications were distributed to all South Australian councils. Applications closed on 21 May, 1999. Three applications were received by the due date. These applications were assessed upon merit against selection criteria detailing:

- that the proposal outlined new, unique programs with a community development focus on identified ethnic youth issues;
- the proposed financial commitment, both during and after the project;
- the applicant's demonstrated commitment to youth programs and participation; and
- that the population of the council area warrants the establishment of such a project.

None of the three applications complied with the requirements of the application process and all applications were non-committal with regard to actual financial contribution. Two applications focused more on service delivery rather than youth development.

The offer for seeding grants was, therefore, withdrawn and a more effective means of utilising these funds for the benefit of young people from culturally diverse background will be considered by the minister.

MASTERS GAMES

In reply to **Ms BEDFORD** (20 October).

The **Hon. J. HALL**: The 7th Australian Masters Games office did not make arrangements for child care facilities at specific sporting venues.

However, measures were put into place to assist participants wishing to make arrangements for child care.

The *Games Guide* or games information book was issued to all participants and I quote from Page 19:

'Child care. A number of options are available to suit your child care requirements during the games. These include care for children in community based child care centres or family day care, where care is provided in homes of approved providers and

outside school hours care. All services are on a user pays basis and advanced bookings are required where possible. Contact the games information desk or the games hotline on 8300 6304 for further details and contact numbers.

The games information desk and the games communication centre (hotline) were equipped with details of service providers.

OPERATION AVATAR

In reply to **Mr CONLON** (20 October).

The **Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE**: The Deputy Police Commissioner advised that Operation Avatar commenced on 5 August 1999, with the aim to reduce criminal activity and public order offences by outlaw motor cycle gangs (OMCGs).

Operation Avatar provides a policing strategy incorporating all operational members of SAPOL with responsibility for the management of street level anti-social behaviour of OMCG members. Investigation sections within local service areas are responsible for the investigation of criminal activity with the higher level organised crime being investigated by the Drug and Organised Crime Investigation branch.

Specific investigations at this time include:

- Operation Eden, involving the bombing of the Rebels club rooms
- The murder of three Rebels members on 8 October, 1999

Both investigations have been declared major crimes with Operation Eden investigated by the Drug and Organised Crime Investigation branch and the murders investigated by Major Crime Investigation branch.

Operation Avatar is a model with the flexibility to utilise a range of resources at any given time that may include all local service area operational and investigational police with specialist support from the Drug and Organised Crime Investigation branch. This is seen to be a more effective and permanent strategy than the commitment of dedicated numbers of personnel at this point in time.

This strategy has been particularly effective in increasing contact between police investigators and the Outlaw motor cycle gangs in general, while reducing the number of conflict situations between the groups themselves and the consequent risk to the public. As a consequence, the number of police involved in Operation Avatar varies from day to day.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

Capital City Committee Adelaide—Report, 1998-99
Department of the Premier and Cabinet—Report, 1998-99

By the Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs
Commission—Report 1998-99

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Livestock—Exemptions
Primary Industry Funding Schemes—Sheep Industry
Veterinary Surgeons—Practice Fees

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

Adelaide Festival Centre Trust—Report, 1998-99
Art Gallery of South Australia Board—Report, 1998-99
Carrick Hill Trust—Report, 1998-99
Charitable and Social Welfare Fund—Report 1998-99
History Trust of South Australia—Report, 1998-99
Libraries Board of South Australia—Report, 1998-99
South Australian Film Corporation—Report, 1998-99
The State Opera of South Australia—Report, 1998-99
State Theatre Company—Report, 1998-99
Road Traffic Act—Regulations—Driving Hours
Crown Development Report—Cooling Units, Giles Street
Primary School

By the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training (Hon. M.R. Bucky)—

Regulations under the following Acts—
 Public Corporations—
 Health Development
 SA Co-ordinated Care Revocation
 Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South
 Australia—Subject Variations

By the Minister for Environment and Heritage (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—

Martindale Hall Conservation Trust—Report, 1998-99
 Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water
 Management Board—Report, 1998-99
 Pastoral Board—Report, 1998-99
 Patawalonga Catchment Water Management Board—
 Report, 1998-99
 Torrens Catchment Water Management Board—Report,
 1998-99
 South East Catchment Water Management Board—Report
 1998-99
 Wilderness Protection Act—Report 1998-99
 Water Resources Act—Regulations—Clare Valley
 State Water Plan 1995—Report on Progress, 1998-99

By the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—
 State Aboriginal Heritage Committee—Report, 1998-99

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. M.K. Brindal)—

Local Government Finance Authority of South Australia—
 Report, 1998-99
 Local Government Grants Commission South Australia—
 Report, 1998-99
 Local Government Superannuation Board—Report,
 1998-99

By the Minister for Industry and Trade (Hon. I.F. Evans)—

Legal Practitioners Conduct Board—Report, 1998-99
 Listening Devices Act 1972—Report, 1998-99
 SA Ambulance Service—Report, 1998-99
 South Australian Police—Statistical Review, 1998-99—
 Erratum
 Summary Offences Act—Road Block Establishment
 Authorisations—1 April—30 June 1999
 Summary Offences Act—Dangerous Area Declarations—
 1 April-30 June 1999
 Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians Act—
 Regulations—Exemptions

By the Minister for Year 2000 Compliance (Hon. W.A. Matthew)—

Year 2000 Processing, Progress of State Agencies in the
 Detection, Prevention and Remedy of Problems
 relating to—Second Report.

PARTNERS IN RAIL PROJECT

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I wish to advise the House today of the establishment of the Partners in Rail project to maximise the industry development opportunities for local industry associated with the construction and operation of the Adelaide-Darwin railway project. Under this project, a rail partnership group and a government rail project support team will be set up immediately. They will work with South Australian industry, regional communities and government agencies to ensure that local firms are positioned to take full advantage of the opportunities that the Adelaide-Darwin railway will bring.

The railway is, in the long term, an immensely important strategic project for the state which will open up opportunities of many sorts: as a major thoroughfare for the state's exports,

in establishing South Australia as the gateway to Asia, as an opportunity to exploit the huge potential of the mining development in the north of the state, and as a stimulus for tourism and other economic development for the regional communities along the rail corridor. The potential economic and community benefits of these opportunities are enormous.

Economic modelling done for the government recently indicated that the South Australian economy is likely to benefit from the project, in net terms excluding land bridging, in the order of \$250 million to \$600 million over a 25-year period. It is vital that we start planning now, especially for the benefit of regional communities, so that we are ready to go when the rail link is in place to take maximum advantage of these opportunities and to ensure that we move the actual return to the state to the upper end of the estimated potential benefits.

It is not just a matter of planning for the completion of the link. The railway will be an icon construction project for the new millennium, so it is also vital that we position ourselves quickly for the shorter-term opportunities that the construction phase will bring. When construction starts in May 2000, it will take two years, employing at peak capacity more than 7 000 people directly and indirectly.

The agreement with the preferred consortium, the Asia Pacific Transport Consortium, requires it to source 70 per cent of its goods and services from within South Australia and the Northern Territory. South Australia should be able to capitalise on a significant proportion of the local component, particularly through the supply of goods.

My government has fought long and hard to bring about the realisation of the Adelaide-Darwin rail link, a vision in this state for 100 years. Negotiations with the commonwealth over funding and with the consortia over their tenders were tough, but we won a major victory for South Australia. Now the government is determined to work equally hard to maximise the local content in the project and the economic development potential it brings for South Australia.

The Partners in Rail project will achieve this by working with local firms to position them for commercial opportunities that will flow from the construction and operation of the railway. There will be a need to communicate the opportunities to stakeholders and the wider community; build and maintain regional and industry confidence and support for the rail project; identify opportunities and facilitate industry uptake; build company capability and capacity to be competitive in obtaining work, through networking, enterprise improvement and skills development; and support investment attraction activity. This will involve, in both the construction and operational phases of the project, the government's playing a supporting and facilitative role with the private sector as the drivers. It will be achieved, as I have indicated, through the establishment of a rail partnership group and a rail project support team within government.

The rail partnership group will report directly to me and will have responsibility for overseeing the Partners in Rail project. Various stakeholders will be invited to participate in the group, representing state and local government, industry, regional groups—particularly in the Upper Spencer Gulf—and the community. The group will be chaired by an industry leader, and be jointly sponsored by the state government and the South Australian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Its first task will be to develop, and then implement, an industry participation plan which will include detailed initiatives to:

- identify local firms with the potential to participate in the rail project
- inform firms about the opportunities the construction and operation of the railway will bring
- channel efforts to build company capability, capacity and competitiveness
- inform and build confidence in the wider community, industry and regions about the project.

The rail partnership project will also be charged with regular liaison with the appropriate Northern Territory bodies, to facilitate good working relationships in delivering the joint task of maximising industry development opportunities for South Australian and Northern Territory companies.

In addition, within government, the rail project support team will be formed, as a dedicated group of senior officers, responsible to the Chief Executive of the Department of Industry and Trade. It will service the rail partnership group and assist in delivering its industry participation plan. In setting up this infrastructure to take advantage of opportunities flowing from the railway project, the government is not least mindful of how important these opportunities are for some areas of regional South Australia. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to say that the rail link will secure the future of the upper Spencer Gulf region. BHP in Whyalla, for example, is ideally placed to supply much of the 155 000 tonnes of steel required—the largest single order BHP will ever have received, and coming at the ideal time to enhance the performance of the long products division and ensure its future under new owners.

Port Augusta is strategically placed to play a pivotal role in the construction phase, and then to become a major distribution and transport hub for freight to the north, east and west of Australia, as well as a consolidation centre for freight destined for Asia. Both cities will be well placed to pick up business in maintenance and train crewing. And there will be many similar opportunities for the upper Spencer Gulf to reposition itself for investment and growth. So the government is ensuring that the rail partnership group and the rail project support team place particular emphasis on encouraging regional activity. They will be working closely with a series of reference groups, including reference groups specifically representing the regions, so that their perspectives are properly reflected in the development and implementation of the industry participation plan.

The upper Spencer Gulf common purpose group will be one of those reference groups. Another reference group will represent other regional areas of the state. Nominated mayors, council and Regional Development Board chief executives, and regional community leaders will also comprise this group. There will also be two other reference groups, one representing industry groups and associations, and the other representing government agencies. This initiative, the Partners in Rail project, will start immediately. Cabinet approved yesterday funding of \$1 million for the remainder of this financial year to launch and establish it. The Adelaide Darwin railway will be an Australian icon. It is a once in 100 years opportunity for South Australia. The government is proud that it has secured the project for the future of the state and all South Australians. But we will not rest on our laurels. We need now to ensure that we maximise the realisation of the potential benefits that the railway can bring to the state, to local industry and the community. The Partners in Rail initiative is a strategic approach to doing just that, and the government will be putting every effort into ensuring its success.

TAXI SURCHARGE

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): On behalf of the Minister for Transport in another place, I seek leave to table a ministerial statement concerning taxi surcharges for new year's eve.

Leave granted.

QUESTION TIME

PARTNERSHIPS 21

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Education. Why has the government now changed the figures given to schools to help them decide whether to go into Partnerships 21, and can the minister explain why the latest figures cut funding available to schools under the global budget formula by \$20 million? The opposition has a leaked copy of a government document—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I will just wait to see how leaked it is. The—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, that's right.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has leave.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I think he remembers the water documents. The opposition has a leaked copy of a government document dated October 1999 and called 'Global Budget 3 Final Draft', which details how the government has recalculated current running costs and global budgets for every school in South Australia. An analysis of these figures shows that figures given to schools in the second term have been changed and that the total amount which schools are entitled to receive under the latest formula, known as Global Budget 3, has been cut by \$20 million.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education): As I have reiterated in this House, Partnerships 21 is a policy of this government and one which will introduce a great deal more flexibility within our schools and which will deliver decision making to school communities rather than to the bureaucracy. Over the development of this policy, during normal consultation with schools and school councils in identifying how the global budgeting will work, we have identified areas where schools may have been worse off and, as a result, we have upgraded the budget. As the Leader of the Opposition said, supposedly he has draft 3, or whatever draft it is.

We have worked through this process to ensure that no school is worse off under Partnerships 21 than they are in the current situation and, in many cases (and I have seen the global budget figures), schools are a lot better off. I could quote to members a number of schools that are thousands of dollars better off. As I have said, I am not aware of any \$20 million cut because the department knows that the policy I have put down is that no school—and I repeat: no school—will be worse off under Partnerships 21 than they are—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—under the current situation, and I stand by that.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

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

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Hartley.

EDUCATION, HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Education detail how students will develop a greater understanding of history and government as we move to the centenary of Federation in 2001?

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I know that, when the honourable member was a teacher, he was involved in organising the government and society course in high schools. I commend the honourable member for developing that course while he was a teacher in our schools.

The centenary of Federation in the year 2001 is undoubtedly a milestone in all our lives. It will be a time when we all will be able to look back and see how our community has changed over that 100 years. People who were alive in 1901 and who are alive now will have seen enormous changes in terms of motor vehicles, aircraft travel and computerisation.

It is important that we pause at that time to look at and take stock of our communities and to look at the heritage and history of those communities and how they have shaped the state of South Australia and the country of Australia as we move into the centenary of Federation. In fact, anyone who questions why we teach civics and citizenship in our schools these days should really question themselves because it is an important part of our community. It is important for our young students to know the history and particularly the multicultural nature of our community. The commonwealth's Discovering Democracy materials are now in all schools; they were recently distributed. Newer materials will be coming out in April 2000. The program develops students' social and political understandings; it engages them in levels of skills of democratic discussions and also in the practice of democracy. It promotes democratic values and models which are socially just and also looks at relevant communities.

A number of projects are being undertaken by schools within our community, a few of which I will list for the knowledge of the House: the young citizens celebrating the centenary of foundation project; the Belair school's federation wall hanging and re-enactment of significant events of the 20th century; Woodville Special School's computerised pictorial history of significant sites in the Woodville area since Federation; Tanunda Primary School's creation of two windows that will celebrate past and present in local cultures; and Urrbrae Agricultural High School's involvement in the preparation of a history of agriculture in the state and its impact on approaches to agricultural education in our secondary schools.

I also know that the Hamley Bridge Primary School is looking at producing a book on the history of Hamley Bridge. Not only will these particular programs have schools acting in a way which gives them greater knowledge of the history of their local community but they also celebrate the centenary of federation. It raises their awareness. There are programs and seminars that teachers can undertake to bring that history into the classroom to ensure that all students have a very good feel for their local community, for the state of South Australia and for what federation means to this state and to this country.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training explain why school global budgets under Partnerships 21 before his so-called top up will be less than current funding in 17 out of 21 electorates held by Labor whilst seats such as Kavel, Finniss, Flinders, Goyder, Heysen, Schubert, Chaffey, MacKillop, Gordon and others each will receive substantial increases in their total school funding? An analysis of the figures leaked for Partnerships 21 school budgets shows that school funding under the new global budget formula will fall in 17 of the 21 seats held by Labor. This will require schools to rely on top up funding of \$10 million to maintain parity with this year's funding alone. By comparison, our analysis shows that schools in Kavel will share an extra \$388 000 under the formula; Finniss, \$765 000; Flinders, \$2.7 million; Goyder, \$713 000; Heysen, \$540 000; Schubert, \$776 000; Chaffey, \$1.1 million; MacKillop, \$1.1 million; and Gordon, \$820 000.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I thank the honourable member for his question, but I did not catch Light's figures! Partnerships 21 is undoubtedly a significant reform in education in South Australia. It is an occasion on which schools for the first time in their history will actually see their complete budget. For instance, previously schools had no idea what was being spent on telephone, electricity or water in their own school. They will now know and will be able to react accordingly as to whether they decide to change their practices or exactly what they do.

I would have to look back in a document and check the accuracy of what the Leader of the Opposition has said. In the 'Country Calling' program operated by my department, a number of factors came out of some 52 meetings that were held when officers met with country people right around the state and looked at the needs for education in the country and the sorts of issues involved. Country areas program (CAP) funding was a fairly hot issue in the country and one which the new index or global budgeting seeks to address. As I have said before, no school will be worse off, and many schools in both the metropolitan and country areas will be significantly better off under this policy.

MATURE AGE UNEMPLOYED

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Can the Minister for Employment describe to the House what the government is doing to assist mature age unemployed people in obtaining employment?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Employment): I would rather be remembered as a pirate than a clown. The South Australian economy has been highly dependent in the past on tariff protected manufacturing industries, as this House knows, and that has provided a large portion of the state's employment. This House also knows that the Premier and his government have worked assiduously to maintain protection for local jobs and for South Australians. But there is a myth of full-time employment that dates from the post war. Even when many of us grew up, the myth of full-time employment was part of a social contract that saw women upon marriage often excluded quite deliberately from the

work force. We now have a different climate in which there is a different employment base and in which different cohorts of people, quite rightly, seek to be employed. Because of this, there is structural unemployment and a relatively high concentration in the traditional manufacturing industries of persons over 45 who were particularly vulnerable to long-term unemployment.

Mature age people, as this House knows, face significant disadvantage in the labour market and are particularly vulnerable to becoming long-term unemployed once they are unemployed. Issues facing mature age people include a skills mismatch, whereby they do not possess the skills that are in demand; the length of unemployment—and in 1975 the Senate inquiry into long-term unemployment heard that time can work against the mature age job seeker and it is essential for them to find their first job within the first six months of unemployment; employer attitudes—studies are increasingly finding that employers are often reluctant to hire older workers; and also mature age expectations; older workers' understandings of the labour market; and the expectations of the opportunities that can arise as a barrier to re-entering the work force.

So, mature age unemployment is clearly a complex issue that requires a shared approach by government and the community to solve—again a matter in which the Premier and this government have been showing a strong degree of leadership. A variety of responses are needed to deal with the complex and often multiple needs of the mature age unemployed. The government strategy therefore is multifaceted, and it is a benchmark in this country to combat the nature of mature age unemployment through a variety of approaches. Federal Minister Abbott acknowledges South Australia's lead in this area.

The strategy currently includes a \$2 000 financial incentive package for employers to take up unemployed persons over the age of 40; and the mature age employer incentive scheme which is to encourage employers to take on eligible mature age people and those who have been recently retrenched. There are also mature age skills training grants which address the issue of the need for reskilling, providing grants to the value of \$500 to manage mature age unemployed people for the purpose of retraining. There is also a mature age labour forum which is aimed to inform mature age job seekers about the current labour market environment and of employer expectations.

The first of these series of forums will be held on 25 November 1999, and the forums will be held throughout South Australia until July 2000. Apart from all these initiatives, the government continues to support—as did the previous Labor government—DOME, which is a specialist, not for profit community organisation whose main aim is to provide job placement, training and support to unemployed people over 40 years of age.

While not diminishing the problems of the mature aged unemployed, nor offsetting the problems of the mature unemployed against the equally profound problems of the youthful unemployed, the government is working on both fronts. Most importantly, this government is seeking to create a climate in which employers can see a need to employ and can see a profit in employing so that, at the end of the day, South Australians, whether they are over 40 or under 20, have an opportunity to pursue a career, a lifestyle and choice such as will make them happy and profitable contributors not only to the South Australia we all know but also to the Australia of which we are all part.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Does the Minister for Education believe that schools in the Premier's electorate are disadvantaged compared with schools in the northern suburbs, and can the minister explain the different outcomes under Partnerships 21 for schools in Kavel compared with schools in the Salisbury Labor electorate of Taylor—my electorate?

An analysis of the government's final draft for budgets under Partnerships 21 shows that in the Premier's electorate 16 out of 17 schools will get more money and share a net additional amount of \$388 000. In Taylor, only two out of 11 schools would be better off for a net loss of entitlement in the electorate under the new formula of \$350 000. Nine out of the 11 schools in Taylor will have to rely on top-up funding to maintain even current funding levels.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I think the member for Taylor at the end has indicated the important part of this, that is, that no school will be worse off. We are not cutting funding to these schools. The member for Taylor has to be aware that there are different configurations within the schools as to how they are made up and then as to how that formula then turns out. As I said in the answer to the previous question, there were issues in the consultation of the country which we undertook and which saw particular issues come up that we have addressed. As I have said previously, I will look into the figures that the member has presented to check their authenticity, but I repeat that no school will be worse off.

INFORMATION ECONOMY

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Bragg): Can the Minister for Government Enterprises advise the House of the growing importance to all Australians, and consequently to governments, of the expanding information economy?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): As the information economy expands in Australia, it is an opportunity for us to overcome the tyranny of distance which has affected, and indeed afflicted, our industry for so long because, with the information economy, the distance that one needs to worry about is the distance between the end of one's finger and the 'enter' button. If indeed the question had been asked of me a couple of months ago, I would have said that, quite frankly, there was a growing awareness among Australian governments of the importance of the information economy—but now I am not so sure.

In Victoria, it seems as though one door closes and another door closes. Today the Victorian Minister for State and Economic Development is quoted in the *Age* as saying that he wants to 'bring together all of the elements that drive economic growth in Victoria.' That is noble and it is lofty, but it is rhetoric and it is rubbish. He has taken on the responsibility for IT and communications but he has not taken on a whole lot of other portfolios. If he is going to drive the information economy in Victoria, which is important for all Australians, why has he not taken that specific portfolio of multimedia, IT or information economy? It appears that the new Labor government in Victoria regards the information economy as only speculative and not an established industry because it is saying clearly that it does not warrant specific representation in cabinet, yet it is the driver of the biggest

economic and social change that we have seen for 100 years. With the—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member for Hart indicates that we have a special Minister for Industry and Trade. That is absolutely correct. We also have a special minister—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Hart for the second time and make the comment that he has had a fair go today.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Not only do we have a Minister for Industry and Trade but also we have a Minister for Information Economy, indicating that this government focuses on the importance of this industry in the future for South Australia. Participants in the information economy in Victoria must be quite perturbed about their future environment. How will they do business in Victoria, given that responsibility has been palmed off? How can the information economy expect leadership in Victoria? I think it cannot, but opportunity knocks for South Australia.

If Victoria fails to acknowledge the importance of the information economy, the area of greatest growth in the world, the area that is driving the growth of the major economy in the world today, the United States, that is fabulous for South Australia. As the Premier told the House only a couple of weeks ago, we are taking advantage of the void that is appearing in Victoria because we are advertising aggressively in the *Melbourne Age*, encouraging small and smart information economy businesses to come to South Australia, where the vibrant air of the information economy is supported. The ads have highlighted not only government initiatives such as Pathway SA, Networks for You, Talking Point, and so on, but also the initiatives of the Adelaide City Council, including the Smart Building program, the City Vital Fund and a number of other joint efforts such as the Playford Centre, Ngapartji Multi Media Centre, University of Adelaide scholarships, and so on, all of which give a very solid foundation for the information economy in South Australia.

Pleasingly, I am able to report that a steady flow of inquiries has been received by the Information Economy Policy Office and we expect more to follow from Victoria as the small and smart companies realise that their government is downgrading the importance of the information economy. We are seeing that as an opportunity in South Australia. In particular response to the member for Bragg's question, I advise that, unfortunately, the stark fact is that, despite all the protestations to the contrary, in Victoria the information economy is at best an add-on and at worst an afterthought. That is not the case in South Australia.

The narrowness of vision of the ALP, not only in Victoria but also in South Australia, hampers its depth perception. As I know the Minister for Local Government would say, one gets depth perception when one has two eyes to see. The narrowness of vision of the ALP both here and in Victoria in the information economy arena is such that, like true flat earthers, they are actually in danger of falling off the edge.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): Can the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training explain the different outcomes under Partnerships 21 for schools in the electorate of Finniss compared with southern suburbs schools

in the Labor electorate of Reynell? An analysis of the government's final draft for global budgets under Partnerships 21 shows that, in Finniss, held by the Minister for Human Services, 13 out of 14 schools receive more money and share a net additional sum of \$765 000 under the new global budget formula. In Reynell, only four out of 13 schools would be better off, given a net loss of entitlement under the new formula in the electorate of \$378 000. The remaining nine schools in Reynell will have to rely on top up funding to maintain current funding levels.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I bring to the member for Reynell's attention the fact that the growth rate in the Finniss electorate is some seven times that of the southern suburbs. Only last week, on Thursday, I was in that area opening up a middle school. Victor Harbor Primary School has far too many transportables, and we have to consider that matter as well in terms of the number of people moving into that electorate. In the member's electorate, the opposite is the case, because I have had schools approach me asking to close, because of—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It is quite right. The member for Mitchell laughs, but last year Morphett Vale South School approached me and asked to close, because parents saw better educational opportunities for their children by attending a larger school. I commend the parents for that decision, because it is not an easy one. The point is that the parents there recognise the changing demography of the area: the school numbers are gradually falling; they have decided to take the decision that is in the best interests of their children, and I commend them for it. It is a very gutsy decision. There is a difference between the two examples the member has outlined. As I have said—and I will continue to say it, regardless of the number of examples that are brought up—I will have to check the authenticity of the document in question and report to the member on that.

YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Will the Minister for Year 2000 Compliance advise how the state is progressing in its work to achieve compliance and indicate what particular work has been undertaken in preparation for a successful transition night in the year 2000?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Year 2000 Compliance): I thank the member for Waite for his question and for his ongoing interest in this matter. The second quarterly report that I tabled in Parliament today will add considerably to the already growing community confidence about the state of preparedness that has been achieved. When I tabled the first quarterly report in August this year, I advised the parliament that, as at 30 June 1999, government had achieved 90 per cent preparedness. In the report I have tabled today, I have been able to advise the House that, as at 30 September 1999, the government has achieved 98 per cent preparedness in its critical systems, and that includes 84 per cent preparedness of contingency planning. It is important to include the contingency planning aspect as part of our compliance because, in ensuring that no risks are taken, we as a government have also put in place contingency plans in the event that something unexpected is certainly not unplanned for. I am confident today that, as a result of the preparedness I have indicated in the report to the parliament and the work undertaken since that time, all government

agencies, all critical systems and all essential services will achieve business as normal.

From my first report members would be aware that government is being divided into 44 distinct reporting areas, and there has been a special focus on essential services such as electricity, water, gas, sewerage, fuel, telecommunications, health services, transport and emergency services. Indeed, the state government's clear direction and strategic plan to undertake year 2000 compliance, particularly focusing on those essential areas, has now paid dividends. While it is the case that, indeed, seven of the 44 reporting units have yet to achieve 100 per cent compliance, the exceptions are being monitored and, in fact, they are being monitored down to the individual system level. I am very comfortable with the fact that the units concerned are simply awaiting componentry and other minor items and will be ready well and truly before the end of this year.

I can advise the House that, following regular briefings and meetings with the providers of the state's essential services, I am pleased that each essential service, without exception, is expected to provide a business as usual basis come the end of this year. That statement is not made lightly, because I have not simply been satisfied with the briefings and statements made by those essential service providers: I have required them to provide the government with details of the way in which they have undertaken the task, the work that has been completed and the contingency programs that are in place to transition them into the new year. I am also pleased with the progress that has been made by business and industry towards achieving compliance—and I have previously provided detailed information to the House regarding that aspect.

In relation to advising householders, as members are well aware, a brochure entitled 'Ready for 2000' is now being letterboxed across the state, in many cases with the assistance of individual members of parliament. I take this opportunity to thank members of parliament, be they Labor, Liberal or Independent, for their assistance in ensuring that this information is distributed to their constituents. That brochure is, in fact, the last stage of the householder education program to ensure that South Australians know of the state of preparedness and, indeed, know what minor things they need to undertake in their own household to ensure that they do not suffer any minor inconvenience.

While we are confident that there will not be any significant problems associated with the transition, in keeping with our no risk approach, a number of steps have been taken to ensure that any unexpected occurrences are not unplanned for. For that reason, it has been necessary for government to ensure that staffing plans are in place on 31 December. While most government agencies are viewing this transition process as being business as usual and are not placing an unnecessarily large number of staff on duty, or on call, needless to say, all agencies have taken some preparation measures, particularly those agencies which have a 24 hour responsibility and those which are responsible for essential services. I am confident, therefore, that all agencies will be staffed as necessary to face any eventuality.

Another important part of the transition process is obviously communications and, as the state's media outlets are well aware, preparations have been made and, indeed, measures put in place to ensure that members of the public can have timely and accurate information about the millennium transition made available to them to cover every eventuality. To achieve this, the government will have on

hand a small core of staff at the State Operations Centre to collect and disseminate any reports that might be received in relation to the year 2000 issue. The government web site that members are familiar with at www.y2k.sa.gov.au will be changed from its present informative site to one of hourly report updates, and that will continue into the night for as long as is necessary. It is my personal view that, as there will not be any issues of significance, that site will, in fact, simply be reporting that fact. We would expect information to remain on that site for about a week into the new year, after which time the site will be shut down.

In relation to the information hotline at 1800 11 2000 (again, with which members are familiar), that hotline will not be operational on new year's eve but will continue during weekday office hours until as late as the end of January in a slightly different role in that it will, essentially, be manned by Business and Consumer Affairs staff, who will provide information to South Australians who might have suffered minor inconvenience with household products and who might need information as to how they should discuss those problems with retailers to ensure that they get what they have paid for—a piece of equipment that continues to operate for a reasonable period of time, and clearly well into the new year. I am very confident that, in putting the report before the House today, South Australia is well prepared for the year 2000; that, in government system terms, it will be 100 per cent compliant by the end of the year; and that it will be very much business as usual.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. Given the minister's guarantee to this House on 20 October 1999 that no school will be worse off under Partnerships 21, will he also guarantee to continue 'top-up' funding for schools after the initial three year funding agreement and for all non-Partnerships 21 schools? The government's 'final draft' for funding under Partnerships 21 shows that 263 schools are entitled to less money under the new Partnerships 21 formula than they currently receive. These 263 schools will have to rely on top-up funding worth a total of \$26 million a year.

Schools are concerned that top-up funding is not an entitlement under the formula and that they have not been told whether it will be adjusted for factors such as inflation, wage increases and the GST. If top-up funding is cut or reduced schools say that they will be forced to increase school fees.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): For the three years of the agreement we have guaranteed top-up funding to schools opting into Partnerships 21. Obviously, after that time in budgetary terms, we would have to look at the situation. If I say that the situation will remain the same, after three years we could well be able to deliver more into education (I would hope) and that, as a result, schools could be better off. Those schools that do not opt into Partnerships 21 will continue to receive their normal budget allocation.

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: If they do not participate in Partnerships 21 the top-up does not apply to them: they continue to receive the same—

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The honourable member asked one question; she now wants to ask five. As I said, those schools that choose not to opt into Partnerships 21 (it is voluntary) will continue to operate under the same budget and conditions as they received this year and last year. Those schools that opt to participate in Partnerships 21 will be assured that the top-up is guaranteed for the three years of the policy.

BIKIE GANGS

Mr VENNING (Schubert): My question is directed to the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services. In relation to last week's police ministers' conference, will the minister outline what resolutions were agreed to with respect to dealing with outlaw motor cycle gangs?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): As some members would recall, I indicated to the House several months ago that I had contacted all police ministers around Australia to discuss in writing some of the national issues surrounding outlaw motor cycle gangs and, indeed, events and circumstances that have occurred in many states, including our own state, in recent times. As a result, it was agreed without exception that we should put this matter on the Australasian Police Ministers Council notice paper for discussion. I was delighted with the outcomes of this discussion. First and foremost, it was an opportunity for the first time for all Australasian police ministers to be briefed fully by the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence.

Whilst I am not in a position to go into the confidentiality of that particular briefing, it gave all ministers a comprehensive understanding of the complex and digress issues revolving around outlawed motorcycle gangs not only in Australia but internationally. As a result of the discussions I am pleased to announce that the APMC resolved to support South Australia's proposed application for the establishment of a broad based Panzer reference for South Australia. That is an important breakthrough when it comes to the issues involving outlawed motorcycle gangs in this state. In fact, the Panzer reference will be directed towards all criminal activity and violence within or between outlawed motorcycle gangs and/or their members and associates.

Also, it was agreed that the papers that South Australia put forward on this issue of outlawed motorcycle gangs be referred to the intergovernmental subcommittee of the National Crime Authority so that it can consider all the issues regarding legislation and assess whether or not there should be any—

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the cameraman of our rules on filming.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: —improvements to legislation that could assist police jurisdictions throughout Australia to work against this unacceptable criminal activity. Finally, I was delighted to see unanimous agreement on a further sharing of intelligence from state to state as well as working cooperatively with the National Crime Authority. This will greatly assist the fight against criminal activity and the violence which none of us are prepared to accept—activity which is un-Australian and which has been on the increase in certain states of Australia over the last couple of years.

STUDENTS, DISABLED

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. Is the government's plan to introduce a new disadvantage index to identify students with disabilities intended to make it more difficult for children to qualify for funding and so reduce the number of students receiving assistance? The opposition has a copy of a leaked minute from the chief executive officer of the education department advising principals that the former general manager of education for the Kennett government had been engaged to develop new eligibility criteria for children with disabilities. The opposition also has a leaked document which says that the criteria used in Victoria seem to be a more appropriate method of allocating funding in South Australia and will take account of new factors such as parents' occupation, education and family status rather than just income.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I am not quite sure whether the member for Taylor is referring to a report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Disabled Children which has revised the formula in terms of that—

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It is within our department?

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Thank you. I will check out the details of this for the honourable member. I am aware that the department has been looking at a range of issues existing throughout our schools, and I will seek those details for the member.

COONGIE LAKES

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. The Coongie Lakes wetlands were listed as being of international significance at the Ramsar convention in 1987. Will the minister outline what the government is doing to protect this particular area as well as protecting the interests of the pastoralists and the mining and tourist industries in that area? I understand that a draft report inviting comment has been prepared by the minister's department and has had some circulation in the area. Will the minister give a clear undertaking that those comments will be taken into account before any further restrictions or controls are placed on this area?

The SPEAKER: I call the Minister for Environment and Heritage.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I thank the member for his question. I think we are all well aware of the long representation of the people throughout that whole area of the state who certainly receive a very passionate hearing from the member for Stuart, and I respect his representation throughout the whole of that area for all the reasons that he has added to the explanation of his question.

I think all South Australians know that we live in a state with a number of unique ecological regions, including areas such as the Coorong, Kangaroo Island, Naracoorte caves, Flinders Ranges and certainly the Coongie Lakes wetlands. They are all part of the natural heritage that we hand down to our children, and our generation certainly will be judged by the condition in which we leave these unique and special

areas. The Coongie wetlands receives water from the Cooper Creek, and that forms a very complex mosaic of lakes, channels, deltas and interdune floodouts, and it also means that it provides a great variety of habitats. The biodiversity of that region is certainly outstanding for an arid area wetland.

Up to 205 different bird species utilise the Coongie wetlands, giving it potentially the biggest bird species diversity of any arid region in Australia. The area also supports some 350 plant species, including four that are listed as rare or endangered. It also includes some 12 native fish species, many of which are unique specifically to the Lake Eyre Basin. Not surprisingly, the Coongie wetlands are significant tourist attractions, and between 30 000 and 50 000 people visitor nights are spent on site per annum. This is an area that is also important, as we have heard the member for Stuart say, for its pastoral activities, and is estimated to support some 16 000 cattle, with an average annual \$2.8 million revenue and employs 20-odd people.

The wetlands are home to numerous Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage sites. The Aboriginal Heritage Register lists some 120 sites of Aboriginal significance within the Innamincka regional reserve, most of which are located at the lakes. The Cooper Creek was also—as I am sure members are aware—the resting place of both Burke and Wills on their ill-fated expedition to the Gulf of Carpentaria. The wetlands are also noteworthy for partly overlying the Cooper Basin, which is the most significant wholly onshore petroleum resource in Australia. In 1996, those petroleum resources resulted in more than 630 jobs and generated more than \$357 million.

The need to balance the future management and conservation of the wetlands between these competing interests is certainly paramount. I am delighted to advise the House that I will be releasing the draft management plan for the Coongie Lakes within the next fortnight in order to set a very clear direction for the management of what is a very precious natural asset. The plan will outline the vision for and commitment to the conservation of the Coongie Lakes Ramsar wetlands by incorporating world's best practice in integrated natural resource management. The draft management plan commits to five specific management principles, and they are:

- retaining a naturally flowing Cooper Creek;
- ensuring the wise use of wetlands, including reviewing the boundary of Coongie Lakes Ramsar site so that it does reflect the ecological and hydrological character of the site;
- conserving the biodiversity and heritage values of the area through the identification and management of any threats to those values;
- developing a better understanding of what is a wonderful natural region through research, monitoring and modelling; and
- working together to achieve all these outcomes.

The draft management plan has been put together through extensive consultation with the local community, including industry and interest groups. Some six working groups were established, representing conservation, water resources, Aboriginal, pastoral, tourism and petroleum and mineral interests. Each of those working groups prepared an issues paper that outlined that particular sector's visions, aims, values and issues, and from that came their recommendations for the future management of the area. Each of the issues papers was discussed at a workshop with all the stakeholders. This draft management plan will be open for further consultation until the end of February 2000, and I certainly invite all

interested members of the community to have further input into the finalisation of this very important plan.

The Coongie Lakes are, indeed, South Australia's oasis in the desert from a conservation and economic perspective, so it is up to us to conserve this unique area for future generations. I take this opportunity to reiterate on public record this government's commitment to working with all the stakeholders to find the best possible way of managing the Coongie wetlands for the future.

STUDENTS, DISABLED

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. Given the minister's statement to the House on 8 July 1999 that Partnerships 21 will improve support for disadvantaged children, can the minister explain proposals to cut in half the number of students with disabilities receiving assistance? The opposition has a leaked copy of a minute—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: You might think disadvantaged children are a laughing matter. The opposition has a copy of a minute from the Director of Equity Standards in the Education Department to the Director of Local School Management setting out plans to develop a new index of socioeconomic disadvantage modelled on the Kennett system in Victoria. The document states that from 2001 the plan is to reduce the number of students with disabilities from 6.9 per cent of students to 3 per cent of students.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): This is not a document that has come across my desk as yet. I can well imagine that much work is done—I know much work is done—within the department, but that does not mean to say that the work that is done is the final outcome.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: They might well be doing work, but you would well know that a range of opportunities—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader and the member for Mitchell will come to order.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—and a range of possibilities are put up to a minister and it is then a matter to decide on the options or priorities. So, if there is a 'disadvantage' paper coming to me, I will look at it to assess the impact—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the leader.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—of that. As I said earlier to the member for Taylor, I will seek information on that and see what has been suggested. As I said, it has not come across my desk as yet. So, I will ascertain what advice will be put to me.

What should be reiterated in all this today is the fact that it is not a matter of Labor versus Liberal seats: it is a matter of looking at the country in South Australia following those meetings about which I advised the House and which the House well knows have gone on over time to develop this policy. Members should reflect a little on issues that country schools face. Everywhere they go it is a matter of having to travel by bus or private car to get to either museums or art galleries to give their students access to these sorts of experiences. They often have to travel down the road a distance of some kilometres to get to a pool for swimming

lessons. As the member for Flinders would know, she has some 45 000 square kilometres in her electorate. I do not see the member for Giles complaining at the moment about extra funds that might be going into her electorate.

It is not a matter of Labor versus Liberal. It is a matter of looking at country schools and giving equitable distribution in terms of funding for those schools. The member has asked me about the disadvantaged in terms of an index, or whatever, which has been developed. I will seek that information for him.

SPENCER GULF PRAWN FISHERY

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Deputy Premier please explain what the government is doing to assist the Spencer Gulf prawn industry to access lucrative new export markets?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for Flinders for the question, and I am sure that the member for Goyder is also very interested in last week's announcement for the Spencer Gulf prawn industry. It is very much a forward looking group, very proactive with its product. It is an extremely well managed fishery.

The US market is one of the most lucrative markets for primary products. As we have seen in the past, it is often difficult to access—and we saw that with lamb earlier this year. But if one can get in there, the rewards are extremely rich—and we have seen what the US market has been able to do with our citrus industry; it has brought about a turnaround, so access to that market is very important. Last week there was good news for the Spencer Gulf prawn industry in that exports to the US will now be allowed. This is in response to a World Trade Organisation dispute case, and it certainly restores faith that sometimes the WTO rules work in our favour. Australia was one of a number of countries which opposed a US prohibition on prawn imports from countries which did not require the use of turtle exclusion devices on trawlers. Given there are no turtles in the Spencer Gulf fishery we felt that the prohibition was not justified and certainly not fair.

The Federal Government greatly assisted with international consultation in getting access opened up. The Federal minister, Mark Vaile, last week acknowledged the efforts of Australian Bight Fisheries and the South Australian government, and we thank him and his department for their assistance in making sure these rules were overturned. The Spencer Gulf fishery is actually the first fishery without turtle exclusion devices to be allowed in. The House can be assured that we will continue to work closely with the Federal Government and industry to create new export opportunities for excellent food products from South Australia, and that is well and truly in line with achieving the goals set through the Food for the Future plan.

POLICE, RESOURCES

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Can the Minister for Police explain an apparent disparity of resources which appears to be occurring in the neighbouring local service areas of Elizabeth and Holden Hill, and will he also advise whether he supports the use of volunteers to undertake policing duties?

On 20 October an article appeared in the *News Review* messenger about a projectile which smashed a bus window injuring a passenger while the bus was travelling through

Elizabeth. Despite no police patrol being available to attend, the local police superintendent was quoted as saying:

There are sufficient numbers to do the job. Extra resources would be wasteful.

However, on the same day an article appeared in the *Leader Messenger* calling for volunteers to assist with policing duties in the Holden Hill local service area, including undertaking the return of stolen property.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): I thank the honourable member for her question. Her interest seems to be more so in these matters than the shadow spokesperson's because she certainly asks more questions. I drove past the shadow spokesperson's office last night about 10 o'clock (as I often do on my way home) and it is the first time I have seen the lights on in your office at night, Pat. I do not know whether you have given up barbecues and lunches or whether you have gone back in the dark to work on how you will handle your faction meetings but—

The SPEAKER: Order! I bring the minister back to his reply.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, but it was nice to see lights on.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: Well, of course, the honourable member does not want to go on radio these days. In answer to the member for Wright's question, we are on a significant police recruiting program at the moment. As well as that, the Premier has announced a task force which is looking at all resource issues surrounding policing. I know that the opposition does not like that one little bit, but that is what is happening under this government.

With respect to volunteers in policing, surely the honourable member has been around this place long enough to know not to believe everything that is written in the papers. The honourable member is trying to beat up something that is simply not there. If the honourable member is about working against Neighbourhood Watch, Rural Watch, crime prevention and pro-active community based policing models, I suggest that she talk to all those diligent people in her electorate who are proud and committed to community policing, Neighbourhood Watch and Rural Watch. Let us knock the issue on the head once and for all about volunteer policing and the angle that the honourable member is trying to put forward.

The final point that she raised concerned what the superintendent had to say. I would believe the operational superintendent before I would believe an article in the *Messenger's Leader* newspaper.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Today we have uncovered the political fraud that this government has embarked upon for schools in this state. The government has come up with a formula to transfer millions of dollars from Labor electorates to Liberal electorates in this state. Why? Because of the Victorian election result, which has spooked this government into transferring \$10 million from Labor electorates into

schools in Liberal electorates. That is what has happened. In a few short months between the second and third versions of the Partnerships 21 global budgets, the government has downgraded—

Mr Williams: Not in Mackillop.

Ms WHITE: No, not in Mackillop, not in the Independent seats, not in the Liberal seats—only in the Labor seats. The Labor seats have taken this in the neck because the Liberal government is pork-barrelling Liberal seats. It is taking money from schools in needy areas to put into their own electorates. That is what this government is doing. In my own electorate nine out of 11 schools will need top-up funding just to maintain their current funding. In this last version, their global budgets have been downgraded by over \$700 000, while in the Premier's seat, all of his schools bar one—16 out of 17 schools—will do better under Partnerships 21. Their global budgets have been upgraded by \$239 000. Why is it that the Premier's schools are worth more than northern suburbs schools? One has to ask that question.

What did the minister say today about the schools that do not go into Partnerships 21? He said that they will not get top-up funding, so all those schools in Labor electorates that are doing worse under the global budgets of Partnerships 21 will not get the top-up funding. That is not all: this government is also attacking disadvantaged students and disabled students. It will not cut the funding overtly, but it intends to cut the amount of disability from 6.9 per cent to 3 per cent. That is what the government will do, and its own documents say so. The minister can say that he has not seen them, but the heads of his department have put in writing their plans to do just that. He cannot walk away from that very real attack on the most disadvantaged students in this state. That is absolutely disgusting.

In the latest round of global budgets that have just been released, 17 out of the 21 Labor electorates have done worse. In the most needy areas—in the northern suburbs, in the southern suburbs and in the western suburbs—the schools have done worse under this government. To pay for what? For some pork-barrelling in the Liberal electorates. Why has this new formula come about only after the Victorian state election result? The government is spooked by what has happened in Victoria and is ripping funds out of areas where they are needed to pork-barrel its own electorates. It is absolutely disgusting and this Labor opposition will have much more to say about what this government is doing to students in needy schools and to disadvantaged students. We will not stop here.

The minister cannot hide behind statements that he does not know what is going on. Of course he knows what is going on, because he gets information on a per-electorate basis. If he does not know what is going on, who the hell is running the Education Department in this state?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Stuart.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): It will be very interesting when the minister comes back with a response to the attack with a feather that has been made on him today. The honourable member has taken to the minister with a feather. This minister is most effective in ensuring that there is fairness and justice throughout the education system. He is an excellent minister, well versed in the subject, and I would rely on the minister, not on a set of concocted figures. We are all aware that Janet Giles has been in the building today, and

the honourable member is relying on Janet Giles. We all know how ill-informed, how politically biased and inaccurate that spokesperson is. We are looking forward to the minister's coming back in here and giving an unbiased, factual account in answering the nonsense put forward. Under this minister, schools are receiving a fair deal.

When the House was sitting on the last occasion, I spoke briefly about the excellent opening of the Pichi Richi rail extension and the member for Giles made an interjection indicating that people on the train could have been blotto. I make clear to the honourable member that that might be how she and her colleagues carry on, but everyone I saw on the train and the large number of people in Quorn were all enjoying themselves and no-one was blotto. I only half heard the interjection and made the mistake of responding to it, which anyone knows is unwise, and I did not get a chance to correct *Hansard*. I make clear to the honourable member that no-one was affected in that way.

The third matter that I refer to today is the excellent decision taken by the South Australian, Northern Territory and commonwealth governments to put into effect a project that has taken far too long, that is, the construction of a rail line from Alice Springs to Darwin. I well recall attending the first phase of the construction at Tarcoola, opened by then Prime Minister Whitlam many years ago, when with great gusto and fanfare the rail line was commenced and all sorts of promises were made. I also attended the opening in Alice Springs and I recall the rudeness that was displayed to me as the local state member, who had cooperated with the then government in facilitating legislation through this parliament. Every Labor hanger-on around Australia was there and they all got a mention but I, representing the opposition of the day, did not get a mention. I know who was responsible. This project will be of great benefit to my electorate and that of the member for Giles.

The courageous course of action taken by all will bring long-term benefits to this state and nation. Just after the announcement, I very disappointed to read a strong criticism published in the editorial of the *Weekend Australian*. It is obvious that eastern Australia will oppose this project to the bitter end. That editorial was not only negative but also unnecessary. It was certainly inaccurate, and it did not display the impartiality or commonsense that one would expect a national daily newspaper to display. It was in very poor taste, against the interests of the nation as a whole and based purely on a small amount of interest expressed by people in New South Wales who really have lost the plot. In view of what has taken place to our north in East Timor, one should have thought that even those people who concocted the editorial would understand that it is necessary to move large quantities of material and supplies efficiently and quickly to Darwin. However, that seems to have escaped them.

Time expired.

Ms RANKINE (Wright): For two years, I have been arguing that this government's supposed vision for the future of policing in South Australia would have a negative impact. In my local area, we have seen the Para Hills patrol base close down and our Tea Tree Gully patrol base move to the Para Hills premises. However, that has all but disappeared now in the bowels of the Holden Hill patrol base. We have seen the numbers of police in Salisbury significantly reduced and the Salisbury patrol base downgraded, with the removal of its inspector and a senior sergeant taking his place. We

have seen the morale go down in our police force. However, most significantly, we have seen crime rise.

For two years, I have been arguing that this would happen. It has taken two years for the government to recognise it and this long for our current hapless minister to acknowledge that there might be problems within the police force. I venture to say that he probably needs a brick to hit him in the head to realise what is going on.

Earlier today, I referred to an incident that was reported in the both the *Leader Messenger* and the *News Review Messenger*. The article that was reported in the latter involved a woman who was injured as a result of a projectile being thrown through a bus window while it was travelling through Elizabeth. No patrol attended. Ambulance services arrived to treat the woman but no patrols were available. Yet we had the local superintendent saying that any more resources would be wasteful and that we had to have a balance between too few police and too many. He went on to say:

The reality is we will never have enough police numbers and neither should we.

Clearly, the government's backflip had not reached Elizabeth at the time that Superintendent Clark was making those statements. However, I know that the people in Salisbury and Elizabeth do not agree with him. They want better police services, and they want patrol cars to attend when something like that occurs. However, on the same page was a photograph of a police patrol car with a bent coat hanger acting as a temporary aerial. This is how good the resources are in our South Australian police force!

In the other Messenger on the same day, it was reported that they were looking for volunteers to come and help with police duties. I will quote from the article so that the minister has this absolutely on record. It is not from me, and it is not from the Messenger reporter. It states:

Meanwhile, Holden Hill police are looking for people willing to volunteer their time to perform 'minor policing duties'. The volunteers would update the web page, return stolen property, contact victims of crime and carry out research. They would have their own office with telephone and internet access. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the Holden Hill community liaison office. . .

Then the telephone number is quoted. There has been no retraction of that, so I would like to know whether or not the minister supports that concept. If he does, there is a matter for real concern. There is obviously a place for community participation in our police force and in crime fighting. However, it is not in an active policing role. The involvement of people in returning stolen property raises a number of questions, including security of both the property and the people attending. It raises issues about situations in which people may find themselves: they may find themselves in totally inappropriate and dangerous situations. Crime rates are now soaring, the number of break and enters are up, car thefts are escalating but, surprisingly, in the annual report there are no details, as has always been the case, of localised crime rates. So that is an issue that I will be pursuing.

There is a role for community participation, and there is a responsibility. However, the government has to stop trying to put more and more of the burden on the community when it is lessening police resources. In Tea Tree Gully, for example, two years down the track, we still have no undertaking from this government about when and where it will provide us with a patrol base. The argument from the minister has always been that we need a suitable location. I have written to the minister, advised him of a perfect location of

government owned land and, after weeks and weeks, I have had absolutely no response.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I would like to make a brief reference to the referendum. It is now time for emotions to cool somewhat and for the community to engage in a rational, ongoing discussion about where we go from here. I commend the Premier for taking a stand. Naturally a lot of people had a different viewpoint from the yes case which he supported. It is appropriate and desirable that leaders state a position, and I commend him for that. Sadly, the no case was characterised by a lot of false claims and scaremongering and, ironically—by inference, at least—they supported a republic model, because they suggested that this model was not the one to support; therefore, one could reasonably conclude that they believed a different model would be appropriate.

I hope that, within the Liberal Party and without, no attempt is made to gag people from discussing and progressing this issue. That is unproductive, and in the long-term does not help anyone. The argument that we cannot deal with several issues at once is a nonsense. An adult community can deal with a whole range of issues, and we still need to address the one of Australia becoming a republic. There is a way of avoiding the United States style republic. I was interested to hear the Leader of the Opposition advocating a model. That is one suggestion. Indeed, I had come up with something somewhat similar, although, building on the model that was offered on the weekend, it would be possible to offer the community a choice of selecting one out of 10 names put forward. These could be voted on at alternate federal elections so that no significant cost is involved, and the president could serve a six year term. In that way, the public would have a choice out of that list of 10 candidates, and we could build on the model on which we voted on the weekend. By building on that, we can get the best of both worlds, avoid the US-style republic model but still have a system which suits Australia and which fits in with the Westminster tradition. It is important that we get it right rather than get a model simply on the basis of its being early.

I conclude by noting that I thought the distribution of how-to-vote cards at the referendum was an example—if we ever needed one—of the silliness of that practice. The sooner we get rid of having a system that not only permits but also encourages how-to-vote cards—and, in this case, telling people whether they vote yes or no—the better. It is time for us as a nation to move to get rid of how-to-vote cards at polling booths in terms of the externality of the polling booths and to have the cards displayed inside.

I wish to raise an important local issue. It has come to my attention that graveyards do not have any protection under current legislation where the lease on a burial plot has expired. This has arisen in relation to a historic church and graveyard at Coromandel Valley. It used to be the Uniting Church and prior to that it was the Wesleyan Church, and something like 30 pioneers are buried there. The property recently has been acquired by a private developer, who can now bulldoze and build on those graveyards without any legal restriction whatsoever. I think it is an issue that needs to be addressed, because the relatives of those people are concerned about what can happen there. I am pleased that the Minister for Local Government is going to look at this issue with a view to trying to redress something that is very distressing. We may not be able to do anything in relation to the particular situation at Coromandel Valley but, with respect to burial sites throughout the state, we might be able

to ensure in the future a degree of consideration for the relatives of people who are buried in such graveyards. It is an important issue that is arousing a lot of emotion, understandably, in the local area.

I conclude by suggesting that the police minister address the issue of the 11 444 number and introduce a three digit number, such as 999, for police attendance, because I think the present 11 444 is prone to complication and in an emergency people get the digits confused.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Last week, the Hon. Paul Holloway (the shadow Minister for Primary Industries) and I visited the Riverland. During our visit to the Riverland we met not only with representatives from the local hospital and the Riverland Regional Health Service but also with the representatives of the Citrus Growers of South Australia committee and representatives of Riversun Export. Following that meeting, I have written today to the federal Leader of the Opposition, Kim Beazley, and to the Prime Minister, John Howard, appealing for their support to deal with a potent threat to South Australia's citrus industry.

The simple truth is that there has been a phenomenal success with citrus exports during the last eight years or so, particularly to the United States. Indeed, in 1992, 127 000 cartons of citrus exports—largely oranges—were exported to the United States, and that has grown to 1.66 million cartons in 1999. Of course, the success of these exports has been essential to both the survival and, indeed, the revival of the citrus industry in the Riverland in South Australia, along with the Sunraysia and Riverina areas. As a result, I think about 25 000 tonnes of citrus fruits were exported to the United States this year and that would be earning about \$60 million. Indeed, I am told that such is the success of the industry we are likely to see premium sized navel oranges retailing in some US department stores, or supermarkets, for up to \$A2 per piece of fruit. So, it is vitally important that we do what we can in the policy sense, particularly dealing with our federal colleagues of both parties, to ensure that the current policy settings remain in place.

However, there is a threat to the industry. It is my understanding that legislation is before, or will soon come before, federal parliament to facilitate the merger of the Australian Horticultural Corporation and the Horticultural Research and Development Corporation. I understand that a committee is currently examining the implications of this merger in relation to national competition policy and that the legislative basis for the current single importer arrangements, which have served the industry so well over the past decade, may be changed. There are obviously many advantages for the industry which growers fear will be lost should the single importer arrangements be abandoned—in particular, the controls over quality and deliverability, which the single importer arrangements permit and which have been essential to the success of the marketing push, will almost certainly be lost.

For the benefit of those members who are not on top of this issue, at the moment Riversun is responsible for arranging the shipping program, including ordering and timing of charter vessels to ensure that the marketing and shipping programs go hand in hand. The coordination of transport and delivery of fruit to ships in Port Adelaide is another Riversun responsibility. Delivery schedules are developed so that fruit from different packing houses arrive in a particular time slot for loading or pre-loading cool temperature treatment.

Riversun has an operations manager in the United States who works with DNE, which is the single importer in the management of the US program, and there has been a big change there. Originally we were exporting to the east coast of the United States—to Wilmington near Philadelphia—through the Panama Canal. However, in an effort to save 10 days in shipment time (which is an important shelf life issue), the oranges are now shipped directly to San Diego, in southern California, from Port Adelaide. So, after 10 years of hard work in negotiating agreements and overcoming quarantine and other export-import issues, we now see a real threat to our citrus export industry, particularly oranges from the Riverland. I think it is important that the government joins me in contacting its federal counterparts, as I am, in order to press the issue home that we need a single desk, single importer arrangements, and let us not throw the baby out with the bath water once again by putting up with deregulation that damages South Australia's industries.

Time expired.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): There always tends to be a plethora of activities occurring in my electorate, and this last weekend was no exception. I had the pleasure of attending quite a few of the events, including the Copper Coast Family Fishing Competition, the Moonta Antiques and Collectables Festival and a special ceremony at Bublacowie, with the Bublacowie Military Museum.

I highlight first the situation as it applies to the Copper Coast Family Fishing Competition. This is the third year that it has been held. It is based out of Wallaroo, but people who are entering the competition can go within a reasonable distance from Wallaroo—as far south as Port Hughes (in fact, I am not certain how far north they are able to go). I would like to formally pay a compliment to all those who were involved in the organisation of the fishing competition. It seems that for each of the three years the weather has not been ideal in the lead up to the weekend, or on the weekend. This year was no exception, because members may recall that on the Friday a significant amount of rain fell, certainly on Yorke Peninsula. However, thankfully, the weather at Wallaroo fined up very significantly on the Saturday and it also was A1 on the Sunday. As a result, in excess of 600 people entered the fishing competition.

The prizes that were awarded were very significant. In that respect, we must thank the sponsors which have now, year after year, provided magnificent prizes. This year, the first prize was donated by Yamaha Pitman Marine. It put together a four horsepower outboard Yamaha engine on the stern of a 3.5 metre Fishnipper aluminium boat, with all safety equipment. This prize alone was valued in excess of \$3 000. In fact, literally thousands of dollars of prizes were available to people from this state (and interstate, or wherever) who wanted to enter the fishing competition. I spoke to many of the sponsors over the weekend and all of them said that they cannot wait until next year's fishing competition, and they will certainly be providing sponsorship. After speaking to some of the organisers, I gained the impression that sponsorship will be even greater next year. So, I would urge people at the beginning of November to take advantage of one of the best fishing competitions in Australia and be in it to win it if they are keen fishermen.

I pay tribute to all the organisers of the event and, in particular, Mr Darryl Stringer, President of the Copper Coast Fishing Competition, and the secretary, Brian Wheadon, who did a lot of work behind the scenes. To go beyond that I could

get into trouble because so many other people volunteered their time and labour to ensure that the weekend was a success. I had the pleasure at the weekend of opening the Moonta Antiques and Collectibles Festival which, interestingly, is also in its third year and is going from strength to strength. This festival featured crafts, dolls, bears and other local collections.

The festival was held in a variety of locations at Moonta, the largest number of traders being located in the school gymnasium. Certainly when I was present (about 1½ hours) a great number of people went through the gymnasium. I heard that those involved were all very happy with the festival and were looking forward to its returning next year; and likewise in terms of people located at other venues who either displayed their wares or provided people with the opportunity to buy. One artist exhibiting over the weekend was Mr Bob Landt from Maitland whose paintings are something to be seen. I wish that time allowed me to highlight more aspects of the festival but I will try to do that on another occasion.

Time expired.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (COMPETITION) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Government Business Enterprises (Competition) Act 1996. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: 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.

A review of the Government of South Australia's *Competitive Neutrality Policy Statement, 1996* conducted by a Key Agency Working Group was recently completed. As a result of experience and this review, it is clear that a number of refinements and revisions to the *Government Business Enterprises (Competition) Act 1996* are necessary.

Following successful passage through Parliament of the proposed amendments to the Act it is intended to publish a new South Australian Competitive Neutrality Policy Statement, to replace the existing Policy Statement. Publication of the new Statement is to be timed with the legislative amendments coming into operation.

The Bill and the new Policy Statement are designed to achieve two things. Firstly, to provide additional clarification on the application of competitive neutrality to significant government business activities, and secondly, to refine the complaints mechanism and process as a result of experience.

The Act came into operation in August 1996 and provides *inter alia* for a formal competitive neutrality complaints mechanism. Since that time eight formal complaints have been received, six of which have been assigned to the Competition Commissioner for investigation.

Clarification and further definition is provided in this Bill concerning the meaning of 'government agency', 'local government agency' and 'confidential information'.

The Bill seeks to make explicit that competitive neutrality applies to local government agencies, as well as State government agencies which are subject to control and direction by a Minister. The Government considers this necessary to make certain that entities, over which it has neither the power to control or direct, such as the Adelaide and Monarto zoos, the State's Universities and the Ngapartji Multi Media Centre are not unintentionally captured under clause 3 of the *Competition Principles Agreement 1995*.

Presently, both proclamations under the Act, the SA Government

Competitive Neutrality Policy Statement, and the Clause 7 Statement on the Application of Competition Principles to Local Government, co-exist. The Clause 7 Statement is presently being reviewed by a Joint State and Local Government Working Group and it intended that there be consistency between the two statements.

Provision for proclamation by the Governor of competitive neutrality principles has been removed and replaced with reference to policies published by the Minister from time to time. Proclamations made to date largely duplicate parts of the existing two Policy Statements. This duplication is considered unhelpful and potentially confusing to end users. The proposed amendments to the Act and the revised Policy Statements will encompass any matter peculiar to the existing proclamations as appropriate.

As mentioned, the Bill also seeks to refine the complaints mechanism and processes. An amendment is proposed to make explicit that a complaint will not be assigned to the Competition Commissioner for investigation unless it is clear that the matter cannot be resolved between the complainant and the government or local government agency involved, or where there has been a previous investigation by the Commissioner, and the government or local government business activity was found to be complying with competitive neutrality principles, and its circumstances have not changed.

The Bill seeks amendment to the Commissioner's reporting requirements to elucidate the information to be included in reports as well as requiring a summary which is suitable to be made publicly available.

Finally, an amendment to the confidentiality provisions will ensure that confidential information obtained as part of an investigation, including an investigation by the government or local government agency, is not disclosed or used, except as authorised, for any purpose unrelated to the making or resolution of the complaint.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

It is proposed to insert a definition of "confidential information" in the Act. The definition of "government agency" is to be revamped and a definition of "local government agency" included.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 16—Principles of competitive neutrality

Various amendments are proposed to section 16 of the Act. The principles of competitive neutrality will now be identified in policies published by the Minister from time to time for the purposes of Part 4 of the Act.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 18—Assignment of Commissioner

It is proposed to amend section 18 of the Act so as to provide that the Minister will not assign a complaint to a Commissioner unless the Minister is satisfied that the matter has already been investigated by the relevant agency. The Minister will also be able to refuse to assign a complaint if the matter has previously been investigated by a Commissioner and a finding made that the relevant business activities of the agency comply with the principles of competitive neutrality.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 19—Investigation of complaint by Commissioner

A Commissioner will now prepare a summary of the contents of a report, which will be available for public inspection.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 20—Confidentiality

A complainant will not be able to release confidential information obtained through the provision of a report of an investigation except in accordance with proposed new section 20(2).

The Hon. M.D. RANN secured the adjournment of the debate.

OFFICE FOR THE AGEING (ADVISORY BOARD) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): 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 purpose of this Bill is to extend the membership of the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing to provide for increased representation and expertise on ageing, health and associated issues.

The Government currently receives advice from a number of different advisory bodies concerning ageing issues. These include the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing (MAB), the Older Persons Health Council (established by the Ministers of Health and Ageing in 1996) and a sub-committee of the Council, the Continuity of Care, Casemix and Older Persons Advisory Committee (established by the Ministers of Health and Ageing in June 1995 and initiated through SA Health Commission and the Commissioner for the Ageing).

There is overlap between the functions of the three groups and the Government believes that it would be better served by broadening the membership of the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing. This would allow for the provision of integrated advice across the ageing area whilst ensuring that human service and health issues are appropriately represented.

The terms of reference for the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing are to:

- provide policy advice to the Minister for the Ageing on matters relating to the health and well-being of older South Australians;
- bring to the Minister's attention policy, research, planning and service issues which affect older people;
- monitor and advise on the impact of Government policy on older people;
- conduct consultations and hold forums on issues of importance to older people as required.

The creation of the Department of Human Services has brought together health, public housing, aged care and community services. This integration does provide an opportunity to consolidate the functions of the Ministerial Advisory Board, the Older Persons Health Council and the Continuity of Care, Casemix and Older Persons Advisory Committee.

In order to ensure that there are sufficient members to adequately represent the wide areas covered by the Ministerial Advisory Board, it is proposed to expand the membership of the Ministerial Advisory Board.

The formation of a single advisory structure through the expansion of the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing will ensure that there is a focus for ageing issues through one Minister in relation to health, housing, community care and other areas of concern to older people.

Under the amendments, the Ministerial Advisory Board on Ageing is proposed to consist of:

- the Director of the Office for the Ageing (as an ex-officio member), and
- not less than six and no more than ten (previously three and six respectively), other persons with relevant expertise.

They also prescribe that at least three of the Board be women and three men.

As a result of a further amendment in the other place, the maximum aggregate period for which persons may hold office on the Board is increased from four to six years.

I commend this Bill to honourable members.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 8—Advisory Board

The size of the Advisory Board on Ageing is increased from a minimum of four and maximum of seven to a minimum of seven and a maximum of eleven. A consequential increase is made in the minimum number of Board members who must be women and the number who must be men. The maximum aggregate period for which persons may hold office on the Board is increased from four to six years.

Mr HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

HERITAGE (DELEGATION BY MINISTER) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 28 October. Page 335.)

Mr HILL (Kaurua): I advise that the opposition will be supporting this legislation which, as I understand it, was made necessary because the delegations the minister had previously passed on to various members of her department were found by the Environment, Resources and Development Court to be non-existent. It has therefore been necessary to correct what hitherto everyone thought had been in place. I understand that for some months the minister has been onerously signing all the individual delegations: that is causing her some distress and she needs some relief from that problem.

The minister's original bill was sent to me some months ago and, having looked at it, I had some concerns because I felt that the delegation provided in it was an absolute one and that the minister, under that original bill, could have delegated her authority to make decisions about heritage matters (in terms of development) to anyone in the state; presumably that included builders, clerks from local councils and her personal assistant—just about anyone she wanted. No safety mechanisms were included to ensure that those delegations were operating correctly and transparently.

I referred copies of the bill to the Conservation Council and the National Trust. I was most surprised that neither of those bodies had seen the draft bill until I had forwarded it to them. They very kindly considered the matter and suggested to me some amendments relating to limiting the class of persons to whom the delegation could be made and also to conflicts of interest, as well as issues of transparency, and I will go through each of those shortly. Having received that advice, I asked Parliamentary Counsel to prepare some amendments, which they did. I then forwarded those amendments to the minister for her consideration.

I am very pleased to report that the minister did consider the amendments and has accepted the majority of them; as a result, I believe the bill is significantly strengthened. I suppose that some people would think that it does not really matter: the minister will always do the right thing and will always delegate to classes of people who will do the job properly, as I suppose most ministers would. However, when we make laws we should ensure that they cover the field and take into account someone who might have Russ Hinze's kind of orientation in terms of development. We must also ensure that the public is protected at all times in all circumstances.

I shall refer to the three areas that we sought to amend: first, to try to limit in some way the class of people to whom the delegation could be passed on. I wanted to make sure that those who have authority passed on to them had some knowledge in the area of heritage. Normally I gather it would be members of what was known as the heritage branch, or Heritage South Australia now, or officers jointly employed on a contract basis by local councils and government—in most cases they were architects. The parliamentary draftspeople formulated an amendment which tried to make that clear.

Unfortunately, I understand from the minister that the form of words 'a heritage adviser accredited in accordance with the regulations' was not acceptable because there are no regulations, no definition of 'heritage advisers' and it would have been meant going through a reasonably complex process to establish that. I accept that, and I will not pursue that amendment.

The other amendments which the minister accepted related to conflicts of interest. It is important that that be specified.

If a heritage adviser, or anyone for that matter, under this act who has authority delegated to them is in a conflict of interest situation they should make that plain. I gather from talking to those in the National Trust that relatively few persons could actually have this power delegated to them and who would have the appropriate skills and knowledge to exercise it. There is a relatively small club in South Australia where everyone knows everyone, and there could be the perception that favours were being done for mates unless this provision was included.

The bill ensures that the delegation is in writing and that there needs to be a register where all the delegations are kept so that any member of the public during normal office hours and without a fee can inspect that register. That is a sensible provision: it means that anyone who has any doubts or suspicions can check out those suspicions. With those few words, the opposition supports the bill. I congratulate the minister on picking up these suggestions that were made through me by the National Trust and the Conservation Council of South Australia.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I put on the public record my appreciation of the contribution of the member for Kurna and that of his party, and its support of this bill. It is important to make sure that all legislation which we deal with in this House and which then becomes law is as good as we can get it. Very often, that can be difficult when we are dealing with words that sometimes require definitions. The more definitive we make them can actually restrict certain powers or in fact take us to areas where we did not really intend to go in the first place. The member for Kurna has understood this with one of the aspects that was sought to be amended in the first instance in relation to this bill.

Generally, this is purely an administrative bill. There are no direct state development, social or environmental impacts that result from this proposal. However, I am very happy to accept the member's contribution in terms of the amendments that support and clarify different areas of the bill, because it does mean that the administrative processes will be clear and streamlined. Certainly, with the moving of this amendment (and the second reading explanation will suffice), the present delays that could occur through not having this power of delegation to development applications will not now occur. I thank the honourable member and members for their contributions.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): Notwithstanding the sincerity with which the measure comes before the parliament and with which the minister acts and speaks in addressing it, as it comes out of the second reading debate, having not been in committee, I validly observe that this is one of the pieces of legislation which will pave the way for the abolition of the federation in that it delegates the authority to act to—

Mr Hill interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: That is not in the least far-fetched. It delegates to the Public Service the authority to act.

Mr Hill interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I point out to the member for Kurna that it is not at all a long bow to draw. Legislation of this kind

enables ministers of a state—this state in particular—to resign without there being any disruption to the administrative process, and enables then a transfer of powers to the federal minister, and the delegated authority made by the federal minister under federal legislation would take over.

Frankly, I am disturbed by the extent to which we are constantly being driven in policy decision making either by delegated authority to public servants—and one has to go back to when a minister says, 'That was done by the senior bureaucrat and I cannot change that,' and read the legislation to discover whether in fact the minister has the power and the law to override—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member is now starting to stray from the bill before us. I ask him to return specifically to the delegations as they apply in this bill.

Mr LEWIS: You have to discover whether the legislation, as this bill does have, provides that power such as is therefore contained in clause 3, which seeks to insert proposed new section 41A. That is the way this Bill has come to us after the second reading. The minister does have the power to revoke it at will. There have been other instances—not this instance—where it already exists and where the bureaucracy can act with a delegated power. In the past, I have spoken to ministers about such actions and they have said, 'It is not my decision.' In fact, when I checked the legislation I found that they did have the power to revoke or override the authority. That is my worry: there is less accountability in the parliament, more partisanship in the debates and less concern for the rights and interests of a citizen who perhaps does not belong to the Chamber of Commerce or, more particularly, to a union affiliated with the ACTU or the Trades and Labor Council.

If it is not seen as something which will create a local stir but something which is relevant only in the context of the wider community, those people in a class in that wider community who are small in number but important in the context of the economy and the society will be disadvantaged administratively by this sort of approach. It is in that vein that I raise my voice in expressing my concern about the direction in which we are going by conferring this delegated authority to the bureaucracy. I express it on those two points.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (MAGISTRATES COURT APPEALS) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 26 October. Page 252.)

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): When the Magistrates Court Act was enacted in 1991, because of the relative seriousness of minor indictable offences, it was considered that appeals should be as of right directly to the Full Court of the Supreme Court when an accused person wished to challenge an adverse judgment in the Magistrates Court. Some might think this was an unusual departure from earlier practice where there was a clear distinction between summary offences which went before a single judge and the treatment of felony offences on the other hand.

With the creation of minor indictable offences, it was considered appropriate to have a kind of halfway house whereby appeals from the Magistrates Court would go directly to the Full Court unless there was an election for the appeal to go before a single judge, but even then the single judge of the Supreme Court could refer the matter to the Full

Court presumably if it was considered of sufficient seriousness or complexity. Section 42 of the Magistrates Court Act actually provides for rehearing and admission of fresh evidence in relation to the matter which was the subject of the conviction in the Magistrates Court, and it really is an anomaly in our courts system for the Full Court to be hearing evidence first hand, as it were, rather than reviewing the decisions of either a fellow judge of the Supreme Court or one of the judicial officers in a court below.

I trust that the minister handling the bill in this House has sufficiently researched the matter to be able to tell us roughly on how many occasions appeals have been taken as of right to the Full Court on these minor indictable offences as an indication of the problems with work load that these kinds of appeals have caused. Whatever the answer is, it can readily be appreciated that if these Magistrate Court appeals in respect of minor indictable matters go directly to single judges of the Supreme Court, then obviously there will be less workload in that court, and with judicial resources stretched as they are that can only be a good thing.

If there are savings to be made, it would be my hope that perhaps some contribution could be made through the appropriate budget line to reduce the cost of obtaining transcript for accused people and plaintiffs and defendants in civil cases as well, because that is one of the greatest areas of injustice. At the moment it is probably a more severe problem than the sheer matter of workload and the delays consequent upon a heavy workload for the courts. Having said that, I am glad, along with my colleagues, to support the bill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): I thank members for their contributions. In answer to the member for Mitchell's question, the advice to me is that, while there is no formal record, the court experience is less than 1 per cent.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Now that we are getting into the specifics of the bill rather than our general interest in judicial administration for which both the minister and I are renown, I certainly believe that the bill will ensure that an appellant in a minor indictable criminal matter can only appeal to a single judge of the Supreme Court rather than having the choice of going to a single judge or to the Full Court. As most appellants appear to have chosen to elect to appeal to a single judge, this amendment may make little change to practice. However, the change will bring these provisions in line with what is available in summary criminal matters. Certainly I note that a single judge upon receiving an appeal has the discretion to refer the matter to the Full Supreme Court—and that is how it should be.

I also want to place on record how well served we are by the new Chief Magistrate, Alan Moss, who is showing great leadership in the area of advancing the magistracy which, of course, is a very important part of our judicial system. We are very pleased to support the bill.

Bill read a third time and passed.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION (AUXILIARY APPOINTMENTS AND POWERS) (DEFINITION OF JUDICIAL OFFICE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 26 October. Page 251.)

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): This is obviously an area of keen interest and something which the opposition believes is overdue. In fact, it surprises me that changes to the legislation were not made some years ago. There is no doubt whatsoever that we have been particularly well served as a state, not only by judges who currently hold the position of judge but also by auxiliary judges who are appointed to fill vacancies before other appointments are made, or to fill positions when someone is on long-term leave, or to fill vacancies when someone is ill, or to fill positions when there has been a short-term increase in the workload of a court and the workload, of course, has been lagging behind the number of cases involved.

As I mentioned before in my broad overview, a number of very distinguished jurists in South Australia have from time to time, following their retirement, served our state eminently by filling these gaps and performing this important role in the courts. So, it seems very logical to extend this provision to the Environment, Resources and Development Court. Rather than going to the committee stage, I would hope that the minister (because I know he would be on top of his brief) in the third reading stage could assure the House that he has checked that no other judicial types of position are not defined under the act, as it would be useful to ensure that the provision to allow for auxiliary appointments applies across the board to other courts and judicial administrative areas. I am very pleased to support the bill.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Members know that I have been keen to get to this bill and make my contribution. The principal act was introduced in 1988 to allow for the employment of casual judges. In the same way that businesses require casual staff when they want to produce an extra amount or they are particularly busy in a heavy sales period and have a need to employ extra staff on a casual basis, so it is with the courts. At least, that is the principle that was put in place in 1988, supposedly to meet short-term demands in terms of additional court workload. The system does seem to have worked well over the past decade, but some cautionary notes were sounded at the time that the bill was introduced and, although the opposition has no difficulty at all in supporting this bill and extending the capacity of making auxiliary appointments to the ERD Court, it is worth repeating some points that were made then. The fact is that there is some scope for abuse of the principal act in terms of short-term judicial appointments and the subjects of those appointments being conscious of the fact that they may or may not be appointed again, depending on how they perform, not so much in terms of their competence in the position but in terms of to what extent their judgments please the government of the day.

Generally speaking, that has not been a problem at all in the past decade, but I say again that it is worth keeping that in mind when appointments are made under this legislation. We need to be vigilant about that. In that regard, there is a clear distinction to be made in practice (even though it is not made in the statute) between the appointment of retired judges and the appointment, on the other hand, of practicion-

ers for short periods as judicial officers. Where barristers in practice, for example, in their 40s or 50s might be appointed as judicial officers for a short time, conceivably they would have more to lose should they be found to have made judgments unfavourable to the government of the day in terms of their future practice or their prospects for permanent, that is tenured, judicial appointment. There is no suggestion that this difficulty has arisen over the past 10 years.

In concluding his contribution to the matter, the minister in this place might just confirm that there have been few, if any, appointments of practising barristers to these positions of judicial office. Generally speaking, to my knowledge, the appointments have been of retired judges, or in some cases it has involved the appointment of a judge in one court to, if you like, a secondment to another court, and there can be no difficulty with that. Having sounded that cautionary note, I see no other great problems with the bill, and I trust that Attorneys-General in the future will maintain the standards of integrity practised by both Labor and Liberal Attorneys-General over the past decade.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): I thank the leader and the member for Mitchell for their enthusiastic contributions to the debate. In relation to the member for Mitchell's last point about practising barristers, I am advised that the practice has always been to draw from those who have retired. In relation to the leader's point about auxiliary appointments to other offices, I advise that the principal act already permits auxiliary appointments to the office of judge of the Supreme Court, District Court, Industrial Court, Licensing Court and Children's Court, and master (and deputy master) of the Supreme Court and District Court, and this bill simply adds the office of commissioner of the ERD Court. The government is not aware of the need to refer to any other offices in the principal act at this time but will consider the issue if and when it arises.

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

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Industry and Trade): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): It is not with much joy that I rise to address the House this afternoon because I point out that we must now declare war on branched broomrape. South Australia knows that it has become host to a pest that is probably the most serious threat to this country's economy than any other pest produced this century. It is more serious than European carp in our southern rivers and it has the same potential order of devastation as rabbits and prickly pear, both introduced last century. It is much more serious, too, than water hyacinth or talapia. It will probably be worse than foot and mouth disease unless we stop it and eradicate it now.

Branched broomrape or *Orobanche ramosa*, which is its botanical name, has been termed the ultimate weed. There are other species of orobanche and they originate mainly from Europe. We in Australia are said to have one native plant of the orobanche family which is a parasite of native daisy bushes. No crop of economic consequence is known to be a host to *Orobanche cernua*, or variety australiana.

The orobanche species that we have, *Orobanche ramosa* or branched broomrape, has been in farmland areas south of

the River Murray between Bow Hill and Mannum for at least eight years. It has spread out from there, despite our attempts to contain it. Primary Industries SA has learned a great deal about this pest plant since its discovery in 1992. It is sufficient to say that we know now that we cannot pursue it using a low-cost strategy of containment. It is my personal and very strong opinion that we must now adopt draconian quarantine of the entire area affected by it (and that would be several tens of square kilometres) and properly, fairly and fully compensate the farmers for the loss of production income that they will suffer as a consequence of this quarantine process. I do not mean that they need to be fully compensated for the entire gross income from their farms but, rather, for the income they would otherwise have derived, net of costs of production, so that they can indeed cop the consequences of being completely quarantined.

This species is not easily discovered because it grows entirely below the surface of the soil for six to seven weeks after germinating. It lives on its host plants. It germinates in August; and then, after living on its host plants, when it is strong enough and ready in late spring, that is, in October, it pushes its flowering stem, with no leaves, up into the atmosphere; and it blooms, is pollinated and dries off in a matter of two or three weeks. Each plant produces around 500 000 or more seeds. It germinates only if it has been in moist soil for a week or more and if the moisture surrounding the seed contains one of a number of enzymes which are given off by the root hairs of the host plant, which it parasitises. It must find that trigger enzyme in the soil moisture in which the seed has been immersed or moistened for about a week. Then it will germinate.

The tiny seeds, about 600 to 800 of them in each capsule the size of a grain of rice, look like fine ground pepper, and they will germinate in soil up to 15 centimetres (that is, six inches) or more deep below the surface. It likes low alkaline, low nitrogen soils that can easily warm to around 18° to 23° Celsius, which is the optimum for germination, in the August period after there are plenty of suitable host plant roots on which it could live. The seeds live in the soil for 10 years or more until exactly the right conditions for their particular germination occur. The plant reproduces only sexually, that is, it is not reproduced vegetatively: it relies on its seeds. It is spread by adhesion to cultivation implements, other seed crop seeds, and by adhering to the coats and feet or in the droppings of animals. It is palatable to grazing animals, not only farm animals but also rabbits and kangaroos. It could spread by wind and floodwater, as well as on the tyres of vehicles—whether encased in mud or dung or in some other way; it does not matter.

It will not only adversely affect all broad leaf crops which we grow but will also destroy our international markets in some measure for our cereals and the like, because we will be seen by our customer countries to be selling grain which is at risk of being contaminated with the seeds of orobanche *ramosa* (branched broomrape). Branched broomrape parasitises tomatoes, tobacco, egg plant, canola and hemp. Indeed, it probably came into Australia in the seeds of marijuana that were illicitly imported and grown in the vicinity in which it was first discovered. Its other host plants include lettuces and the total crucifer range, such as mustard, turnips and so on. Other hosts are sunflowers, onions, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and all the braccias, all cucurberts, that is, melons and cucumbers, including wild melons and the like, and all the vegies such as faba beans, chickpeas, clovers in pasture, lentils, peas and the like, as well as root crops such

as carrots, celery and parsnip. It includes sunflower, safflower and lupins—that is, all plants in families of but not exclusively limited to leguminosae and solanaceae.

If we do not act now and act decisively, and with fairness to those whose property and lives we are affecting, the result to the Australian economy through lost production and lost markets will be of the order of billions of dollars a year as it spreads out and literally rapes the farmlands in the subtropical, temperate and cool temperate southern part of our continent and Tasmania. I believe that we need to be prepared to allocate tens of millions of dollars to this program and eradicate it now, rather than otherwise spending that same amount of money at the present time on some capital works programs which can wait. We do not really need some of these icon buildings immediately.

When judged against the potential income they could generate as we bring tourists here to enjoy, say, what can be offered in a convention centre or a wine centre in the conferences that would be attended and the meals that were bought in, perhaps, promoting our clean, green environment, free of disease and pests, that will be more than offset by the amount of loss in income we will otherwise suffer to our gross domestic product from the loss in export markets and from the loss of yields of all the vegetable crops I have listed, many of which we already export, anyway, and most of which we seek to export in the future if we are not exporting them now. That will be denied to us if we fail to act.

This one cannot wait. We should act responsibly as a government. We must act decisively and, most importantly of all, we must act now. I am pleased that the government has called a public meeting at Burdett tonight to let all the locals in my electorate and in the member for Schubert's electorate know of the gravity of the situation in surrounding districts. I make it plain, though, that only programs which save life itself are, in my opinion, more important in priority for public expenditure than this program. Dalliance on our part this spring now and failure to address the problem and quarantine those farms and come up with suitable programs by which we can manage the land and in time return it to farming would be ridiculous and stupid. We need to do it and do it now. If we do not have the will, we will end up with a bigger mess than prickly pear was in Queensland last century. Millions of acres of land were lost to prickly pear until cactoblastis was introduced. However, there is no predator for this one.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Earlier this afternoon, I highlighted some of the activities that were occurring in my electorate—in particular over the last weekend—but time did not allow me to complete all my comments. I mentioned about the Copper Coast Family Fishing Competition and its excellent patronage and sponsorship. I thanked all those involved in it and indicated that next year should be even bigger and better. I also had got onto the third Moonta Antiques and Collectables Festival which I had the privilege of opening. It was very well supported, and it included a variety of displays of crafts, dolls, bears and other local collections. I want to pay tribute to the people who organised this event. It is an initiative of the Moonta Apex Club and also the Moonta Business and Tourism Association. The Moonta Apex Club is currently chaired by Mr Ian Crispe, and to Ian and the members of the club I express a sincere thank you for all the work they did this year to ensure its success and, likewise, to the Moonta Business and Tourism Association which is chaired by Mr Trevor Kiest. As President of the

traders, I want to thank Mr Kiest very sincerely. It is great that this is a combined, unified operation.

Yorke Peninsula is becoming used to being the festival part of South Australia, because we seem to be holding more and more activities. People would be very familiar with the Kernewek Lowender (better known as the Cornish festival), and I have highlighted aspects of that on previous occasions in this House. We are continually having different festivals take place. I also mentioned in my earlier address today the Bublacowie Military Museum. For those who do not know where Bublacowie is, it is situated approximately halfway between Minlaton and Yorketown on Yorke Peninsula. The military museum is sited at the old Bublacowie school, and it is a private enterprise initiative. In fact, close to one year ago, Mr Chris Soar and his wife Enid opened up the museum, and it was opened by Senator Alan Ferguson. On last Sunday, a special Bublacowie Remembers service was held. It was held not only to coincide in close proximity to Remembrance Day this coming Thursday but also to commemorate the handing over of the ashes of some six world war one persons. Those ashes had apparently been in storage for up to 40 years, and some of them are unknown persons who served in the war. During the ceremony it was pointed out that the ashes of one of those persons has now been traced to a person who served not only in world war one but in world war two, and more information is being gained on other persons.

Additionally, the federal member for Wakefield and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Neil Andrew, who was present, handed over a cheque for \$8 000 for further extensions to the military museum. I know that Mr and Mrs Soar were very grateful for that, because so far the money for the museum has been virtually all their own money. It is a museum that contains a huge amount of military memorabilia and, given its contents, it is probably exclusive to South Australia, and by and large to Australia as a whole, because most memorabilia from previous wars is held by RSL organisations. Therefore, I am delighted that it is situated in my electorate on Yorke Peninsula, and it is a self-supporting venture.

I had the privilege of presenting a state flag to Bublacowie Military Museum. Therefore, that was flown alongside the Australian flag and, at the appropriate time, it was put at half mast. The importance of a military museum can be understood only when one visits such an institution, and I would hope that, if persons from around the state have military memorabilia, they may provide it to the Bublacowie museum so that it can be stored for all people to see in future years. I express a sincere thank you to Chris and Enid Soar for the work they are doing.

Another activity that occurred over the weekend, both on Saturday and Sunday, was the 130th jubilee of Kalori school. Kalori is a private Catholic school at Wallaroo, and it is now the longest running Sisters of St Joseph school in Australia and New Zealand, and that is quite something to celebrate. I was not able to go to some of the functions, but I was able to attend its fete on the Sunday morning. The weather was absolutely excellent in Wallaroo on Sunday morning.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: As it always is.

Mr MEIER: I would have to agree there because, whilst the weather was excellent at Wallaroo, when we went to Bublacowie, which as I have said is between Minlaton and Yorketown, unfortunately it was raining there. When we finally came back to Wallaroo for the presentation of prizes for the fishing competition, it was fine weather again. So we are somewhat privileged in that respect.

With respect to the Kalori school and the 130th jubilee, I want to extend a very sincere thank you to the principal, Sister Julianne Murphy, to the members of her staff and, equally, to all parents associated with the school. The parents arranged all the stalls; there was certainly a huge array of goods, and I trust that a significant amount of money was raised for the school. We are very privileged to have quite a few private schools throughout my electorate, as well as excellent public schools, which is an ideal situation when one is attempting to seek education for one's child.

I wish to highlight to the House that, this coming Sunday, Yorke Peninsula Bird Rescuers are holding a gala day at

Maitland, from where this organisation operates. Again, this is another voluntary organisation; it is a voluntary service. In fact, the Buffalo Lodge of Yorke Peninsula has made a significant contribution to a new bird treatment facility—better known as a hospital—and that will be opened on Sunday. I also say a very sincere thank you to the proprietors of the Yorke Peninsula Bird Rescuers, Marcia Kemp and Tony Sutcliffe. I visited the museum some time ago, and it is an A1 museum.

Motion carried.

At 4.52 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 10 November at 2 p.m.