LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday 9 August 1994

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

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Education and Children's Services (Hon. R. I. Lucas)—

Disciplinary Appeal Tribunal—Report of the Presiding Officer, 1993-94
University of South Australia—
Financial Statements, 1993
'New Outlook', June 1994.

By the Attorney-General (Hon. K. T. Griffin)—

A Review of the Gulf St. Vincent Prawn Fishery—Consultants Report, 1 July 1994
Regulations under the following Acts—
Industrial and Employee Relations Act 1994—
Enterprise Agreements
Registered Agents
Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration (Commonwealth Provisions) Amendment Act 1991—
Affiliated Associations.

By the Minister for Consumer Affairs (Hon. K.T. Griffin—

Regulations under the following Act—
Liquor Licensing Act 1985—Dry Areas—
Brighton
Gawler
Port Lincoln/Moana.

By the Minister for Transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw)—

District Council By-law—East Torrens—No. 17—Keeping of Dogs
Regulation under the following Act—
Beverage Container Act 1975—Exempt Containers—
Two Dog Alcoholic Lemonade.

TRADING HOURS

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to table a statement by the Minister for Industrial Affairs on the issue of shop trading hours.

Leave granted.

PRAWN FISHERY

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to table a copy of the ministerial statement made by the Minister for Primary Industries in relation to the Morgan report on the Gulf St Vincent prawn fishery.

Leave granted.

QUESTION TIME

POLICE PROSECUTORS

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about police prosecutors.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: In June this year the *Advertiser* reported on the front page that there was a proposal to phase out police prosecutors and introduce professional lawyers as prosecutors throughout the State Government system. The suggestion was that 150 police prosecutors would be replaced by eight professional DPP prosecutors, and it was further suggested that savings to Government could be made by this move. That is clearly incorrect: any such proposal would involve considerable extra cost to Government running into several million dollars. After a bit of to-ing and fro-ing it appears that the proposal is for a committal unit to be established within the office of the DPP and for its numbers to be increased from the current two to eight.

I make clear that in principle I support the proposition of a professional prosecution service operating under the direction of the DPP. However, the important point relating to my question is that it is clear that dispute has arisen between the Government and the Director of Public Prosecutions on this issue. In particular, the Minister for Emergency Services, Mr Matthew, is reported in the *Sunday Mail* of 19 June as having said that he 'was both surprised and annoyed by [the Director of Public Prosecution's], Mr Rofe's, comments' about replacing police prosecutors with DPP professional officers. He stated:

> There has been no consultation or discussion with me as Minister or officers from my department.

He also indicated that he had assured the Police Association that the Government had no intention of replacing police prosecutors in the foreseeable future. This was again taken up on Wednesday 29 June by the same Minister on behalf of the Government when he said that he was disappointed at Mr Rofe's public comments and that he supports police officers handling the cases. The report states:

> By making his comments—

that is, the comments of the DPP—

> he has had a total disregard for the difficulties that have been faced by police officers working as police prosecutors.

A number of questions arise from that dispute between the Government, in particular Minister Matthew, and the DPP. My questions to the Attorney are as follows:

1. Does the Attorney-General agree with the remarks made by the Minister for Emergency Services, Mr Matthew, and, in particular, is the Attorney annoyed and disappointed with the actions of Mr Rofe in making the statements that he did relating to this matter?

2. What is the Government's position on this dispute?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: It was in January this year that a pilot project was established by the DPP, whereby two officers from the DPP were outplaced with the police prosecutors, supported by one clerical officer. That pilot project was to develop a proposal that the DPP had discussed with police, that there should be an earlier point at which the DPP became involved in determining what prosecutions should be laid and on what charges. There is no doubt that in the whole of the police prosecution area there is a need for close coordination with the DPP. That happened, even before the DPP was established, with the Crown Prosecutor. The DPP had been called in on occasion by police for advice on serious criminal matters before charges were actually laid.

The pilot project took that a step further and had the DPP involved at a much earlier stage in determining what charges should be laid. The object was to achieve savings in the criminal justice system in a number of respects: for example, where previously charges had been laid by police but incorrect charges had been laid; where charges had been laid and subsequently had to be withdrawn because there was

insufficient evidence upon which to proceed; or where there was further information required in terms of statements from witnesses. If this need had been identified at an earlier stage, it would have been easier to get an upgraded statement because the recollection of the witnesses would have been clearer, and in some instances the witness would have been more easily accessible.

The object was to give to the DPP and to police a much closer working relationship in the criminal justice process. As a result of the pilot period a number of areas were identified where the DPP had been able to save court time, police time and police prosecutors' time in the way in which some 100 particular criminal matters had been the subject of consultation. The next step is to move towards a larger committal unit because the pilot project dealt with only the Adelaide—

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: I know all that stuff; I am asking about Matthew.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: —Magistrates Court.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: You asked the question; you get the background. The Leader of the Opposition did not seem to appreciate what had actually been going on in relation to the DPP and the police prosecutors. I wanted to make sure that the questions he was asking were put into a framework of information which identified where the DPP was coming from. We have got to the point of the pilot project. The next step is to broaden it beyond the Adelaide Magistrates Court to the suburban courts, such as Christies Beach, Para Districts, Holden Hill and Port Adelaide. That is something which the Government is considering at the present time.

The DPP has suggested that the New South Wales and Victorian experience, with a much closer and earlier involvement by the DPP with police, may well mean a 20 per cent saving in courts and in police dealing with these criminal matters.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Only the committals.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Yes, in terms of committals. I said 'in respect of these matters': not across the whole system. Certainly the experience in New South Wales and Victoria indicates that there would be savings.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: What about Matthew?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The report which appeared in the newspaper and which purported to come from the DPP, on my discussions with the DPP, was a misrepresentation of his position.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: That is what the *Advertiser* says—I checked. Don't you worry about that.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: You wanted an answer. The DPP indicates that his statement in relation to this was—

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The more you interject on me, the more I will keep going.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will answer the question.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The honourable member cannot keep quiet.

An honourable member: Exactly, throw her out!

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The DPP wanted a small unit. There was never, at any stage, any suggestion by the DPP that he was working towards the replacement of all the police prosecutors. It was a distortion of the facts. The concept is a small unit which he has worked through with police prosecutors and with which, as I understand it, police prosecutors were comfortable because they could see that there was an advantage for them, an advantage for the courts and an advantage for the system to have the DPP involved at a much earlier stage. That is where it really rests. The Minister for Emergency Services made some statements based upon inaccurate representations of what the DPP was claimed to have been aiming for.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Why didn't he check with you or the DPP?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I happened to be out of the State at the time. I was satisfied that it was all a significant misunderstanding about what the DPP was on about. As far as I am aware, it is acknowledged by the police and police prosecutors that there are advantages in the system, and at the moment the Government is giving consideration to how that will be put in place.

TOW TRUCKS

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the tow truck regulations.

Leave granted.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: Recently I have received representations from a metropolitan crash repair company about perceived inadequacies in the system, which has now been in operation for some years, under the accident towing roster scheme regulations. The company cites examples where people involved in accidents have been coerced into having their vehicles towed to the workshop of the tow truck operator, even though they have nominated some other crash repairer as their first choice. He also cites instances where, quite properly, he has advised people involved in accidents who wanted him to collect their vehicles that they must instead arrange for a rostered tow truck to collect their vehicles for delivery to his premises. He says that in most cases those vehicles have ended up in the workshop of the tow truck operator.

As a member of the old Subordinate Legislation Committee in the mid-1980s I well remember the horror stories that were told by various people at the time about acts of coercion, intimidation and even violence against accident victims prior to the introduction of the roster system. At that time we all agreed that such behaviour should be stamped out. Indeed, such provisions were provided by way of disciplinary powers, and in particular clause 51(h) of the regulations, which empowers the Registrar to take action against a tow truck operator if he or she has acted in an intimidatory, threatening, violent or otherwise unethical way with respect to towing, storage or repair of any vehicle. However, it would appear from what this crash repairer is saying that some of the old practices remain or are re-emerging. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Is she satisfied that the accident towing roster scheme regulations are being adequately policed?

2. If there is evidence of other complaints similar to those that I have received, does she agree that greater effort is required to enforce the regulations?

3. As some years have passed since the regulations were introduced, will she consider approaching the RAA with a view to conducting a publicity campaign (a) to remind people of their right to have vehicles towed from the scene of an accident to a repairer of their choice and (b) to encourage members of the public to report any cases of threatening or

intimidating behaviour by tow truck operators so that disciplinary action may be taken against them?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I thank the honourable member for her question. In the past few months I have received a number of letters about the tow truck roster. Some have sought to change the arrangements which limit the number of companies that can participate in the roster system. It is seen by a number of crash repair operators as a closed shop at present and they want to open it up further. I have been advised by the Accident Towing Roster Scheme Committee that a designated number of tow truck calls should be the minimum for any company in any one month. At the moment all tow truck operators are well under what is seen to be the minimum number of tow truck call-outs in that period. Therefore, the committee that is responsible for preparing the roster does not wish to see changes to that roster with the addition of more companies participating. However, I have asked for a review of that arrangement, including a number of the regulations.

I have passed on to this review committee the concerns that the honourable member expressed in this place today because they have been raised with me, too. Arising from my inquiries, I understand that the RAA is very interested in being in charge of the roster in the future. However, the police are against such a move. They believe that it gives them an early warning of where an accident is and they can thus control the situation and get people out to do the investigation. They believe that they should be in charge of the roster and the policing of the system. That is where the responsibility lies at present. I am trying to sort out the arguments between the police and others. I propose to speak to the Minister for Emergency Services because the arguments must be explored and resolved.

We certainly have to address the concerns expressed by the honourable member on behalf of her constituent, because no-one involved in a car accident, whether they are at fault or a victim, wishes to be harassed in the way that crash victims were harassed before this roster system was introduced. I am aware that the honourable member was involved in a rather agonising and traumatic select committee, because that was also the response of members of my Party to that select committee's inquiries. I want to avoid a repeat of that situation at any cost. I am working through the issues with representatives of the Department of Road Transport, the Towtruck Owners and Operators Association and the police, and we are also discussing various matters with a Government adviser on deregulation. I shall be able to provide very shortly a more detailed response to the honourable member about progress of the discussions that I am presently having.

RURAL ADJUSTMENT SCHEME

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Primary Industries, a question about the Rural Adjustment Scheme.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I am in receipt of correspondence from the Chairman of the Kangaroo Island Rural Action Group, Mr Gregory Roberts, expressing concern about the administration of the Rural Adjustment Scheme by the Liberal Government. In their correspondence my constituents have raised concerns about, first, the relocations and, secondly, the credentials of consultants being contracted by the Rural Finance Department. The Kangaroo Island Rural Action Group is particularly concerned about the administration of applications for re-establishment grants. According to Mr Roberts, his group knows of 30 applicants for re-establishment grants but only six have received the $45 000 grant and the rest have received nothing. Mr Roberts says in his letter:

> The administration of the scheme is left to the States and this clearly is where the fault lies. The State's officers appear to be working against the spirit of the Act. One wonders whether this is due to the severe financial cut-backs or by political design.

It appears that, of six successful applicants from the Kangaroo Island Rural Action Group, three were only successful after appealing against earlier decisions made by the departmental officers. Some key wording of the Commonwealth Act provides:

> Assistance will be granted at the discretion of the departmental officers.

All the above mentioned applicants have met the quantitative criteria yet still are rejected by the departmental officers. Given the concerns raised by the action group, my questions to the Minister are:

1. How many applications for assistance under the Rural Adjustment Scheme have been received since he became Minister in December last year?

2. What percentage of these applications have received re-establishment grants and/or interest rate subsidies?

3. What is the criteria under which applications are accepted or rejected?

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

NATIONAL PARKS

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources a question about the national parks audit.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: On 12 April 1994 the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources released the review into the management of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and announced that he had called for an immediate park audit to give him a snapshot of the condition of natural and built assets in all reserves in South Australia. I am curious about why the Minister would need to commission yet another report, given his strident criticism of the management of parks last year and the Liberal policy indicating that this work would be undertaken by a new South Australian Parks and Wildlife Commission.

The Liberal Party policy on national parks promised legislation to establish the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Commission, with responsibility for the protection of the State's flora and fauna. I remind members of some of the Minister's statements during last year's Estimates Committee when he claimed:

> The management of our parks and reserves under the National Parks and Wildlife Act is a disaster.

He also said:

> . . . staffing levels are an absolute disgrace.

My questions are:

1. What process has the Minister put in place to assess and implement the recommendations of the review into the management of the National Parks and Wildlife Act?

2. When will the Minister introduce legislation to establish the proposed South Australian Parks and Wildlife Commission?

3. In view of the Minister's past criticisms of the management of the State's parks and reserves, can he describe new programs to be introduced during 1994-95, and how many additional staff will be employed to address what the Minister described as a disgrace?

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

B-DOUBLE SEMITRAILERS

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about B-double semitrailers.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I refer the Minister to an article in the *Daily Commercial News* of 12 July 1994 detailing plans by freight companies, Linertrains and TNT Contrans, to operate an international and domestic container road transport service on the Melbourne to Adelaide road corridor in direct competition with the National Rail Corporation. This represents about 80 extra movements of fully laden semitrailers with additional trailers, known as B-doubles, each day, six days a week between Adelaide and Melbourne. That traffic will almost certainly travel along Portrush, Mt Barker and other suburban roads. A few weeks ago, while I was driving through Port Augusta a B-double semitrailer turned across the road in front of me. I was forced to break hard to a stop to avoid a collision, not anticipating the vehicle to be longer than a standard semitrailer. As well as concerns about road safety we also have concerns about road damage. My questions are:

1. What are the implications of this extra traffic on South Australian roads in terms of the road toll and the resultant burden on South Australian hospitals and motor insurance premiums? Does the Minister believe that having more B-double semitrailers on the road is a greater hazard to road safety than the standard semitrailers?

2. What is the marginal cost difference between B-doubles and railcars in terms of road or track damage? If freight can be moved with less net damage to infrastructure with rail transport rather than with road transport, will the Government move to prevent more B-double semitrailers from travelling on South Australian roads? If not, why not?

3. Can the Minister inform the Council what steps, if any, the Government is taking to reverse the deteriorating situation with regard to the operations of the National Rail Corporation in South Australia?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: In part the honourable member has answered her own question. In her third question she asked me what steps I was taking to address the deteriorating situation for National Rail. One of the reasons that I have been provided with from the road transport industry and from freight forwarders, in particular, for moving towards road transport is the frustration with progress with National Rail, particularly the frustration that they are experiencing at the Islington freight depot, in the Adelaide area and, more particularly, in Melbourne. They have been warning National Rail for the past six to nine months that, unless it got its act together in terms of work practices, efficiency, blockages and delays, for their own survival they would be resorting to increased use of road transport.

I regret to advise that the article to which the honourable member refers and the experiences that have been related to me prove that their level of frustration has got to the point where they are resorting to the use of more B-doubles. That is not because they wish to clog up the roads. There is no question that B-doubles provide a very efficient and cost effective means of moving goods between Adelaide and Melbourne in this instance and also around Australia in general. Trains offer even more attractive benefits to many primary and secondary producers and freight forwarders.

It is because of those efficiencies in road transport that rail has to perform better than it has been performing, and it has to perform better particularly in terms of time-sensitive goods and practices. It is a fact that in the commercial world today people are not storing goods in warehouses and the like for long periods of time, because of costs of overheads and so on. Therefore, they want time-sensitive deliveries. Rail is not providing that at the present time and has not provided it for some time. Therefore, in the cut-throat business of manufacturing, for the reasons I have indicated of sheer survival in these economic times, more and more manufacturing industries, more primary producers and more freight forwarders are resorting to the use of road transport.

This has a lot of implications for the road toll, I suspect; it certainly has implications for road wear and congestion. It has major implications for the Mount Barker road at a time when we have no indication from the Federal Government about when we may receive funding for upgrading that road or for any tunnel from Devil's Elbow through to Eagle on the Hill—matters that I discussed with the Federal Minister yesterday. Those are our problems, for us to address. In good faith we as a Government and Labor when it was in Government put a lot of energy, commitment and vision into the establishment of National Rail. To date it has not lived up to those expectations.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: As a supplementary question: if the Minister does regard the use of B-doubles as inevitable, who will be bearing the cost of road damage repair; will it be local, State or Federal Government?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I do not wish to regard it as inevitable. I am still having discussions with National Rail to see whether it can improve its performance in this area. As part of my learning experience I travelled with railcar drivers from Adelaide to Tailem Bend a few months ago, to learn more about practices in rail and some of the challenges that National Rail is facing. I do not see it as inevitable, nor do I wish to see National Rail fail in our objectives for the swift, efficient movement of goods between Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. I do know that the projections for increase in manufacturing industry, primary production and the export of goods generally will see a progressive demand for more freight movement and there will be more movement on roads as a consequence. Last year or the year before, the Bureau of Transport Economics suggested that, even if National Rail does perform at peak efficiency, there are projections of a 30 per cent increase in heavy vehicle transport. All those matters must be addressed in terms of road funding and wear and tear. If the vehicles are travelling direct from Melbourne to Adelaide they are travelling on a national highway system, which is the responsibility of the Federal Government. If they are coming from the Mount Gambier or Hamilton farming communities, many of them will be travelling on State arterial and local roads. That is of concern to the Government.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services a question about a video and resource package.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Last week a question was asked in this Chamber on the issue of a video and resource package being produced by the Women's Studies Resource Centre for the women's suffrage centenary. Is the Minister in a position to report on any progress in ensuring that the video and resource package can soon be made available to schools?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am pleased to be able to report that on 5 August—last Friday—I received a letter from Liz Ahern on behalf of the Women's Studies Resource Centre collective which states in part:

> We are pleased with the response and suggestions as to how the video could be amended and will continue our discussions with officers in the Office of the Minister for the Status of Women about existing footage or new film for inclusion in the video. We understand that a question was raised in Parliament about the video. We wish to assure you that we did not initiate this action and are satisfied with the recent discussions we have had with your office and with the Education Department. We look forward to continuing and finalising the production of the package and thank you for your support.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: As a supplementary question: will the Minister make the new video available to members of Parliament who wish to view it before it goes into production?

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: Yes, well you are going to tamper with the old one.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I find it difficult to understand the question as to how I can show the Hon. Ms Pickles a copy of the video before it goes into production. If she thinks about the logic of that question she might like to ask another supplementary or ask another question.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles: Which bits are you taking out and which bits are you putting in?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Not at all sensitive.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am not sure what the honourable member is interjecting now, and I do not think I should choose to respond to those interjections. I am not in a position to let the honourable member look at a copy of the video before it goes into production. I have outlined to the honourable member and all members my concerns with one element of the video; I outlined that concern fully and explicitly last week. I have written to the Women's Studies Resource Centre collective, it has responded that it is very happy with the process that is being adopted, and we are looking forward to ensuring that we can have the video and resource package in schools as soon as possible, so we would not want to put in train any further delay mechanisms by having the Hon. Ms Pickles or anybody else at this stage casting their collective eyes across the video. I can assure you that I am pretty confident—

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: It is interesting that the Hon. Ms Pickles says that she is keen to see that 'our side'—and I presume by that she means the Government—

An honourable member: It's bipartisan.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Exactly—will get the same footage as 'her side', which I presume means the Labor Party. It was not a concern of the Hon. Ms Pickles when the video package involving $80 000 of taxpayers' money was, in effect, a promo for super Susan, the former Minister of Education, Employment and Training.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles: I never saw it.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: You were part of the committee. You said—

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles: I never saw it.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: You should have looked at it. You were the one authorising this package. It is fine for the honourable member to stand in this Chamber now and say, 'We want to compare the seconds between the Government's side and the Opposition's side in regard to the video.' When the honourable member was on the committee originally overseeing the video, there was no thought to the notion that the video ought to be bipartisan. In effect, it was a promotional vehicle for super Susan from the south saving the issue that was being canvassed by the students as part of a video and resource package. As I indicated in a very moderate fashion last week, I thought, the goals for this video and resource package, which I am sure are shared by all members, will be well served by the process that I have outlined to the collective.

As I have just indicated, the collective has now indicated that it is happy with the process in relation to some amendments to the video and resource package and, therefore, I believe that the honourable member and all members will be pleased when they see the final version of the video, that it will at least achieve some measure of bipartisanship by ensuring that it is not just one member or former member of Parliament who features in the video.

PUBLIC SECTOR SAVINGS

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services, as the Leader of the Government in this Council, a question about cost savings, if any, to South Australian taxpayers as a consequence of the present Government's plan to restructure South Australia's Public Service.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Much has been said recently about the necessity to trim this State's Public Service, and the figure bandied around is 10 000 public servants. Many reasons are advanced to put some public gloss on these occurrences. One is to pay off the public debt incurred as a consequence of the activities of the old State Bank. Another is to try to keep State taxes and charges from increasing, etc. It is with the second observation that I wish to base my question concerning recent events. We have seen throughout Australia much duckshoving by all State and Federal Governments over public charges by the major Parties of both political persuasions.

For instance, the Bannon Government, after having introduced our WorkCover scheme, realised that in so doing there would be a significant decrease in Federal Government moneys paid out in sickness benefits, health costs and unemployment benefits that would be greatly reduced in respect of the Federal Government's cash outflows. Yet, at subsequent Premiers' Conferences John Bannon and subsequently Lynn Arnold were not able to convince either Hawke

or Keating of the right of South Australia to be compensated for picking up what were in other States charges on the Federal Government.

I suppose that the Federal people chortled in glee at the thought of the cost transfer from Canberra to Adelaide. In light of the fact that irrespective of whose ledger, whether it be Federal or State Government, the costs come from, it must be said that it is the South Australian taxpayer who ultimately shoulders the burden as they are taxed by both State and Federal Governments. In light of the foregoing, has the State Government done a cost benefit analysis as to the following aspects:

1. How many of the about to be made redundant male State public servants (that is, all people whose wages or salaries are currently paid by the State Government or one of its instrumentalities) are returned servicemen who will qualify for old age pensions and other pensioner benefits before they turn 65?

2. How many of the about to be made redundant female public servants (that is, all people whose wages or salaries are currently paid by the State Government or one of its instrumentalities) are entitled to apply for and receive old age pensions and all other pensioner benefits, both State and Federal, because they have not as yet turned 65?

3. How much will the present proposed redundancies cost the State taxpayer in redundancy payments?

4. How much will State services currently available to all pensioners cost State taxpayers in respect of the flow-on effect of those employees rendered redundant by the present State Government's policies before their time?

5. What will be the position if those employees who are entitled to do so apply for and receive the old age pension and all of the ancillary State benefits which flow to retired South Australians, a retirement which I remind the Council is being forced upon many South Australians by the Minister's Government's policy?

6. Has any forward exercise been done by this Government about how it will further erode the consumer purchasing power of South Australians by these redundancies?

7. In light of the recent bleatings of the Leader in response to some of my other questions—that he does not mind doing my research for me—does he recognise the seriousness of my questions and will he endeavour to ensure that as promptly as he can and in the interests of good Government he will bring back an answer to them? In the absence of any movement by him in that direction, I am sure that some of my Federal colleagues who follow our *Hansard* would be delighted to ask similar questions to which I assume answers would be forthcoming in another place.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind all honourable members asking questions that our Standing Orders do not allow opinion. That question contained a considerable amount of opinion. I have allowed a certain amount of opinion, because it adds a little flavour to the question, but that question did get a little over the fence. I remind honourable members to keep comment within bounds.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Mr President, I did not hear quite what you said to me. Would you care to repeat it for my education and edification?

The PRESIDENT: After Question Time, Mr Crothers.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As always, I am here to serve the honourable member. I will refer his detailed questions to the appropriate Minister or Ministers and bring back a reply. As to the general premise upon which he bases his questions as to why the Government is cutting back in the public sector by about 10 000 public servants, the honourable member will not be at all surprised to know that because of the mess that he and his Government created over the last 10 years or so this Government has had to look at that mess and seek to do something about it.

The issue of cutbacks in the public sector is not principally associated with the State mortgage or State debt—although there is some relationship—but it is in essence related to the key findings of the Audit Commission, which found that South Australia, with its State budget, is annually spending about $350 million each and every year more than we are earning. As I have indicated before, it does not matter whether you are running our own family budget, a business budget or a State's budget, you cannot keep on going on each and every year spending more than you are earning. You might be able to do it for a year or so, but in the end it catches up with you. This Government has accepted that essential finding of the Audit Commission and there are two or three responses to that. One could be that we raise an extra $350 million in taxes and charges and balance our annual budget that way. That is one option.

A second option is that we reduce our public expenditure and, therefore, the number of public servants by $350 million. The Government has chosen a figure of $300 million, because we believe that is closer to the mark than the $350 million posited initially by the Audit Commission.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: The Audit Commission was wrong, was it?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Well, we didn't believe the $350 million was right. That is the second response to the honourable member. The third response is a mixture of both: that is, you cut expenditure by a couple of hundred million dollars and you raise extra taxes and charges by $100 million or $150 million. As explained in the June financial statement by the Premier and Treasurer in another place, the Government chose the second option: to cut annual expenditure by about $300 million a year over a four year period.

The Audit Commission talked about a fast-track response: bringing everything into balance by the first 12 months. We rejected that. We are phasing in that balancing task over four years so that by the 1997-98 financial year we would have brought the State books into balance. That is the simple explanation as to why we are having to go through the process of a reduction in Public Service numbers. I am not sure what the exact percentage is, but I am prepared to obtain the information for the honourable member. Probably 70 or 80 per cent of that total expenditure is tied up with salaries and wages for public servants.

It is a very high percentage, and therefore in some departments like my own you cannot make expenditure cutbacks without reducing the number of persons within the department. It is a simple fact of life. That is the essential reason why the Government is heading down the path it is heading. The honourable member may well disagree with that, and that is his right but, in relation to specific questions, I will refer those to the responsible Ministers and bring back a reply as soon as possible.

RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the Council, representing the Premier, a question about nuclear waste disposal.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: The *Advertiser* of 19 July 1994 and the *Weekend Australian* of 23 and 24 July 1994 reported that the sites for the disposal of radioactive waste has been short-listed to eight sites, three of which are wholly in our State and two of which are partly therein. One site is the Maralinga atomic test site, which is already uninhabitable and heavily contaminated with nuclear fallout.

In commenting on the dump site the Premier is reported as saying that he is distancing his Government from any moves to store radioactive waste in South Australia. What he means by 'distancing his Government' is not clear, at least to me, because he is reported by the *Advertiser* of 27 July as saying:

> We won't be giving any commitments until we are absolutely assured that there is a net benefit.

It seems that the Premier is not prepared to rule out absolutely the storage of Australian nuclear waste in our State if it is solely a State decision. He should reject outright, in my view, the storage of Australia's nuclear waste even if there is some 'net benefit', as he calls it. Perhaps there is an alternative. Australia has a sovereignty of three islands sufficiently remote from our shores: Macquarie Island, south/south-east of Australia; Heard Island; and the McDonald Islands in the southern Indian Ocean. A meteorological and geological station has been maintained on Macquarie Island since 1948. This island would be the least suitable.

Heard Island, which has been uninhabited since the research station closed in 1954, is visited occasionally by expeditions travelling further south. The island has been used by US scientists concerned with the space program, and it may be used again. This island may be suitable for the disposal of radioactive waste.

The McDonald Islands would be the most suitable site for such a dump, with no threat to human beings as it is uninhabited and not likely to be inhabited, excepting by seals, penguins and other sea birds. The greenies, I am sure, would be screaming, but the choice of a suitable island and a suitable location thereon would minimise risk to animal life. It would not need guarding, as no-one would want it and anyone who might like to steal it would be very welcome to it, provided that they were prepared to accept any risk that goes with taking and using nuclear material. My questions are:

1. Rather than distancing the Government from moves to store Australia's radioactive waste in South Australia, will the Premier and the Government indeed resist all attempts to make our State the dump for radioactive waste, particularly at Maralinga?

2. Has the State or Federal Government given consideration to having a remote island under the sovereignty of Australia used as a radioactive and nuclear waste dump?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will be pleased to refer those questions to the Premier and bring back a reply.

CONTAINER DEPOSITS

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: 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 container deposit legislation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: At a seminar I attended the weekend before last on container deposit legislation it was revealed that industry discussions were taking place to find an alternative to container deposit legislation. The revelation was made by South Australian Brewing's Public Affairs Manager, Mr Kevin Taylor, who refused to elaborate on the discussions.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: No, it is not the same question. She left the seminar before Mr Taylor spoke this time. Mr Taylor said that he did not support any expansion of the scheme. He also indicated that the reuse of South Australian Brewing bottles was a year by year proposition. Perhaps this brings into question the company's commitment to the deposit scheme. When asked if members of the public could become involved in these discussions, Mr Taylor suggested that representatives of the public were already involved. This raised many concerns, as the Government has given no support to the possible expansion of the container deposit legislation, even though non-deposit containers are becoming a major problem within the litter stream.

The Conservation Council of South Australia (the peak body of conversation groups in this State) had no idea that such discussions were taking place. One is left asking: who has taken it upon themselves to represent the public interest on this conservation matter? KESAB would probably be my guess. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Is the Minister aware of the industry discussions which we are told are taking place?

2. Is he or are his departmental representatives involved in the discussions and, if so, will he release details of the discussions?

3. If people are involved in the discussions who are supposed to be representing the public, who are they?

4. What justification does the Minister give about the discussions not being in the public arena, particularly as the current scheme has strong public support?

5. Will the public be given a *fait accompli* and be offered mock public consultation—something like the shop trading hours—or will the Minister ensure that there is a proper public consultation on the issue?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

SELLICKS HILL CAVES

In reply to **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES** (22 March) and answered by letter dated 30 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information.

The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has not ignored advice given to him on the Sellicks Hill Caves by any authority, committee, department or interested individual or group. The Minister was grateful to receive advice from many different sources and took all such advice into account in relation to this whole issue. The Minister will not be reversing any decision that he has made. The Minister is not in a position to comment further as the matter is currently before the Supreme Court on judicial review proceedings.

SEWERAGE

In reply to **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES** (18 May) and answered by letter dated 28 July.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for Infrastructure has provided the following information.

The Government is considering carefully all of the recommendations made by the Audit Commission. The recommendation proposing an extension of the environmental levy on sewerage rates is being reviewed in the context of the need for further environmental improvement projects by the Engineering and Water Supply Department and that agency's ability to finance its programs.

A decision by the Government on this matter will be made in conjunction with the consideration of other recommendations by the Audit Commission for the establishment of an independent pricing review mechanism and the introduction of a new pricing structure for Engineering and Water Supply Department services.

AUDIT COMMISSION

In reply to **Hon. T. CROTHERS** (13 May) and answered by letter dated 21 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations has provided the following information.

It is not expected that there will be any reduction in the number of outlets for delivering Housing Trust services, if the Government accepts the recommendation of the Audit Commission to rationalise the Housing Trust's regional network. Any rationalisation would be in the area of management and planning, budgeting and reporting processes aimed at savings in administrative overheads.

If some regions are consolidated, any freed up managerial positions would be converted to service delivery positions to enable demand for housing assistance to be met. A further Audit Commission recommendation on the trust suggests collaboration with other community service authorities, particularly Department for Family and Community Services (FACS). Effective reciprocal arrangements have already been put in place in the area of domestic violence, however there is very little overlap in other services provided by the trust and FACS. Whilst further collaboration seems unlikely, any opportunities will be considered.

PORT STANVAC

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (12 May) and answered by letter dated 21 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information.

As part of the Coast Protection Board's sand replenishment program for Adelaide's beaches using dredged sand, the board commissioned a study of benthic marine life in the area near Port Stanvac to ensure that the full impact of dredging was understood to minimise any environmental damage. The study commenced in 1992 and was expected to cost $55 300. An interim report from the Department of Botany, University of Adelaide showed further work was necessary to positively assess the impact of dredging. To date a total of approximately $90 000 has been expended and $70 000 has been allocated in the 1994/95 budget for completing the work. To put this expenditure into perspective, it cost $2.1 million this year for the dredged sand replenishment program, and this work is required biennially.

The board considered the university's proposal for extending the work early this year and agreed that the prudent course of action to maintain the integrity of the study would be to collect samples in 1995. If analysis of the 1995 samples indicated a significant change then the 1994 samples would be re-analysed. The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has been assured that the study will be completed to provide the necessary understanding of the impact of dredging on the site. The results of the university study will be made public and the Minister understands that the Botany Department also wishes to make use of the work in published papers. The dredging activity will not be taking place further south than the current dredge site.

RECYCLING FEE

In reply to **Hon. BARBARA WIESE** (6 May) and answered by letter dated 21 May.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Officers of my department have been in contact with the Environmental Protection Authority, the Local Government Association and the Clean Up Australia organisation in researching this proposal. The figure of 300 vehicles mentioned by Mr Ian Kiernan as having been retrieved from national parks and reserves, during the recent 'Clean Up Australia' day campaign, related to the whole of Australia, and not to any particular State or Territory. Clean Up Australia has advised the majority of vehicles were located in New South Wales, following the clean-up campaign, mainly in areas devastated by bushfires earlier this year. These vehicles were in all probability dumped over a considerable period, some perhaps resulting from the theft of the vehicle.

In most cases, vehicles have some value, no matter their condition, either as scrap metal or as spare parts. The fact that the Environmental Protection Authority reported that only five vehicles were located as being abandoned in national parks in South Australia during 1993, suggests that the issue of abandoned vehicles may not be a great problem in South Australia. The Local Government Act provides councils with the authority to impound and sell abandoned vehicles. The Local Government Association does not consider abandoned vehicles to be a problem.

The introduction of a deposit system would likely be perceived by many as a new form of tax. As the average age of vehicles in this State is 11.5 years, a considerable amount of money would be collected and held in trust pending a claim at a later date. Given the advice of the Environmental Protection Authority and the Local Government Association, the set up and administration costs of a deposit scheme on new cars in this State does not seem justified.

WILPENA POUND

In reply to **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES** (5 May) and answered by letter dated 21 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information.

The honourable member has raised certain questions in relation to how this Government intends to handle provision of tourist facilities at Wilpena in the Flinders Ranges National Park.

In reply to the honourable member's particular questions the Minister has advised the following:

1. Refurbishment and additional development of the operation run by Flinders Ranges Tourist Services under the policy of this Government will provide an important financial asset for this Government and the wider community.
2. The Attorney-General is currently seeking legal advice from the Solicitor General as to the best way to achieve the Government's policy commitments.
3. Any cost implications for the Government will be evaluated in the context of advice being provided by the Solicitor General to the Attorney-General.

CONFERENCE BROCHURE

In reply to **Hon. ANNE LEVY** (5 May) and answered by letter dated 20 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for Tourism has provided the following information:

In relation to the claim that Melbourne has recently been voted the 'world's most livable city' the Minister for Tourism's advice is this refers to a survey initiated by the Washington based Population Crisis Committee. The Minister understands that, in the course of its work, this organisation has developed a list of the best and worst urban environments, based on such criteria as murders as a proportion of population, telephones, food costs, clean air, open space and so on.

Apparently Melbourne placed first on this list, along with Montreal and Seattle. Sydney was the only other Australian city included in the survey.

As far as the remaining claims in the brochure are concerned, they are a good demonstration of just how competitive the tourism marketing carried out by each of the Australian States and Territories is and to remind us once again of the high stakes involved in the development of our tourism industry.

WOLSELEY RAILWAY LINE

In reply to **Hon. BARBARA WIESE** (18 May) and answered by letter dated 20 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: From the summary of the thesis, the conclusion states '. . . a regional railway based in the Mount Gambier region would be a profitable venture which would be attractive to private investors. In the optimal solution, the community would invest in the operation by means of a once-only grant to standardise the lines and the regional railway would retain trackage rights enabling it to operate through to Adelaide and Melbourne'.

These conclusions were based on rail traffics of between 228 000 and 912 000 tonnes/annum, a standardisation cost of $10.5 million and 'short line' operating practices.

The figures used in the summary have been compared to the figures used in other recent evaluations of the Mount Gambier line.

Although the cost of standardising the track is in broad agreement with the other evaluations, the estimated traffic is considerably higher. The National Rail Corporation, AN and others have used a figure of about 150 000 tonnes/annum as the most likely level.

Insufficient detail is given in the summary to comment on the figures used for operating and other expenses, other than to say they are comparable to international best practice for 'short line' operation.

While the Government's preferred option is for the South-East lines to be standardised and operated by Australian National, what the summary does highlight is the need to consider options other than operation by the established rail operators with their inherited cost and management structures.

Accordingly, it has been proposed that detailed examination be made of the potential for 'short line' operations in South Australia. No funds are available for this purpose this financial year. It may be possible to fund the project in 1994-95 and if this is so the following matters would be examined.

. Operational arrangements (for example, ownership of infrastructure and equipment, liability and insurance, and labour relations);
. Working relationships with the existing rail systems (for example, trackage rights, access to freight terminals, and cross border issues);
. State and community benefits and disbenefits; and
. The potential for "short line" operation in South Australia (for example, what lines or groups of lines, likely traffics and the financial assistance needed).

I assume the report the honourable member refers to is a thesis undertaken by a member (Frank Lander) of Rail 2000. I do not have a copy of the report. I was only given a confidential copy of the summary document. I am therefore unable to give the honourable member a copy. However, the honourable member may be able to obtain one by request from the author of Rail 2000.

NATIONAL PARKS

In reply to **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES** (4 May) and answered by letter dated 30 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Premier has provided the following information:

The Audit Commission excluded from the State's assets land which it considered could not be deemed to have a market value as it would not be sold. To have included a value for such assets presupposes that the State would consider selling such assets.

Recommendations of the report into the Management of the National Parks and Wildlife Act does not suggest a wholesale sale of the reserve areas under a park audit. Indeed, it suggests strict limitations on consideration of sale of such land and recommends surplus funds should be directed towards reserve management.

The Audit Commission does not suggest that the majority of land reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act has no value as the honourable member suggests, rather it excludes the value from the State's financial position as there is no intention to sell such land.

To include a value inflates the available assets the State has available to realistically offset against its liabilities should the Government choose to dispose of assets.

WILPENA POUND

In reply to **Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES** (6 May) and answered by letter dated 30 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information.

The honourable member has sought advice from the Government on the role of the Reserves Advisory Committee in restructuring the Flinders Ranges National Park Management Plan to accommodate the new lease for Flinders Ranges Tourist Services Pty Ltd.

The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has advised that before any new lease or development activity can take place within the Flinders Ranges National Park of which Wilpena is part, the existing adopted management plan must be amended in accordance with the provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972 (as amended). The procedure for amending management plans is set out in section 38 of that Act.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (3 May) and answered by letter dated 20 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has provided the following information.

1. In his statement of 3 May 1994 the Minister said that his discretion under s.23 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act was not determined by the contractual obligations of the Government. Beyond this, the question seeks an expression of a legal opinion by the Minister in relation to a hypothetical event.

2. The Minister has had an archaeological report prepared for him on the impact of the bridge construction on Aboriginal sites. The Aboriginal informants have not given their consent to the report being released in full. The Minister does not intend to release the report until such time as he can be sure that Aboriginal cultural information will not be revealed as a result.

3. The Minister only received the report late on Friday 29 April 1994. He did not make his decision until after he received further legal advice on Monday 2 May 1994. Given the importance of the issue, the Minister considered it warranted a ministerial statement and the first opportunity to deliver a statement was Tuesday 3 May 1994.

TAXIS

In reply to **Hon. M.S. FELEPPA** (24 March) and answered by letter dated 21 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Attorney-General has provided the following information:

1. The Commonwealth has no general powers to legislate in respect of the taxi industry. Commonwealth legislative powers do affect the taxi-industry, and in so far as the industry is carried on by trading corporations, the corporation's power (section 51(xx)) could be used to regulate the conduct of the industry. Another power which could be used by the Commonwealth is the posts and telegraphs power (section 51(v)) which could regulate the use of radio and telephones in the taxi industry. The Commonwealth does not have the legislative power to regulate the industry completely and there is no suggestion that the Commonwealth will unilaterally attempt to do so.

2. Mutual recognition which is adopted by this State has the effect of overriding, to a varying extent, State laws which deal with the sale of goods and the registration of persons to carry on occupations. The operation of mutual recognition will not affect the economic regulation of the taxi industry in this State. Under mutual recognition, a person who is registered for an occupation in another State is entitled to be registered in this State. For example, a person who is licensed as a taxi driver in Victoria is entitled to be licensed as a taxi driver in South Australia. The economic regulation of the taxi industry is not carried out by the licensing of persons, but by the licensing of vehicles. Mutual recognition does not require that a person who owns a vehicle registered as a taxi in Victoria is entitled to have a vehicle registered as a taxi in this State. Owning a taxi is not registration for an occupation. The legal effect of mutual recognition comes from this and other States either referring powers, or adopting Commonwealth legislation. Accordingly, this legislation would not affect later valid Commonwealth legislation.

3. State legislation cannot override valid Commonwealth legislation. By virtue of section 109 of the Constitution the opposite is the case. In Hansard the Minister for Transport made reference to the Hilmer Report. It is one of the recommendations of the Hilmer Report that non-incorporated businesses be brought under the Trade Practices Act. If this were done the taxi industry may be significantly affected. For this recommendation to be implemented the cooperation of the States is required as the Commonwealth lacks the Constitutional powers to do this unilaterally. The Government is in the process of preparing a report on the impact upon the State of implementing the Hilmer Report. One area which will be considered is transport, including its impact upon the taxi industry. The team to whom the Premier has delegated this task will be consulting with the industry in the course of preparing their report.

ROCLA QUARRY

In reply to **Hon. ANNE LEVY** (13 May) and answered by letter dated 21 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Maslins Coloured Sands Report was commissioned jointly by Art for Public Places, Department for the Arts and Cultural Development and the Department of Tourism Industry Development.

The Art for Public Places Committee was made aware of the significant coloured sand deposit through the works of German artist, Nicolas Lang who has visited Australia four times to work at the ROCLA quarry at Maslins and has created works of art that are highly esteemed at the international level by taking impressions from the sand face. Mr Lang is an authority on ochres and geological

formations and believes that these sands represent a geologically and artistically significant landform which is unique in the world.

The brief for the preparation of the report asked the consultant to 'identify and develop an imaginative concept for the establishment and development of an artistic-environmental reserve which provides a facility which addresses geological and environmental conservation and also potentially provides for arts activities or events, or similar in conjunction with tourism activities. It should also practically address environmentally sensitive landscape and pertinent cultural issues in the development of the site.'

The preparation of the report has been complex and has involved considerable consultation with many reference groups including the Department of Mines and Energy, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Tourism Industry Development, District Council of Willunga, Kaurna Heritage Committee, Maslins community group, Noarlunga City Council and the Southern Development Board.

A summary of recommendations was presented to an Art for Public Places Committee meeting on Wednesday 18 May, 1994. The final report will be available late June following assessment of feedback regarding the summary report. The consultancy team preparing the report is endeavouring to ensure that the needs and concerns of all relevant parties are noted and will be dealt with in the final report.

The ROCLA quarry management is willing to work co-operatively in the rehabilitation of the site and recognises that if plans are established now they can begin to be implemented during the ongoing quarry operation.

The report will certainly be made available when it is completed. The support of all relevant Ministers and their departments will be sought to determine the direction taken in the realisation of the recommendations contained within the report, to ensure the Maslins Coloured Sands deposit is retained and the site developed in a way that enables access to a broad public and one that is beneficial in terms of the arts, tourism, the environment and the community.

RED GUMS

In reply to **Hon. T.G. ROBERTS** (5 May) and answered by letter dated 20 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information.

The removal of trees to enable new farming ventures and technologies is regulated under the Native Vegetation Act. Any such clearance approved by the Native Vegetation Council is conditional upon the landholder replanting or regenerating areas of trees and understorey in another area of the property. This, coupled with Landcare, Property Planning, and a responsible attitude by the landholder, will ensure that the treescape of the South-East will continue. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is seeking funding under 'Save the Bush' to investigate in part the possible area of large red gums that could be considered for removal through changes of land use to grapes and pivot irrigation.

YAKKA CLEARANCE

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (4 May) and answered by letter dated 20 June.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources has provided the following information:

1. While there have been allegations that illegal clearance of yakkas is common practice, no documented reports of such clearance have been provided to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. If it were as alleged, then departmental officers would have reported some activity.

2. All reports of illegal clearance where some detail as to location and/or persons involved are provided are investigated. Where substantiated, the cases are prosecuted before the courts. The people of Kangaroo Island, especially the landholders and the local councils are well aware of the requirements under the Native Vegetation Act 1991.

With regard to harvesting of yakka gum, departmental officers have provided relevant information to a recent meeting held on Kangaroo Island to discuss this industry.

3. The extremely slow growth of yakkas does limit the rate at which gum can be produced from plantings. However, the economics will depend upon price paid for the gum. Any landholders wishing to pursue this avenue will have to experiment and they should approach the Department of Primary Industries for advice.

EDUCATION FUNDING

In reply to **Hon. C.J. SUMNER** (14 April) and answered by letter on 31 May.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: There have been three 'Big Picture' discussions held between representatives of the Department for Education and Children's Services and the SA Institute of Teachers.

1. MEETINGS:

The first discussion was held on 17 December, 1993, subsequent meetings were held on 21 December 1993 and last on 29 March 1994.

2. THOSE PRESENT WERE:

Department for Education and Children's Services:

Marilyn Sleath
Kevin Boaden
Sandi Fueloep
Ewa Swiecicka
David Mellen
Rodney Gracey attended the 29 March 1994 meeting in lieu of Ewa Swiecicka.

SA Institute of Teachers representatives:

Clare McCarty (first meeting only)
Ken Drury
Lou Davey
Jacqui Catalano
Angas Story
Steve Errock (last meeting only)

3. MINUTES/NOTES

No formal notes or minutes were taken.

I understand some officers did write some 'shorthand' notes in the margins of the confidential paper circulated by SAIT officers at the meeting.

The discussion agenda of 29 March 1994 was formed via SAIT's paper tabled on the day. The three page paper covered:

- 4 year Guarantee
- Leadership in Country Schools
- Teacher Leave
- 2%:98%
- 10 Year Limited Placement
- Country Incentives
- Career Planning

Each of the above topics were addressed with examples of change discussed in a notional sense only.

The issue of teacher's morale as they are placed in a temporary vacancy was discussed. 1100 permanent teachers are currently placed in temporary vacancies with the remaining 700 occupied by contract staff.

Changing the 98 per cent:2 per cent ratio 'agreement' to allow permanent teachers to fill only ongoing vacancies was explored.

I am advised that at no time was the cutting or reducing the teacher work forces by 1800 permanent positions discussed let alone negotiated.

4. TABLING DOCUMENTATION

A copy of the 'without prejudice' discussion paper produced by SAIT on 29 March 1994 and which formed the agenda is held by all officers present on that day.

The tabling of this document would embarrass SAIT given the sensitive nature of a proportion of the topics.

It needs to be emphasised discussion did not result in any proposals which could form the basis of negotiation.

Normal protocol indicates the paper should not be tabled as the paper in question and discussion took place in terms of a 'without prejudice' discussion.

The meetings did not lead to a statement by departmental representatives on any formal changes to current personnel policies. The meetings were held to discuss options for introducing appropriate flexibilities in staffing of schools.

ALBERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

In reply to **Hon. C.J. SUMNER** (4 May) and answered by letter dated 22 May.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: There is no record of police checks being made, or requested, by either the Office of the Minister for Education and Children's Services nor the Department for Education and Children's Services on the criminal records of any members of the Alberton School Council.

INTENSIVE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DISORDER UNIT

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (10 May) and answered on 13 June.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Intensive Speech and Language Programs for preschool children, between 3½ and 5 years of age, are currently operating in three locations. These are the Intensive Speech and Language Disorder Unit at Regency Park Centre, Valley View Kindergarten and Warradale Kindergarten.

Over the past year the Crippled Children's Association (CCA) and the Children's Services Office (within DECS) have been negotiating the development of a model for community based provision of intensive speech and language programs in preschools.

This will further decentralise the current three programs and will include the closure of the Intensive Speech and Language Unit at Regency Park at the end of Term 2, in July 1994.

The model allows for six programs provided in six preschools (two in the northern metropolitan region, two in the southern metropolitan region and one in each of the western and eastern metropolitan regions). Each program will work with six children allowing for 36 children to be supported, rather than the current 18 children. This will decrease waiting lists.

Funding is provided through the Special Education Consultative Committee. The staff of both the Crippled Children's Association and the Children's Services Office agree that there are significant developmental gains to be made by children with severe speech and language disorders receiving intensive speech pathology support and educational support within a mainstream educational setting, i.e., a preschool. The contact with peers with developmentally appropriate speech and language skills, is to their advantage.

Each child is to attend four extended preschool sessions (each of 3¾ hours) per week. The additional time involved in extended session will allow for two sessions of specialist therapy input in each preschool session to enhance the preschool program for the child. The therapy time and intensity will be the same as is current at Regency Park Centre.

The extended preschool sessions equate to approximately 5½ regular sessions. (Children at ISLU, Regency Park, currently receive six sessions of preschool, and children at local preschools are eligible for four sessions per week).

Early entry and extended time at preschool can also be approved by the regional manager to meet individual needs.

Since September last year a Speech and Language Programs Reference Group comprising parent representatives from the Intensive Speech and Language Unit at Regency Park Centre, and parent representatives from the other current programs, and staff from CCA and CSO, have acted as a coordinating body in managing the decentralisation of this service to community based preschools. Parent representatives have fed back information about decisions and progress to the relevant parent groups.

In early May, I approved the model and the associated funding for the six programs until the end of 1994. Long term funding will be negotiated within the departments and the Commonwealth. Parents were verbally informed of my decision by members of the Reference Group and letters were sent out in confirmation in the week beginning Monday, 23 May 1994. Letters were also sent to the preschool directors/management committees of current programs and the proposed preschool sites, who had been approached previously to incorporate a speech and language program into their preschool program.

Staff of the CSO and CCA in discussion with the reference group are coordinating the employment of staff and implementation of the new programs. It is planned that the new programs will be under way early in Term 3, 1994.

In addition to normal preschool allocation, speech and language program staffing in each program will be:

0.5 teacher
0.5 speech therapist
0.7 therapy assistant

A formal evaluation process is being discussed by the reference group which will take account of the progress of children in the programs. A subgroup of the reference group will be coordinating the evaluation taking into account the views of parents. They will explore the possibility of an external consultant.

In summary:

- The decentralisation of Speech and Language programs is being coordinated by a reference group including parents.
- I have approved funding for 1994 and long term funding is being negotiated.
- It is agreed by staff involved that the structure of the preschool sessions and the amount of therapy input in each program achieves equity of out come for these children.

SENIOR SECONDARY ASSESSMENT BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In reply to **Hon. C.J. SUMNER** (12 May) and answered by letter 10 June.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:

1. The Report of the Review is a public document. Prior to the consideration of the Report by the Board embargoed copies were provided to The Advertiser and the ABC and it was widely reported on Thursday 28 April 1994. These were not 'leaked' copies but intentionally made available. On Thursday 28 April the Report became public and all SSABSA staff received copies. Copies were sent to the Chief Executive Officers of the school sectors, to me, to the university Vice Chancellors and to all secondary school principals on request. The Report has been available to the public, free of charge, from SSABSA, upon request. I am happy to enclose a copy.

2. The Report provided a comprehensive series of sixty-five major and subsidiary recommendations, for action in relation to the problems which occurred in 1993. These recommendations covered Results Integrity; Collection and Confirmation of the Results Data; Information Systems Issues; Communication with Schools; Management Structures; Resourcing Implications; Timelines, Results Release Procedures; Specific Curriculum Matters; and Dual Reporting of Results.

I am able to report that the response of the Board and the management of SSABSA has been swift and concerted in accepting and moving to implement the recommendations to ensure that the same problems do not occur again. The specific actions taken to date include:

(1) initiation of a complete audit and checking of the 1993 results (this is nearing completion and I am advised that, to date, no errors beyond those which were previously known have been identified).
(2) restructuring of the SACE operations area to bring together all facets of the process under a single coordinated branch of management. Both senior staff brought in to key positions in the SACE Operations area had not been directly involved in the 1993 results preparation.
(3) a review of the capacities of the information systems hardware and software used by SSABSA and upgrading where appropriate, to ensure that sufficient capacity exists for the 1994 results processing.
(4) reorganisation of the relationship and communications with schools and revision of the enrolment and results collection procedures.
(5) suspension of further developments of the SASO computer enrolment system developed by SSABSA for schools and planing of a new system for future implementation. This will still allow schools familiar with, and able to use the current system to do so in the interim period.
(6) development of various plans to speed up the results processing and to implement an on-going accuracy audit during the preparation of the 1994 results.

3. As I indicated to the Council in my earlier comments on 12 May, the Report does indicate that additional resources will be required, at least in the short term to ensure that adequate staffing levels, and resource levels, particularly in relation to computer hardware and software exist to facilitate the effective further processing of results. I have been advised that the recommendations are being costed and that SSABSA will provide me with a detailed report on the cost implications of the recommendations, within the context of SSABSA's overall budget situation as soon as it is available. This will, of course be factored into the broader budget and funding arrangements associated with the budget.

A major element of additional cost in the recommendations is the proposal that a new, state-of-the-art computer-based enrolment and result system be developed to replace the SASO system. The report suggests this be available for the 1996 school year and this will have budget implications for the 1994-5 financial year, and to a lesser extent, the 1995-6 financial year.

4. I have already indicated to the Council that the action already taken by SSABSA includes a major overhaul and restructuring of the management arrangements for the SACE Operations area, and that SSABSA has moved also to improve its communication with schools. One element of this process includes setting up a SACE

Operations Reference Group which will meet every two weeks and includes several representatives from schools, including a school principal, SACE Coordinator, practicing teacher, and school administrative officer.

I should stress that SSABSA has always and continues to have, a culture of service to its clients, including students, schools and the general community. The structures to achieve this more effectively, and especially to achieve better communication with schools and improved response time when problems are encountered are being put in place for 1994.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (18 May).

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I wish to repeat my earlier advice that there was not a Government submission or a departmental submission to Ernst & Young.

SAIT chose to put forward a submission to Ernst & Young, but the department was not asked for and did not provide a submission to Ernst & Young.

Ernst & Young worked to term of reference given to them by the Commission of Audit—it was not the role of the consultants to seek public or departmental submission but to investigate specific area within their terms of reference. To this end Ernst & Young sought data and answers to questions of departmental officers as part of the investigation of specific areas within the terms of reference.

ELECTION ERRORS

In reply to **Hon. C.J. SUMNER** (2 August).

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN:

1. As members would know the Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission must take into consideration the political impact of its decisions so that a party or group achieving more than fifty percent of the two-party-preferred vote in the Assembly, has the opportunity to form a government. To meet this requirement, polling booth results are used to calculate the political impact, as they provide the best guide as what may occur in the event that electors in the catchment area of a booth, are moved to form part of another electorate.

It was in this process that it was found that the average two-party-preferred vote for the polling booths differed by 3% from the total district figure. The only way that could have occurred was for the Democrat candidate's preferences in the declaration votes to have split 60% for Mr Brindal and 40% for Mr Mayes. This was the reverse of the situation in the polling booth figures. A small variation is to be expected because most declaration voters do not have access to candidates' how-to-vote cards. This difference in Unley was not a small variation, leading to the conclusion that a transposition error had occurred.

The Returning Officer for Unley was asked to review his 'Return' and he arrived at the same conclusion on 26 July, 1994. He undertook to write each candidate and inform them of the error. The Electoral Commissioner did likewise but wrote also to the Parties involved and Dr Dean Jaensch of Flinders University. Those letters were posted on 28 July, 1994. I was not informed of the error by the Electoral Commissioner.

2. On 26 July, 1994.

3. As mentioned in answer to question 1, the possibility of an error was discovered by an officer of the Boundaries Commission (who is also on the Electoral Commissioner's staff) on 21 July. Further investigation led to the error being identified.

4. Unley was not dealt with in isolation and the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that no error of this nature, size or significance has occurred elsewhere.

5. The Electoral Commissioner is the appropriate person to deal with the problem unless members can think of a way to legislate to prevent error. The Commissioner informs me that, an algorithm developed to check on polling place results, where there is a far greater potential for error, has been extended to cover declaration votes and the total vote for the district. In addition the Candidates Manual will emphasise the importance of having scrutineers at every stage of the count regardless of the size of the margin. No scrutineers were present at the admitting of declaration votes to the scrutiny or at the distribution of preferences. Naturally, the Electoral Commissioner is not apportioning blame in this regard, however, the attendance of scrutineers would have provided an additional safeguard so that the error would have been detected immediately.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: In reply to a question that I asked, the Minister for Education and Children's Services made an inaccurate statement that I was part of a committee that oversaw the production of a video by the Women's Studies Resource Centre. I refer the Minister to page 42 of *Hansard* where I stated what my involvement had been. My involvement was merely in meeting the then Minister of Education, Employment and Training, Ms Susan Lenehan, together with Dr Jean Blackburn, when some ideas were tossed around early in 1993, I believe it was. I had never had anything—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: They were ideas for a project that would go into schools. The Minister said that maybe a video would be a good idea for a school project, or whatever.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is a personal explanation.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: The Minister indicated that I had had something to do with what went into the video. I can assure the Minister that I had nothing whatsoever to do with the content of the video.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I am not sure whether the then Minister had anything to do with the content of the video. The only thing I knew about it was when the former Minister made an announcement about it. I resent the Minister's gratuitous comments about my friend Ms Susan Lenehan by calling her 'Super Susan', although I think she was Super Susan, and perhaps the Minister will go down in history and be remembered as, and being called, Robbing Rob.

MOTOR VEHICLES (LEARNERS' PERMITS AND PROBATIONARY LICENCES) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 3 August. Page 36.)

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: The Opposition supports this Bill, which seeks to vary the penalties that apply for failing to carry a learner's permit and a probationary driver's licence. Currently, it is compulsory for people in these categories to carry their licence with them at all times, and should they be detected without that licence in their possession they may be disqualified for a period of six months and have their licence cancelled. In addition, they may also be liable for an expiation fee of $42.

The Minister's proposal is to replace the provision which allows for the cancellation and disqualification penalty and to establish in its place a penalty of $46 for the offence of failing to carry a learner's permit or probationary licence.

This issue was raised with me on numerous occasions during the 12 months that I was Minister of Transport Development. It was usually raised with me by young people who had been penalised in accordance with the existing

legislation or by their parents, who appealed to me on behalf of young people about what they perceived to be the severity of the penalty that was being imposed. In almost all those cases the young person concerned required a driver's licence to attend studies, to undertake some form of training or to commence employment, and without a vehicle and a driver's licence in many cases they would have had to forfeit the employment or the study that they had undertaken.

It seemed to me that the penalty being imposed was out of proportion to the offence being committed. However, I believe that it is important to encourage young people, when they are novice drivers, to carry their driver's licence with them at all times, because it is a useful and sensible practice which should be carried through life. Therefore, it is important to encourage novice drivers to develop that as a practice or habit.

However, the severity of the penalty seems to me to be too harsh. I therefore commend the Minister for introducing this Bill, which will reduce the penalty but preserve the principle that it is important for people to carry their driver's licence with them. I support the Bill.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW (Minister for Transport): I thank honourable members for their support of the Bill. I have spoken to the Hon. Sandra Kanck, who represents the Australian Democrats on transport issues, and I understand that she also wishes to support the Bill. I think that young people generally will applaud this initiative.

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

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 4 August. Page 59.)

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: In responding to Her Excellency the Governor's address, I acknowledge the tremendous energy and conscientious attitude that Dame Roma Mitchell has put into carrying out her duties. I am sure that all of us are most appreciative of her work, and we thank her.

I also join Her Excellency in expressing sympathy to the relatives of former members of Parliament, namely, Mr Joe Tiernan, Mr Reg Groth, Mr Keith Plunkett and Mr Lloyd Hughes. In particular, I refer to Mr Joe Tiernan, who was known to all of us as 'Joe'. It was a name that suited him, as he was a grass roots person. He was sincere and genuine and, above all, he was a friend whom one could trust. Indeed,. we have lost a fine person, and this Parliament is all the poorer for it.

In this session of Parliament, and most probably continuing into next year, the dominant issue will be the financial status of South Australia. Economics will be the driving concern, as we have been left with a State brought to its knees by the previous Government's mismanagement and poor economic skills. Last Friday (5 August) we were yet again reminded of the previous Government's ineptitude in the areas of economics and finance. The former State Bank has again sustained staggering losses on two building investments, so much so that another bank bailout is eminent. I remind members that bailout No. 1 in February 1991 was $970 million; bailout No. 2 in August 1991 was $1.23 billion; bailout No. 3 in June 1992 was $100 million; bailout No. 4 in August 1992 was $850 million; and there is the potential of another $14 million with bailout No. 5.

The Group Asset Management Division (the so-called Bad Bank) was created by the previous Government to deal with the non-performing loans and assets of the former State Bank. Members will recall that approximately $3 billion was provided to the former State Bank by the previous Government to cover its losses. The Group Asset Management Division reported a loss of $287 million for 1992-93 and a likely loss of another $127 million for 1993-94. The main reasons for the loss were the Myer Centre, which in 1993 was valued at $205 million and which is now, in 1994, valued at $155 million; and 333 Collins Street, which in 1993 was valued at $220 million and which is now valued at $188 million. The total picture for the Myer Centre is $916.6 million (the total bill—holding plus interest) minus $155 million (its current valuation), making a loss of $761 million. The total picture for 333 Collins Street is $620 million (total cost plus interest) minus $188 million (its current valuation), making a loss of $431.8 million. We, therefore, have the shocking loss of nearly $1.2 billion on these two properties. We have to ask whether we can ever again trust the financial ability of a Government such as the previous Government? With this tremendous loss by an incompetent Government such as the previous Government, we now have to look to other avenues to raise funds for this impoverished State. One of the fundraising avenues is the introduction of pokies or video gaming machines.

I now address the matter of gambling, in particular the extension of pokies from the Casino to clubs and pubs. Most of us remember the marathon night in May last year when the pokies Bill passed by one vote. In my opinion that one vote was gained by coercion. We now find that the Gaming Machines Act 1992 is flawed due to the haste with which it was passed, and that we have to amend it to prevent certain activities which could have the potential to promote criminal behaviour. These proposed amendments will prohibit certain profit-sharing arrangements and also prohibit the holders of gaming machine dealer's licences or their associates from holding gaming machine licences in this State. A further amendment will restrict the eligibility of the holders of general facility licences from holding gaming machine licences effective from 1 August. Therefore, we have the anomaly of one lone restaurant with the right to have pokies whilst all other similar restaurants are prohibited from doing so. That is how slack and flawed the pokies legislation has turned out to be.

Let us look at the number of pokies or gaming machines that the different States have acquired—'with pride', they say (source: Totalisator Agency Board of Victoria 1992-93). In New South Wales gaming machines number 69 544; in Victoria, 9 841; in Queensland, 11 598; in the ACT, 3 066; and in the Northern Territory, 346. At that time, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania had no machines. But since July this year, just two weeks ago, this State has approved 5 500 machines. With pride we have overtaken ACT which has approximately 3 000 machines and the Northern Territory which has approximately 400 machines. We might get to the top of the list yet!

How much money do we make in gambling? Australia's total gambling expenditure for 1992-93 (source: Tasmanian Gaming Commission) is noted and the term 'expenditure' is the loss incurred by gamblers or the revenue generated by the gambling operator. This expenditure or loss or revenue for 1992-93 was $2 666 million in New South Wales; $1 112

million in Victoria; $985 million in Queensland; $514 million in Western Australia; $344 million in South Australia (and this amount will certainly increase with the advent of our new pokies); $139 million in the ACT; $119 million in Tasmania; and $59 million in the Northern Territory. In all, Australians have spent and lost in gambling $5 939 million—nearly $6 billion—in 1992-93.

An article in today's *Advertiser*, entitled 'Richest of prizes still elude pokie players' states:

> Official figures tallied yesterday show turnover in the first fortnight of almost $16.5 million. Of this, about 90 per cent—or $14.8 million—was returned to players in credits.

We should note that the loss by gamblers was $1.7 million in only two weeks. The article continues:

> The State Government took almost $700 000 off the top in tax. The Executive Director of the Hotel and Hospitality Industry Association. . . said pokies had been 'an outstanding success'.

Yes, it is an outstanding success if we count success in terms of dollars and cents. In relation to the amount of money one can make from gamblers, for Victorian gaming machines over a 12 month period to 30 June 1993 the turnover was $2 715.3 million, the average turnover per machine was $1 426 per day, and the Government revenue per machine was $133 per day.

Let us now look at the social impact of the extension of video gaming machines beyond casinos. A report prepared by the Tasmanian Council of Social Services in November 1992 does not give us that much to rejoice in; it does not call it an outstanding success. This can be contrasted with the fanfare connected with the advent of the pokies recently installed in South Australia. The consultant to the Tasmanian Council of Social Services, Mr P. Allen, stated:

> It is clear that significant social costs will eventuate with the wider availability of video gaming machines, and this will require ongoing Government action.

Let us look at the evidence that prompted him to make this comment to the Tasmanian Minister for Community Services and Health. We must first define what is meant by the terms 'compulsive' or 'pathological' gambler. In 1980 the Diagnostical and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association recognised and listed 'pathological or compulsive gambling' as 'an emotional and mental disorder' and defined it as:

> Pathological gambling is a progressive behaviour disorder in which an individual has a psychologically uncontrollable preoccupation and urge to gamble. This results in excessive gambling, the outcome of which compromises, disrupts or destroys the gambler's personal life, family relationships or vocational pursuits. These problems, in time, lead to intensification of the gambling behaviour. The cardinal features are emotional dependence on gambling, loss of control and interference with normal functioning.

Despite the fact that compulsive gambling is recognised medically as a mental disease, the general public does not equate gambling addiction with other forms of addiction, such as alcoholism. It is also a public misconception that compulsive gamblers will bet on anything, as in fact a vast majority of compulsive gamblers are addicted to one particular type of gambling. There are other types of gamblers, such as professional gamblers, social gamblers and irresponsible gamblers, but we need to focus upon the compulsive gambler.

The prevalence of compulsive gambling is estimated at 1.3 per cent. Therefore, assuming an adult population for Australia of 12 430 180 people, this gives us 161 592 probable compulsive gamblers in Australia. Fifteen per cent of regular players of video gaming machines can be classified as compulsive gamblers. It was originally estimated that the figure for gaming machine usage in Australian casinos was 1.8 per cent of the total population. With the extension of these machines into clubs and pubs there has been an increase in usage to 4.1 per cent. Therefore, there is an increase of 2.3 per cent, which represents the increase in usage due to the extension of the pokies into the clubs and pubs. Of the South Australian population of 1.2 million people, this represents an increase in the number of players to 27 600 people, of which 15 per cent will satisfy the criteria of compulsive gamblers, and that translates into a figure of approximately 4 140 additional compulsive gamblers—people to whom we will have to give extra support, aid and counselling.

In considering pokies in particular, there has been surprisingly little research done on the addictive nature of these machines. However, the Tasmanian Council of Social Security report indicates:

> What evidence is available suggests that gaming machines are exceptionally addictive, more so in fact than most other forms of gambling.

With regard to gaming machines, the council's report concludes:

> 1. Video gaming machines are designed to maintain player interest for as long as possible. They do this by reinforcing those aspects of behaviour that will lead to reward.
> 2. Video gaming machines are different to most other forms of gambling in that the time taken between stake and play is negligible.
> 3. Video gaming machines are a form of gambling, which can be made accessible to a wide range of people, both through its simplicity of use and in its compact and transportable design.
> 4. Gaming machines are therefore a particularly addictive form of gambling.

The Dutch Government recently noted this addictive problem and moved to ban more than 10 000 machines because of the alarming rise in gambling addiction. I believe that this addiction is slowly showing itself in Australia, judging from recent reports from Victoria with regard to children being left in locked cars and women who are unable to control themselves and who are losing large amounts of money. The Adelaide Mission will probably soon be seeing a steady stream of gambling addicts.

I hope we will be able to monitor the increase in availability of machines as it impacts on our society. A motion to monitor the impact of pokies on society was moved at the time that the pokies legislation was passed last year, and I hope that this motion will be moved again. I also note that a motion is to be moved by the Hon. Anne Levy with regard to gaming machines. Whilst it is a commendable motion, calling on the gaming machine revenue to be made available to welfare agencies to deal with the social problems associated with gambling, it probably would have been much more effective had she voted against the pokies legislation in the first place.

The social impact as it affects the gambler, the family and the wider community will be immense. The areas through which society will be affected are personal health, interpersonal relationships, financial hardships, loss of employment and legal implications. I hope that the trend of possible increase in compulsive gambling will not be seen in South Australia, but I know that that hope is futile.

The other subject to be considered is the rural community and the hardships and disadvantages it is experiencing. The Social Development Committee is trying to come to grips with the difficulties experienced by that community. I refer to the interim report on rural poverty and I wish to highlight

certain issues that need to be aired and clarified. The terms of reference as referred to the Social Development Committee by the House of Assembly used the phrase 'investigate the affects of rural poverty'. This term has rather negative connotations, which are not being received by the rural community with much enthusiasm, to put it mildly. I believe that the terms 'rural hardship' or 'rural disadvantage' would be more acceptable.

The interim report also noted that the term 'poverty' was rather difficult to define as it means different things to different people. Different academics gave us their views on poverty and no definitive answer to the question of definition was given. One academic stated:

> Attempts to construct a universally acceptable definition for poverty are unlikely to succeed as poverty will always be a function of the particular social context within which needs are created and satisfied.

The issue of measuring poverty was just as difficult to assess. The opinion was held that measures ought not take into account only the traditional measurement of income-based poverty lines but that they should also take into account broader issues, such as regional decline, the availability of community services and the state of family networks.

With this in mind, the statistics used to identify the two most severely affected regions were taken from the ABS rural index of relative social economic advantage. This uses income, occupation and educational attainment data. Therefore, a high score means that the area is characterised by a large proportion of households with high incomes, more people with high levels of education and a relatively high proportion of the labour force in skilled occupations. A low score, of course, indicates the opposite.

There has been some contention about the statistics used for identifying areas of hardship in the report, compared with the statistics used and the outcome of the report on rural debt in South Australia. The parameters used when identifying areas of hardship in the rural debt report related only to farms and financial situations. The rating categories reflect this; for example, category A were businesses considered to be viable under most circumstances; category B were businesses experiencing debt servicing difficulties and/or whose debt situation was deteriorating; and category C were businesses which were considered non-viable and which would need to exit farming in due course. We therefore note that the measurements of hardship in the rural debt report are different from the measurements of the Interim Report on Rural Poverty. We therefore have a slightly different order of ranking for rural hardship areas.

However, let us not forget that historically the rural sector has been a very important component of the South Australian economy and that agriculture and its exports still have an important place in the South Australian and national economies. For example, the gross value of Australian farm production is as follows: in 1990-91, the gross value was $21 254 billion; in 1991-92 it was $20 967 billion; and in 1992-93 it was $22 203 billion. The gross value for South Australian farm production was as follows: in 1991 it was $1 899 billion, which was 8.9 per cent of the Australian total; in 1991-92 it was $2 179 billion, which was 10.4 per cent of the Australian total; and in 1992-93 it was $2 303 billion, which was 10.4 per cent of the Australian total. The farm sector contribution to the gross State production in 1991-92 was 4.5 per cent, compared with mining, which was 2.8 per cent, and manufacturing, which was 18.2 per cent. However, we must take into account that approximately 20 per cent of the manufacturing sector's value added component is of rural contribution. Of the State's international exports, the rural sector was a significant contributor, with raw agricultural product providing 17.4 per cent of total exports in 1991-92.

One of the major economic influences on agriculture is the dependence of the rural sector on overseas markets. Recently such factors as unstable international economies, disruptive trade policies, volatile exchange and interest rates and low commodity prices have had an adverse effect on the rural sector. There has therefore been a worrying decline in the establishment of farms, and South Australia has a higher rate of decline, compared with the general trend in Australia. The rate of decline in South Australia was 11 per cent, as compared to 5 per cent for the whole of Australia.

This Government is mindful of the financial difficulties being faced by some farmers, and initiatives have already been put in place. Some such initiatives are: the Young Farmers Incentive Scheme and its extension; the exemption from stamp duties for inter-generational farm transfers; exemption from mortgage stamp duties for rural debt refinancing; exemption from stamp duties for registration of tractors and farm machinery; the Finance Management Advice Scheme revised; the rural assess program for training; family farm seminars; the Rural Adjustment Scheme, etc. These are some of the Government initiatives and, perhaps, with the completion of the Social Development Inquiry into Rural Poverty, some other positive recommendations can be put forward.

I would like to comment briefly on my trip to Asia with the Premier's group. We visited Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and China, but I did not go on to Japan. It was with great interest that I observed how some in the group were totally unused to the customs and culture of the East. We must make more contact with our Asian neighbours if we want to be involved with more trade and tourism. It was with great ceremony that we gave the various joint ventures and the new connections the seal of approval and status through the Premier, which is an important step, but one has to cement these initial steps further by knowing and understanding the business etiquette of Asians.

We also need to keep up regular and frequent contacts with the Asian business community. It is only through friendship and trust that business with Asia will thrive and progress. To this end, it is encouraging that the Premier recently initiated and opened the Council for International Trade and Commerce in South Australia, which is unique in its concept. The council provides a focal point for South Australians and overseas businesses interested in bilateral trade, and it calls together 20 (at present) country-specific chambers of commerce and business councils, which will operate at Greenhill Road. It is encouraging to note that the board for this council includes a significant number of Asians—three out of five elected members. However, the disappointing part is that there is only one woman. I understand the members were democratically elected but, still, more could have been done. I congratulate the newly formed Asia-Pacific Business Council for Women and its membership of the new international council.

Finally, I want to speak briefly on health and the women's suffrage centenary. In the area of health, we were initially dismayed to note the Commission of Audit statement that:

> The future of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is relevant to the strategy for regionalisation. Although there are excellent services and super specialty services provided from this hospital, which has good community linkages, the buildings are not up to standard. There

should be no presumption that the redevelopment will necessarily involve the Queen Elizabeth Hospital remaining a major teaching hospital.

In recommendation 13.24 it states:

The future of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital should be resolved as a matter of urgency. It is open to question whether the redevelopment needs to be a major teaching hospital.

As a member of the Legislative Council who has had considerable contact with the western suburbs and has seen the social/economic disadvantages of people in that area, I believe that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is an important part of that western area. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is the hospital servicing that area and the recommendation by the Audit Commission that that hospital would perhaps lose its teaching status after so much time, effort and finance has been put into the hospital just seems ludicrous to me. I am sure that we are all relieved that the Minister for Health has now gone against the Audit Commission's recommendation that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital become a non-teaching hospital and applaud the decision.

Finally, this being the year of the Women's Suffrage Centenary, it is with excitement that we note that the International Conference of Women from Non-English Cultural Backgrounds is to be staged on 3 and 4 September. This is the first conference of its kind and it will not depict women from a non-English cultural background in their traditional areas of expertise such as food, culture, song and dance, but it will provide a platform for non-English cultural women to promote themselves to be acknowledged as experts in the various fields of law, health, politics, social development and business, etc. I hope the conference will be well attended.

Certainly, I wish to congratulate the steering committee and the other co-opted members for the long hours they have given unstintingly in the planning and implementation of the conference. The Women's Suffrage Centenary Steering Committee provided the major proportion of much needed funds, meagre as they were, and I hope that the conference is successful. On that note of high anticipation, on behalf of all the non-English cultural women who are working towards the success of the conference, and more importantly working towards acknowledgment of their excellence in various professional fields, I conclude and support the motion to adopt the Address in Reply.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply and, in so doing, I would thank Her Excellency the Governor of South Australia for her speech in opening the second session of the Forty-Eighth Parliament. I pay tribute to Her Excellency for the generous way in which she gives of her time to be with so many community groups, attending their functions and participating in their celebrations in a spirit of great service to our diverse multicultural society.

I take this opportunity to express my regret at the death of Mr Joe Tiernan, Mr Reg Groth, Mr Keith Plunkett and Mr Lloyd Hughes and extend my sympathy to their families.

In February this year I spoke about some of the crucial reforms that the Brown Liberal Government would need to consider in order to improve our capacity to compete at an international level and promote our export opportunities into world markets. I am aware that the Government is focusing on major initiatives and substantial public sector reforms in order to achieve greater efficiency in Government which, in turn, will assist in the process of rebuilding the South Australian economy. However, I consider that in assessing the various options one direct way of enhancing the rate of economic growth is for the Government to adopt policies which will boost the supply of factors of production available for employment.

The most important of these is labour, which accounts for about two-thirds of the economy's value added. How much labour is available for employment depends largely on the population growth, its age, gender composition and the work force participation rates of particular age and gender groups in our community. One of the most powerful policy instruments through which the Liberal Government could influence the growth of the work force is the level of immigration and its skill composition.

There is no doubt that higher rates of immigration would accelerate the growth in the work force and consequently a growth in real GDP over the longer period. A number of studies clearly show that the higher the annual level of immigration, the faster the rate of growth of GDP. One such study showed that, when assuming a net annual immigration increase of 125 000 people, the real GDP in the year 2030 is projected to be 41 per cent higher that the level we would otherwise achieve with a zero net immigration growth.

It can be argued that higher immigration numbers will provide a larger domestic market offering various companies manufacturing consumer products the opportunity to expand higher production numbers at reduced costs. However, I believe that the Government must adopt more internationally oriented trading policies by encouraging domestic industries to produce for and compete on a much larger international market and achieve more efficient and cost-effective production techniques.

All available evidence also suggests that scale economies do exist in the provision of some public infrastructure services, particularly in the less populated States such as South Australia. They are less likely to exist in the more populous States, which contain the cities that have traditionally absorbed a large proportion of the migrant intake. On balance, it seems unlikely that living standards will increase as the result of scale economies based on an immigration induced population growth.

Without skill enhancement, scale economies and induced technical change, the gain in living standards, as opposed to growth from immigration, is likely to be small. There is a strong trade-off between the size of intake and its skill level in terms of the effects of immigration on living standards. The greater the degree of skill enhancement of the intake relative to that of the domestic work force, the smaller the annual intake needed to achieve a specific gain in the long term real GDP per head of population.

Whilst a highly selective immigration program would add significantly to South Australia's human capital resources, a more direct way of achieving this objective is through the enhancement of the skills level of the domestic population. In some areas South Australia's education and training performance lags behind that of successful industrialised countries. School retention rates are lower, as is the efficiency with which skills are acquired and utilised. It is widely recognised that substantial reforms are needed within our schooling, training and higher education institutions in order to improve our performance in this area.

At both Federal and State levels Governments have pursued proposals to rationalise higher education institutions aimed at both increasing their efficiency in providing such services and enhancing the potential supply of graduates. A

number of proposals in the general education area are currently the subject of considerable challenge and debate. There is legitimate concern about the potential loss of diversity and competition that might occur with the amalgamation of various educational institutions. As always, it is difficult to sort out the genuine arguments from specious claims coming from vested interest groups. I would now like to speak briefly about resource based industries, particularly the mining and forestry industries, which can be sustained only if they have access to natural resources.

In recent years we have seen increasing conflict between interest groups in the community, principally developers and environmentalists, over access to these resources. The State Government has come under extreme pressure from various groups which have sought to influence resource development both on Crown and private land, to the extent that these resources are locked away, their available supplies diminished, the growth rate of dependent industries is curtailed and State income forgone. The potential conflict over access to resources on Crown land is becoming more difficult and costly.

Under the previous Labor Administration the response to the extreme and erratic political pressure exerted by the environmentalists has been an *ad hoc* and unpredictable approach. In many instances the interests of the State have taken a back seat. Legitimate but generally regrettable tactics have done little for efficient, harmonious and informed debate. Just as manufacturing tariffs dominated the industry policy debate over the past decade, the issue of access to natural resources may well dominate the debate over the next decade.

I am of the view that the starting point to reduce conflict over access to natural resources is a recognition that, on one hand, economic development is needed to meet the aspirations of the people and provide young South Australians with a viable future; on the other hand, development must increasingly be sustainable in terms of its environmental effects. That is, such development should increasingly seek to live off the earth's interest rather than its capital. It seems inevitable that to measure development against this concept will require the assignment of values to resources used in their natural state and assessing whether the community as a whole is prepared to pay the price.

Economic principles, particularly those relating to property and lease rights and opportunity costs, may provide some guidance on how this might be achieved. A possible way to proceed might be to first use these principles to establish directly the value of the resource to the community if left undeveloped. A commercial enterprise wishing to develop such resource may well be prepared to pay at least this value by way of royalties to the Government before the development is permitted to proceed.

I now turn to the question of labour costs. I mentioned earlier that labour is one of the most important factors in boosting production because it represents almost two-thirds of South Australia's economy total costs. Therefore, it is adjustments in the cost of employing labour relative to output prices which is the key to determining our international competitiveness. To the extent, therefore, that distortions in the labour market are raising labour costs and reducing the flexibility of occupational and industry labour to changing market conditions, their removal or correction can be expected significantly to enhance the State's overall economic performance.

The extent and nature of the distortions in the labour market are well known. The Myer REMM project, which cost South Australian taxpayers more than $760 million, was a typical example of labour problems and rorts in the market place. They included restrictive work practices which reduced labour productivity in aggregate and institutionalised other wage determination mechanisms which, although at the time were considered to be market driven, nonetheless remained very biased. The bias which is often found in our wage system is towards equity principles rather than efficiency objectives. This therefore impedes productivity based adjustments in wage relativities between occupations and industries.

Labour on-costs over and above cash wages are too high, although many of these costs would be viewed in economic terms not as distortions but as part of the employee's real wage, and as playing an important role in equating the demand of supply of labour in different uses.

Not surprisingly, on the basis of experience both in Australia and overseas, the economy-wide benefits of labour reforms are likely to be very significant. It has been estimated that for each 1 per cent improvement in labour productivity in the manufacturing sector an additional .3 per cent in real GDP would be added to longer term GDP growth. Therefore, the impetus for reform in this area must come from managers and workers at enterprise level. This is indeed happening, but the South Australian Government can and should accelerate the process by removing much of the underlying regulatory restriction governing the structure of unions, industrial relations and the conditions under which labour is made available to various companies and enterprises.

I would now like to say a few words about regulation of business practices. We have a vast array of instruments regulating business practices, including zoning laws, trading hours, permits on production and sales of certain goods and activities, packaging and labelling laws, etc., just to name a few. These regulations impose substantial compliance costs on business and add further costs when providing the Government bureaucracy with the information. Included under this category are trade practice regulations which involve penalties on businesses engaging in agreements or practices believed to be restricting competition.

The promotion of price competition is the intent of trade practice regulations, yet exemptions are allowed for anti-competitive arrangements supported by both State and Federal Government regulations. To the extent that such regulations counter anti-competitive behaviour of private monopolies and cartels, either actual or potential, there are benefits and efficiency gains for South Australia and our nation as a whole.

However, there is often a fine line between desirable outcomes promoting competition and the undesirable outcome, suppressing opportunities for rationalisation and scale economies which strengthen efficiency and the competitiveness of companies involved at an international level of competition.

This suggests that the goal of such regulations should be restricted to providing a business environment in which the potential for competition is present by ensuring freedom of entry and hence contestability of the market. Estimates of the economic cost of business regulation in terms of growth forgone through resources tied up in unproductive activities vary widely because of the myriad of regulations which operate with various intensities across a whole range of activities. The Business Regulation Review Unit estimated

that compliance costs of business regulations is between 9 per cent and 19 per cent GDP. Other research agencies have also estimated similar large costs of business regulation.

It is recognised that our economy is also subject to considerable social regulations, principally in the areas of environment, consumer protection and health and safety standards. The economic case against many of these regulations is much more difficult, although there are many examples where unnecessary and avoidable costs are imposed on industries because of such regulation. Environmental regulations are considered to be a significant factor in the slow down in productivity and output growth in the OECD countries in the past 15 years. We should recognise that some controls may well be consistent with, and in fact necessary for, sustained economic development. The economic rationale for this type of regulation is that some activities may involve social costs which are not borne by the activity causing the environmental degradation.

The challenge for the Government in this area is to ensure that sensible environmental targets are put in place and that efficient regulatory arrangements are designed to achieve these targets. Widespread community acceptance of the need for substantial deregulation of the economy is needed if we are significantly to raise productivity and income growth.

The need to increase efficiency is made more urgent by the perilous position of the State's finances and by the speed with which reforms are being implemented throughout the world. It is recognised that Governments, both State and Federal, have to contend with powerful political forces in the process of microeconomic reform. In large part this is because regulatory arrangements confer substantial benefits on concentrated interests whereas their costs are borne largely by the community.

The Government must also recognise that rapid technological change is an important catalyst for reform in some areas. There is overwhelming evidence that, where competitive markets are created or exist, private companies are more efficient than public enterprises. In these circumstances, there is little justification on economic grounds for public ownership. The situation is more complex where natural monopolies exist. Public ownership has been one solution; another solution consists of private ownership but with Government regulation.

However, in my view, the key requirement for reform of public monopolies will be to expose as much of their inputs and outputs as possible to the disciplines of price competition. Contractual and tendering arrangements in the supply of inputs and the maintenance of infrastructure can be an effective means of achieving this goal.

Where a natural monopoly continues to prevail, little may be gained in the way of increased efficiency by full privatisation. One option worthy of consideration is the partial privatisation of an industry where natural monopoly elements are separable. For example, the Government could retain ownership of the transport network and infrastructure and charge access by both private and public operators.

Finally, I should like to make some comments about improving our terms of trade. We all recognise that South Australia's exports are predominantly commodity based. By contrast, imports are dominated by manufactures. It is fashionable to argue that there is something wrong with this state of affairs. We often hear claims for more value adding before export, with less reliance on commodities because their world prices are unstable or because over time the prices of commodities tend to fall relative to the prices of manufactures. If we are to have more value adding before export and greater export diversification, I would argue that this must occur through market-based incentives, not through industry policies which tilt the playing field in favour of some activities.

With the exception of the wine industry, South Australia is not large enough to influence prices significantly on the world market. Our penetration of these markets depends largely on our cost competitiveness relative to other supplies and the quality of our products.

Any increase in the foreign terms of trade has a similar effect on our economic growth: an increase in our productivity factor. It enables South Australia to support a high level of expenditure for the same input of domestic resources. Invariably, subsidies to one set of activities are paid for by others. In the world markets, agriculture is the best known example of this practice. It is therefore not surprising that agriculture has found a central place on the agenda of the GATT negotiations.

The South Australian Liberal Government must continue to demonstrate by vigorous economic analysis and through greater public awareness the real economic costs in the countries imposing the subsidies, particularly those with which South Australia has strong bilateral trade and cultural relations. I commend the motion for the adoption by the Council of the Address in Reply.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.20 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday 10 August at 2.15 p.m.