

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday 15 October 1996

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)—

- Reports, 1995-96—
 - Construction Industry Training Board
 - Department of the Premier and Cabinet
 - SAGRIC International Pty Ltd
 - SA Water
 - South Australian Asset Management Corporation and its Controlled Entities
- University of Adelaide—Report, 1995
- University of Adelaide—Legislative Business from the Council 1995—Statutes
- Friendly Societies Act 1919—Rules—Confirmation Pursuant to section 10 of the Act

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

- Reports, 1995-96—
 - South Australian Classification Council
 - South Australian Research and Development Institute
 - South Australian Totalizator Agency Board
- Regulations under the following Acts—
 - Development Act 1993—Julia Farr Services
 - Land and Business (Sale and Conveyancing) Act 1994—Various
- Rules of Court—Magistrates Court—Magistrates Court Act 1991—Forms

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

- Reports, 1995-96—
 - Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Local Government Finance Authority of SA
 - Local Government Grants Commission—South Australia
 - Local Government Superannuation Board
 - Medical Board of South Australia
 - Murray Darling Basin Commission
 - Nurses Board
 - Office for the Ageing
 - Urban Projects Authority
- South Australian Housing Trust Statutory Financial Statements, 30 June 1996
- Shack Land Division Report
- District Council By-law—
 - Warooka—No. 2—Moveable Signs.

YATES, Mr B.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement about Mr Bruce Yates. Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Bruce Yates is a school teacher employed by the Education Department since 1972. Mr Yates was married in 1970, he and his wife separating in 1984. There were two children of the marriage, a girl born on 4 November 1982 and a boy born on 20 August 1984. Following separation, he took access to his children pursuant to an order of the Family Court. In December 1985 Mr Yates was charged by the police with sexual offences relating to his daughter. Those criminal charges were dismissed by a magistrate sitting at the Port Adelaide Court of Summary Jurisdiction in April 1986. Following a notification of sexual abuse against Mr Yates to the then Department of

Community Welfare (DCW), the child was examined by Dr Black at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) and subsequently by Dr Kuhlbach, a psychiatrist. Both offered the opinion that the child had been sexually abused. The department refused to identify the source of the notification. Finally, after much difficulty, it was learnt that the source of the notification was an officer of the Women's Information Switchboard who took it upon herself to make the notification without the consent of the then Mrs Yates but relying on information conveyed by her.

Mr Yates then brought an application in the Family Court for the guardianship and custody of both of his children. Subsequently, the allegations of the abuse were the subject of proceedings in the Family Court. The case went to trial in the Family Court in 1986 and 1987. The case was very thoroughly ventilated before Justice Burton who, in a long and careful judgment, found the sexual abuse allegation not proven, and was critical of the methods of Drs Black and Kuhlbach. Mr Yates access was resumed. Not surprisingly, Mr Yates took great umbrage at the allegations, the way they had been made and the great difficulty he had had in endeavouring to gain information about the notifier of the alleged abuse and to gain access to the departmental files. He was deprived of contact with his children for significant periods of time. He suffered significant stress. He has waged a campaign against DCW, QEH and his former wife ever since.

As a result of the Family Court proceedings, DCW paid approximately \$20 000 in costs to Mr Yates as Justice Burton was of the view that the DCW was largely responsible for costs given the refusal to reveal the name of the notifier and Mr Yates having incurred substantial legal costs. The Full Court of the Family Court in its judgment had this to say:

In conclusion, we consider that there are aspects of this case which give rise to considerable disquiet. The method of investigation of the allegations was unsatisfactory and incompetent and led to a substantial injustice being done to the husband and wife and to the children themselves.

It should be noted that section 246 of the Community Welfare Act, now repealed, allowed the department to withhold the identity of the source of the allegations of abuse. In such matters the department regarded it as important to preserve the identity of informants on the basis that such abuse can be extremely difficult to detect. If informants knew that their identity would be disclosed, they would be less inclined to report such matters, thereby making detection even more difficult. Informants are now protected by section 13 of the Children's Protection Act.

Following the 1987 judgment of Justice Burton, a second notification was received by DCW in 1987. I understand that the children were subsequently examined by Dr George Blake of the Flinders Medical Centre. His report indicated that there were no concerns, and the matter was closed. The department has not had any further involvement with the children since that time.

Following the cessation of the involvement by DCW with the children they were taken by their mother to a psychologist, Ms Scherger. Some of the sessions were videotaped, and Mr Yates and others have expressed concerns at the way these contacts were conducted. Allegations have been made to the effect that DCW, whilst not actively involved with the family, either paid for or contributed to the payment made to Ms Scherger, even after Justice Burton's findings on 2 June 1987.

There is no doubt that the department did pay Ms Scherger's accounts to meet half the expenses involved in

consultations with Mr Yates' two children up to 5 August 1987. The Crown says that there is no proof that the department continued to pay Ms Scherger after 5 August 1987, but that remains a matter of disagreement between Mr Yates and the Government.

Mr Yates brought a further application for custody of the children in the Family Court. He did so because, in his view, his former wife would take any steps that were necessary to disrupt his relationship with the children, including, he believed, the promulgation of baseless allegations of sexual abuse on a second occasion with all that involved in terms of intrusive and distressing physical examinations of the children.

In 1990, Mr Yates issued a subpoena out of the Family Court requiring production of all DCW files. Once before the court, Mr Yates restricted his application to one for production of the documents surrounding the second notification in 1987, on the basis that they were relevant to the question of the credibility of his former wife and to her alleged consistent course of conduct, which he said was designed to destroy the relationship between himself and the children.

A number of arguments were raised by the Crown against the production of the files, including an objection pursuant to section 246 of the Community Welfare Act and on the ground of public policy. It was also argued that the documents were simply not relevant to the proceedings. Some documents, believed to be about 13 pages (Mr Yates and the Government do not agree which pages), were placed in an envelope and produced to the judge for the judge to consider the question of relevance. In his judgment, in which the subpoena was struck out, Justice Burton ruled that there was nothing of relevance in those documents which he had before him.

On 7 January 1994 Mr Yates once again issued a subpoena in the Family Court requiring production of all DCW files. The subpoena related to an application by the mother to suspend all access to the son based on the behaviour of Mr Yates at access. Due to the fact that FOI proceedings were current in relation to the same documents, it was decided to first seek clarification as to exactly what documents were sought, and then to hand those to the judge and invite the judge to rule on their relevance to the matters before him. On instructions from the Minister, no other argument against production was raised.

When the matter was before Justice Butler in the Family Court, counsel for Mr Yates indicated that he sought only those documents that related to the second notification in late 1987, that is, the same documents that were sought in 1990 when the matter was before Justice Burton.

This time another selection of documents, some 50 or so pages, were placed in an envelope and produced to the court. On the basis of a report from Dr LePage, which indicated that in Mr Yates's mind the issue of the wife's involvement in the 1987 notification was crucial to Mr Yates' recovery, Justice Butler ruled that some of the material contained in the envelope was relevant. He ruled that material that related to conversations between the department and the former Mrs Yates was relevant. Justice Butler granted the mother's application, and I understand that all access to the child is still suspended.

Mr Yates pressed vigorously for the release of relevant information from the DCW file. Through his local member, Mr Heini Becker MP, he made various applications to the department under the Freedom of Information Act for the release of the 1987 file in relation to the children. Mr Yates

had to make two separate appeals to the District Court under section 40 of the Act to overturn various refusals of the department for the release of information. The appeals did not proceed to legal argument, and the Crown agreed to pay his legal costs.

The Crown Solicitor made an agreement with Mr Yates concerning future production of documents. I understand that the agreement was that, if Mr Yates issued a further subpoena, the DCW files would be produced without any objection. On 19 May 1994, all DCW documents, apart from those subject to legal professional privilege, relating to the children from 1 January 1987 were produced to the Family Court pursuant to a subpoena issued by Mr Yates. I understand that on 30 May 1994 Justice Murray gave leave to Mr Yates to view the documents. I also understand that he was given permission to copy various documents.

All of the foregoing litigation and allegations took their toll on Mr Yates. His health and career have suffered. For over six years he has been in receipt of weekly payments of workers compensation. It has not been possible to find suitable alternative work. There have been more recent attempts at rehabilitation to have Mr Yates return to the work force and the classroom. However, for various reasons, these attempts have not been successful. After nearly 10 years of stress for everyone involved in this saga, but particularly for Mr Yates, it is important for the Government and for Mr Yates that the issues between us are resolved as best they can be.

Such resolution should play a part in Mr Yates' rehabilitation and return to the work force. Hopefully, it will also be the beginning for some rebuilding of the shattered relationships between Mr Yates and his children. Throughout his campaign to clear his name, Mr Yates has confided in and had the tremendous support of Father John Fleming. Father Fleming has counselled Mr Yates and has been a conciliator in the disputes between Mr Yates and Government. I take this opportunity to commend him for his involvement.

Since mid 1994, I have personally been involved in dealing with Father Fleming and Mr Yates to endeavour to find a resolution of the dispute. A considerable amount of my time and the resources of Government have been put to resolving Mr Yates' disputes with Government. The matter is complex and difficult. If not resolved, it will continue to be traumatic for Mr Yates and prevent effective rehabilitation, as well as requiring substantial resources of Government to address. That is not in the public interest.

I am pleased to say that a settlement has been reached between the Government and Mr Yates that will end the dispute. The terms of settlement are that the Government will pay approximately \$100 000 in settlement of his workers compensation claim and the sum of \$220 000 in full settlement of all other outstanding issues or claims he may have against the Crown and any of its departments or agencies by way of a severance or separation package—a total of \$320 000. That does not include any entitlement Mr Yates may have for long service or recreation leave.

The acceptance of a separation package thereby ends any continuing workers compensation liability for Government and provides an *ex gratia* payment to cover any loss or inconvenience suffered in the decade or so that this conflict has taken place. The Government's position is that any liability to Mr Yates was resolved by the judgment of Justice Burton in 1987 and that, while liability except for workers compensation is denied as a matter of law, the *ex gratia* payment is a fair settlement and represents an opportunity for

Bruce Yates to start a new life and to put, as much as is possible, the memories of this conflict behind him.

MODBURY HOSPITAL

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW (Minister for Transport): I seek leave to table a ministerial statement regarding Modbury outsourcing which was delivered earlier this day by the Minister for Health.

Leave granted.

WORKCOVER CORPORATION

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to table a ministerial statement made by the Minister for Industrial Affairs in another place this day on the subject of WorkCover's unfunded liability, which has reduced by \$69 million.

Leave granted.

TELEPHONE TOWERS

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services a question about mobile phone towers in school grounds.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: A report by the Senate Environment, Recreation, Communications and the Arts Committee has expressed astonishment at the Minister's decision to allow mobile telephone towers to be located on school grounds. The report says:

Given the fact that the South Australian Government had admitted that it was concerned about the towers, and that equivocal advice, and that no information other than the current Australian Standard was provided by the Department of Education and Children's Services and the South Australian Health Commission to school councils, the committee was astonished to learn that schools were allowed to approve the erection of towers on school properties.

On ABC TV last night the Minister was reported as saying that he dismissed the Senate committee report, saying it was made up of Labor, Australian Democrat and Green MPs. I would like to mention a few of the Liberal and National Party MPs who supported the view of the committee. They are Senator John Tierney, Senator Susan Knowles, Senator William O'Chee, Senator Michael Baume, Senator Judith Troeth, Senator Ronald Boswell, Senator Paul Calvert, Senator Grant Chapman, Senator Helen Coonan, Senator Alan Eggleston, Senator Alan Ferguson, Senator Nick Minchin—that born again Greenie—and Senator Kay Patterson. It is true that Senators Baume, Knowles, O'Chee and Tierney put in a dissenting report in which this issue was not raised, so one can only assume that they also supported the comments of the committee in relation to the problems.

The CSIRO gave evidence to the committee. The Senate committee has been advised that research on EMR/EME is not advancing rapidly, that funding for research is still under consideration and that any Australian research program is many more months away.

Dr George Tallis, an endocrinologist at Flinders Medical Centre, informed the committee that it was unwise to be dismissive of the potential health hazards imposed by an additional source of EMR. He pointed to a financial commitment made by the United States Government of \$US65 million for a five year research program into EMR. Pointing to Australia's lack in research and possibly outdated

standards, Dr Tallis urged the committee to recommend a revision of existing legislation and look into the issue of erecting mobile phone towers in close proximity to areas in which young children are present, such as kindergartens and primary schools. The committee recommended:

that no further mobile phone towers and bases be constructed in proximity to kindergartens, schools and hospitals, and in any location where people may be at risk from long-term exposure to EMR until further research is undertaken which shows there is no risk to public health.

My question to the Minister is: given the concerns expressed by the Senate report, will the Minister now withdraw his approval for schools to enter into these arrangements?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Government's position remains as it was on the last couple of occasions when the honourable member and other honourable members raised the question. We are not experts on health within the Education Department. We are in the business of running schools, and do a good job of that. We rely on the Health Commission in South Australia and the international array of experts to provide advice to the Health Commission and then to the Department for Education and Children's Services. If the Health Commission at any stage indicates a concern to the Department for Education and Children's Services and recommends that the policy be changed, then we will very quickly respond to those sorts of formal requests, or advice from the Health Commission. I do not have a copy with me at the moment, but tomorrow in Question Time I will table a copy of the advice that has been sent to all schools and child care directors. If I understood the honourable member's question and explanation correctly, I think there was a reference that advice had not been provided to schools.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles: No.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The member indicates that that is not what she said, so I will not continue with that. My understanding of what she said was that advice had not been provided on the health risks. If that was the case then that is not correct, because we have shared with schools and children's services centres the advice that we have received from the experts in this particular area.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: We are relying on the advice of the Health Commission, the health experts. One of the problems with this issue is that members, well intentioned or otherwise, are deliberately trying to cause some concern. The Leader of the Opposition yesterday deliberately confused mobile phone towers with TV towers and the incidence of leukaemia in Sydney. The Leader of the Opposition knows that there is a quantum difference between TV towers and mobile phone towers and, obviously, yesterday she deliberately chose to cite that evidence. From memory, the advice from the Health Commission, which I will table tomorrow and of which I do not have a copy at the moment, indicates that, first, mobile phone towers and television towers operate on different radio frequencies and, secondly, the level of the frequency at the base of a mobile phone tower is equivalent to the level of frequency about four to 12 kilometres away from a television tower.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I said that is the Health Commission. I am not the expert. I rely on the advice of the Health Commission, the international experts, who certainly know more about it than the Leader of the Opposition, who quite deliberately confuses a television tower with a mobile phone tower and cites evidence about leukaemia from a

television tower as opposed to a mobile phone tower. I was trying to be charitable in suggesting that the Leader of the Opposition had made a genuine mistake, but she has clearly indicated that she deliberately chose to put that information in that press statement yesterday. I will share with all members the information that we have shared with school principals and with child-care directors, based on the best advice that we have had from the Health Commission and the international array of experts; not just the South Australian Health Commission but the latest summary of an international array of experts in non-ionising radiation, which summarises the view of the research evidence on this area.

The Hon. M.J. Elliott interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Elliott and I have had a disagreement about that before; he knows that that is not right but he chooses not to listen to the facts in relation to this issue. As I said, I do not claim to be the expert in this area. We rely on the experts in the Health Commission who have the information from an international array of health experts. We share that information with schools and, as I said, if the Health Commission at any stage directs a change in policy in relation to the health aspects of this issue, then we would obviously, with a formal request from the Health Commission, respond immediately.

MIMILI SCHOOL

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services a question about asbestos in school buildings.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: I ask members not to interject while a member is asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: The Opposition spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs has received advice that a transportable asbestos building was recently transported from the Croydon Primary School to Mimili, in the Far North of the State, for use at the Mimili school. I understand that Mimili Community Incorporated and Anangu Pitjantjatjara Services Corporation (APS) has expressed concern that such a building was provided to the school by Anangu Education Services without consultation with the community and without proper planning approvals being sought from APS.

I understand that APS has served notice on Services SA—the Government body responsible for transporting the building to the site—that building approval has not been granted, that the building must be removed from the site and that the site must be made clean by Friday 18 October. I am further informed that the transportable building has been placed on site in such a way that it covers access to some of the community's services, such as water and electricity, and that if there was a problem encountered with any of these services the building would have to either be removed or substantially altered to provide access to those services.

I understand that the Mimili community has been agitating for some time for an extra classroom and library, but the community is appalled at having this building delivered to them without consultation or approvals from the appropriate body, particularly given that the building is covered with warning stickers stating that it is constructed from asbestos sheeting. I understand that the Minister for Education is aware of this matter and I ask him the following questions:

1. Why was the building provided in the first place without any formal consultations or building approval from the Mimili community or the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Services Corporation?

2. Is it true that the community has been told that no replacement building will be made available if this structure is removed? I did note that the Minister for Education gave notice that he would introduce a motion expressing support for education and health, so he may have preempted my last question (but I will put it to him anyhow):

3. Will the Minister assure the safety and wellbeing of the Mimili school community—students, staff and parents—by acting immediately to remove the building, consult with the local community and, following this, provide a more appropriate building that meets the community's needs and the relevant health and safety requirements?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I have a pretty good memory and I cannot remember the issue, so I will certainly consult my office. I am not familiar with the details, contrary to the claim of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I will take the questions on notice and bring back a reply as soon as I can.

HERITAGE PROTECTION

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport, representing the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, a question about heritage protection.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: In the last few days there have been reports of vandalism to heritage sites. One report from Western Australia concerned an Aboriginal sacred site being vandalised deliberately whereby part of it was removed by cutting out the—

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Brontosaurus.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: Brontosaurus footprints—

The Hon. M.J. Elliott: Stegosaurus.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: Stegosaurus, is it—that have been there for many millions of years. Although these footprints may not have directly been a part of the Aboriginal sacred site they were certainly included in that site. We had another case locally, where a recent fire destroyed a historic canoe tree in the Riverland. It appears to me—and this is not a direct criticism of the Government's policy—that nationally and in the States we need to develop a policy to protect these sites and recognise them as historic.

It appears that now may be a good time to try to educate the community that we have a lot of heritage and historical sites that need to be looked after and protected. It may be that the Government and local government need to recognise that an education program is needed plus some formal recognition that historical landmarks, buildings or, in this case, trees or geographical remnants need to be cited and recognised by some sort of identification process. Therefore, my questions to the Minister are:

1. Will the Government identify for protection heritage, historical and sacred sites that could be deemed at risk from accidental or deliberate damage?

2. Could a policy be brought forward to in future protect these sites from either accidental damage, neglect or, in some cases, deliberate vandalism?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Any site by its nature and isolation can be so vulnerable. That vulnerability does magnify the need to address the honourable member's questions. The two examples are major losses to our cultural

Aboriginal heritage in this State and with pleasure I will pass on the questions to the Minister and bring back a reply.

O-BAHN, SOUTHERN

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about a proposal for an O-Bahn guided busway to Adelaide's southern suburbs.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: On 1 August this year the *Advertiser* published an article indicating that the construction of an O-Bahn guided busway to link up with the new Southern Expressway was being considered by the Department of Transport. The plan is for the busway to follow the existing railway line to the Brighton interchange before connecting to the Southern Expressway at Darlington, with residents of suburbs poorly serviced by the present rail line able to catch feeder buses to link with the busway.

The Premier and Transport Minister are both reported to have endorsed the southern O-Bahn concept, although it would probably be built and operated by a private company. The October edition of *Transit Australia* deals with the issue and includes some highly critical comments about the proposal. I quote from a letter by Mr Barry Fox, originally published in the *Advertiser* on 15 August 1996 and reprinted in *Transit Australia*:

An O-Bahn would simply add multitudes of buses to city streets, thus falling victim to the very congestion that genuine rapid transit systems overcome. Also there is not enough room for an O-Bahn along certain sections of the Brighton railway, so there would have to be property acquisitions and some demolition of houses. The O-Bahn cannot negotiate level crossings. These would have to either be closed or converted to expensive over or underpasses and what would we get in return for this intrusive multi-million dollar folly? Nothing but a superfluous transport system where a modern system (the railway) already exists. This is transport planning gone mad.

In the light of these observations, and acknowledging *Transit Australia* as a source, my questions are:

1. Has the Minister endorsed the southern O-Bahn proposal?
2. What would be the cost of the extensive grade separation works required to eliminate the numerous level crossings that exist on the Brighton route?
3. If a rail corridor is to be used, why not use the Tonsley line, which terminates much closer to the Darlington end of the Southern Expressway and which would therefore reduce the on-road distance travelled?
4. Does the reference to feeder buses to the busway not contradict one of the oft-touted advantages of the O-Bahn as eliminating mode changes?
5. Would the proposal that the southern O-Bahn be operated by a private contractor as an extension of the existing north-eastern O-Bahn not create problems both for the southern O-Bahn operator and TransAdelaide, which operates the existing O-Bahn service?
6. Would the cost of the project not be much better spent on a light rail alternative or upgrading the existing rail service, constructing modern interchanges at strategic locations and improving rail access to the city centre?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I was interested in the source of the statements cited by the honourable member. She would have been fairer in indicating that *Transit Australia* is a magazine promoting light rail and therefore the comments that she quoted from letters are pretty predictable in terms of any reflection on any public transport initiative other than

light rail. Nevertheless, if I do not have all the answers to the honourable member's questions I will get those answers. She would be aware that extensions to the O-Bahn system have been on the agenda when we were in Opposition for years and we have never made any secret of that. The most successful part of the whole operation of public transport in South Australia is the O-Bahn system to Modbury. It was only earlier this year that we were able to celebrate 60 million passenger journeys and it is the one part of the public transport system that continues to increase in patronage. So, in every respect—maintenance, patronage, speed, efficiency, overheads—it is the most efficient and effective method of public transport delivery in this State, and it works well because it caters for our very diverse population spread in the city.

We may not like the way urban planning has been undertaken in the past, but it is a fact of life. The O-Bahn works efficiently with these systems. I have not seen any plan by anybody, particularly from the public sector, promoting a southern O-Bahn that would require any endorsement from me. It may be that there will be a plan at some stage in the future, but I have not seen any endorsement of such a plan. In terms of cost separation, I suspect that that would be assessed either as part of the first endorsement of the concept or certainly would have to be considered in later feasibility studies. The Tonsley line is one area that would have to be considered in terms of feeder buses. They are not nearly as efficient as encouraging people to stay on the one bus from the time they pick up the journey to its conclusion rather than having to transfer, but with the O-Bahn there is a transfer arrangement at various interchanges and that would work well on any southern O-Bahn if and when it does proceed.

In terms of a private contractor, you would have to consider a private contractor undertaking the construction work. It does not mean a private contractor would also operate any services on that line. I would not see any conflict with any operator, just as TransAdelaide has won the contract for the north-east area on its merits. It is now under contract operating that system very well with some exciting new and more efficient services to be offered in the near future. I will look at the last question and bring back a reply to the honourable member.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: If no considerations have been given by the Minister's department on the issue of a southern O-Bahn, have any private representations been made to the Minister?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Not formal representations, no.

BOWEL CANCER

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport, representing the Minister for Health, a question about bowel cancer screening.

Leave granted.

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: A Professor Graeme Young, Professor of Medicine at the University of Adelaide, has called for a screening program for bowel cancer. In his book entitled *Prevention and Early Detection of Colorectal Cancer*, he finds that the results of studies into the effective areas of screening for bowel cancer were 'extremely encouraging'. Bowel cancer kills 4 000 people every year. The disease is fatal in 50 per cent of sufferers. It is therefore one of the most common and deadly forms of cancer. The

incidence of bowel cancer in Australia is high—five times higher than in developing countries. This is due largely to an unhealthy diet of too much fat and too little fibre, fresh fruit and vegetables. It is a disease of a westernised modern society, and countries such as Japan and Greece, which previously had a low incidence of bowel cancer, have seen increasing rates of the disease due to their change in diet.

Professor Young believes that screening could reduce the death rate by 25 to 30 per cent. The cost benefits are the same as for breast cancer screening. Confirmation as to the screening efficiency can be made only within five to 15 years, but Professor Young says that during that time bowel cancer will kill many people. The options for screening could be the testing of faeces once a year for the presence of blood. In addition, an internal or endoscopic examination could be done every five years, combined with the yearly testing of faeces. This screening should be targeted at people over 50 years and those who have a family history of the disease or related bowel disease. The rationale is that if it is detected in the early stages it is curable. My questions are:

1. Will the Minister look into the possibility of setting up such a screening program for the early detection of bowel cancer?

2. If the program could be a national one with perhaps a pilot project to start in South Australia, can the Minister seek Federal funding for the project?

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

SEWAGE TREATMENT

In reply to **Hon. T.G. ROBERTS** (10 July).

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Minister for Infrastructure has provided the following information in relation to Question 1.

The Government has already announced its preferred option for the environment improvement at the Port Adelaide Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The statement in the *Messenger* press on 3 July 1996 was a direct result of the Minister for Infrastructure's announcement earlier that week that the Government had endorsed a community consultation program with respect to the Environment Improvement Programs for the metropolitan wastewater treatment plants.

In the information provided as part of the community consultation process, a range of options has been presented for each plant to illustrate the diversity of possible options, associated costs and resulting environmental improvements. Each plant has a preferred strategy indicated which represents the agreed position with the EPA.

In the case of Port Adelaide, the preferred strategy is for a major treatment plant upgrade to substantially reduce the nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus, and a relocated outfall with diffuser in the Port Adelaide River, at an indicative cost of \$26 million. Re-use is not feasible due to the high salinity of the treated wastewater.

Community consultation in the Port Adelaide area has already commenced with the Port Adelaide Wastewater Treatment Plant opened for public inspection on Saturday 10 August 1996, and a public meeting held at Port Adelaide on Monday 12 August 1996 at which a range of community input was received.

This comment and written submissions will be considered by Government in reaching its decision on the option to be implemented.

The Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations has provided the following information in relation to Question 2.

The options put forward for the next stage of stormwater management works in the Patawalonga Basin have been presented for public examination in the form of an EIS (Amendment) report, which was on public exhibition from 10 May until 24 June 1996.

Public submissions received in response to that process are still being examined and the various options are currently being assessed in accordance with the prescribed EIS procedures.

The Government will decide on its preferred option following the conclusion of the EIS process and after it has had the opportunity to consider all the information arising out of that process.

The Government will not announce its position publicly prior to that time.

RURAL HEALTH

In reply to **Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER** (4 July) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

1. The Minister for Health is aware of this study. It was undertaken by Doctors J.R. Clayer, A.C. McFarlane, A.S. Czechowicz and G. Wright, and titled 'Mental Health in the Riverland—A report of the Findings of the 1991 Prevalence of Mental Illness, Associated Disability and Needs in the Riverland Study'.

The study was cited and referred to in a more recent study undertaken by the Riverland Health and Social Welfare Council titled 'Mental Health Advocacy Project Report—A Consumer Perspective 1995' which was published and widely distributed in February 1995.

2. As part of the realignment of the South Australian Mental Health Service, a comprehensive and integrated Country Mental Health Service is to be established involving a considerable increase in resources. The model, which will for the first time specifically focus on the needs of country people, will have five main components:

- A 20 bed Country Acute Inpatient Unit to be established on the Glenside Hospital complex. Co-located will be a 24 hour Country Emergency Mental Health Service which will provide a 24 hour consultation and advisory service by telephone or video-conferencing (a facility which the Berri and Loxton Hospitals already have), for general practitioners, Hospital Staff, Community Mental Health Workers, Consumers and Carers. (The Telesychiatry system will be expanded in 1996-97 to include all Regional and Sub-Regional hospitals in the State).
- Community Mental Health Services which will be considerably expanded in line with the recommendations of the 1993 'A Framework for Country Mental Health Services Report' which recommended an increase in Community Mental Health staff from 24 to 120. The first 20 'high priority posts' were filled in 1995 and further positions will be filled in 1996-97. The Riverland Mental Health Team of three will be augmented over time to a total of 10.
- Community Mental Health Support Services, such as self-help groups for Consumers and Carers, assisted accommodation, and provision of respite care, will be funded in all country regions.
- Comprehensive education and training programs in mental health will be developed by the Rural Health Training Unit for general practitioners, Generic Local Hospital and Community Health Staff, Community Mental Health Workers and Consumers and Carers. This program commenced on 22 August 1996, with the training of local hospitals' nursing staff in the management of severely mentally ill people. A position is also to be established in the Country Inpatient Unit for the short term refresher training of country general practitioners. Other educational programs for general practitioners are also being considered.
- Improved co-ordination with access to State-wide Mental Health Services such as Services to the Elderly, Extended Care Services and the Intensive Care Service.

A program identifying the resource requirements to facilitate full implementation of the Country Mental Health Services model has been developed and in 1996-97 an additional \$1 500 000 (\$3 200 000 in a full year) has been allocated to enable the implementation of the program to commence throughout country South Australia (including the Riverland).

3. General practitioners play a pivotal role in the treatment of mental illness in country areas. Their need for specific and ongoing education and training has been clearly recognised and will be an important feature in the implementation of the new Country Mental Health Service model.

HEPATITIS B

In reply to **Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER** (24 July) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

South Australia adopts the recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in relation to the Childhood Immunisation Schedule. The NHMRC has not recommended the incorporation of universal hepatitis B vaccine in the routine childhood schedule. A working party has made such a recommendation, however with some reservations including that hepatitis B should only be added to the schedule if that did not cause undue problems with the present arrangements.

The NHMRC has set procedures before working party recommendations are endorsed and at present a second working party, the Immunisation Procedures Working Party, is reviewing the childhood schedule and will make recommendations about if and how to incorporate hepatitis B. Recommendations will probably go to NHMRC in November.

Negotiations between States and the Commonwealth in relation to funding would also be premature. However, funding for any change to the immunisation schedule, such as the introduction of a new more effective and more expensive vaccine against whooping cough, requires debate between the two levels of government. The issue of who pays for such things will be a matter for discussion at NHMRC in November.

DOCTORS, OVERSEAS

In reply to **Hon. P. NOCELLA** (1 August) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

South Australia, like other States of Australia, has a number of overseas trained medical practitioners who have migrated on the basis of general migration, family reunion, or refugee processes. Medical practitioners who are granted permanent residency status are required to pass the Australian Medical Council (AMC) assessment to ascertain if their qualifications are suitable for obtaining full registration in Australia. This is common in all States.

Doctors who have passed the AMC multichoice questionnaire examination are able to obtain training positions in Teaching Hospitals for the purposes of preparing for the Clinical Examination. Once the Clinical Examination has been passed, the Medical Board of South Australia requires such medical practitioners to complete twelve months of general rotation under a supervised arrangement, before being granted full registration. These two groups of doctors, so far as is known, have not been excluded from employment in the South Australian Health Commission system.

The Australian Health Ministers' Conference recommended that suitable overseas trained medical practitioners who are living in the Australian community with permanent residency status should, where possible, be offered positions which are determined to be 'in the public interest' before any temporary resident doctors are sought to fill such positions.

South Australia has only two temporary resident doctors who have limited registration practising in South Australia. The demand for temporary resident doctors is extremely low in South Australia, unlike other States of Australia.

If positions become available for which no applications are received from fully registered medical practitioners, prior to those positions being advertised overseas, any suitable applicants from permanent residents who have not yet passed the AMC examination will be considered for limited registration 'in the public interest'. This does not negate the requirement for overseas trained medical practitioners to pass the AMC examination prior to obtaining full registration.

In the Commonwealth Budget, announced in August, the decision was made not to grant a 'Provider Number' to non-vocationally registered medical practitioners after 1 November 1996. This will affect current interns and subsequent medical graduates and all AMC candidates who have not been fully registered and have not obtained a provider number prior to the above date.

The apparent intention of this policy is to reduce the dependence on temporary resident overseas trained doctors and to prevent more non-vocationally trained practitioners from setting up in practice, particularly in metropolitan suburbs.

MEDICAL CONSENT FORMS

In reply to **Hon. ANNE LEVY** (1 August) and answered by letter on 18 August.

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

In asking her questions the honourable member stated 'it (Medic Alert) is a commercial organisation and it is not its job to undertake community service obligations'. The Minister for Health points out that Medic Alert is not a commercial organisation, but a national non profit agency that exists for the purpose of providing a community service which is functionally identical to our Register. As a non-Government organisation, it prides itself in operating very viably and independent of Government financial assistance. Its existing members pay a fee commensurate with that prescribed for the Register, and the Minister for Health is sure there would be many pensioners and low income earners in the over 110 000 registrations it currently holds.

In answer to the honourable member's first question, the Minister for Health can state that no Government funding was provided to Medic Alert when it was contracted to operate the Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act Register. The Government did agree though to meet any additional indemnity insurance costs that Medic Alert experienced as a consequence of managing this Register. The Minister for Health understands that no such cost has been incurred by them.

In answer to the honourable member's second question, the Government will not be assuming a community service obligation, with respect to Medic Alert offering concessional rates for pensioners and other low income earners. The Register is an entirely voluntary arrangement, which only a small number in our community are likely to elect to utilise. If Government funding was granted, there appears no sound reason why the other functionally identical and equally important services provided by Medic Alert should not also be subsidised. We would then have the complication of this being a national organisation where no such subsidies are provided by other State Governments. Given other competing priorities in the health system, the Minister for Health believes this a good case for allowing an organisation that works very well without Government funding to continue to do so.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

In reply to **Hon. P. HOLLOWAY** (1 October).

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Government has received legal advice in relation to its obligations to Westpac in relation to the building of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge. For obvious reasons it would be inappropriate for me to disclose that advice to the honourable member as it would defeat the legal professional privilege attaching to such advice. I assure the honourable member that the Government has carefully considered its obligations to Westpac and all relevant parties and will act appropriately having regard to those obligations.

CANNABINOID DERIVATIVES

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (24 July) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

The National Task Force on Cannabis in 1994, recommended that the Commonwealth support controlled research into the efficacy of synthetic cannabinoid products for the treatment of a variety of medical conditions. The SA Select Committee on the Control and Illegal Use of Drugs, also recommended in 1995 that such research be undertaken.

Following on from the Task Force's recommendation, the Commonwealth undertook preliminary investigations into the feasibility of such research being undertaken, through convening a working group of experts in the fields of oncology, pharmacology, haematology, drug evaluation, drug and alcohol treatment and public health. This group met in February 1995, and its recommendations were considered by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS) in June 1995. The group recommended that research on the therapeutic potential of cannabinoids be undertaken, in accordance with sound clinical practice, with a focus on synthetic derivatives of cannabis. It was recommended that a consultancy be commissioned to develop a research plan.

The matter has since been discussed at the July 1996 MCDS meeting, where it was acknowledged that there were legal barriers to further investigation into the therapeutic uses of cannabinoids as well as ethical and moral issues to be explored. It was resolved that

South Australia would prepare a discussion paper to clarify these problem issues and propose ways in which research could proceed.

Progress has occurred in making the cannabinoid 'dronabinol' available for the treatment of weight loss associated with AIDS on a trial basis. Many other Australian jurisdictions already allow the use of dronabinol for this purpose or are moving towards making synthetic cannabis derivatives available to sufferers of AIDS and some cancers. Eligible prescribers in South Australia were advised around 12 months ago of the availability of this drug for use and a list of registered prescribers is held by the Therapeutic Goods section of the South Australian Health Commission.

DOCTORS, BULK BILLING

In reply to **Hon T. CROTHERS** (31 July) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

1. The Minister for Health is not responsible for Federal Health policies.
2. and 3. Both questions are hypothetical.
4. The Minister for Health has no objection to the retention of the option of bulk billing.

FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE, BUS STOP SHELTER

In reply to **Hon. T.G. CAMERON** (24 July) and answered by letter on 22 August.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: An officer of the Passenger Transport Board (PTB) has kept in contact with the Flinders Medical Centre (FMC) regarding the issue of bus shelters.

FMC management have advised that after discussions with both Australian shelters and 3m products they have been unable to secure any new bus shelters for the Medical Centre. Both companies stated that the major criteria for the supply of shelters was total vehicle numbers actually passing a particular point of request—and the FMC is not deemed to be a commercially viable 'bus-site'.

Bus shelters on Council land are the responsibility of local government but not on private property such as the Flinders Medical Centre. Thus, the local Council is not responsible.

Where bus routes serve major traffic generators such as shopping centres and hospitals, and the buses stop on the land owned by those facilities, the landowner normally supplies the shelters. Accordingly the PTB has written to the Medical Centre requesting that it give consideration to the welfare of its patients and visitors using the public transport system.

For your interest, the current cost of bus shelters is \$5 000 per unit.

RURAL HEALTH

In reply to **Hon T. CROTHERS** (4 June) and answered by letter on 26 September.

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

1. Both the State and Federal Government provide funds to support the attraction of health professionals to rural areas.

The Medical Practitioners receive not only a significant income from the public purse for their work in rural hospitals, but also support for continuing medical education, locums and professional indemnity, as follows:

- Integrated Rural Locum Service (\$298 000 per year).
- Continuing Medical Education Funds for general practitioners (\$50 000 per year).
- Continuing Medical Education Funds for Specialists (\$50 000 per year).
- Locum support for solo practitioners (\$140 000 per year).
- Subsidy of Professional Indemnity payments for rural medical practitioners, locums and RACGP trainees (approx. \$1 200 000 this financial year and \$600 000 in subsequent years).
- Rural Scholarships of \$5 000 per year for up to three years (accessible to medical students in their last three years of undergraduate study).
- The amounts in the two Continuing Medical Education Schemes (of \$50 000) have been increased to \$60 000 in the current FFS negotiations.

2. The Health Commission has expanded the allocation to the Fee for Service Pool over the last two years by approximately \$1.6 million to expand the specialist services in rural areas.

A paediatric unit has been established at Port Augusta, and obstetric services expanded in the Riverland.

The professional colleges have been encouraged by both the State and Federal Governments to look at their training program to ensure that there are suitably trained specialists to provide services at rural centres. These colleges have moved to encourage rural placements for their trainees, an action which is supported by the South Australian Health Commission.

The Minister for Health recently announced increased spending in South Australian regional districts.

ROAD FUNDING

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about Government spending on South Australian roads.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: The State's road network represents infrastructure of major economic and social importance to South Australia. South Australia's network of sealed roads has been constructed or reconstructed largely since the Second World War, with peak activity occurring in the 1960s. As the economic life of these roads has generally been in the region of 35 to 50 years, major road replacement will become increasingly necessary throughout the 1990s and into the next century.

A road is considered to be at the end of its economic life when the savings on maintenance are greater than the replacement cost. According to the Department of Transport, the average cost of maintaining roads in this State is approximately \$75 million each year. The Department of Transport Annual Report shows that in 1994-95 the State Government spent only \$60.5 million on road maintenance—\$15 million less than was needed just to keep our roads as they are. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Is the Minister aware that, according to the Department of Transport, South Australian roads are fast approaching the end of their useful life and that considerable amounts of money will need to be spent in the next few years?

2. Why has this Government consistently underspent on roads by some \$15 million each year, when the Department of Transport recommends that a minimum of \$75 million be spent?

3. Considering that the level of funding spent on roads is only 10 per cent of the amount spent in the 1960s, what is the Minister doing to rectify this unacceptable situation and when can we expect an increase?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I am not too sure where the honourable member gets all his facts and figures, because the Auditor-General's Report from—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No, it is just interesting the way people use the figures, because the Auditor-General's Report on major program expenditure said that the most significant item of expenditure during 1995-96 amounted to \$114 million compared to \$93.4 million the previous year. So, quite a substantial increase of \$20 million was spent on road assets preservation.

The broad objectives of this program are to preserve the safe, efficient and reliable operations of the principal road system. So, it depends on what figures one applies to what programs. I highlight that, in terms of road asset preservation, in the same year the Auditor-General indicated that we spent \$20 million more in the same year and that the department indicates that we have spent \$15 million less than would be needed to replace the asset.

The honourable member has not been in this place for as long as this issue has been raised in this place. This issue has been of particular concern to all members of Parliament for at least the 14 years I have been in this place. The one thing the honourable member did not acknowledge is that last year, for the first time in years and years, there was a substantial increase—not necessarily in what may be required to replace that asset—of funds devoted to road assets preservation. I suggest that that warranted the Government's receiving substantial congratulations on finding those additional funds and to the work force because it is looking at road maintenance costs generally. There have been enormous savings in the way in which we do our work so that more money can be spent on this very subject that the honourable member has highlighted.

MARION HIGH SCHOOL

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services a question about the closure of Marion High School.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The *Guardian Messenger* recently carried an article entitled 'Marion High Closure Sparks Year 8 Enrolments Crisis' which stated:

No vacancies are left for students wanting to enrol into year 8 at local high schools, forcing parents to look outside the region. The closure of Marion High School at the end of this year is being blamed for the influx of students, forcing three local schools to cap year 8 numbers...Mitchell Liberal MP Colin Caudell has said the issue was not one of overcrowding, but a lack of vision shown by the Education Department when it decided to close Marion High School.

The article also reported Mr Caudell as follows:

All high schools in my area for year 8 are completely full and will only except zone of right entries.

My questions to the Minister are:

1. Will he confirm that there are no vacancies in high schools in that area, or is the member for Mitchell incorrect?
2. Does he share the view of the member for Mitchell that his department has shown a lack of vision or, again, is the member for Mitchell incorrect?
3. Has he acceded to the request of his colleague, Mr Caudell, as reported in the Messenger article, that 'south-western children attend the school of their choice while waiting for enrolments to stabilise after the Marion closure'? The member for Mitchell had reportedly written to the Minister requesting that action.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As I said last week with reference to the member for Elder, we also have a very good member for Mitchell in Mr Colin Caudell.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Exactly, we have excellent members everywhere. These are members who, as I said last week or two weeks ago, fearlessly stick up for the views of their constituents, whether it be a Liberal or a Labor Minister. Unlike Paul Holloway, from whom we did not hear a squeak for years—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As I said two weeks ago, where did the Hon. Paul Holloway end up? He was very lucky: he lost his seat.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The member for Mitchell, Colin Caudell, is fearlessly putting the points of view of his constituents—

The Hon. P. Holloway: Is he right or wrong?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: On this rare occasion the member for Mitchell and the Minister for Education and Children's Services have a disagreement. The Minister for Education and Children's Services happens to think, on this rare occasion, that the member for Mitchell is not fully appraised of all the facts in relation to the matter.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: He is taking some advice.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Holloway is taking advice, is he? Certainly the member for Mitchell and I have had a discussion about the particular problems that some constituents might perceive to have in relation to enrolments. The reality is that all local schools in the south-west are not full and, as we indicated with the announced closure of Marion High School, we have room for many hundreds of students at Daws Road High School. The Government will be spending considerable sums of money over the next 12 to 18 months to upgrade the facilities at Daws Road High School to ensure that it has—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Well, it is outside his electorate, so obviously he is working his own electorate very hard. The constituents of Marion High School, I hasten to say, do not all come from the member for Mitchell's electorate. The catchment area for—

The Hon. L.H. Davis: Some of them come from the Hon. Mr Holloway's old electorate.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Yes. Some of them come from over the hill and down Reynella and Morphett Vale way. They come from a very wide catchment area to Marion High School. Just across the road from the member for Mitchell's electorate, in the member for Davenport's electorate (another very hard working member whom we have in the Lower House), is Daws Road High School. We have room for many hundreds of students within the Daws Road High School complex on which, as I said, we will be spending somewhere between \$1 million and \$2 million on renovations and redevelopment over the next year or so to provide extra facilities.

I have a recollection of seeing a briefing note—although I would need to check my memory—stating that there is some capacity, perhaps small, at Hamilton Secondary College. If my recollection—

The Hon. R.R. Roberts interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The remark shows how well the honourable member knows the south-west area. Ask the Hon. Mr Holloway where Hamilton Secondary College is.

The Hon. P. Holloway interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: It is an excellent school, as the Hon. Mr Holloway indicates. I will check my recollection of that. Certainly, some other students from the northern part of the current Marion High School catchment area will also be attending Plympton High School. Again, there is room for many hundreds of students at Plympton High School. Some of those students are coming from over the hill and from Reynella and Morphett Vale. Also, schools are located in the local area, much closer to their homes, which have room for many hundreds of students.

Let me assure the Hon. Mr Holloway, as I have the member for Mitchell, that those schools have the capacity. There is a full house at Brighton High School and, as the Hon. Mr Holloway will know, it has been the case for many

years now that that school offers magnificent programs, being a special interest music school. In effect, Brighton High School has been under enrolment pressure for many years and that continues. Certainly students from outside the immediate zone for Brighton High School cannot attend.

I know that Seaview High School was formed as a result of the closure of Daws Road High School under the previous Government, as the Hon. Mr Holloway would remember. Perhaps that was not in his electorate—that might have been just across the road from his electorate, or perhaps he has forgotten about that one.

Hamilton Secondary College resulted from the amalgamation of two previous secondary schools—I think Glengowrie High School and Mitchell Park. The Hon. Mr Holloway might have forgotten that, or perhaps it was not in his electorate; it was just across the road from his electorate. That particular school was closed in the south-west under the previous Labor Government. The longer I go on with this answer the more schools I can remember being closed by the previous Labor Government in that south-western corner.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: Did he ask any questions at the time?

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: No, I cannot remember the honourable member asking any questions. I will continue to discuss these issues with the local member, Mr Caudell, who I am sure will fearlessly continue to put the views of his constituents and the perception of his constituents in relation to these issues.

CONSULTANCIES

In reply to **Hon. R.R. Roberts** (2 October).

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The variation in the cost of consultants to the Attorney-General's Department for 1995-96 between the \$266 000.00 stated in the Auditor-General's Report and the \$1 357 548.80 answer to the consultants question during the Estimates Committees is due to:

1. The Estimates Committee answer includes consultants used by the Public Trustee Office \$293 781.75, Office of the Ombudsman \$6 406.00 and Police Complaints Authority \$3 894.00. The cost of these consultants are not reported in the Attorney-General's Department's financial statement, but included in the Public Trustee Office's own financial statement and Miscellaneous Payments respectively.

2. The interpretation of defining who is a consultant. The Department of Treasury and Finance's Accounting Policy Statement No. 13 defines a consultant as 'a person who is engaged by an entity for a limited period to carry out a defined task free from direction by the entity as to the way in which that task is to be performed and in circumstances in which the engagement of a person under normal conditions of employment is not a feasible alternative'.

This definition of a consultant is used for disclosing the cost of consultants as a note to the Attorney-General's Department's financial statement. Consequently, the Attorney-General's Department cost of consultants of \$266 000.00 as stated in the Auditor-General's Report is in accordance with this definition of a consultant and is accepted by the Auditor-General.

The answer to the Estimates Committee on consultants includes a broader interpretation of consultants such as payments made to contractors for specialised work like professional legal services \$572 329.50 and computer specialist \$210 960.00. These types of payments are categorised separately from consultants within the Attorney-General's Department's financial statement and notes.

The issues and examples outline in these two points account for \$1 087 371.25 of the variation between the \$266 000.00 and the \$1 357 548.80 figures.

OUTSOURCING

In reply to **Hon. R.R. Roberts** (2 October).

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Advice regarding legal risks and liability has been provided in all major outsourcing contracts over the past two years. However, this advice has not necessarily been

consolidated into a discrete legal risk assessment document. Legal liability and risk issues are usually dealt with by way of drafting instructions and advice on specific issues as they arise during the process of contract formation. The outcome of these instructions and advices is embodied in the words of the contract document and is subject to negotiation with the private party. The final outcome is included in the final form of contract document which is certified by the Crown Solicitor or the private firm of solicitors acting for the Government as being suitable for signature by the Minister concerned. The South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation has been consulted on risk management and insurance issues related to all major outsourcing contracts over the past two years.

POULTRY MEAT INDUSTRY

In reply to **Hon. M.J. Elliott** (9 July).

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The Minister for Primary Industries has provided the following response:

1. The Minister introduced legislation to repeal the Poultry Meat Industry Act 1969 on 10 July 1996 in the knowledge that all contract poultry growers will be offered contracts by the processing companies.

2. Contract chicken growers will be in the same position as other business people who are required to enter into contractual relations in the course of their business.

3. The Minister is aware of the provisions of the Act regarding processing of chickens from farms with contracts. The Minister has powers under the Act to exempt processors and growers from any provisions of the Act and has exempted processors from Section 11h which requires that processors can only process chickens raised under an agreement approved by the Poultry Meat Industry Committee on an approved farm. The Minister stresses that this is a short term measure pending the repeal of the Act which has been undertaken with the assurance from the processors that all growers will be offered contracts. The Minister is aware that some growers have already signed contracts and that negotiations are continuing between processors and growers with respect to contracts. The Minister would be reluctant to prosecute processors as the spirit of the legislation is to ensure that chicken growers have contracts with their processors rather than to punish people. The Minister will continue to monitor the situation closely.

BETTER CARE

In reply to **Hon. T.G. Roberts** (23 July).

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The Minister for Industrial Affairs and the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs have provided the following responses:

1. An initial assessment by WorkCover Corporation has indicated that Better Care and Anders, Salwin and Salwin are complying with the technical requirements of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act.

The activities of Better Care and Anders, Salwin and Salwin have previously been brought to the attention of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA). Better Care's activities and representations were investigated with the result that specific Fair Trading offences could not be substantiated. Since that time OCBA has maintained a monitoring brief on the activities of the company. Several consumer complaints concerning Better Care have been lodged with OCBA in the past year. Better Care has co-operated in resolving these matters.

OCBA continues to liaise with the WorkCover Corporation to investigate allegations of misleading representations made to consumers through Better Care's marketing methods. The legal firm Anders, Salwin and Salwin is based in Victoria and one of the senior partners of the firm holds a practising certificate for South Australia. The partner, Mr Mark Salwin, is a Director of Better Care Pty Ltd and, as a result of complaints received against Better Care and Anders, Salwin and Salwin, the Legal Practitioners Complaints Committee has commenced an investigation into the conduct of the company.

2. Funding for compensation for hearing loss claims is from employer levies paid to WorkCover by registered employers or directly from the employer in the case of Exempt Employers. The only money from the Government would be for claims from Government employees. There is no 'pool of Government money' established to meet hearing loss claims.

3. Workers who believe they have a hearing loss should approach their employer and lodge a notice of disability (claim form). The claim will be treated as having arisen out of their current employment unless the employer can establish proof to the contrary. No compensation is payable unless the percentage loss of hearing exceeds 5 per cent.

The claim will be assessed by the Claims Agent (in the case of a registered employer) or by the Exempt Employer. The worker would not be required to pay for the cost of medical assessments and would not need to involve a legal representative. The worker could therefore keep the full amount of the compensation payable.

Workers who have been retired for more than two years or who have not worked in employment capable of causing noise induced hearing loss since the establishment of WorkCover in 1987, may not be entitled to compensation for hearing loss and should discuss their particular circumstances with their employer, Claims Agent or union, or they may choose to seek legal advice.

WORKCOVER

In reply to **Hon. ANNE LEVY** (30 July).

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The Minister for Industrial Affairs has provided the following response:

The lump sum compensation referred to by the Honourable Member is a payment for Loss of Earning Capacity (LOEC) under Section 42A of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986. This provision was introduced by the former Labor Government in 1992 to allow for compensation to be paid as a capital payment for loss of the capacity to earn, in lieu of income maintenance payments. Capital payments are not taxable, whereas weekly payments are taxed as income. A ruling from the Australian Taxation Office confirmed the above.

The fact that the lump sum is not taxable in the hands of the worker is taken into account in the legislation which specifically requires an estimation of income tax to be deducted from the worker's notional weekly earnings in the process of assessing the worker's capital loss.

The policy adopted by the WorkCover Corporation in relation to the estimation of income tax provides for the relevant PAYE tax instalment applicable to the worker's notional weekly earnings to be reduced by 20 per cent or \$35 per week (whichever is lesser) to take account of deductions which the worker may otherwise claim. The policy also provides that adjustments to the estimate of tax may be made if the worker provides proof of tax concessions which exceed the 20 per cent or \$35 per week level of reduction referred to above.

It is suggested that the worker concerned discuss his/her tax situation and LOEC assessment with the relevant Claims Agent.

OUTSOURCING

In reply to **Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT** (30 July).

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The Minister for State Government Services has provided the following response:

The Government has a well publicised policy on competitive services delivery within the public sector. In this context the Government decided that Services SA Building Maintenance Services (BMS) would be open to competitive tendering. BMS currently undertakes some \$50 million worth of work per annum.

Services SA appointed consultants Ernst & Young and Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey to identify, in consultation with agencies and the private sector, the best way for South Australia to achieve the greatest value from this process.

On the basis of the consultants' recommendations, a proposal is being developed by Services SA in conjunction with the public sector non-commercial agencies for the packaging of building maintenance and minor works into large contracts.

Options for contracting out are presently being scoped for consideration by Cabinet. No decisions have yet been made about the nature of the contracts.

This process has been successful in Western Australia. Services SA are working closely with WA to learn from their experience to ensure the best outcome for South Australia and employees of Services SA's Building Maintenance Services.

Should the introduction of packaged maintenance contracts proceed, it is expected that the process will take 12 to 18 months.

EQUESTRIAN SPORTS

In reply to **Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER** (25 July) and answered by letter dated 30 September.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: The Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing has provided the following response:

It is proposed to stage the Adelaide International Horse Trials from 29 October to 2 November 1997 at Victoria Park. The interest in this event, both locally, nationally and internationally, augurs well for Adelaide being recognised as a focal point in Australia and the southern hemisphere for world-renowned equestrian eventing.

Our recent gold medallists, Gillian Rolton and Wendy Schaeffer, are already playing a role in promoting this event both nationally and internationally.

I thank the Member for her question and I wish to advise that at the current time I am not contemplating the establishment of an equestrian complex at Victoria Park, but you can be assured that, through the Australian Major Events Board and the Officer for Recreation, Sport and Racing, all opportunities will be capitalised on to ensure that we establish Victoria Park and Adelaide as a true international equestrian centre.

FIRE BLIGHT

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Primary Industries, a question about fire blight disease.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Fire blight is a plant disease that attacks apples and pears. Australia is currently free from fire blight, although such is not the case in many other world growing areas such as New Zealand, the United States, Canada, Mexico and Central and South America. Also, of more recent times, places such as the United Kingdom, the rest of Europe and the Middle East have become infected. This disease caused severe losses in Greece in 1987, just one year after it was first detected in that country.

I stress that fire blight cannot be prevented or cured, even though expensive and extensive applications of antibiotics are used in some nations. I am reliably informed that this sort of treatment cannot be used in Australia. Current quarantine regulations from as far back as 30 January 1941 preclude imports of apples from countries where fire blight is known to exist, except where permission of the Minister gives exception to the rule. These rules also provide that apples grown in districts of New Zealand in which fire blight does not occur may be imported subject to certification, namely, that prescribed conditions have been satisfied.

In 1988, the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries submitted a protocol for evaluation by the Bureau of Rural Resources which claimed to satisfy Australia's prescribed conditions. That was rejected by the then Australian Government. Earlier this year, the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture submitted a further new proposal which, I am told, if granted would again place Australian grown fruit under considerable threat from the importation of fire blight disease. Considering that South Australian exports of apples and pears earn this State many valuable export dollars each year, and further considering the number of people employed by the industry, particularly in the Adelaide Hills area and, to a lesser extent, in the other areas of this State, and I note that in recent years there has been considerable development of this industry in the South-East, I pose the following questions:

1. Is the Minister opposed to this new protocol application by New Zealand?
2. Will he ensure that his department makes appropriate submissions to the Federal Government in respect of this matter?
3. Will he endeavour to attract maximum support from respective Ministers in all the Australian States, and I ask this

third question based on the earnest expectation that his answers to my first two questions will be in the affirmative?

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

MOUNT LOFTY SUMMIT

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 on the Mount Lofty summit redevelopment.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Aren't you pleased that it is going ahead? You haven't been able to stop it this time.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister for Transport cannot answer the question until it has been asked.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: For the record, on a number of occasions I have congratulated the Government on the negotiations and the way in which they were carried out. However, my question relates to the current status of the redevelopment. I have been informed that the Native Vegetation Council has just approved the clearance of native vegetation for fire hazard reduction. There is considerable public confusion about events surrounding the destruction of native vegetation during this project. While conservation groups felt that the consultation process worked well, the clearance which subsequently occurred was greater than expected. I understand that an application for further clearance to provide a better view from the summit is also expected to be lodged.

Last month, the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia wrote to the Premier seeking clarification of several issues about the redevelopment. It has still not received a response. Particular concerns were raised about the application for clearance for fire hazard reduction. In this case, the Department for the Environment and Natural Resources is the applicant, the assessor and the organisation that administers the Native Vegetation Council. The Nature Conservation Society is concerned that the consultation process prior to the development was inadequate in terms of not fully identifying the clearance that was to occur. In addition, the car park clearance application was confusing with respect to the precise boundaries for which clearance approval was sought and granted, and the severity of clearance for the car park was excessive, involving the total destruction of vegetation rather than the sensitive selective removal of vegetation.

The society says that it is not possible for the planned rehabilitation of the summit to restore the intact ecological community that was destroyed. It says that any suggestions by the Minister and senior departmental personnel that the summit environment will be improved after the redevelopment are not scientifically accurate. The Conservation Council of South Australia has also raised serious concerns about the latest clearance in correspondence to me. Consultation with various groups was undertaken only after the Conservation Council became publicly involved, and it says that, after the mismanagement and serious damage to the proposed car park on the summit, the groups have become very suspicious of any further actions by the Department for the Environment and Natural Resources. My questions are:

1. Can the Minister confirm that the Native Vegetation Council has granted clearance approval for fire hazard reduction on site?

2. Was this fire reduction a condition of the approval granted by the Development Assessment Commission?

3. Was the Department for the Environment and Natural Resources informed of this DAC condition before work on the redevelopment began?

4. Therefore, was commencement of work on the redevelopment pre-empting Native Vegetation Council approval for bushfire related clearance?

5. Will a further application be lodged in relation to clearance for viewing purposes?

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

LION ARTS CENTRE

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I am sure most members are aware that the Lion Arts Centre was built, and formally opened in 1992, to be a centre for the arts in South Australia. The several buildings at the site were allocated to separate organisations: The Jam Factory Craft Centre; the Experimental Art Foundation; the Nexus Gallery and Cabaret; the Lion Theatre; office space for Doppio Teatro; the Mercury Cinema; and the Iris Cinema under the auspices of the Media Resource Centre.

During the last Festival, the Fringe moved out of the Lion Theatre and rented premises in the East End. There has been a good deal of discussion that the Fringe may wish to stay in the East End rather than return to its previous home in the Lion Theatre. I certainly wish the Fringe well in whatever it attempts to do to increase the prominence and effectiveness of the Adelaide Fringe, but this raises questions regarding the occupancy of the Lion Theatre.

Rumours have been circulating around the Lion Arts Centre amongst people in all the organisations there that the University of South Australia may wish to take over the Lion Theatre, and there is great perturbation about this. The University of South Australia will be adjacent to the Lion Centre and will share the courtyard with it. While all the people who work and enjoy the facilities of the Lion Arts Centre are very happy with this arrangement, they do not want the University of South Australia encroaching into the Lion Arts Centre itself. It is in no way denigrating the university to say that it is an educational institution; but the Lion Arts Centre is an arts centre, which is not the same as an educational institution. I understand that the university has been ambivalent about this idea and may, indeed, at this time not be interested in pursuing it.

My question to the Minister is: will she confirm that the Lion Arts Centre in its entirety is a collection of venues for the Arts, not educational institutions? If the Fringe festival is not to occupy the Lion Theatre, I am sure that there are many other arts organisations in this State that would be only too happy to occupy the Lion Theatre and its associated facilities, with a similar arrangement of grant being increased by the amount of rent which they have to pay back, which has applied to other arts organisations in the Lion Arts Centre.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: As the honourable member has said, the Fringe wants to move to the east end of Rundle Street. On the latest estimates it will cost, on average, some \$80 000 in additional funding that they are required to

pay now in terms of the cash flow for rental. If those additional funds are provided from the Government for that purpose, does it want to outlay that just for rental, for no further gain to their activities, or would they really want to use that for their activities? The Fringe is working through that at the moment. As to the Media Resource Centre, in terms of the operation of the theatre, the honourable member would know that they want that whole issue explored. The Crafts Council has given me a submission that the Fringe may wish to move; it has given me an exciting submission proposing that it might like to occupy that site. Nexus, Doppio—all of them—want to move around that whole area, and I am thrilled that everybody is thinking broadly in how they wish to operate in the longer term and how they can work together much more closely than they have done. Although they have been on the same site, they have not really always cooperated as well. To test all those options it is important also that we look at every option, and we have sought to get advice from the University of South Australia to assess and gauge its interest. The university has expressed an interest. It wants an immediate reply and I indicated last week that we will reply to that interest within a month.

The Hon. Anne Levy: So it's not a whole performing arts centre?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Call on Orders of the Day.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: If the Hon. Anne Levy and the Minister for Transport cannot hold their tongues while other people have the call, they can go outside and have their argument, not in here.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order, Minister for Transport!

ANZ EXECUTORS & TRUSTEE COMPANY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) LIMITED (TRANSFER OF BUSINESS) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 2 October. Page 69.)

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports the second reading. The Bill facilitates the amalgamation of two companies created under statutes of this Parliament, as explained by the Attorney in his second reading explanation on 2 October. Because these companies are statutory creatures, the Opposition agrees that this Bill provides the most efficient way to achieve the reasonable commercial objectives of the parent company, ANZ Trustees, and its South Australian subsidiary. We are pleased to support the second reading.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 3 October. Page 98.)

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES (Leader of the Opposition): In my Address in Reply to the Governor's

speech I believe it will be timely to reflect upon the aspects of His Excellency's speech that dealt with Aboriginal issues. His Excellency has noted that the Government will be releasing a package of material to assist the teaching focus on Aboriginal issues as part of building stronger links within our society between our Aboriginal and our non-Aboriginal cultures. His Excellency also stated that specific initiatives and health care targets will be pursued over the next year in the area of Aboriginal health services. I am glad that Aboriginal people were included in His Excellency's speech, delivered to us in this Chamber on 1 October. Unfortunately, South Australian Aboriginal people have been faced with one of the most disappointing Aboriginal Affairs Ministers for a long, long time.

We have a Minister for Aboriginal Affairs who is happy to blithely use derogatory racist terms in Parliament. His handling of the Hindmarsh Island issue and other Aboriginal issues has caused dismay among Aboriginal people. If new teaching materials on Aboriginal issues are to be developed for our schools, then I hope that understanding of Aboriginal culture in our schools will be promoted and tolerance will be fostered. Of course, it is not only our schoolchildren but the broader community that could also benefit from greater understanding of Aboriginal issues. Progress towards reconciliation was happening slowly but surely in this country until the change of Federal Government in March this year. Now every conservative and every redneck believe that they have some kind of moral authority bestowed upon them by the Prime Minister himself to vilify, to attack and to spew poison about Aboriginal people.

And it apparently suits the Government to have this poison seeping out into the information pool of what John Howard would call mainstream society. Racism, whether born out of ignorance or malice, has been with us from the first days of European settlement. In the public political life of Australia, we have gone through various phases. In my lifetime the two most significant doctrines affecting race relations in Australia have been the White Australia Policy (abandoned long ago but possibly to make a comeback) and multiculturalism (which was promoted on the Labor side of politics and, in fact, had a bipartisan approach until recently). We seem to be moving into another phase, characterised by a crude and ugly backlash against the moves towards the greater tolerance of the past 20 years.

Officially, history may record the beginning of this ugly new phase in Australian political and social life as commencing with the maiden speech by Pauline Hanson, the member for Oxley in the House of Representatives in Canberra. Her speech was classic, crude racism, contemptuous of the non Anglo-Saxon members of our community and utterly divisive in its effect. Her thoughts and her feelings are not new or original, and I would have to admit that they are probably the views of many thousands of Australians. I do not say that the member for Oxley did not have the right to speak out about her perceptions, however ill-informed and ignorant, of immigration and multiculturalism, but the expression of her views in our Federal Parliament and the consequent media coverage of her remarks presents a challenge to all decent and inclusive Australians, especially those in public life, to speak out and explain why she is not only wrong but also capable of doing terrible damage to the social fabric of our country.

Many very interesting articles about this debate have been written over recent times, and I would like to quote from one by Richard Glover, in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 4 October. It reads:

At dinner parties, in letters' pages, on talkback radio, people are now almost chanting about Pauline Hanson. 'I defend her right to say it,' they chorus, as if the world is full of people trying to silence her. It's code, this phrase—a Mason's handshake for people who don't feel game to defend, on its merits, her attacks on Aborigines and Asians. But who still want to give her a secretive leg-up. And so they talk as though the system has stifled Pauline Hanson, as if newspapers have been censoring her words, as if radio stations have been refusing to broadcast her ideas.

Of course, the very opposite is true. As a society, we've been falling over ourselves to broadcast Pauline Hanson's views. Perhaps never, in the 95 years since Federation, has a maiden speech had this much coverage. In the past month, there were 59 stories mentioning Hanson's name in this newspaper alone; while the most popular radio hosts have competed to sing her praises. Not bad for a first-term backbencher. Who (apart from the authors of these supposed and much reported death threats) wants to see her gagged? The reality is that nearly everyone 'defends her right to speak.' It's just some of us also think she is wrong.

We're not 'politically correct'. We're not against 'free speech'. We believe she has every right to claim that Aborigines are actually well-off plutocrats, wandering around in comfort. But we also think this society has enough maturity to allow other views; to let us say we think she's quite mad. In this debate, Pauline Hanson has used all the vigour she could muster. She's used the lowest of debating tricks—fake statistics, *ad hominem* attacks, barefaced lies. And those who think she's wrong will argue with the same vigour. Like her, we might get personal. We might joke about her fish and chip shops, we might say she's unAustralian. Unfair perhaps, but it's the nature of debate. It's real free speech.

It may even sound impolite when we call her a racist. But, remember, she's claimed Aborigines are privileged bludgers. These people whose children die. The Prime Minister has welcomed the flowering of free speech in this country. But I think it's always flowered. True, some of us didn't like the idea of children being taunted because of their race; the community, we thought, should do something to lessen their pain. And we thought it wrong that a gay guy would be told by his neighbours that he should die, and have excrement thrown at his home.

And we imagined how we'd feel if it was our daughter, or our sister, or ourselves, at age 17, being harassed by the boss, enduring the innuendo, given the choice of his bed or unemployment: his sack or the sack. In 1996, these are the limits on free speech—the real ones, the ones that actually end up before the courts.

And then there's the fantasy limits on free speech—the ones that supposedly affect Pauline Hanson and Alan Jones and Paddy McGuinness and Graham Campbell and Ron Casey. It's a fantasy designed not so much to stop that lot talking, it seems to me, as to stop anybody else answering back. It's good to know that John Howard is in favour of free speech. Let's just hope he believes it's a two-way street.

I think that that was one of the more interesting media comments that I have read on the issue.

Racism is not just a variation of selfishness; racism demeans a target group so that the racists and their supporters can avoid taking the needs and desires of the target group into account and so that they can use the target group as an escape for the problems of the day. From the racist point of view, this is an opportune time to appeal to the worst instincts of the Australian people. At a time when Australian unemployment is chronically above 8 per cent—South Australia being even worse off with 9.8 per cent—with falling real wages and a threat of basic wages falling right through the floor if Howard's Workplace Relations Bill goes through, at a time when everybody, except the unemployed, is working harder and longer hours to make ends meet, these are the times when racists come out to take advantage of the failure of the Government in delivering a decent social wage.

So it was a disgrace that the Prime Minister chose not to condemn Pauline Hanson's remarks. I was pleased to see in the paper today that the Premier in Parliament will move a motion to affirm reconciliation and support multiculturalism and that the Leader of the Government in this place will do

the same. On this issue I am sure that there will be unanimous support from all Parties.

As for the content of Pauline Hanson's maiden speech, do we really need to labour the point that our Aboriginal Australians have the worst health statistics of any group in our society? They have a completely unacceptable level of infant mortality and a much shorter life expectancy than the rest of us—15 to 20 years less than the Australian population as a whole. The Aboriginal infant mortality rate is nearly three times higher than the rate for the rest of Australia. These facts were comprehensively spelt out in the Royal Commission's report into Aboriginal deaths in custody.

Do the racists say that we have no obligation towards Aboriginal people? Surely we have an obligation to disadvantaged people throughout society, no matter what their racial or cultural background. In conservative circles it now seems unfashionable to speak of multiculturalism, but multiculturalism has made our society one of the most mixed, enriched and tolerant societies in the Western world. This is obviously so in all the cities of Australia. It is a fundamental tenet of our society that every citizen should be afforded the same protection and benefits of which every other citizen has the opportunity to take advantage.

It is not a matter of 'political correctness'. That expression has been used in a derogatory way to attack people who stand up for the principles of equality and fairness. If it is politically correct to say that Aboriginal people deserve respect, if it is political correctness to say that all barriers to greater numbers of women entering Parliament should be removed and to say that once immigrants settle in this country they should be accepted as part of Australian society, then I am proud to be politically correct.

His Excellency did not touch on native title issues specifically, but I return to the theme of 'building stronger links within our society between our Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures', which His Excellency believes the State Government will do. There appears to be a fundamental misconception about native title held by the Federal member for Oxley and presumably many others—a view encouraged and promoted by those with a vested interest. The misconception is that Aboriginal people, in some way, will be reclaiming the homes and cities of other Australians. This is nonsense. Native title is simply about recognising Aboriginal ownership and use of land where that use has been uninterrupted throughout the white occupation of this country. Obviously this will not apply in many places at all, and it is very unlikely that native title would have been maintained in cities or townships around the country. Native title is just about recognising that Aboriginal people should be committed to retain what property rights they have not yet had extinguished by the white occupation of the Australian continent.

Everybody in mainstream society, including pastoralists, would be incensed at the thought of being deprived of their real estate without any compensation. Yet, if we can translate the concept of real estate, this is just what has happened to the Aboriginal people who inhabited this continent perhaps 100 000 years before European people did. So, what has yet not been taken away can be kept, and what is yet to be taken away must be paid for. As a nation we are now civilised enough to be able to say that, and I for one am proud of that fact.

It would be appropriate at this point to applaud the fact that just last week native title was recognised on mainland Australia for the first time. The original Mabo claim of Eddy

Mabo and others was in relation to the island of Mer. Now native title has been recognised in relation to a small area of vacant Crown land at Crescent Head on the north coast of New South Wales. The New South Wales Government is set to acquire the land for the purpose of residential development and therefore \$800 000 compensation will be paid to the local Aboriginal community. The agreement took over two years to negotiate; it is a landmark agreement and a credit to all parties involved in the negotiation process.

I will not dwell unduly on this, but the Federal member for Oxley also claimed that this country is 'in danger of being swamped by Asians'. She went further on the weekend, suggesting that we are heading for Somalia or Bosnia, that we are going to have a civil war. I find these comments repulsive. I also find it fundamentally irresponsible for a member of any Parliament in this country, especially the Federal Parliament, to be making comments which will divide Australians and accentuate the racism that already exists in our society.

There are various members of this State Government whose job it is to go out and politically work over the ethnic communities of South Australia—the Asian communities, the Greeks and the Italians. I do not know how they can go out there with a straight face knowing that the Liberal Prime Minister in this country refuses to condemn outright the racist remarks of the Federal member for Oxley. It must be galling for my colleague opposite, the Hon. Dr Pfitzner, who would be all too familiar with the effect that racist taunts and comments can have on a person, especially on children.

I turn now to some current issues in education. I welcome the new emphasis on vocational education and training opportunities in our schools as proclaimed by the Governor in his recent speech. Support for the education needs of gifted and talented students will also have my support, as long as, as I have indicated publicly, it does not adversely affect those less talented and gifted. I am also pleased to offer my support for the concept of additional resources going towards more computer and information technology in school classrooms. However, the critical concept in this area is equity. It would be utterly unfair for this Government to pursue the promotion of information technology education in our schools if only the well off schools can afford to obtain the necessary equipment.

This is happening already when we see schools in the leafier green suburbs with rooms full of computers whilst some of the more outlying schools, particularly in country areas, are woefully under-equipped. There is no doubt that information technology oriented education costs money, but it is the way of the future and the Government needs to make an appropriate financial commitment so that all our young people, not just a select few, have the opportunity to become computer literate. In other words, computers cannot be an optional extra that parent fees have to pay for. Such is our changing world that adequate computer facilities are necessary in every State school, not just in those schools which can extract substantially higher school fees from local parents.

A critical point which was not addressed in His Excellency's speech was the problem of retention rates in our high schools. The falling retention rates to year 12 level, especially for young males, are staggering. It is not clear whether the Government is unable or just unwilling to address this issue. As I have always said, a substantial part of the answer is adequate expenditure and policies within schools to ensure that curriculum choices are relevant to the available job opportunities for young people, particularly those who will not be going on to university studies.

This issue was raised by numbers of young people who contacted the Labor Party when we held an 'Education Hotline' over the weekend. Both parents and young people expressed concerns about the state of our high schools and the inadequate preparation that many young people are receiving for the workplace. There are very complex issues involved here and I believe that these issues must be dealt with by the Government if we are not to continue to have an erosion of the numbers of young people staying on to complete their years of education. It is obvious and has been highlighted time and again that if a young person is to have any opportunity at all to be gainfully employed in a full-time job they have much more chance of gaining employment if they complete their years of education.

I am pleased to see that the role and needs of women in society got a mention in His Excellency's speech. Not much could be said by the Governor, however, because the State Government essentially has done very little to advance the cause of women in society over the past three years, and there are no signs of change on the horizon. The statement on programs for women allegedly to be tabled by His Excellency's Government later this month was first announced over a year ago and, as recently as the budget Estimates Committee, the Minister for the Status of Women was suggesting that September would be the deadline for the release of that document. I am glad that I did not choose to hold my breath waiting for it: it had better be good by the time it arrives.

I have several brief points to make before concluding. His Excellency in his speech states that his Government's program for industry and economic development is based upon a fundamental respect for and recognition of our unique environment. With great respect to His Excellency, that statement is rather fanciful, but we all know that the Government does write the speeches for His Excellency. We have seen no sign whatsoever in respect to the environment on the part of this Government over the past three years, and again there are no signs of improvement.

We are looking forward to seeing the Government's legislation on retail shop leases following the recommendations of the select committee into retail shop leases. It promises to be a lively debate, given that the Attorney was the sole dissenting member of this select committee that looked into this whole issue. So, we are not sure what came out of the Liberal Party room in the end, but it will be an interesting result either way.

I note that the Leader of the Democrats has given notice that he, too, will be introducing a Bill in that area. Certainly the Opposition will be fully supportive of measures to bring greater fairness and viability to small traders throughout the State.

We are also expecting some lively debate on the legislation to abolish the Adelaide City Council. This legislation encapsulates succinctly the Government's attitude towards democracy in this State, and I have noted that the Minister has decided not to proceed with the Bill this week. One can only wonder if he is coming under a lot of flak and opposition from his Party room members. At best the legislation can be viewed as an admission of the Government's own failure in its attempt to maintain and invigorate the Adelaide city centre. Someone else has to be blamed, so the Adelaide City Council is the obvious target. At worst the whole proposal may just be a shabby political ploy to enable the Premier to grandstand and look tough. If that theory is correct, the

Premier may not have chosen the easy target he thought he was going to hit.

All in all this promises to be a very interesting session of Parliament. Some interesting and profound social issues will be raised, and the Opposition will be as ready as ever to speak out for equity and tolerance in our society.

I take this opportunity of wishing our new Governor, Sir Eric Neal, an enjoyable and peaceful time as Governor of South Australia. I support the motion.

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: In responding to the address to our Parliament by His Excellency Sir Eric Neal, I would like first and foremost to welcome and congratulate him on his appointment as Governor of South Australia. I understand that he has a background of business experience—experience that this State needs badly. In welcoming our new Governor I also thank our immediate past Governor (Dame Roma Mitchell) for her tremendous efforts in the role and function of Governor. She is an inspiration to us, showing qualities of enthusiasm, energy and understanding of all our multicultural society, friendship, compassion and goodwill to all, no matter what race, position or creed.

In my Address in Reply contribution I will speak on economic development in general and State development in particular. I will speak on the rural sector at some length and briefly on health and education, women and, finally, on what I would call the Hanson problem.

With regard to economic development, at a recent national summit meeting to launch the final report of the Commission for the Future of Working Australia there were present three groups who seldom meet but who are influential in our thinking on work in Australia, namely, the Business Council of Australia, the Australian Council of Social Service and the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence—creators of financial wealth and, some would say, spenders of this wealth.

The main target was to reduce unemployment to 5 per cent by the year 2000. This is a formidable task and one has to balance economic goals against social goals. Both are important. However, as an article in the *Business Council Bulletin* says:

Only by creating wealth, by gaining and maintaining a strong economy, can Australian society have the freedom it needs to implement choices in social policy.

I have been involved in social issues most of my working life as a medical practitioner. However, I recognise and accept that if we do not have the necessary financial wealth we will not be able to help those in need. We therefore have to focus on economic goals as a priority, but that does not mean that social goals will be neglected. But we have to be realistic and, as the article says:

You can't spend what you haven't got.

We therefore have to accept that there will be some pain, as we have been living beyond our means. All this difficulty will be worth it in the long run if we reach the final goal of unemployment reduction. The creation of jobs must be our priority. The difficulty appears to be in our rigid wage rates and work organisations, and almost no flexibility has been permitted to take into account business circumstances. We must be innovative and efficient in order to keep up with consumer demands and to remain competitive with other countries. As the article says:

The key to competitive success is for Australian businesses to develop a high productivity and high wage rate. Reform of industrial relations system to encourage this is crucial to our nation's future.

The article states that Governments [that is us] are not good at predicting what customers will purchase, but that we as a Government have a role in improving market information and interchange. Governments should also give encouragement and facilitate business development to create wealth out of this country's rich resources. Consideration must be given to the taxing of consumption rather than taxing of income. If this philosophy is accepted, there will be encouragement for a higher level of savings because savings will not be taxed. These savings can be used to fund increased investment, thus economic growth and hence job creation.

A reduction in the opportunity for people to avoid paying their share of taxation will be another benefit and a greater incentive for the help of our export industry. However, we acknowledge that we must always have a safety net for the protection of those on lower incomes. The common goals should be to reduce unemployment, to foster the development of high productivity, to refine the tax system and to better target Social Security benefits.

What is the state of economic development in South Australia? We have a most competitive State. A study concluded that we have a cost advantage compared with Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The advantages are in the areas of industrial and CBD office rentals, port interface costs, professional services, labour costs, and in energy and water. Our *per capita* taxation is now 21 per cent less than Victoria and 23 per cent less than New South Wales. Our major job creation projects include: 6 700 jobs from Western Mining Corporation (involving a \$1.25 billion expansion of Olympic Dam); 1 650 jobs from the Westfield Shopping Centre at Marion; 1 100 jobs from SA Water's contracting out of metropolitan and waste water services; 900 jobs from EDS; 800 jobs from Westpac Mortgage Loan Centre; 750 jobs from Mitsubishi; and 700 jobs from Holden. These projects will reach fruition and will stem the tide of our unemployment rate.

I note from the Governor's speech that our State finances are on track and that our debt reduction is on target, partially through our assets sales program, which has achieved a total of \$1.75 billion in sale proceeds. I am aware that there has been criticism of our asset sales program, but with the debacle of the State Bank by the last Government there are few options left for us.

On the subject of economic development, I turn to our great concern, the rural sector, where economic development is not progressing well. We note in the *Advertiser* on 16 September this year an article on Mrs C. Oldfield where she sounds an alarm to which we should pay attention. She says:

It costs \$2 500 a week just to maintain an average farm where I live (Lucindale)... Since 1993...there have been 101 Government reports, inquiries, reviews and surveys...and still nothing is done.

She is right. Do we want a rural sector? If so, we need to take note and implement the recommendations of some of these inquiries. Through the Social Development Committee I have been involved in one such inquiry. However, I have to say that the recommendations—all 29—have been sent to the relevant State and Federal Ministers and, whereas some of the recommendations that relate to the State Government have been implemented or taken into account, the recommendations that relate to the Federal Government have yet to proceed.

Some of the more important recommendations of the rural hardship report of the Social Development Committee were:

Recommendation 6: The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport, in conjunction with local government,

explore transport options for people living in non-metropolitan areas with a view to improving current services and reducing individual costs associated with travelling long distances.

Recommendation 8: The committee recommends that the Minister for Employment, Technical and Further Education urge the Federal Government to exclude family farms from the Austudy assets test.

Recommendation 9: The committee recommends that the Minister for Employment, Technical and Further Education urge the Federal Government that if it is unwilling to accept the committee's preferred position, that is, recommendation 8, it is essential that the current discount of 50 per cent on the value of assets of a farm or business be increased substantially.

Recommendation 10: The committee recommends that the Department for Education and Children's Services, in conjunction with the Commonwealth department, explore the possibility of providing assistance for isolated children funding to South Australian students at Years 11 and 12 where a student has selected 50 per cent or more core subjects and where more than 50 per cent of all chosen subjects are not available in a face to face manner.

Recommendation 22: The committee recommends that the Minister for Health immediately commence activities to ensure that rural communities in this State are included in the pilot project for the prevention of youth suicide in rural areas as outlined in 'Here for Life', a national plan for youth in distress.

Recommendation 24: The committee recommends that the Minister for Health urgently perform a study of mental health needs in rural areas with an emphasis on finding community-based solutions involving the coordination of service providers in the field. (I am happy to say that today I received an answer to a question with regard to this matter, indicating that this will proceed).

Recommendation 28: The committee recommends that the Premier urge the Federal Government to implement a recommendation of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Reference Committee that applicants for Social Security payments under the hardship provisions for JobSearch or NewStart Allowance should no longer be required to offer their property for sale.

Recommendation 30: The committee recommends that the Premier urge the Federal Government to implement the recommendation of the Senate that the Commonwealth Government increase significantly the liquid asset threshold used to determine eligibility for family payments under hardship provisions.

Recommendation 36: The committee recommends that the Minister for Primary Industries urges the Federal Government to implement the recommendation of the Senate that, in order to reduce confusion about the purpose of RAS 92, a restructured joint Commonwealth-State rural adjustment program needs to be implemented with a change of name. (I understand that this is also being looked at).

Recommendation 39: The committee recommends that as a matter of utmost urgency the Minister for Primary Industries, in consultation with representatives from the farming community, investigate the reasons why those farm businesses identified in the rural debt audit as experiencing debt servicing difficulty and debt deterioration are doing so and further consider factors contributing to currently viable farm businesses. (I understand that this is being done at present).

Recommendation 40: The committee further recommends that the findings of such an investigation be used to determine how best these farm businesses can be assisted to achieve long-term profitability.

Recommendation 47: The committee recommends that the Minister for Primary Industries consider the formation of a body to monitor farmers' concerns about the practices of financial institutions in their dealings with the farming sector and to provide advice to the Minister about these concerns.

As mentioned, some of these recommendations have been achieved at the State level, but there has not been as much success at the Federal Government level. We must further lobby the Federal Government as after discussions with some country people recently they have identified that the maintenance of rural health and education is essential if rural communities are to retain acceptable living standards.

They also identified interconnecting road sealing between rural towns as being most important. This problem came home to me most dramatically when I attended a Port Lincoln seminar recently and drove back to Adelaide after heavy rains

made the unsealed roads a quagmire. On the tracks near Booleroo Centre our car went into a spin and we ended up on the other side of the road facing the opposite direction. It was lucky that there were no other vehicles and that we were not bogged. I visualise a pregnant mother or a mother with an asthmatic child in a hurry to get to the hospital.

Yes, we have heard about the constant requests for the sealing of the Cleve-Kimba road, and it makes sense, even more so now. The rural community also identified incentives for water, fodder and conservation, such as tax breaks and fewer regulations. Further behind the farm gate we need to look at the high cost of production. As a country person put it so pointedly:

When our costs are so close to our income, it is a wonder why we bother, each year there is less and less to put back into the farm in the way of improvements and farms are becoming run down. The land is suffering and our total existence—for all city and rural people—comes from the soil. Our natural asset is what is important, not houses, not superannuation, not cars, etc.

The rural community also says that we need to look at tax reforms, which I have discussed previously. We need to look at commercial interest rates versus housing loan rates. Why is there such a discrepancy of 5 per cent to 7 per cent, plus risk loading? We need to look at urban income versus rural income. Do we wonder why our young people are leaving the farms. Who can blame them? To substantiate these concerns for the farm income, let us look at some statistics released by the Primary Industries Department of South Australia in a report entitled 'A Statistical Profile', dated August 1995. Some basic facts include the preliminary estimate of gross value of farm product for the year 1994-95 of \$2.5 billion, and this State contributes 10 per cent of the gross value of the Australian primary industry product.

South Australia has 14 077 rural establishments on 56.5 million hectares of land, so let us look at this substantial area we call our primary industry; let us look at farm incomes in South Australia. The statistics include a table entitled 'Farm Income in South Australia'. For the year 1989-90, the total gross value of farm production was \$2.6 billion. The gross farm product at factor cost, that is, the gross value production minus the cost of production was \$1.4 billion, therefore, approximately a 50 per cent loss to cost of production. Farm income then goes down to \$0.5 billion, and approximately 20 per cent is left of the total for farm income.

In 1992-93, the gross value of farm production was \$2.2 billion. The gross farm production at factor cost, that is, the amount minus the cost of production, was \$1 billion. That equates to approximately 60 per cent being lost to the cost of production, whereas previously it was 50 per cent, and farm income goes down to \$0.2 billion. Approximately 10.8 per cent is left from the total GVP for farm income. We can therefore see the rising high cost of production, so that farm income dropped from 20 per cent take home to 10.8 per cent take home, a difference of 9 per cent.

Farm income for the whole of Australia shows a loss through production of approximately 50 per cent, but that farm income for the year 1989-90 was 16.6 per cent compared with the 1992-93 year of 14.3 per cent—a drop of 2 per cent compared with South Australia's farm income drop of 9 per cent. This final farm income decrease is due mainly to taxes and charges in market price commodity fluctuations. I now refer to gross farm product at factor cost for the year 1992-93 according to States, and seek leave to incorporate into *Hansard* the relevant statistical table.

Leave granted.

Gross Farm Product at Factor Cost by State: 1992-93

	\$ Million	% of State Gross Product in 1992	% of State Gross Product in 1990
New South Wales	2 802	2.3	3.6
Victoria	3 246	3.4	3.4
Queensland	2 685	4.6	5.9
South Australia	1 133	4.2	6.1
Western Australia	1 687	4.4	5.7
Tasmania	454	5.7	7.0
Northern Territory	132	3.3	3.1

Source: ABS, Australian National Accounts

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: This statistical table shows the gross farm product at factor cost for each State and I note that, over recent decades, the significance of primary production in State economy has diminished. I also note that the primary products component of the South Australian economy is significantly more important than it is in other mainland States. As one rural person said:

Keating said, 'You never had it so good. If you can't make money in business, get a job.' Most of us should—we'd work less than half the hours for more than double the pay.

Do we want this? Do we want our primary producers to close shop? I am sure that we do not. They are the people who produce our food and our clothing. We must ask ourselves, and our Governments, in particular: do we want a rural sector? If we do, it is time we took some affirmative action to give incentives to an area that is essential and vital to our Australia. The other most divisive and destructive issue is native title—this compounds the whole issue further and needs to be clarified and made workable. The title of a recent article in an agricultural paper with regard to primary production says it all—'Where are we really heading?'

I briefly touch on health in general and note that waiting lists are shrinking; that there is more help to people with disabilities; and that hospital building upgrades are progressing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Lyell McEwin Hospital, the Repatriation Hospital and, to a lesser extent, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We note that there will be regional hospitals at Mount Gambier and Port Augusta and a private hospital at the Flinders Medical Centre. With respect to education, the Government spends more per student than any other State. The Government provides 12 per cent more school assistants than the national average.

The Government spends more to overcome learning difficulties in early childhood, and this must be applauded. The Government provides more speech pathology services, and has introduced the basic skills test, and it is working. It has spent this year alone \$100 million for new schools and upgrades. The Government is looking at and looking after this sector well. On the subject of women, it is reassuring to note that a new career development course for women called Top Steps has been launched, and that 30.3 per cent of members on Government boards and committees are women, the highest for any State in Australia.

For example, the Passenger Transport Board comprises 60 per cent of women; the Adult Community Education Council comprises 78 per cent of women; and the Physiotherapists Board of South Australia comprises 71 per cent of women. But I have concerns with regard to women from non-English speaking and cultural backgrounds; I do not think that their difficulties have been specifically addressed. In particular, their culture and their customs tend to be a barrier to seeking higher positions, which positions mostly require a very assertive and very aggressive type of personality. I hope that this issue will be more definitively addressed in the future.

I now come to what I consider the most contentious topic of them all: the problem of what I call Australia's newest racist mouthpiece. She has determined that Asian immigrants are about to swamp Australia, and has said, 'I believe that we are in danger of being swamped by Asians.' I will give some statistics to refute that perception. In the 1991 census, of the total Australian population, people from an Anglo-Celtic background comprised 75 per cent; Europeans 20 per cent; Asians 4 per cent; and Aboriginals 1 per cent. In the 1991 census, the population by groupings was as follows: South-East Asian—in South Australia, 2 per cent, in the whole of Australia, 2.2 per cent; North-East Asian—South Australia, 1.2 per cent, Australia .6 per cent; and South Asian—South Australia .4 per cent, Australia .7 per cent.

The 1991 census statistics show the major birthplace by countries as follows: China—South Australia .2 per cent, the whole of Australia .5 per cent; Hong Kong—South Australia .1 per cent, Australia .3 per cent; India—South Australia .2 per cent; Malaysia—South Australia .3 per cent, Australia .4 per cent; Philippines—South Australia .2 per cent, Australia .4 per cent; Vietnam—South Australia .7 per cent, Australia .7 per cent. As the statistics bear out, the total Asian original population is 4 per cent and, broken up into larger groups, such as South-East Asian, it is no larger than 2 per cent. Further, individual groups show fractions of the total, the greatest being a decimal point—.7 per cent.

With regard to what I call the racist mouthpiece's allegations of ghetto living, I note that she said, 'They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate.' As far as South Australia is concerned, I note that in an article in the *Advertiser* in February 1996 entitled 'Who lives where?', the following statistics are provided: Cambodians live in Woodville, Salisbury and Enfield; Indonesians and Malaysians live in Mitcham, Burnside and Campbelltown; Filipinos live in Salisbury and Enfield; Singaporeans live in Burnside, Mitcham and Tea Tree Gully; Vietnamese live in Port Adelaide and Woodville; Hong Kong people live in Burnside, Campbelltown, Marion and Mitcham; and the Chinese (from China, I presume) live in Port Adelaide and Woodville.

The word 'ghetto' has a negative connotation of poor, unhygienic and crowded conditions. It is true that new arrivals who are financially disadvantaged live in Port Adelaide, Woodville and Enfield. That is because of cheaper housing availability in those areas and because the migrant hostels used to be in the Woodville and Port Adelaide area. How are Asians any different from financially disadvantaged Anglo-Australians in their choice, or lack of it, of housing areas?

I turn now to address the anti-Aboriginal statements. She said:

I do not believe that the colour of one's skin determines whether you are disadvantaged... I have done research on benefits available only to Aboriginals and challenge anyone to tell me how Aboriginals are disadvantaged when they can obtain the 3 to 5 per cent housing loans denied to non-Aboriginals.

To show the disadvantage of Aboriginals, I will now quote statistics from an article on Aborigines dated 1995, which was compiled by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Diabetes is a major health problem and has a 30 per cent prevalence, which is four times the rate of non-Aboriginals. Life expectancy is 16 to 18 years shorter than for non-Aboriginals. Infant mortality is two to three times higher than for non-Aboriginals. In the Northern Territory in 1993, Aboriginal babies accounted for 73 per cent of all

infant deaths, while representing only 38 per cent of all births. As to early childhood morbidity, I have seen severely infected ears resulting in deafness and, at four years of age, speech development is two years behind that of non-Aboriginals, possibly because of hearing defects.

Aboriginal babies start life more than 200 grams lighter than non-Aboriginal babies. By 25 years of age, the risk of dying young is five times higher than for non-Aboriginals and, by 62 years of age, an Aboriginal woman is likely to be dead. On every economic and social indicator, Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged group. The 1991 census showed unemployment as three times higher and that two thirds of indigenous adults had incomes under \$12 000 a year, compared with 45 per cent of other Australians. In terms of the historical context, I quote from the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia, as follows:

The first Australians were a strong and healthy race. A hunter-gatherer lifestyle included daily exercise and a healthy diet. Early records show little evidence of widespread illness, but Aboriginals now face far greater illness risks than non-Aboriginals. Diabetes and heart disease are prevalent in adults. Many children are affected by gastro-intestinal infections, anaemia and ear, nose and throat problems. Respiratory illness and diseases like trachoma and tuberculosis, now rare in non-Aboriginals, are common among Aboriginals in some areas. Life expectancy is on average 22 years less than that of non-Aboriginals. People do not become ill or die early simply because they are Aboriginals. Poor Aboriginal health is traced to 200 years of oppression and limited opportunity following European settlement.

To say that she does not believe that the colour of one's skin determines whether you are disadvantaged takes on an absurd meaning. It is because of the disadvantage of Aborigines that they are given special housing loans, not that these housing loans give them a greater advantage. In other words, the loans are the result of their disadvantage and not the cause of their perceived advantage.

From the facts, we can observe that the member of Parliament is at best ill-informed, naive or misled and, at worst, she is limited in intellect, deliberately mischievous or purely and simply racist. Whatever it is, the fallout has resulted in untold harm in the community. As evidence, I quote from some newspaper articles. In the *Weekend Australian* of 13 October, an article entitled 'Cyclone Hanson endangers tourism' stated, in part:

...the real threat that we lose tourists from our top export industries...Australia's friendliness and tolerance is crucial to how easy it is to sell us overseas...600 000 Australians are employed directly in tourist-related industries.

...Inbound tourists now number 3 million and are increasing towards 7 million... Rough estimates suggest one job is created for every 15 tourists...2.2 million of this 3 million rise in tourists will be jettied out of, you guessed it, Asia.

...Asian and Japanese travellers have copped abuse in the streets of Australia...as Asia becomes wealthy and the middle class want holidays, wine, lobster, education, etc., that's where the work is going to be.

...Given our inextricably close connection with Asia now and in the future, it is plain dumb to be bagging our customers... If any CEO heard any of his underlings fouling up his potential business by silly, thoughtless comments—even if they were true—the boss would give the worker the toss.

...The entire Asian block takes close to 60 per cent of our exports, while our old mates—the Yanks, the Poms and the Kiwis—are only good for about a quarter of our overseas sales.

...Asian savers are bankrolling much of our borrowing and, without their savings, we could be paying much higher interest rates than we are right now, and that would kill a job or 200 000.

...this demands we think less of things like trees. Instead we should be hugging Asians for the sake of the unemployed. Who knows, the next job saved might be yours.

In the *Weekend Australian* of 13 October we saw: 'Words translate to ugly deeds on hate street'.

and to quote in part:

...much of the racism is insidious...people in pubs and clubs and parties feel free to let loose and say things they wouldn't say before.

Further, I refer to newspapers in Singapore. The *Straits Times* of 12 October stated, 'Unease in Australia over race issue.' The Singapore *Sunday Times* of 13 October stated 'Australian MP hits out at triad groups and drugs from Asia'. Recently I had dinner with a visiting Malaysian Minister and he intimated to me that we are interested only in obtaining Asian money but not in Asian people themselves.

I will not try to further explain that this woman is totally out of kilter with the facts, and it only serves to cause division in an otherwise most harmonious community that is Australia, of which I am proud. I will not go on further with the dissertation on multiculturalism—I am sure that that topic would be too difficult for her to comprehend. However, we must take into account the 70 per cent of the community who want to stop immigration. Whilst I would understand this most human of sentiments due to our high unemployment rate, I do not accept using the criteria of race in immigration. It is true that the statistics indicate that the largest groups of the latest immigrants are Asian. I refer to ABS figures for South Australia, and seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a statistical table on Birthplace of South Australian population—1947, 1976, 1986 and 1991.

Leave granted.

Birthplace of South Australian Population
1947, 1976, 1986 and 1991

Birthplace	1947	1976	1986	1991	Percentage Change		
					1947-76	1976-86	1986-91
Australia	602 521	951 535	1 029 470	1 065 284	+57.9	+8.0	+3.5
New Zealand	1 459	4 098	8 287	10 087	+180.9	+102.2	+21.7
UK/Ireland	32 718	157 882	146 404	145 872	+382.6	-7.3	-0.4
Other Europe	6 687	115 407	105 459	100 787	+1 625.8	-8.6	-4.4
Asia	1 443	7 917	15 728	32 761	+448.6	+98.6	+47.4
Other	1 085	8 468	11 689	23 187	+680.5	+38.0	+98.4

Source: ABS, South Australian Office 1995; Hugo 1990

The Hon. BERNICE PFITZNER: We note for 1947 to 1976 the percentage change of the birthplace of immigrants. Other European percentage change is +1525.8 per cent; Asians, +448.6 per cent; and UK/Ireland, +382.6 per cent.

We note that for the years 1976 to 1986 New Zealand topped the percentage change at +102.2 per cent; Asia, +98.6 per cent; UK/Ireland, -7.3 per cent; and Other Europeans, -8.6 per cent. For 1986 to 1991, the Asians topped the percentage

change with +47.4 per cent; New Zealand with +21.7 per cent; UK with -.4 per cent; and Other Europeans with -4.4 per cent.

It is therefore understandable that there is insecurity as the Asian migrant rate of arrival has increased relatively in the last 10 years. We must seek to educate our community so that such mouthpieces will not be able to claim any credibility emotionally or intellectually. Our newly arrived must work harder to seek understanding from the community at large. But it is hard when one is coping with settlement to also seek acceptance. Australia has always been a compassionate society and I still see us as such in spite of all that has been said.

In closing, the storm in a teacup has become larger than it ought to be. People of standing, in particular Anglo-Australians, have spoken out. It is comforting to know and to observe that there is understanding; that these ill-informed sentiments are treated as such and that, as one journalist put it:

It goes to the heart of the way this country is evolving and it is an issue which needs to be fought by all Australians of goodwill and decency.

I support the motion.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I support the motion, and begin by congratulating our new Governor, Sir Eric Neal, on his appointment. I wish him and Lady Neal well in their very important jobs. The Governor's speech contained the legislative program of the Brown Government and, unfortunately, I believe it was a fairly insignificant program. It is not surprising that a number of political commentators around the traps have suggested that the Government might be considering going to an early election. Certainly, it is rather remarkable how, after almost three years of being in office, the Brown Government appears to have so little to do.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: With their economic record, how could they go early?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: That is right. As my colleague the Hon. Terry Cameron said, with their record how could they go early? They do have a problem. The Governor's speech, which was, of course, written on behalf of the Government, had some claims to make about the debt reduction strategies of the Government and claimed some virtues on behalf of the Government. In my Address in Reply last year I spoke about the illusion that is being perpetrated by this Government as to how it is reducing debt as it is recorded on the books of the State but in some areas it is increasing rapidly off-balance sheet debt, and I suppose that in some ways that is not dissimilar to what Alan Bond, Christopher Skase and some of the entrepreneurs of the 1980s were doing. While their financial statements looked pretty good, some of the off-balance sheet transactions were where the problems were.

One area in which this Government is moving in that direction is in the private provision of infrastructure. The Auditor-General's Report, about which I will have some more to say when we have the debate on this subject in the near future, referred to two projects, the Mount Gambier Hospital and the Port Augusta Hospital, where there was a loss of \$4 million and \$2.5 million respectively through the private funding of those hospitals as compared to the situation if they had been publicly funded. This Government has also entered into some water filtration schemes in excess of \$100 million. It has the Aldinga water treatment plant, which

is being privately funded. It has had a number of public school projects, which are also being privately funded.

As I pointed out last year, the attraction for Governments is that, when these projects are privately funded, it does not appear as debt on the books. Nonetheless, the projects still have to be paid for by the taxpayer out of recurrent expenditure over a number of years, which is really, apart from the way in which the accounts are measured, in every other respect debt. It is this off-balance sheet illusion that this Government is trying to use to pretend that it has reduced debt by far more than it really has. Indeed, the Auditor-General effectively blew the whistle on all this in his recent report when he referred to the amount of revenue that he estimated would be forgone by this Government as a result of its asset sales. He estimated about \$110 million, whereas the Government said that it would save \$114 million as a result of the asset sale. So, we really were not much better off. I think the revenue estimates that were used—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Not at all. The Auditor-General made the comment that of course the removal of risk was important in relation to financial institutions. I agree with that, and it was the former Labor Government that decided to sell the bank in the first place. But in relation to the Pipelines Authority of South Australia and other authorities, is there really a risk involved in the transport of gas, for example? Is that a risky venture? Of course, we know that just before that instrumentality was sold the Government enabled the new private purchaser to rapidly increase the price of gas, so the increase in its revenues would have been far greater. I think that the Auditor-General's estimate of revenue forgone was actually far less than what really would be earned by those bodies.

Other benefits derive from State ownership of certain activities. This year much time has been given to Sir Thomas Playford's achievements over the years. If you look at his original decision to nationalise the Adelaide Electric Supply Company back in the 1930s, one of the reasons he did that was to ensure that there was local control over investment decisions. I believe that in the future one of the big problems we will have in this State is that we will increasingly have so little control over the investment decisions that are necessary to provide jobs for our economy.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: That is right; it is happening all over the place. And employment is the subject I wish to turn to next, because I believe that it is the most crucial issue facing South Australia at this moment. At the last election the Brown Government promised that it would create 20 000 jobs a year. Sadly, the statistics are far worse than that. The latest employment statistics, which came out last week, show that in this State the number of full-time jobs is actually 1 800 fewer than when the Brown Government came to office in December 1993.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: If you take into account all jobs, which includes part-time jobs, the number has grown by 17 100. Given that the Government promised to create 20 000 jobs a year, that is hardly an impressive record. In fact, it is really a disastrous record.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Yes, one of very many. As the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies pointed out last week, in this State the total number of persons employed was up only .7 per cent in the past 12 months. Of course, the

latest figures would make that figure even worse. This has meant that the rate of unemployment over recent months has continued to increase.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. T. Crothers): Order! The speaker is having trouble trying to get his speech in between the interjectors.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Thank you, Mr Acting President. The fact is that any reading of the statistics shows that in job creation the performance of South Australia and of the Brown Government is extremely poor. Certainly, it is worse than in most of the other parts of Australia. What makes the last figures even worse is that the proportion of working age people seeking work, which is the participation rate, has actually fallen further, to 61.7 per cent. That means that there is an even higher level of hidden unemployment within this State at the moment. That is the issue about which this State Government has to do most, in my opinion.

Under the policies of the Brown Government, virtually every region in this State is losing population. Sadly, the policies of the Brown Government are contributing to the decay. As an example of this I recently did a survey about what the impact of State Government policies, in terms of cutting jobs, had done to the South-East region. The South-East is one of the regions of this State that has enjoyed sustained economic growth over the years. It has tended to be pretty well insulated from some of the problems of the rest of the State. In that region I identified at least 150 State Government jobs that had gone from the South-East in the past couple of years, and there were some other agencies about which I could not get information. To a region of about 50 000 people that would represent at least \$4 million lost.

If we apply to that a multiplier of two or three (which is the usual economic multiplier), we can see how substantial the impact has been to the region. Not only have the Brown Government's cuts to jobs in that region affected it but also the loss of key public servants in those areas has had all sorts of social impacts. Many of those public servants in country areas take key leadership roles within their communities. When these people go they are a real loss to the region. This has impacts on the schools and school numbers and on sporting teams. The impact generates throughout the whole area.

The jobs in that area—and I am sure it is the same for all other rural regions of this State—have not been replaced: in most cases they are lost altogether or have been transferred to the city and replaced with a telephone answering machine. We have had this impact of the State Government's cuts for a couple of years now, but even worse the Howard Federal Liberal Government is about to further batter these areas with its cuts. The Taxation Office closed in Mount Gambier earlier this year, and Medicare offices are under threat in other areas of the State.

The Hon. R.R. Roberts: State Supply.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: State Supply was in the State area, but federally the CES, Social Security, SkillShare and Telstra—all these agencies—are facing large employment cuts. So this big impact on these regions is about to be exacerbated by cuts in the Federal area.

Earlier this year the Federal Regional Development Minister, John Sharp (I will quote from one of his press releases) said:

Current arrangements for regional development and urban management overlap with State and local governments which have their own urban infrastructure and local government reform

programs. There is no clear rationale or constitutional basis for Commonwealth involvement.

So now the Commonwealth has totally opted out of regional development in this State and across the country. In other words, the Howard Government is opting right out of doing anything to assist regional development and employment in the rural areas of this State; it is leaving it up to the Brown Government. But what have State Government's done? All that this State Government has done, as I said, is slash the number of jobs in these regions, and we are really facing some very serious problems in the rural areas of our State.

I would like now to turn to the question of inequality. Not much has been said about the question of inequality in our community in recent years, but I believe it is about time that this issue was put back on the agenda because it is related to the problem of unemployment and it is also increasingly one of the most serious problems we face. Of course, inequality is closely related to the problem of unemployment because it has probably never been more true than today that those people who are unemployed are the most disempowered people within our community. I think that the inequality that exists within our midst is greatly underestimated as the cause of our economic problems.

We have the phenomenon, not just in this country but around the world, where growing numbers of people are doing increasing amounts of work—and problems of stress that are coming out as people are increasingly working longer and longer hours—but at the same time there are ever growing numbers of people who have no work at all. What has happened is that the reduction in wages of working people, which has come about through outsourcing and contracting, about which I will have a bit to say in a moment, the so-called labour market reforms, the reduction of union power, and so on—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Hear, hear!

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: 'Hear, hear,' the Minister says, so we can see the agenda of this Government. That is what it wants to do: it wants to reduce wages for the people.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: The point I want to make is that as the wages of ordinary working people have been reduced so it is exacerbating and adding to the many economic problems that we face. The richer people in our community purchase a far higher proportion of imported goods, travel overseas more, and so on. Increasingly, as—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Are you opposed to the GST?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I would like to debate the issue of GST at length at some time. I do not think it is a simple matter of being for or against it.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: As I said, one day I will be happy to give my views on it. However, the point I wish to make is that there is no such thing as a perfect taxation system. I think one of the problems we have in this country is that everybody is looking for some perfect tax system which somehow or other will solve all our problems. However, there is not in fact such a thing. All we can do is restructure our system in such a way as to make it better.

I get rather tired of all these experts who keep claiming that if we make some particular change all our problems will be solved, that there will no longer be any economic problems, that we will fix up incentives and so on. I think they have far more faith in their proposed systems than I do and what experience would show. Nevertheless, the question of

our taxation system will need to be looked at in terms of the inequality problems that I am addressing, and the GST, as it was proposed by Dr Hewson at the last election, would have greatly exacerbated that problem. Goods and services taxes inherently, unless there are other correcting matters, fall far more heavily upon the poorest members of our society than they do on the wealthiest. So, if one is discussing that issue one has to take all those factors into account. But, as I say, that is not the purpose of this debate.

There is in our society a growing lack of cohesion which is coming about as a result of the growing inequalities. If we look at our society today we see increasing alienation, particularly from our young people. We are getting higher crime rates and vandalism, and there is less respect for the institutions in our society and for families. We have growing suicide rates and so on. A lot of these problems are coming about because of the growing inequality that exists. But as I say, it is not just a question of the social problems: it also involves the economic problems. The rich spend more on things such as security because of the growing lack of cohesion in our society. It is things such as that which are measured as increasing gross domestic product in our country, but they do not necessarily mean that because people are spending more on these sorts of things we have a better society.

One of the problems of the growing inequality we have had is the housing boom that we had during the late 1980s. In this State that is a problem that we would now like to have; the housing situation at the moment is absolutely disastrous. It is the worst it has been for many years. To some extent the problem that we are now experiencing is the result of growing inequality. I would like to quote from a book that was written about the United Kingdom by Will Hutton, the Economic Editor of the *Guardian*. He wrote a book entitled *The State We're In*, which was a very important book in the United Kingdom—a best seller over there. Talking about how the inequality in that society has led to problems in that country, he said:

To be born poor means to stay poor and ill-qualified; while to be born rich brings with it educational attainment and career achievement. Class hardens subtly into caste—and economies do not prosper in caste societies.

That expresses fairly well the problem we are having here: that it is no longer the sort of equality where people can move from a poorer background to a more affluent background by hard work. Unfortunately, class barriers in our society are becoming more entrenched. In the words of Will Hutton, referring to the UK (but the same applies here), they are moving towards caste rather than class and that is a problem about which we should all be worried.

In the United Kingdom, after privatisation, the massive tax cuts in the mid 1980s under Margaret Thatcher, and the destruction of union power in that country, in 1992 the Government in the UK had the largest budget deficit since the war, so all the supply side theory that was then in vogue came completely unstuck. After the United Kingdom has privatised or outsourced everything it can, it is now in diabolical trouble. There is nothing left to sell, it has a massive budget deficit and has a society more unequal than it has ever been in its history, and there is growing social dislocation.

When the Labor Government comes to power at the next election, which hopefully will not be too far away in the United Kingdom, it will have an incredibly difficult task to patch up the mess. Unfortunately, what happened in England is happening in Australia—it is the policies that are being

pursued by this Government. If this Government gets away with doing the same things in this society we will have a more unequal and uneven society and it will be increasingly hard to address some of these problems.

I now refer to outsourcing because it is one of the issues which this Government has claimed is its salvation. The ALP is not and never has been opposed to the outsourcing of Government services. We do not have an ideological opposition to it, but what makes our policies different from those of the Government is that we are not ideologically driven as is this Government. We have a Government that hates itself—a Government that hates government—and is ideologically driven to outsource even core Government services. Some outsourcing of Government services has always gone on in this State, but it has always been done where it made economic sense.

This Government has been driven ideologically to outsource everything because, amongst other things, it wishes to use that process to drive down the working conditions of South Australians. Early in the days of this Government the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Commission, Ray Blight, even said that running hospitals was not the core business of Government. He made the rather remarkable statement that the Government wanted to get out of everything in health care apart from running the bureaucracy itself and deciding policy, and that everything including hospitals was not Government business.

I think this Government has now discovered that things are a little different from that, and its experiences over the past couple of years since that statement was made by the head of the Health Commission has brought it down to earth a bit. Nevertheless, this Government has unrealistic high expectations about the benefits of outsourcing. I and the Labor Party are not opposed to outsourcing as such. We look at it on a case-by-case basis and make our decisions accordingly.

An interesting book has just been released by Graham Hodge of Melbourne entitled *Contracting out Government Services—A Review of International Evidence*. The evidence that he presents on the cost savings from outsourcing is that basically it is quite possible literally to find what you want to find in the literature because there have been so many studies and so much printed about outsourcing. The point he makes, to quote from his book, is as follows:

Since we're presumably accepting those contract bids, which are in most cases lower than the alternatives, we would expect, all other things being equal, that those contracts for which the best price was achieved from external bidders would indeed deliver lower prices (by definition) than the internal costs which lost the bidding process. Plus the United States General Accounting Office reports that the private sector bid 'winners' had 39 per cent lower costs than the alternative in-house bids, whilst at the same time the private sector bid 'losers' had costs 33 per cent more than the alternative winning in-house bids! If a study was undertaken on a sample based simply on the contracts where the private sector had won, we would not be surprised to find that 'contracting out saved 39 per cent'. Such a finding would need careful interpretation, however, since it would not necessarily reflect any inherent lower public sector productivity but would be more a reflection of the value of competition. Alternatively, if a research study was based only on the in-house winners, we would not be surprised to find that 'contracting out would have resulted in 33 per cent higher costs'.

The lesson we learn is that we have to be very careful about claims by this Government about savings being made from outsourcing. It was interesting today that the Minister for Health produced a document about claimed savings from the Modbury Hospital. Some of the accounting—if you can call

it that—used in that document to justify claimed savings at Modbury is highly dubious, to say the least. If accountants did in fact prepare those figures they are the sort of accountants that Alan Bond would have loved to get his hands on.

This document claimed that there have been savings from Modbury Hospital of \$7 million a year, but when we look at how that \$7 million has been made up we see that there is a factor in here called 'the elimination of cost overruns at Modbury'. They are really saying that if Modbury had not been outsourced there would have been cost overruns. The statement says that it is not possible to know exactly what the cost overruns would have been had outsourcing not occurred, but it then guesses that they are somewhere between \$2 million and \$5 million. Based on that, it comes up with the figure of \$7 million based on artificial cost overruns that might have happened. It is incredible accounting practice. It is unbelievable that the Government can put out something like this.

At the end of the last session the select committee on the Modbury Hospital put out an interim report that reported how little information has been supplied by the Government. Why will the Government put out a ministerial statement today making all sorts of claims of savings when it will not supply the basic core documents to a select committee of this Parliament that would enable us to verify those cost savings? When we consider the comments I made earlier we must be very sceptical about some of the claims made.

The real point that this book makes is that cost savings are due to competition rather than the private nature of the operations because, as the book points out, there are many cases where one Government department contracts out its services to another and makes considerable savings. It is the competition and the specialisation that can lead to savings and not the private nature of ownership.

The Attorney-General's report also adds to the warnings on outsourcing. On page 133 of the overview of his report the Auditor-General points to the high and increasing demand for assistance faced by his office and attributes that to the reduction in the public sector work force and also—

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Mr Acting President, I draw your attention to the State of the Council.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: As I was saying—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: Did you want them to come back and listen?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Yes, I appreciate the audience. There are important points to be made about the Auditor-General's Report, and I look forward to the debate we will have on this subject tomorrow. In his report the Auditor-General pointed out how there has been an increasing demand for the Auditor's comments. He said that the need for this increasing demand for assistance is driven by the changes being undertaken within Government and the fact that many of these changes are breaking new ground. He said:

It is in my opinion also explained by the fact that with the reduction in the public sector work force there has been a run down in certain competencies and a loss of institutional memory within some agencies.

That is a matter which should concern us. On page 132 the Auditor refers to the inaccurate information one department supplied to him. On page 140 he refers to the problems created by whole-of-Government initiatives and the problems this presents for the boards of departments. The Auditor-General says that, in his opinion, if boards go along with whole-of-Government initiatives and do not do a proper study

as to whether they are in the best interests of individual departments, they could be, in some instances, acting contrary to their legislative charter. The Auditor-General also points out on page 81 of his summary how outsourcing may not remove the legal liability from the Government. He says:

...the Government may still be liable for the acts of independent contractors where the nature of the activity is such that a non-delegable duty of care is imposed on the Government... The South Australian Government, along with many other Australian Governments, is engaging in the contracting out of what was traditionally regarded as core Government functions in the pursuit of greater efficiencies and effective service delivery. However, because of the operation of the doctrine of Crown immunity and privilege, and the existence of statutory duties and requirements in areas such as health care, prisons and other areas of traditional Government activity, the contracting out of Government services raises complex questions of legal entitlements and risks. If these legal entitlements and risks are not properly understood there is a risk that the agencies concerned will:

- unintentionally and inappropriately by operation of law allow the conferral of Crown immunities upon private contractors; and/or
- undertake the risk of a legal liability arising from the activities of an independent contractor over which it may have insufficient control.

So, I briefly mention some of the areas where outsourcing can cause problems that were perhaps not anticipated or intended. My point with respect to this discussion on outsourcing is that we need a more intelligent and less ideological approach to the consideration of outsourcing—and certainly more rational—than we have had from this Government.

The other matter I wish to address relates to Adelaide City Council, because that was one matter to which the Governor specifically referred in his speech and in relation to which this Government intends to introduce legislation. The Government has announced that it will introduce legislation to dissolve the elected city council and replace it with commissioners until 1999 or earlier. I understand that the legislation has been held over in the House of Assembly, and I will give my views on this Bill when it is finally presented. But I will make some general comments in relation to this matter.

I do not believe that too many South Australians would have been impressed by the recent antics of the Lord Mayor in relation to his Libyan visit—although, of course, he went on that visit with some of the Premier's very close confidants. If any criticism is to be made of the Lord Mayor, it would also need to go to the Premier. While I may not have any great regard for the Adelaide City Council, I cannot accept that the city council, no matter how factionalised or divided, is responsible for the economic problems of the central business district or this State, which appears to be what this Government alleges. At the end of the last sitting of Parliament—

The Hon. Anne Levy interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Exactly. Even Jeff Kennett summed up the Premier pretty well when he said that the Premier is always looking for someone else to blame. Here it is; we have some of the worst unemployment figures for a long time. The State Bank situation—some six years ago next February—is getting a bit far away, so what do we have now? We have the city council. At the end of the last sitting of Parliament we passed an amendment to the planning and development legislation which the Brown Government insisted was essential to facilitate development in this State. It strengthened the call-in powers of the Government at the expense of local government and reduced the courts' role to hold up development. Specifically, the Minister responsible referred to appeals against suburban shopping centre

development as examples where the previous planning laws had been used to frustrate such development.

Of course, it is the rapid growth of suburban shopping centres, particularly huge developments such as those at Marion, which are part of the problem facing the central business district. Why would people want to travel to the city to shop, with all the associated problems of cost and inconvenience, when they can obtain all the facilities they need under one roof and with easier parking at large suburban centres? So, just as strip shopping centres in the suburbs are struggling for survival so is the city shopping precinct. Also, there has been a fundamental shift in the captive customer base of the city. First, the Brown Government itself has slashed thousands of public sector jobs in the central business district.

The Hon. Anne Levy interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: That's right. The Federal Government is about to follow suit, and banks and insurance companies will probably have the next wave of job losses which will impact heavily upon the city centre. We have just seen another bank merger in the last 24 hours, although, fortunately, this one should not have much impact in South Australia. But there could well be other mergers arising from the Federal Government's new policies. Those people in the know seem to be suggesting that many tens of thousands of jobs in the banking and insurance industries could go in the next few years. The Adelaide 21 report recognised the fundamental problems facing all central business districts, yet three months ago the Government claimed that developments including those in direct competition with the central business district should be less fettered. Now it wants to sack the city council because there is insufficient development in the central business district. There is a fundamental contradiction in the Brown Government's policies which the city council's antics will not mask.

Provisions exist in the Local Government Act—and have for years—to enable a Government to dissolve a council where corruption is involved or where the council becomes unworkable. Section 30 in division 13 of Part 2 of the Act, a section entitled 'Powers Exercisable in Relation to Deficiencies or Irregularities in Local Government', has existed for many years. Why has the Brown Government rejected the use of these provisions? Why will the Premier not say why he wants to sack the council? He said he intends to sack the council not because of what it has done but because of what it has not done. So, when he or the Minister for Local Government Relations is asked what the council has not done, they reply that the council has not provided leadership. But exactly in what matters has the city council failed to provide the leadership? We are not told. The Minister's statements on this are nothing short of disgraceful. Given that he proposes to sack a council just months before an election is due, one would think that at least he would provide some detailed reasoning as to why he wants to do it. But it is just not there. The Government owes the people of South Australia an explanation of its vision—if it has one—for the city. The city council may be tainted, but what will we get in its place?

It seems to me that the fundamental problem facing the city is that it has absolutely no control over most of the events that are affecting its viability, but neither will three commissioners nor any other group that operates on current boundaries. The Brown Government passed legislation 12 months ago to reform local government boundaries based on the MAG report. This legislation was largely supported by the Opposition and the Democrats, in spite of what was said at the time.

The MAG report specifically excluded the Adelaide City Council boundaries from the reform process, and recommendation 7.4 suggested that boundaries for the city of Adelaide be left as they presently exist.

I will read into *Hansard* exactly what the MAG report stated in relation to the city council. After all, the Government wanted specific reference to the MAG report included in legislation. It was removed as a result of amendments moved by the Opposition and the Democrats but, nonetheless, it was the Government's intention that this report should be its Bible with respect to local government reform. At page 7.34, under the heading 'Options for Amalgamation in Metropolitan Adelaide', the MAG report states:

Options for metropolitan Adelaide start with the position of Adelaide City Council. After taking into account a consultant's advice to the Ministerial Advisory Group, we believe that the boundaries of Adelaide City Council should, on balance, remain unchanged. There is some attraction to incorporating Adelaide City Council into a much larger 'Greater Adelaide Council'. The arguments include:

- Adelaide City should not be exempt from the restructuring process;
- Adelaide City provides significant services to the areas which surround it; and
- Adelaide City represents the interests of a wider population than only its ratepayers.

However, there are equally a number of arguments for reducing the size by taking North Adelaide out of the picture, including:

- that it was historically included is not sufficient to justify its incorporation;
- the wealthy residential area benefits from the revenues of the CBD; and
- the residential areas are similar to nearby residential areas of Medindie, Walkerville and others.

The Ministerial Advisory Group believes that all these arguments have some justification, but that on balance Adelaide will serve the needs of South Australia best by facing minor change only, if any. The major reasons for leaving the structure untouched include:

- A major argument in support of restructuring—

The Hon. Anne Levy: If you leave out North Adelaide, what would happen to the residents in the south-eastern and south-western corners? They will really get bowled over.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: These are some of the issues we need to look at. I continue:

—is to increase the financial viability of councils. While population size and revenue are generally related, Adelaide city is, of course, the exception, and this argument does not apply.

- There are no natural limits to the expanded boundary option. People who live in the fringe of metropolitan Adelaide regularly go to the city for work, shopping and recreation.
- Excluding North Adelaide would deny the presence within the city of a number of major recreational facilities and prime State assets, including as examples the parklands, the Aquatic Centre, St Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide Oval, golf courses, university colleges, and others. North Adelaide also incorporates extensive commercial and service activities, such as hospitals.

In short, the generally poor reputation of the City of Adelaide has little to do with boundaries, and much more to do with management and structure. Simply expanding or contracting its boundaries will not improve governance.

The voting system for local government elections also has a fundamental impact on the city council. The system is, of course, no different from that in other council areas. The Adelaide City Council is inevitably split between the interests of business, which pays the bulk of the rate revenue for the city—I think it is some 85 per cent—and residents. The multiple voting system for corporations that own large numbers of properties applies in other council areas but the multiple votes, of course, are not significant in terms of the total vote in other council areas. In the Adelaide City Council

they are. But how does the Brown Government plan to overcome this problem?

If it wants development at all costs, will it override and disenfranchise the interests of city residents? If its commissioners represent the views of the residents of the city then the lack of development, which the Government laments, will not take place. So, while these issues are swept under the carpet, a major review of local government practices, including voting systems, is already under way and it has been under way for some 12 months. The results are due to be in place by the time amalgamated councils face elections in May next year. The point is, will these reforms, which have been so long in gestation, apply to the new city council, or even be appropriate for the city council? What should happen? Should the boundaries be enlarged so that the problems of competing development are internalised (as they are with the Brisbane City Council), or should residential areas, for example, North Adelaide, be hived off and the CBD be treated as a separate entity?

However good the sacking of Adelaide City Council may make the Premier look in the short term, in the long run the Government has a lot of thinking to do before the problems of the central business district are resolved. I think it is about time we heard some substance from this Government rather than the political shadow-boxing on this issue we have heard so far. As I say, I look forward to the debate on this issue, but I think it is absolutely lamentable that the Brown Government has produced so little information in relation to its plans for sacking the council.

We are fast approaching the third anniversary of the Brown Government's election to office. I do not think we have much to celebrate. The Brown Government's plans for the current session of Parliament, as outlined in the Governor's address, do nothing to address the major problems facing our community, particularly the problem of unemployment. The Government must understand that the people of South Australia, particularly our young people, are its greatest asset: if we reduce their opportunities for a good education they will not make the contribution to our society that they are capable of making and that they should make. If the Government continues to see its own employees as liabilities who need to be removed to improve the bottom line of departmental budgets, then the disillusionment and the exodus from this State will continue. What is the point of spending millions of dollars enticing a limited number of highly paid people to work in this State for a few years when we are forcing so many others who have families and commitments here to search for greener pastures in Queensland, and other parts of the country? We desperately need a realistic vision for the future. Sadly, the Brown Government has not provided it.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: In speaking to this debate I raise a number of topics without necessarily dealing with each in any great depth. I would like to begin by expressing my disapproval and abhorrence of the sentiments that were expressed in the Federal Parliament by Pauline Hanson. I think that all members of this Parliament would abhor the remarks that she made. They are inaccurate, prejudiced and potentially deeply divisive of our society. It is just not true to say that the Aboriginal community is not the most disadvantaged in Australia. Statistically, it is certainly the most disadvantaged. It is not true to say that Asian immigrants have brought crime—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: And apparently disease, too.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY:—and disease to this country. The figures do not support these statements, and it is extremely damaging to members of these communities to have such statements being made and given such prominence in the media. I agree with those who suggest that while Ms Hanson obviously has the right to say these things, even if they are totally erroneous, the media treatment of them has blown them out of proportion and has caused great offence and concern to a very large number of decent Australians. It is totally wrong to stereotype people and apply certain epithets to whole groups of people. Asians are as varied amongst themselves as non-Asians are varied.

Aboriginal people are as varied amongst themselves as are non-Aboriginal people. To apply these stereotypes is not only incorrect but it is deeply wounding to many people and offensive to many others. I totally repudiate her remarks, I repudiate the sentiments that led her to express those remarks and I hope that all members of this Parliament would embrace the multicultural aspects of our society. We are a multicultural society and, as Mr Beazley said the other night, we cannot help being a multicultural society, and to pretend that we are not is refusing to face facts. I, for one, welcome very much the multicultural aspects of Australia. I think multiculturalism enriches us all, and we have provided an example from which many other parts of the world could benefit if they followed our lead.

Multiculturalism is to be welcomed, applauded and encouraged in this country, and reconciliation with the Aboriginal community should be extremely high on the agenda of all decent Australians, in particular the politicians who are responsible for promoting such reconciliation and ensuring that it happens. I sincerely hope that all members of Parliament will echo my sentiments and that we can unanimously reject the slurs, innuendoes, falsehoods and divisiveness of the remarks made by Pauline Hanson.

I should like also to make clear to members of this Parliament that I am a strong supporter of voluntary euthanasia. I do this because some people may have read comments erroneously published in the *Sunday Mail* which attributed to me a comment made by somebody else. I was reported as having said that I was opposed to euthanasia because I was a Christian. To me, that is a *non sequitur*. I know plenty of Christians who support voluntary euthanasia.

The Hon. Caroline Schaefer: But you are not one of them.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I am certainly not one of them. I have had to reassure a number of people that, while overseas recently, I went nowhere near Damascus and there was no conversion on a road in that area of the world. I realise that the *Sunday Mail* published an apology and correction in the following edition, but I have encountered a number of people who saw the first, erroneous statement but not the correction, and I should like to set the record straight in this regard.

I support voluntary euthanasia because I believe in the autonomy of the individual. It seems that we strongly uphold the rights of individuals to make decisions about their own lives, provided that they do not harm other people in so doing. We make many decisions that affect our life and it seems to me that the timing of one's death is another matter in which personal autonomy should prevail, that we should have the right to make such personal decisions and that this should be possible under our law without in any way affecting the rights of other people to act as they see fit.

Obviously, those who do not believe in voluntary euthanasia would never seek it, but I do not see that that gives

them the right to prevent other people from so seeking relief by accelerating their own death if that is what they wish. It is a matter of individual choice, and many people who have been through the experience of watching a loved one die slowly from a terminal illness support the right of that dying person to say when they have had enough and when they wish their suffering to end.

I also use this occasion to indicate my strong support for reform of our drug laws. The current drug laws quite obviously have not worked. The drug problem is growing, but luckily it is not a really major problem in Australia compared with the problem in many other countries of the world. Nevertheless, it is a growing problem and the current approach quite obviously does not work. Our drug laws are based on a criminal definition of drug use, and the full power of the criminal law is invoked to try to cope, totally inadequately, with the drug problem in society.

I have admired numerous reports, one of the latest being from Professor Pennington in Victoria, which suggest that we should rethink our whole approach to drug laws, that we should accept that drug abuse is a medical problem and that we should devise medical approaches to deal with the problem; that the criminal law is not dealing with it and that a medical approach would be more humane, of greater assistance to those who are addicted to drugs and probably have much greater success in dealing with drug problems. I put that forward so that it is clearly on the record that I feel our current drug laws have failed and we need to rethink them from a medical perspective.

While dealing with important social issues, I should like to mention the model criminal code, which has recently been circulated and which has been produced for the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General of Australia, on non-fatal offences against the person. It is made very clear that the report does not necessarily represent the views of the Attorneys-General in Australia but the views of a committee which is advising the Attorneys-General.

One of the topics dealt with is the abortion legislation, which currently forms part of the Criminal Code, and so is dealt with by this committee. In essence, what it is saying is that a law similar to the South Australian law on abortion should apply in all the Criminal Codes of Australia—and it may well be that that will be the final situation. There are two comments I make about this. First, while current South Australian law has been rewritten in more modern language—and one has no quarrel with that—the committee has, in its draft model code, made it more restrictive than the current South Australian law. I would hope that, if a decision is made to follow South Australian law in the model code, the committee does follow South Australian law and does not make it more restrictive than the current South Australian law. I will not go into all of the details as to how this has occurred, but I think it is an important matter, which is only evident if there is a careful reading of the proposals of this committee.

It raises the question as to why abortion is mentioned in the Criminal Code at all. I would have thought abortion was a medical matter. In the entire Criminal Codes of this State and other States only two medical procedures are specifically mentioned. The only two medical procedures to which the criminal law is applied are abortion and female genital mutilation—both matters, incidentally, which affect women and not men.

An honourable member: It's a bit hard for a bloke to have a baby.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Yes. That is why I say they affect women and not men—and I cannot be accused of being sexist in saying that. Many other medical procedures are covered in the laws of this State, but they are not part of the criminal law. We have legislation which ensures that medical procedures are properly carried out without negligence, that there is proper information provided to patients, and that there must be informed consent on the part of patients. In other words, we have many laws which govern medical procedures in general but, for some reason, we pick out abortion as something which should be mentioned specifically under the Criminal Code.

It seems to me that there is a very good case to be made that the Criminal Code should not deal with abortion at all, that it should just be excised from the Criminal Code, and that abortion as a medical procedure would be covered legislatively by all the other laws which relate to medical procedure in general. It is a medical procedure, and should be treated legislatively, in exactly the same way as all other medical procedures. I put that point of view. It may not be one with wide acceptance in the Parliament, but I know that a very large number of people in the community would agree with me and feel that abortion should be removed from the criminal part of our statutes.

Turning to a completely different topic, I want to draw the attention of the Parliament to a letter that I received from the Office of the Status of Women in Canberra. I know that this relates to a Federal matter, but it does have relevance to our State. The Office of the Status of Women has written to advise that its Register of Women will cease operation, and probably has ceased operation by now. The Register of Women was established to be a national register covering women from all over the country, listing their skills, capabilities and interests so that their names could be used for appointment by the Federal Government to boards and committees. The register was used to great effect by the Federal Labor Government in many of the appointments that it made during its term of office.

This letter states quite clearly that it is not a decision taken as a matter of policy; it is purely a matter of budget cuts that has forced the Office of the Status of Women to cease operating its register. I realise that there will be some consultation with the States, which have their own registers, but to me that is not the same as having a national register. Different States will have registers with different emphases. There will not be a national overview, and it will surely lead to a lower proportion of women being appointed to Federal Government boards and committees. I feel that this is a very backward step that the Federal Government has taken. I cannot imagine that keeping the Register of Women was a very expensive exercise. After all, it is all on computer database and, while it has to be updated periodically, it cannot have been a very expensive operation to run.

So, it is petty in the extreme to force the closure of the Federal Register of Women in order to save a few measly dollars and, thereby, considerably hamper the appointment of women to Federal Government boards and committees. I predict that their frequency will fall. I raise this matter, as I feel that it is all part of the picture that we are gathering of the new Federal Government. It makes reassuring statements on occasion; it wants people to feel relaxed and comfortable, but that is only so that it can hit them in the solar plexus with more effect when they are not expecting it. Despite their many promises, the Federal Government is chipping away at the structure of Australian society, trying to turn the clock

back to the 1960s, to bring back the attitudes, particularly relating to women, that applied in the 1960s. I have lived through the 1960s once: I did not like them then and I certainly do not want them back again.

It is just typical of the attitudes of this Federal Government to close the Register of Women to save what can only be a few thousand dollars that it would cost to keep it open. It is petty in the extreme and a really backward step, particularly in its symbolism, of which I hope many people will take note.

On a different topic again, considerable publicity has been given recently to the great rise in salary of some of the fat cats in our bureaucracy. I need not repeat these figures; they have been given publicity. But at a time when the Government is retrenching people, refusing perfectly justified pay rises to its own employees, it is encouraging huge pay rises for a select few mates at the top of the Public Service.

I would like to draw people's attention to the fact that this sort of thing does not occur only in Australia; it is endemic in the United Kingdom. I have here a cutting from the *Independent* of 11 August this year which shows that the water companies in Britain, which are privatised thanks to Margaret Thatcher, have pushed through a £20 million pay and perks package for their directors while, at the same time, becoming the worst group of persistent polluters in the country, as new figures show. I will read some of this article, which states as follows:

Two surveys show that while the bosses are well on the way to millionaire status they are failing to stop their firms, privatised seven years ago, from despoiling the environment. According to a survey of directors' total benefit packages, 12 executive directors in the 10 large water service companies (which deal with sewage as well as supplying water) last year received packages in pay, bonuses, pension contributions and share options worth more than half a million pounds [equivalent to \$1 million]. A second survey, by the *Independent on Sunday*, shows that the 10 companies have between them racked up a total of 237 criminal convictions for pollution since privatisation in 1989.

According to [the] figures, one water company director...has a package which could net him more than £1 million [\$2 million].

I will not give the names of these people because they do not mean much in Australia. Another Chairman would get £954 000, about \$1.9 million. The average package for all the executive directors was worth £432 000 or about \$850 000—'average' for these directors.

However, the companies show no sign of improving their records on pollution. Last year alone they were responsible for 48 significant pollution incidents resulting in criminal charges. Only last week one company was fined £175 000 for killing 33 000 salmon in the River Wye. That company is the worst offender, with a criminal pollution record of 40 offences; a Welsh water company is the second worst, with 33 offences; and North West Water (we have heard that name) is third worst with 31 convictions—criminal convictions for pollution! One of these Chair, with a package of more than £1 million, presides over a company which, two months ago, was fined £8 000 for polluting with sewage sludge the estuary of the River Itchen where it flows into Britain's premier sailing venue, the Solent, and for polluting the model boating lake on Southampton Common.

I will not read any more, but it is an indication that when utilities are privatised the executives look after themselves extremely well, receive enormous pay rises and enormous increases in packages and perks but have reduced social responsibility and do not care that their companies are behaving criminally in polluting the environment. To me, that is one of the strongest indictments one could have for not rushing into privatisation and for keeping tight Government control and regulation in matters of environmental pollution and, hopefully, also in executive salaries. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.58 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday 16 October at 2.15 p.m.