

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 24 February 1994

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. Peter Dunn)** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

SEA-LAND (AUSTRALIA) TERMINALS PTY LTD

The **Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW (Minister for Transport)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW**: I wish to announce that the State Government has signed a 10-year contract with Sea-Land (Australia) Terminals Pty Ltd (SLAT) to manage the Adelaide Container Terminal. Sea-Land's parent company, Sea-Land Services Incorporated, is one of the world's largest container terminal and intermodal transport groups and has proven international expertise in container terminal management.

SLAT, in conjunction with the Marine and Harbors agency, will market the port of Adelaide internationally. Priority has been given to increasing the volume of container traffic throughput to a target of around 100 000 containers by 1996-97, as well as increasing the number of shipping services using the terminal. Sea-Land Terminals Pty Ltd took over the operation of the Adelaide Container Terminal on 5 January 1993 under an interim two-year agreement. From April, this company will provide all stevedoring services at the container terminal and will have direct responsibility for all container terminal equipment.

Through a profit sharing arrangement there is an incentive for both parties to cooperate in the development of the port of Adelaide. State Cabinet this week approved the purchase of two straddle carriers for the intermodal rail facility under construction at the Adelaide Container Terminal. These will greatly assist in making the port of Adelaide more responsive to the needs of shipping, rail and road transport.

The intermodal rail facility will generate additional income to the State by targeting extra volumes of cargo to and from the eastern seaboard. The agreement with Sea-Land (Australia) Terminals Pty Ltd will not only inject a level of international expertise into the South Australian economy but will also provide extra competition on the Australian waterfront. Extra shipping services at the port of Adelaide will improve South Australia's access to world trade markets and subsequently greatly improve this State's international competitiveness.

DETAFFE

The **Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Minister for Education and Children's Services)**: I seek leave to table a copy of a ministerial statement on new directions for the Department for Employment, Training and Further Education, made by the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education in another place today.

Leave granted.

QUESTION TIME

AYTON REPORT

The **Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Leader of the Opposition)**: My question is directed to the Attorney-General as follows. Given that on Tuesday of this week the Attorney-General said in answer to a question from me that he did not know the identity of the substantive source referred to by the Deputy Premier in another place in connection with the Ayton submission that had been provided to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the NCA and illegally released from it, my question is: has the Attorney-General been informed of the identity of any other source who provided the Ayton report to the Deputy Premier, to him and to the Premier?

The **Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN**: I am not sure what the former Attorney-General means by that. I certainly do not have any information about where it came from in respect of the Federal parliamentary committee.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The **Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN**: I do not know what you mean.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

The **Hon. BARBARA WIESE**: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the Jacobs report.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. BARBARA WIESE**: I have been informed that some media representatives have been given the opportunity to read the Jacobs report on matters relating to the Hindmarsh Island bridge. In view of that, will the Minister also enable the Opposition to have the opportunity to read the Jacobs report?

The **Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW**: Certainly, no authority has been given by me, nor as far as I am aware by any member of Cabinet, for any person to read that report other than those members of Cabinet. I will look into the matter further.

LIBERAL PARTY POLICY

The **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES**: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport, representing the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, a question about Liberal Party policy.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES**: The Liberal Party policy on national resources, environment and conservation gives an undertaking that the Liberal Government's first priority for the environment will be to pursue a State conservation strategy for the future development and conservation of South Australia's living resources. The policy gave an undertaking to establish a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament to develop this strategy based on evidence from the widest possible range of interests, including industry, commerce and conservation interests. Can the Minister say when he proposes that Parliament establish a joint committee of both Houses to take evidence and report on the State conservation strategy, and will the Minister release draft terms of reference for consideration of members of both Houses?

The **Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW**: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister in another place and bring back a reply.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the Hindmarsh Island bridge.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: 'The Hindmarsh Island project is a bridge that goes nowhere,' said the Hon. Diana Laidlaw in a media statement when shadow Minister of Transport in 1992. In the same media statement she said:

An incoming Liberal Government will support Berri as a priority site for the construction of a bridge across the River Murray.

She went on:

The Liberal Party considers the Government's commitment of \$3 million of taxpayers' funds on the Hindmarsh Island project to be a dubious, unsound investment.

The honourable member also confirmed:

Construction of the Hindmarsh Island bridge was not supported by the draft environmental impact statement, with other river crossings preferred on the basis of vehicle numbers and convenience.

In October last year, during the State election campaign, the then Opposition Leader, Dean Brown, spoke to a public meeting of more than 300 locals in Goolwa on the topic of the Hindmarsh Island bridge. I have a copy of the transcript of his speech, and within that speech he said:

We support the recommendations of the ERD (Environment, Resources and Development) Committee.

He also said:

The Liberal Party is very, very concerned about the environment of Hindmarsh Island and the sensitivity of that environment, and that concern exists whether or not a bridge is built, and we believe that inadequate attention has been paid to that sensitive environment.

I am a member of the ERD Committee, whose recommendations Dean Brown said he supported. Recommendation 1 of the committee in its report to this place was:

That a reassessment of the bridge project be instigated in the light of the preceding comments; and that this review should examine better access for the island and the marina development by augmenting the present ferry service with a second ferry.

It needs to be noted that, in that report, the preceding comments referred to in the recommendation were largely about environmental issues. The Premier said that he supported the recommendations.

My question to the Minister is: In the light of Dean Brown's publicly stated support for the ERD Committee's recommendations during the election campaign, which were clearly directed at environmental issues, why does the only study instigated by this Government into the bridge deal solely with the financial and legal aspects of the project and not conform in any way with the recommendations of the committee, which he said he supported?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: In Opposition, and during the election period, the Liberal Party made a commitment to review the contractual and funding arrangements in relation to the Hindmarsh Island bridge. This is what we have done immediately upon assuming Government, and I have given a ministerial statement in relation to that report. In terms of issues about the environment, in all correspondence that I have received and answered on this matter I have indicated that those matters were looked at closely by the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of this Parliament, and because of a number of—

The Hon. M.J. Elliott interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Yes, it recommended a reassessment, and that is what we are doing at the present

time. We are looking at other options, as recommended by Mr Jacobs, and one option is a bridge link at the site of the barrage. It is also quite clear, from the Hon. Ms Wiese's address to the Council the other day, in that it is her view and, I assume, that of her Party that the Government has no option but to go with the current bridge site. It is our view, as recommended by Mr Jacobs, that in the public interest we should be looking at alternative sites. However, what is quite clear from Mr Jacobs' report is that a bridge in some form, no matter what personal opinions people may have, is required. Otherwise, we face tremendous litigation potentially amounting to many millions of dollars, and that is a burden that the Government has decided taxpayers should not have to bear. There are many views about this bridge about which the honourable member will be aware there is much controversy.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: As a supplementary question, could the Minister tell the Council what significant new facts were brought to light by the inquiry of which the Government was not aware when Dean Brown made that statement at the public meeting in Goolwa during the election campaign?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I do not have the report with me, but there is—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You didn't have it last week, either.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will be heard in silence.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I did not see any need to have it and I do not have it with me. If I had it with me and was referring to it, members would ask me to table it, and that I am unable to do, as I have indicated in a ministerial statement and in answers to questions. I am not going to have that report open before me to quote chapter and verse to the honourable member or members opposite.

I outlined a number of factors in the ministerial statement. If the honourable member cared to read it, he would find that in terms of the contractual and funding arrangements we learnt about the liability that the Government would have if it did not proceed with a bridge in some form and it was, I would have thought, a liability of some \$12.5 million, plus continuing litigation over many years. That was a startling new revelation and it should be a most sobering fact for all members in this place.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services, representing the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, a question about administration at the University of South Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: A person living in Aberfoyle Park has raised the issue that she is now totally excluded from continuing her course of Bachelor of Arts in Library and Information Management even though she has completed two-thirds of her degree course. This person was ill during 1991, 1992 and 1993. The University of South Australia in 1991 and 1992 sent her forms to be completed to confirm her leave in those years. However, in 1993 no such form was sent. She assumed that the university authorities had continued her leave request. This year she re-enrolled to resume her BA course only to be told that she had been wiped out from the computer and she can no longer enrol and

therefore no longer continue her course. As the relevant Minister would have more authority than any other person, I ask him the following questions:

1. Will he ascertain from university authorities whether the situation is correct for student No. 864356T?

2. If this untenable situation is correct, will he investigate and rectify it?

3. How many others have been conveniently wiped out and excluded from continuing a course that is more than half completed?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will refer that question to the Minister and bring back a reply.

TOURISM, REGIONAL

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development a question about fast tracking of regional tourism developments.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I noted with some interest in this morning's *Advertiser* an article which reported upon the Regional Development Minister's opening address at the Jobs for the 90s Seminar in Unley yesterday. Much of what Mr Olsen said in relation to regional development was commonsense and I offer my full support to him in a bipartisan manner in assisting to develop South Australia's regional areas to their full capacity. However, one aspect of the report confused me. In the report Mr Olsen said that his Government wants 'South Australia to be a pace setter in Australia in recognising the importance of the regions.' As part of this recognition, Mr Olsen is quoted as saying that his Government would (and I quote directly from the article) 'fast track regional tourism development'.

Given the new Liberal Government's commitment to the fast tracking of regional tourism development, will the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development explain why he and his colleagues, including the Hons Mr Lucas, Ms Laidlaw and Mr Davis, spent so much time and energy white-anting each and every regional tourist development proposed in South Australia from 1982 to 1993, including the Wilpena tourist development, the Tandanya development on Kangaroo Island, the Hindmarsh Island marina development—

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS:—and the Hindmarsh Island bridge development, to name just a few. Does his statement mean that all these developments will now be fast tracked, if the developers still exist?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I think a number of my colleagues would be bemused at some of the claims made by the honourable member about attitudes of members on this side towards a number of those developments. If I may venture an opinion, it was a particularly sloppy piece of research by the honourable member in relation to the question he has put to the Minister. Nevertheless, even with that sloppy research, I am prepared to refer the question to the Minister and bring back a reply for him.

PELZ, MS WINNIE

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister for the Arts a question on the subject of conflict of interest.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Yesterday the Minister for the Arts indicated in answer to a question from me about the appointment of Ms Winnie Pelz as Chief Executive Officer of the Department for the Arts that, 'She is a friend of mine', when referring to Ms Pelz. Ms Pelz was appointed to the position without the usual open competition and advertising of the position. I might put on record that the honourable the Premier said during the election campaign that he set great store on ministerial propriety. In those circumstances, my question to the Minister is: in view of the guidelines relating to conflict of interest, did the Minister declare a conflict of interest, namely, a friendship with Ms Winnie Pelz, when this appointment was considered by the Cabinet and/or the Premier of this State?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I am not sure what the honourable member is trying to infer in terms of friendship, but there are very clear guidelines in terms of conflict of interest and family relations, and I have no such friendship that relates to family relations with Ms Winnie Pelz. It is a contract position which I was entitled—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW:—and which Cabinet considered—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Well, I do not think many people would go around appointing enemies to these positions, would they? No, that is right.

The Hon. Anne Levy interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: There is no conflict of interest and there is no such reference that I would have to acknowledge to Cabinet. Ms Winnie Pelz was well known to members of Cabinet. She is well respected. She has integrity. She is an excellent appointment. We are entitled, as the shadow Attorney knows, that in respect of executive positions it is a contract position.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: As a supplementary question, Mr President, is the Minister aware that the conflict of interest guidelines not only just refer to family relationships but also to friendships, and that the guidelines require a declaration of those friendships when matters relating to those friends are being considered by Cabinet?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The appointment was made by the Premier.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Mr President, as a further supplementary question—

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We were always ruled out when having two supplementary questions.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: No, you weren't.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Yes, we were.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Is the Minister telling the Council that she had no involvement in the recommendation of Ms Pelz to the Premier or Cabinet?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Of course I am not saying that. What I indicated is the appointment is made by the Premier. It was discussed in Cabinet. The fact that Ms Pelz is known to me, to members of Cabinet and is a friend but not a social friend is—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You did declare it?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I would have declared in terms of the fact that it was known to members of Cabinet, yes.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: So you did declare it?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Formally declared?

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Did you declare it in Cabinet?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: It was not a matter of my formally having to declare that in Cabinet.

BUSINESS INCENTIVES

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the Council a question about the South Australian Government business incentives, which he may have to refer to the Premier.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: In this month's *Employers' Chamber Business SA* there is an article relating to the new South Australian Government business incentives in the legal section of the periodical. The article encourages business people in South Australia to avail themselves of the incentives being offered. The article goes on to describe the WorkCover subsidy scheme, the export employment scheme, the payroll tax rebate scheme and the business development plans. It also lists other initiatives, such as traineeships and group training schemes, an employment broker scheme, young farmers' incentive program and corridors of green.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Sounds a pretty impressive line-up.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: It is certainly advertising within this article to try to get some interest. I am not quite sure what 'corridors of green' means. I think that could mean all things to all people. But it is hoped that the incentives will encourage business sectors within the State to avail themselves of it. My questions are:

1. What has been the inquiry level/take-up rate by South Australian business of all aspects of the business incentive scheme, as I have described?

2. What criteria are being set for prioritisation of applications?

3. What safeguards are being built into the system to prevent wastage and ensure that value for South Australian taxpayers' money is ensured?

4. What are the projections for full-time or part-time jobs emanating out of these incentives?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I thank the member for his question. It certainly sounds a very impressive line-up of incentives in an attempt to get the State economy going. I am delighted to see the support from the honourable member, in a bipartisan fashion, for the Government initiatives to get the State going again after some years of stagnation, as he would well realise. I would be very pleased to refer those questions to the Premier and the responsible Minister and bring back a reply.

EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services a question about employment.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL: We read quite regularly in the newspapers about people receiving their voluntary separation package (VSP) from State Government depart-

ments. Can the Leader tell us where he sees the growth areas for employment are in South Australia?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I would be happy to get some detailed response to that particular question from the responsible Minister (Hon. J.W. Olsen) and bring back a reply, but in broad terms I refer the honourable member to a number of the publicly announced policy documents released prior to the election. In particular I refer him to the refocusing of the MFP in relation to high technology, and also a number of statements that both the now Premier and the responsible Minister made in Opposition, talking about the need to get our existing industry and manufacturing base up and going again.

I know that that is an issue of concern to the Hon. Mr Weatherill and the Hon. Terry Roberts, because that was a matter that both members referred to in the past three or four years, in relation to ensuring that our existing manufacturing base and our existing industries in South Australia are not ignored in the pursuit, obviously, of new industry and, in particular, high technology industry. I guess I would need to also refer the question to the Minister for Tourism and a number of other Ministers, because clearly in the tourism industry and the related service industries there is great scope for growth in those particular industries. I will bring back a reply from the Premier and those responsible Ministers.

HEALTH INSURANCE

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport, representing the Minister for Health, a question with regard to private health cover.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER: In today's *Advertiser* it was announced that 280 000 Australians stopped taking out private health cover last year and that South Australia was leading the slide. Currently, only 34.8 per cent of the Australian population is covered by private health funds, and only 35.6 per cent of South Australians have private health cover. This means that almost 300 000 people at any time are eligible to stand on hospital waiting lists, and taxpayers will have to find more than \$2 billion over the next five years for public health services if the decline in private patient numbers is not reversed. Will the Minister liaise with his Federal counterpart to try to encourage an early solution to this problem, and will he bring back a report as to the severity, both in human and economic terms, of this potential catastrophe to this State?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister and bring back a reply.

LIBERAL PARTY IMAGE

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the Council, representing the Premier, a question about the image of the Liberals being promoted to university students on campus.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: This week each of the university campuses around Australia is conducting orientation week and, besides going to preparatory lectures and getting familiar with services such as the library, students are exposed to a number of organisations that they are enticed to

join. Tables are set up by a range of organisations, from sports clubs to death by chocolate clubs, from Christian clubs to clubs supporting the legalisation of marijuana. There are also tables promoting political Parties. Tables are set up with pamphlets and other paraphernalia in order to promote their organisations.

I was flabbergasted to learn that yesterday at Flinders University the Liberal Party was unashamedly providing badges to new members which read 'Rack Off Lefty Scum' and 'Socialism Sux'.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member has the right to ask her question.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: Moreover, there appeared to be nothing more of significance on the table than membership forms. The post war era in Australia has seen a widening of the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. It appears from these slogans that the Liberal Party's philosophy on the widening gap with the 'haves' and 'have nots' is one of disdain. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Was the handing out of the badges by the Young Liberals a policy approved by the executive of the Party? If so, what Liberal policy or policies do these slogans represent?

2. Is it that the Liberal Party is advocating no support from the State to members of the younger generation who are now attending university, despite facing unprecedented long periods of unemployment?

3. If I have misinterpreted the meaning of the slogan of these badges, what do they mean?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am not sure how the honourable member has interpreted those slogans, but I would have thought that they were probably self evident. In response to the detailed questions, I will have to make inquiries of the executive and the various bodies. In general terms I can say at this stage that the various Liberal associations or clubs on university campuses have no formal links, based on my understanding, with the Liberal Party of Australia, South Australian Division.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Obviously, they have links with the Liberal Party but, in the main, they have prided themselves on their semi-independence. While they follow Liberal philosophy, I understand (and, as I said, I will have to check this) that they have great pride in their independence or semi-independence and are not formally linked by way of the branch structure or anything like that with the Liberal Party of Australia, South Australian Division.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: Did the wets have a table there?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: At Flinders University or the University of Adelaide? I have not investigated that. As to the first question, it is my understanding that there would have been no approval process at all by the State executive of the Liberal Party of any material handed out by Liberal students at Flinders University because, as I said, there is no formal link with the Liberal Party of Australia, South Australian Division, and therefore there would be no need for approval processes through the State executive. I will make investigations on that issue and bring back a response.

In regard to the colloquial expressions that have been used, I am surprised that the Hon. Ms. Kanck is offended by that, if that is the import of her question.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I can understand the Hon. Mr. Roberts being offended by that, being a member of the left faction of the Labor Party—

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Terry Roberts. I do not want to pass an injurious reflection on the Hon. Mr. Ron Roberts by referring to him as a member of the left.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Terry Roberts. I stand corrected, Mr President, before you pick me up. For as long as I have been associated with universities, from my days when I attended as a full time student and as a part time student, a number of things appeared in university magazines: leaflets, posters and badges that perhaps might not normally be seen on the streets of Adelaide—at least 10 or 20 years ago. Perhaps things have changed in more recent times. Certainly, a freer expression of thought and independence on university campuses has been tolerated over the years compared with what might be prevailing community standards elsewhere. I concede that that has changed a little in recent years.

Other than those general comments, I shall be pleased to make inquiries as best I can, because I have no authority over students at Flinders University, and I will attempt to bring back a more considered response for the honourable member.

FESTIVAL CENTRE TRUST

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for the Arts a question about the Festival Centre Trust review.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Mr President, as you and all other students of *Hansard* will know, throughout last year the Hon. Miss Laidlaw was very concerned that the review of the Festival Centre Trust had not been released publicly. I pointed out to her at the time that it had not been released because it did contain commercially confidential information which it would not be fair to the Trust to have been made public in view of its competitive activities in the market place.

At the honourable member's request I then asked the Festival Centre Trust to provide an edited version of the review with the confidential matters removed so that the remaining parts of the report could be available publicly.

The Festival Centre was happy to undertake that task and the precised version of the report arrived on my desk on 10 December last year. That was hardly an auspicious time to be releasing reports publicly. I doubt that anyone would have been interested in reading them—certainly not the media. It is now 2½ months since the election, and the Minister has been Minister for all but a few days of that time, yet that abbreviated report has still not been released publicly. People are asking whether her enthusiasm for having reports released publicly has changed now that she is the Minister concerned.

In view of the Hindmarsh Island bridge report, I ask whether the Minister is opposed to making reports public, even those sections which are not of a confidential nature? When is the Minister going to release the report on the Festival Centre Trust that has been in her possession for nearly 2½ months?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: It has not been in my possession for 2½ months; it may have arrived on the former Minister's desk on 10 December, but it certainly did not come to my office when I established my new office in STA House. Those papers did not come with me, so I am not sure whether they went back to the department. But at 6 o'clock last night I met with the Chair of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust

(Ms Anne Dunn) and the General Manager. We spoke then about this report and they indicated to me that it was my prerogative whether or not I released it. I had inquired whether it was their report and whether because they had edited it they should release it. They indicated that it was my prerogative. I can release it this afternoon or tomorrow if the honourable member wishes.

Certainly I am not opposed to releasing that report, and when they wish the media can have the edited version of the report—because of the confidential information which the former Minister knows cannot be released.

With respect to interested parties, I am aware that the State Theatre Company, State Opera and others would be particularly interested because of the matters that they raised in earlier reviews about their relationship with the Festival Centre Trust and the hiring of venues. So, I can send a copy around to them this afternoon and provide it generally; otherwise, it can be released formally tomorrow.

The Hon. Anne Levy interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I will send a copy to you.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the Hindmarsh Island bridge.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.D. LAWSON: It was recognised by the Environment, Resources and Development Committee in the report of its inquiry into the Hindmarsh Island bridge that the site of the existing ferry crossing to the island was one of great environmental, historic and anthropological significance. There has been widespread concern about the commitment of the previous Government to build a bridge on that site. The same report of the committee of which the honourable member behind me is so proud to be a member noted that the Department of Road Transport had commissioned a feasibility study of the options for access to the island. That study was prepared by Connell Wagner, consulting engineers, in June 1992, and it examined a number of options, all at the site of the present ferry.

In a ministerial statement to this Council on 15 February, the Minister for Transport stated that in his report Mr Jacobs had put forward three options as a means of finding a compromise acceptable to all parties. The first of these options was to convert the barrage into a bridge. The Minister went on to report that the Government has initiated action to investigate further the technical feasibility of this option.

Has the Minister seen anything to suggest that the previous Government, its consultants or the ERD Committee ever made any detailed examination of the option of converting the existing barrage to a bridge? Also, is the present Government committed to examining all reasonable options before deciding upon its course of action?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I have made inquiries upon receiving the report from Mr Jacobs about the bridge link to Hindmarsh Island at the site of the barrage. The Department of Transport indicated that there had been no feasibility study, report or written correspondence on this matter rejecting that option. That was of interest to me, because it had been implied in this place that that option had been explored by the previous Government. The Department of Transport agencies have confirmed that there has been no feasibility study, report or written correspondence exploring the proposed bridge at the site of the barrage. That is

important advice from that source, because it is the contracting agent in this matter.

It was on that basis and considering the recommendation from Mr Jacobs that Cabinet considered that it was important that we explored this further option. As I have indicated before, Mr Jacobs recommended that in the public interest other options should be considered because of all these other anthropological, Aboriginal, environmental, workplace, picketing and union concerns that have been raised in this place and that we should be exploring every other reasonable option. This is what the Government is doing, in the knowledge that that option of the proposed bridge at the barrage has not been explored at earlier times.

HINDMARSH ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport, representing the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations, a question on the subject of Hindmarsh Island. She may care to answer in her own capacities as well.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I am told that at the last meeting of the Goolwa council there were three more development applications for significant developments on Hindmarsh Island itself—developments which will be along the north shore of the island and which will lead to a further change in its character and impact upon wetlands subject to RAMSAR treaties. I understand that as the planning now stands they may be approved once the bridge is constructed, because that is necessary under current planning requirements. Is the Minister aware of this, and does she have a view about these three further significant developments for Hindmarsh Island and the implications of that?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I am aware that developers have considerable interest in land on the island. I am not aware of specific applications, nor matters that have been considered by the council, although it does not surprise me, because we have been informed of such interest by the previous Government over some time. I will refer the question to the Minister in another place and bring back a reply.

AYTON REPORT

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question on the subject of the Ayton report.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Earlier today I asked what I thought was a relatively simple question about this topic which the Attorney-General refused to answer. My explanation is to remind him of the circumstances surrounding this matter. Members will realise that the Ayton submission was presented to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the National Crime Authority and has been illegally released from that committee. That illegal release involves the commission of a criminal offence with up to six months imprisonment as the penalty. The Premier, Deputy Premier and Attorney-General have all been in receipt of that submission. They are facts; that is on the record, apparently forgotten so far by the Attorney-General.

The Deputy Premier has admitted that he knows the source of this report—he has referred to the substantive

source. The Attorney-General, on the other hand, has told the Council that he does not know the substantive source referred to by the Deputy Premier in another place. The question arises as to what information the Attorney-General does have about this matter and where the report came from. I asked earlier today the question which the Attorney-General feigned not to understand and which in effect he did not answer. Has the Attorney-General been informed of the identity of any other source who provided the Ayton submission to either or all of the Premier, the Deputy Premier or the Attorney-General?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The question of illegality is one that the Leader of the Opposition keeps harping on, and of course the perception which he tried to create and which members of the Opposition in the other place endeavoured to create when they first raised this issue was that the Premier, the Deputy Premier and I had committed some offence.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: That was the perception that you and your colleagues in the other place were trying to create.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: That was the perception you were trying to create. The fact is that none of us has committed any offence. It is quite clear that none of us—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: But a criminal offence has been committed.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I have no evidence of that. You have said it and that has been something that the newspaper—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Read the opinion that I tabled.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: You know what that opinion was. That was from the Attorney-General's Department. It was actually the Acting Solicitor-General who was the in-house counsel for the Attorney-General's Department.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: He is a Queen's Counsel.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: So what? The bulk of what he said agreed with what I said. The bulk of what I had to say he agreed with, quite obviously.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has had his opportunity.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You instruct the Queen's Counsel in your department on what opinions to give, do you?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Of course I do not. What I am saying is that he is the Acting Solicitor-General.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Why would it happen in this case?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Who knows? I am not in charge of the Federal Attorney-General's Department, am I?

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: What's the point?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I do not know what the point is.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: It was an opinion of Mr Rose, Queen's Counsel. Okay!

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: So what?

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: You and your Party have been trying to suggest that in some way or another we are implicated in some criminal offence. The fact is—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: That is not what I said.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: That is the perception that you and your colleagues are trying to create.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: There is no doubt that a criminal offence has been committed.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I have not got the evidence of it. I am not responsible for what happens in Canberra.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You had it and you tabled it in this place.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Of course I had it, and I tabled it; that is a fact. I did not commit an offence.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: All right; we are clear.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Stop avoiding the question. Answer the question.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I do not know the source from Canberra. I do not know how it got into Parliament House. Whether it came off the back of a truck anonymously or whatever, I just do not know, full stop.

NOARLUNGA INTERCHANGE

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the Noarlunga Centre Interchange.

Leave granted.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: Approximately two weeks ago vandals heavily graffitied the Noarlunga Centre bus-rail interchange, smashed walls and a rotunda, ripped out phones and destroyed drink dispensers. This is the second occasion in less than three months on which the station has been damaged, with police estimating the total bill following this latest attack to be about \$10 000. The STA has responded by announcing that it will increase security camera surveillance and concentrate a special policing operation on the station.

Recent surveys in the Noarlunga region have confirmed that youth crime and vandalism are a major problem and that fears for personal safety within Noarlunga Centre are of concern to local residents. Improvements to the interchange were being considered by the previous Government as part of a Better Cities funded project to upgrade the whole of the Noarlunga Centre complex. Capital works to provide improved security, clear sight lines and easier transfer between bus and rail at the interchange were considered to be a high priority. My questions to the Minister are:

1. In addition to the immediate security boost announced by the STA, does the Government intend to continue with plans to upgrade the bus-rail interchange as foreshadowed by the previous Labor Government?

2. Can the Minister assure southern commuters of improved personal safety by giving an undertaking to proceed with this project as quickly as possible?

3. When does the Minister expect work to commence?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Sadly, the honourable member is correct in outlining the details of the vandalism that has occurred in recent times at the Noarlunga Centre interchange. On the day after the second incident—the only one that has occurred during the period that I have been the Minister—I spent time with the police looking at this whole situation of cameras and monitors. Because of the traditional problems at the Noarlunga and Modbury interchanges, those interchanges were the first sites to have cameras installed and the equipment is older than at sites that have been the subject of the most recent orders for equipment.

One of the difficulties with interchanges and the equipment that has been installed is that it is hard to get it to zero in on trouble areas. I will not elaborate on those difficulties,

because we would simply be providing more ammunition for those who may wish to cause damage. Initiatives are being taken by the police, the STA and me to upgrade those surveillance cameras at the interchange and to site them more appropriately. We are also looking at security and dog patrols. Dog patrols were tried once before, but there were protests from local people and they were withdrawn. I do not believe that those protests are valid considering the continuing spate of problems at Noarlunga. Discussions are taking place within the development program for enhanced security with the use of dogs in future.

As the honourable member may be aware, there has been a recent initiative to transfer the transit squad to the police. Ten senior constables have recently been trained over a period of one month and they are now full members of the Police Force. When they are on the trains, in particular, one can see the kids moving their feet off the seats. Their behaviour changes visibly to the delight of other passengers who are thrilled to see the presence of police on our trains. Signs will soon be going up in the trains, in particular, highlighting the presence of uniformed and plain-clothes police. I saw such signs in New South Wales some time ago, and I am keen to see them developed here.

The transfer and additional training of members of the transit squad will continue over the next three years. All those who will be policing the trains will then be fully trained police officers. They will have the full powers of arrest, rather than the former situation where the transit squad had to ring in advance for the police to come and help in dealing with various situations. They did not have the authority to deal with some of the ugliness on our public transport. The honourable member will be aware of that through her earlier work in this area and the Bills that she sought to introduce into this place to address that situation.

AYTON REPORT

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: My question is to the Attorney-General. Did the Deputy Premier provide to the Attorney-General any information about where the Ayton submission to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the National Crime Authority came from; and, if so, what was that information? That question is asked in light of the fact that the Deputy Premier clearly knows the source of the information.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The answer is 'No.'

COMMONWEALTH-STATE RELATIONS

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in this place, representing the Premier in another place, a question on Commonwealth-State relationships.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: Yesterday a ministerial statement was given by the Premier, the Hon. Dean Brown, in another place on Commonwealth-State relationships. To me the issue is cause for concern in that it is contradictory in its content. The Premier stated:

I make it clear at the outset that my Government intends to be a constructive participant in the process of developing improved Commonwealth-State relations. We will not be seeking confrontation for the sake of it.

Later the Premier acknowledged:

This financial year almost 48 per cent of Commonwealth allocations to South Australia are in the form of specific purpose payments. This proportion has increased by more than 10 per cent over the past decade.

It is clear that it is the Commonwealth Government's intention to increase tied arrangements. The Premier further stated:

While there will always be a case for some specific purpose payments, provided they are properly negotiated rather than imposed, it is time for this overall trend to be reversed.

We can see that provisions exist for confrontation in both the Commonwealth Government's stated policy and the Premier's policy. He further states:

The case for reform of Commonwealth-State financial obligations is overwhelming. . . In relation to financial issues, dealing with vertical fiscal balance and decreasing the portion of funds which are tied are crucial to improving the flexibility and viability of the budgets of the States and Territories.

It seems that the Premier is on a collision course with the Prime Minister. In view of the attitudes and statements included in the Premier's ministerial statement on Commonwealth-State relations, will the Premier be insisting on increasing the State's revenue base by pursuing untied grants to the detriment of South Australia? I ask that question also of the Leader in this House.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I would be happy to refer those questions to the Premier and the Treasurer for reply, but I assure the honourable member that they will not be undertaking any course of action that will see any financial detriment to the State of South Australia.

SALO

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: My question is to the Attorney-General. Did the Classification of Publications Board agree to the banning of the film *Salvo*?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I thought that I made clear at the time the decision was taken on *Salvo* that I invited current members of the Classification of Publications Board to view the film with me. They had no statutory obligation to do so. They were prepared to do so. They viewed it with me and were therefore acting in an advisory capacity and I made the decision.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: As a supplementary question, did the members of the Classification of Publications Board who viewed the film *Salvo* with the Attorney-General advise the Attorney-General to ban the film?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I am surprised that the former Attorney-General should be pursuing this issue because out in the community there is wide-ranging support for the decision taken. The former Attorney-General and those who support him are crying into the wind.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Answer the question.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I will not answer it. I am not going to tell you because I invited them in in an advisory capacity. They were not obliged legally or in any other way to attend or give advice. I told them when they viewed it with me, that being the basis on which they came in, that I would accept the public responsibility for the decision taken. If the former Attorney-General wants to keep raising the issue, I am happy to debate it at any time because out in the community—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Did they advise you—

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I am not going to indicate that, for the reason that I gave you. I said to them when they were invited in that I welcomed them viewing the film with me and

giving me their advice but, because by statute I had the responsibility, I would make the decision.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

In reply to **Hon. BARBARA WIESE** (22 February).

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: In a ministerial statement (15 February) I indicated in part that Mr Sam Jacobs had determined that the Government was obliged to build a bridge of some form between Goolwa and Hindmarsh Island.

On 22 February the honourable member asked if the Government had received advice of another legal opinion to the effect that the Government's obligation is to build a bridge at the current location.

When replying I presumed, for good reason, that the advice the honourable member was referring to was advice from the Crown-Solicitor—advice which I had not received.

However, on reading the honourable member's question it appears that she may have been alluding to correspondence from solicitors for Binalong Pty Ltd, namely Messrs Michell, Sillar, Lynch and Meyer. They wrote to me on 16 February advising that they had instructions to collate the details of a claim for presentation to me relating to alleged losses arising from a decision by the former Government to suspend work on the bridge on 29 October 1993—a suspension which the Government has since extended.

The letter also confirmed advice that I have provided to the Chamber on at least two earlier occasions, namely that Binalong Pty Ltd proposes in due course to make a claim for alleged losses from inaction by the former Government for the period prior to the suspension of bridge work on 29 October.

Further, Messrs Michell, Sillar, Lynch and Meyer advised they had been instructed to inform me that the Government is bound under the Tripartite Agreement to build the bridge.

Yesterday I received advice from the Crown-Solicitor on the letter from the solicitors for Binalong Pty Ltd, namely that Binalong will have grave difficulty proving any liability and any losses.

I do not intend to make any further comment on the advice until the course of action I outlined in my ministerial statement on 15 February has been completed.

MINISTERS' ACCOMMODATION

In reply to **Hon. BARBARA WIESE** (10 February).

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The State Transport Authority have advised that the relocation costs associated with moving displaced STA personnel from the 12th floor of STA House to alternative accommodation will be in the order of \$90 000.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 23 February. Page 154.)

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I will make only a few brief comments about the Address in Reply following some of the comments made by members. Before doing so I reaffirm, as I did when I was sworn in as a member of this place after the election, my allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: I don't know why you people feel that you have to do it every year. It is a bit of a worry.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: If you prefer not to do it, that's the choice for you. You don't have to. If other people do, that is up to them.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You are nervous about it.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I am not nervous about it; it is a reasonable and proper course to follow and you know it.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I notice that even members on your side took the affirmation of allegiance also.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: We all take it; we can't sit here unless we do.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: You're right. Some of you compromise your own public statements. I thank Her Excellency the Governor for the speech with which she opened this session of Parliament and take this opportunity to congratulate the three new members of the Legislative Council on their election to this place.

The primary area on which I wish to make observations is the issue of voluntary voting. I thought it somewhat bizarre that the Hon. Trevor Crothers should use as the basis for his opposition to the concept of voluntary voting the experience of Germany, Hitler and the Third Reich and on the other hand the more recent experience of elections in Russia. The Hon. Mr Feleppa also spoke about Hitler and the way in which he came to power through voluntary voting. It is a bizarre proposition to propose that Hitler coming to power in the 1930s in Germany was in some way or another a consequence of voluntary voting. The Hon. Trevor Crothers goes so far as to say that, having listened to the Russian Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, people listening to his speeches must be fearful of what he proposes and sigh with yearning for a compulsory voting system in the Russian state.

That really is a bizarre proposition. It in no way bears any relevance to the issue of voluntary or compulsory voting, nor did the accession of Hitler during the 1930s. Those circumstances in those two countries at those two particular times evolved from a quite significantly different set of circumstances from those which apply in Australia. Australia has had a long period of stable, democratic government, even though politically there may have been periods of quite significant public dissension, but nothing akin to either the situation in Russia today or the situation in Germany in the 1930s.

During the 1930s and after the First World War, Germany had suffered what amounted to a humiliating defeat and there was a great deal of ill feeling among the German population in relation to the status to which they believed they had been relegated following the First World War. In Russia today, with a society which is coming out of something like 75 years of dictatorship, and no history of stable democratic rule and the rule of law, it is quite obvious that there will be significant fluctuations in the political pendulum in that country. If one uses that argument in relation to Germany and Russia, what about the situation in Germany today? Germany today has voluntary voting. It is a stable democratic society. What about the situation in the United States of America? In the United States, which is regarded as one of the greatest democracies in the world, there is still voluntary voting.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The Hon. Mr Sumner interjects and says, 'Why debate this now?' I know we will debate it at length when the Bill relating to that particular issue comes before us. But if it is good enough to debate it then, one has to ask, 'Why did members raise that issue in their Address in Reply speeches?' If they make comparisons with Germany and Russia, it is appropriate to place on the record a contrary point of view. I do not intend to debate all the arguments for and against voluntary voting, but it is important to try to put it into some context. All that I seek to do is identify that the propositions by the Hon. Mr Feleppa and the Hon. Mr Crothers in particular making some comparison with Russia, Italy and Germany are quite bizarre,

and one does have to take into account a whole range of other circumstances in Australia and other places around the world where there is voluntary voting.

I was making the point that in countries such as postwar Germany, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and many other countries, in all but a mere handful of countries, there is voluntary voting, and there are swings both to the conservative side of politics and to the other with voluntary voting. Of course, in other countries, they frequently have first past the post voting. When the Hon. Mr Crothers talks about 25 per cent of all votes cast in the recent Russian election being sufficient to elect Zhirinovskiy, then he ignores the fact that not only is that voluntary voting but also first past the post. With preferential voting, one gets a different view of electors and the wishes of electors in voting in Australia. As I said, this will be an issue that we will debate at length on another occasion, but it was important to place that on the record.

In respect of the Hon. John Burdett, I did not make any observations about his service except at the end of the last Parliament, and I take this opportunity of extending to his widow and to his family my condolences. He was not only an honourable member in the true sense of the word but also a very capable representative of the people in this Chamber, with a wide range of interests and activities in the broader community. With respect to the late Mrs Jessie Cooper, she was a member of the Council when I first came here in 1978. She always was a faithful member of the Council and representative of the people and served with distinction in this Chamber. Similarly, I extend to her husband and widower, who was also a past president of the Liberal Party in South Australia, and to the family my condolences on her recent passing.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I rise to support the motion. As have other members, I thank Her Excellency for her speech on opening this session of the Parliament. I also thank all members for what I thought were their generally thoughtful contributions to a wide ranging number of issues. There were some consistent themes through the contributions, as you would have noted, Mr President, but I noted this year—and perhaps it is the start of a new parliamentary session in a new Parliament, whilst also for many of us it is the start of new careers in unfamiliar positions, whether it be on this side of the Chamber or the other—that there was a greater diversity in the contributions made in the Address in Reply debate.

It is one of the issues I believe we need to tackle as a Chamber over the coming year or so. It is one of the few opportunities that members of the Legislative Council have to be wide ranging, to address a whole variety of issues without necessarily having to be restricted to the particular Bill or motion that is before the Chamber. That raises the issue, which has been discussed in the past, of some sort of grievance debate for members in this Chamber. I have expressed a view in the past on that issue with which you would be familiar, Mr President. As Leader of the Government in this Chamber, it is an issue I would like to pursue in consultation with all members in this Chamber, to obtain their views as well as yours, Mr President, to see whether or not there is a majority view in this Chamber about that particular possible change.

I want only to address one issue during this debate, and that is the notion of equal opportunity in our schools in South Australia. All members would acknowledge that girls and

women over the years, and presently, have suffered discrimination of one form or another in relation to access to educational opportunity. Within our education system, in particular over recent years, the department and previous Governments have initiated a series of programs, policies and practice changes to tackle these particular problem areas. The Liberal Party policy, prior to the last election, had a significant section within it on the question of equal opportunity and, in particular, examples of discrimination suffered by girls and women.

We indicated a preparedness to continue with some of the policies and practices of the previous Government. We also indicated our preparedness to tackle these issues through policies such as continuation of girls only schools. We indicated in addition to the existing three girls only high schools that we were prepared to look at the possibility of a girls only primary school in South Australia to see whether or not there was community support for such an option. We also indicated our preparedness to continue with practices such as girls only classes in some of our coeducational schools.

At this stage I do not intend to cover all of the policy commitments that I have placed on the record in relation to this important area over recent years. That is just a small selection of them. Suffice to say that the new Government continues to acknowledge the special problems and will continue to tackle these issues within the new Department for Education and Children's Services. For a number of years I have expressed concern about the special problems being experienced by boys within our education system. I have for a long time believed that the special needs of boys were being largely ignored by our education system.

Since I became Minister for Education and Children's Services one of the issues I have sought to address has been to seek from my Department of Education and Children's Services some detailed breakdown, on a gender basis, of a number of the key areas as I see them existing within the new Department for Education and Children's Services. In my contribution this afternoon I want to share with other members some of the results of that detailed research which is available and which has been available for some time within the Department for Education and Children's Services, on a gender basis, in relation to a number of these key areas.

The first area, to which I have partially referred before but I want to place this on record again, concerns a study done by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia on the first year of assessment for Stage 1 of the new two year South Australian Certificate of Education. As most in the community would understand, Stage 1 relates to the old year 11. That report showed that boys were performing very poorly at year 11 or Stage 1 when compared to the performance of girls. I will refer to some of the key subject areas and the percentage of girls and boys achieving a satisfactory assessment level at year 11.

Again, members might be familiar with the assessment system at year 11. It does not indicate levels of satisfactory performance; it basically says whether they have been satisfactory or, by inference in the other two assessment levels, their performance has been unsatisfactory. If one looks at the area of arts, 83 per cent of girls and 65 per cent of boys performed at a satisfactory level. The difference was 18 per cent. In the subject of English, the figure for girls was 86 per cent and the figure for boys was 71 per cent—a 15 per cent better performance level by girls than boys. I now turn to three other subject areas: maths, science and technology.

In the area of mathematics, girls had a satisfactory assessment level of 82 per cent compared to 73 per cent for boys—the satisfactory assessment level for girls was some 9 per cent higher. In science, it was 84 per cent for girls and 77 per cent for boys—again, a 7 per cent higher performance level by girls. In technology, the figure was 79 per cent for girls and 64 per cent for boys—a factor of 15 per cent. The overall assessment for all subjects in that first year of SACE indicated that 83 per cent of girls achieved a satisfactory assessment at year 11 in all subjects, and the comparative figure for boys was just 71 per cent—a 12 per cent differential.

Some of those figures would not be surprising. There is much evidence in research to indicate that girls perform better than boys in areas such as arts and English, but there has been a long held view that girls were performing poorly in relation to what was known by some as the harder subject areas of maths, science and technology. Those figures for the first year of SACE, as I said, for girls in maths, science and technology indicates fairly clearly that at the Stage 1 level of SACE girls were performing at a much higher level than were boys in all of those subjects, including the maths, sciences and technology subjects, and also arts and English.

The figures are still being crunched in relation to 1992-93, but I have some initial figures. I am advised that in relation to the Stage 1 (year 11) assessment for the South Australian Certificate of Education in 1992, which are the most recent figures available, 66.5 per cent of girls were deemed to have been successful at Stage 1, that is, that they had demonstrated that ten or more units had been completed successfully. The figure for boys was 57.9 per cent. As the report to me notes, more males than females show up as not having successfully completed Stage 1 of the South Australian Certificate of Education.

One other aspect in relation to the South Australian Certificate of Education in 1992 is the writing based literacy assessment, commonly referred to by the acronym WBLA (Writing Based Literary Assessment). That is an assessment of the literacy performance of students for the South Australian Certificate of Education for years 11 and 12. Again, if I could summarise the note to me, it says that, according to a SSABSA report, it is still the case that a higher proportion of females than males have completed the WBLA for 1992. The figure for females is 60 per cent compared with just 50 per cent of males.

Mr President, I now want to turn to another broad indicator of performance in schools and that is in the broad area of special education problems. I would have to say at the outset that I think the availability of information to me as Minister in this particular area is certainly not at the level that I would have liked. It is an area that we have to work on. We have figures in relation to students with disabilities, but I believe we need a more accurate collection of figures, in particular for students who are suffering some form of literacy problem or for students with learning difficulties within our system. Those sorts of figures ought to be available to me as Minister and, indeed, to any future Minister for Education and Children's Services.

I now refer to the figures in relation to special education and students with special disabilities. The Department for Education and Children's Services is divided into six broad areas: four in the metropolitan area and two in the country regions. The figures provided to me indicate that in the eastern area of South Australia, which is the country region of South Australia, there were 126 per cent more boys than

girls with disabilities. In the western area the figure for boys was 124 per cent higher; in the Adelaide north-east area it was 100 per cent higher; in the Adelaide north area it was 89 per cent higher; in the Adelaide west area it was 86 per cent higher; and in the Adelaide south area it was 80 per cent higher. Overall in South Australia we have 90 per cent more boys than girls with disabilities being looked after within our special education programs.

Also, in another breakdown of figures relating to those students with disabilities who have been identified as having disabilities only in language and communication, again the figure for boys is 158 per cent higher than the comparative figure for girls within the State of South Australia. Certainly, the anecdotal information that has been provided to me from guidance officers and speech pathologists indicates that when we move down to that next category below the students with disabilities—and that is those students who have learning difficulties—similarly we see many, many more boys than girls who suffer some form of learning difficulty and who require extra assistance from the Department for Education and Children's Services.

If we turn to the area of the suspension, exclusion and expulsion policy of the department, we find that 80 per cent of all suspensions in the Education Department last year were of boys and only 20 per cent of suspensions were of girls. If we talk about exclusions, 75 per cent of exclusions from schools in South Australia last year were of boys and only 25 per cent were of girls.

Turning to one of the more common quantitative measures that we have available to us in the education system—retention rate figures—I have an early breakdown on the 1993 figures which indicates that the retention rate for girls remains higher than that for boys. In 1992 the rate was about 10 per cent higher. In 1993 the figure for girls was 84.4 per cent and 76.8 per cent for boys. To be fair in relation to that assessment the comparative figure for boys taking up post-compulsory options such as TAFE apprenticeships indicates that boys take up those options in much greater numbers than do girls.

In 1989 the Education Department conducted a writing and reading assessment program (WRAP), with the aim of conducting an audit of the literary performance of students in South Australian schools, and the report states:

The WRAP findings raise similar questions to those of a number of researchers—Australian and overseas—who are critically examining studies which suggest that girls are better than boys at writing. WRAP results suggest that this is the case for particular kinds of writing and for particular aspects of writing and point to a need for continued research to learn more about the conditions under which girls are successful and the nature of the tasks.

I am advised in the note given to me about that section of the WRAP report which looked at curriculum monitoring and reading, as follows:

The only gender difference noted in this part of the report is that girls averaged almost twice the number of pages read as boys.

As to an assessment of student performance and writing tasks, under the subheading 'Story, autobiographical and narrative fiction summary writing', the summary provided to me states:

At year six girls in the random sample performed best in story, autobiographical, science and summary writing. At year 10 the results are similar, except that fiction summary writing can be added as the third task in which girls out-performed boys.

Finally, in the bits and pieces of evidence (and this does not come from the Department for Education and Children's

Services but was a national report released some time in 1993) is the national research study into young children's psychological and social behaviour. In my view that study strongly reinforced public calls for boys to be given greater emphasis in equal opportunity programs. The Australian Temperament Project Study was the biggest of its kind ever undertaken in Australia, and it concluded that boys were less prepared for school than girls and so had a bad start in life. It said that boys were less psychologically ready for school than girls and they had greater problems in becoming oriented to tasks and adapting to classroom requirements.

The study covered over 2 000 boys and girls who were surveyed every 18 months from infancy to eight years of age. This comprehensive and extensive longitudinal study found little difference in the temperament of girls and boys up to the age of three. But as the children grew, large differences surfaced in the different sexes' psychological and social behaviour. The study found that boys made up 66 per cent of those children considered to have serious behavioural problems, maybe needing clinical treatment. From five years of age boys showed greater temperamental difficulties and lower scores than girls in tests of their concentration attention. By the age of six or seven boys had poorer coordination skills and overall school performance than girls. Two years later they were poorer on a variety of classroom, adaptation and performance factors. The study also found it was a matter of great concern that boys may be at greater risk of long-term and behavioural difficulties because of their bad starts at school.

A variety of other pieces of information is available to me, but I do not intend to labour the point this afternoon. I merely want to indicate that I believe that within our system we have a considerable body of evidence indicating that boys are suffering significant learning problems within our education system. This considerable body of evidence and these problems have, I believe, been largely ignored in recent years, and it is my strong view that equal opportunity in its truest sense within the Department of Education and Children's Services must be for boys as well as for girls.

I remind honourable members of the statement I made at the start of my contribution today. I acknowledge and continue to acknowledge the special problems that girls suffer, but it is important for the South Australian community and for many within the Department of Education and Children's Services and for many within our schools, whilst acknowledging the special problems and needs of girls, also to open their minds, eyes and horizons to the fact that special problems are being experienced by boys within our education system.

As Minister for Education and Children's Services, I have a commitment to tackle these issues that have been raised by the evidence before us. There is a variety of things that people within the system will have to do. We certainly need greater access to information. As we introduce new programs, practices and policies, and as we spend considerable sums of money on them, we need to be able after a period of time to be able to measure whether or not they have been effective.

Certainly, we do not have within our education system now an accountability system that will provide us with that sort of information so that we can say, 'Yes, we have introduced the new policy; we have spent some millions of dollars over five years on this policy, but we are not in a position now to say in qualitative and quantitative terms whether we have improved student learning outcomes as a result of that policy change and considerable resource

investment.' In the decade of the 1990s and beyond, that sort of situation is no longer acceptable in an education system that is currently accounting for \$1 300 million of taxpayers' funding within the department.

If we want to continue to justify such an amount of expenditure within Education and Children's Services, we must indicate through accountability measures that we are improving student learning outcomes and that, in relation to special programs for targeted groups, whether they be girls, non-English-speaking background students, Aboriginal students or, as I argue, boys in some cases, at some stage we need to be able to say whether or not programs and targeted assistance have been successful.

It is no longer sufficient for us to rely on the politics of the warm inner glow and believe that, because we have identified a problem and targeted extra assistance, we have therefore improved student learning outcomes as a result of the extra money and the changed policy practice. That is no longer acceptable and should no longer be acceptable. We have to be prepared to accept systems of accountability so that we know whether or not programs have been acceptable.

It might not be a comfortable position for future Ministers for Education and Children's Services and future Governments, after four or five years of putting in an extra \$5 million into a targeted population group, to find that on the accountability measure of student learning outcomes we have gone backwards or stayed the same. Perhaps that has been one reason why we have not had those accountability measures within our system. Governments must accept—and the Parliament and the community should insist—that such sorts of accountability measures are put in place. That is so, no matter how uncomfortable it makes future Ministers of Education and Children's Services or indeed any other Ministers in any other departments. There need to be systems of accountability in relation to the considerable sums that the taxpayers spend in our areas.

In education we know that on the quantitative measures we have higher retention rates and lower student-teacher ratios here in South Australia, but we have to be able to justify and argue to the wider community and the nation that, because of those additional resources, we are doing much more in relation to student learning outcomes: we are improving the quality of education in South Australia relative to the quality of education that is being provided in all other States of Australia.

If we can demonstrate that we are doing better in a qualitative rather than a quantitative sense, there is a more powerful argument to defend continued levels of expenditure in education and children's services. If we are not prepared to tackle those sorts of issues, that argument is significantly weakened. So, with that, I indicate my support for the motion.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: Mr President, I draw your attention to the state of the Council.

A quorum having been formed:

The PRESIDENT: I remind honourable members that Her Excellency the Governor will receive the President and members of the Council at 4.15 p.m. today for the presentation of the Address in Reply, and I ask all honourable members to accompany me to Government House.

[Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 4.50 p.m.]

The PRESIDENT: I have to inform the Council that, accompanied by the mover, seconder and other honourable

members, I proceeded to Government House and there presented to Her Excellency the Address in Reply to Her Excellency's opening speech adopted by this Council today, to which Her Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:

Thank you for the Address in Reply to the speech with which I opened the first session of the Forty-Eighth Parliament. I am

confident that you will give your best consideration to all matters placed before you. I pray for God's blessing upon your deliberations.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.52 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 8 March at 2.15 p.m.