

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 24 October 1996

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

MULTICULTURALISM

A petition signed by 1 462 residents of South Australia concerning ill-informed sentiments expressed by a Federal member of Parliament and praying that this Council will strongly urge the Prime Minister of Australia to take note of the matters raised herein and give a firm commitment that the Australian Government will uphold the principles of multiculturalism and denounce racial discrimination which could divide the Australian community was presented by the Hon. Bernice Pfitzner.

Petition received.

QUESTION TIME

SCHOOL SUPPORT GRANTS

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 school support grants.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: School support grants are normally processed in September each year with an advance of 80 per cent of annual funding for the following school budget year which starts on 1 November. This timetable gives schools one month to finalise budgets and prepare for the purchase of essential materials to be available at the beginning of the new school year. This year, with one week to go, secondary and primary schools are complaining they have not received their funds and have no information of the amounts that will be made available for the coming year. It is also worth noting that in his 1996 annual report, the Auditor-General criticised the timeliness of budgetary processes in the Minister's department. My questions are:

1. Why has the Government failed to distribute funds to schools this year in time to allow for the preparation of budgets?
2. Will the Minister undertake to investigate the reason for this unacceptable delay and provide resources to fix the problem?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will have to check that. My understanding was that the approvals for the distribution of grants had already been processed. If that is not the case I will make inquiries and bring back a reply.

SCHOOL CARD

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 the school card for 1997.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: Changes to school card policy are an important issue for every school at this time of the year. Not only do changes to eligibility criteria impact on how the scheme is administered, but they can also

impact on school revenue, particularly in those schools with a high percentage of recipients. It is also important that, as students in years 10 and 11 complete their years, they are able to be informed of criteria to apply in the following year. Principals in both primary and secondary schools have advised the Opposition that they understand new criteria will apply next year and that this is likely to involve changes to the way in which applications are processed. My question is: does the Government intend to change the criteria to apply to the school card in 1997 and, if so, what will be the nature of these changes and when will schools be advised of the details?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: If the Government was to make any changes to school card, schools would be advised prior to the end of term four. Clearly, that makes sense. There have been some changes in the Federal guidelines and criteria which apply to some of the benefit arrangements and which have had some impact on the State school card scheme. The State Government has taken the view there has been too much rorting of the school card system within South Australia. The view is that having 45 to 50 per cent of families in Government schools in South Australia claiming school card, which was a benefit originally intended only for those most financially needy within the community, is a clear indication that a number of families are still claiming school card when they are not in that financially distressed category originally designated for the school card scheme.

We are looking at those Federal criteria to see what impact they are having on the school card scheme. I have made no final decisions at this stage. We will consider what, if any, changes might have to be made to ensure, on behalf of the taxpayers, that the benefit truly goes to those most in need. If there was to be any change schools clearly would need to be advised before the end of this school year so they can plan what might occur within their schools in term one and following next year.

SCHOOL COMPUTING EQUIPMENT

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education a question about the purchase of school computers.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: Following the Government announcement of the DECSTech 2001 program and funding this year totalling \$15 million, many schools have held back on the purchase of new computing equipment on advice that the Government was planning a new cost effective package for the purchase of hardware and software and the provision of maintenance programs. This proposal to achieve savings by coordinating purchasing seemed to have considerable scope for savings.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: Schools are now complaining that they have no information on these plans and, as a result, the purchase of new equipment for the 1997 program is now in doubt. They have a dilemma of either waiting for the Minister's department to announce options for purchasing equipment and run the risk of not having equipment in place next year or going ahead and missing out on potential savings. This uncertainty is creating frustration amongst teachers and one school has said that it does not know whether to proceed with employment of a coordinator for the program next year. My questions are:

1. Does the Government plan to offer a coordinated scheme for the purchase of equipment in schools and, if so, when will the schools be advised of the details?

2. Will the Minister table the details of preferred suppliers?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The answer is 'Yes,' very soon: stay tuned. It will be an excellent scheme for schools, the first time any Government—

The Hon. T. Crothers: To your radio station in life!

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Stay tuned. It is the first time any Government in South Australia has actually provided a substantial scheme of assistance for schools in terms of computer purchase. It will be announced very soon. In relation to preferred suppliers, I need to take advice in relation to that and see whether there is anything more I can bring back to the honourable member.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government in the Council, in the absence of the Attorney-General, a question about open government.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: It has come to my attention that the *Advertiser* has received a letter from the Crown Solicitor's Office (of the Attorney-General's Department) raising questions about published articles dealing with fisheries matters. The letter states:

The department is seeking the assistance of journalists following concerns from the Director of the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre about the sources and accuracy of information released and whether information had been released by employees of his centre.

The letter refers to three different *Advertiser* articles—one on 13 June entitled 'Alert for giant mussel menace', one on 26 June entitled 'Moves to outlaw fishing area after poisoning scare', and one on 10 August entitled 'Bitter harvest', and that was authored by Colin James. I know for a fact that the last of those three articles was based upon information that I received under a freedom of information request and that the article was written entirely on the basis of those documents. In any event, even if it had not been from this source, the question is being asked: 'What is the Government's concern about the public receiving information that should be publicly available and accessible anyway?' I have had a number of reports of previous occasions where investigations have been set up in Government departments with allegations that there had been leaks. I find it greatly concerning that the Government, which promised accountability and openness in office, apparently is embarking on witch hunts. My questions are:

1. Why is the Government embarking on a witch hunt and will the Minister reveal who initiated the investigation and why?

2. How much is it costing?

3. What role does the Whistleblowers Protection Act play in the release of information about matters of public importance?

4. On how many other occasions has the Crown Solicitor's Office been involved in similar investigations?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will refer the matter to the Attorney and bring back a reply.

BUS SERVICE, ALDINGA-SELICKS BEACH

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the tendering process for the Aldinga and Sellicks Beach bus service.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Several months have passed since tenders were called for the Aldinga and Sellicks Beach bus service and there is still no announcement about who will provide the service to the area. Transit Regency, a private Reynella-based company, won the contract to operate a service in the area in 1993. The contract expired this year and new tenders were called for the service more than three months ago. At present Transit Regency is caretaking the service for the Passenger Transport Board until eventually, I guess, the PTB will announce the winner of the contract.

This caretaking role has gone on for almost a year. Transit Regency recently informed passengers that it would not consider any extension to the caretaking role. As was reported in the local press, residents have supported Transit Regency and have said that the PTB should not leave the company dangling. Alternative travel, such as taxis, can be expensive and workers, students, the elderly and partly-disabled people will be severely affected if the bus service ceases. Despite the Minister's answer yesterday that PTB efforts on the competitive tendering process had descended into an absolute shambles with an emerging pattern of delayed contracts and endless extensions, my questions are:

1. As the Minister responsible for the PTB, why is there so much uncertainty over who will be given the tender for the Aldinga and Sellicks Beach bus routes? Who has tendered for the role and when will a decision be made?

2. Considering the Auditor-General's recent recommendation that the Passenger Transport Board enhance the tender evaluation process to become more proactive in soliciting bids from competent operators, has the Minister discussed the Auditor-General's recommendations with Mr Wilson, the Chairman of the Passenger Transport Board, and what did he advise the Minister the PTB intended to do about it?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have noticed recently that there is a lot of opinion in questions—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! If you want a spell I can accommodate you.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: It doesn't worry me.

The PRESIDENT: It might. There is opinion creeping into questions. I would ask that honourable members try to refrain from that. It is not necessary. Questions can be couched in terms that do not have opinion in them.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Mr President, I note that the Hon. Mr Cameron said that he was not too fussed whether he was here or not in respect of your veiled warning to him not to interject and not comment. I am not sure whether the honourable member is interested; I suspect he is not but, nevertheless, I will seek to answer the question on this important service on behalf of the people of the south for whom the PTB and I have considerable concern in terms of providing much better bus services than Labor ever did over the 14 or 13 years—anyway, it was too long—that it was in Government. Like so many issues in transport, during our past three years in Government we have been picking up a lot

of business that was never attended to in the past. Bus services to people in Aldinga is one of many examples.

To suggest by way of comment that there is any degree of shambles is mere imagination on the honourable member's part. There is no substance to such comments. The Passenger Transport Board—and I would hope that if the Labor Party were ever in such a position it would be as careful as the Passenger Transport Board is in this instance—in assessing the tenders is ensuring that it delivers the best possible services and extension of services and that it does so at the best price for taxpayers generally. That is its charter and that is what it is doing in this respect.

I understand from advice given to me this morning that the Passenger Transport Board met yesterday, that this matter was on its agenda and that its decision would come to me in the course of relaying the decisions of that board. But, in the meantime, I can make inquiries as to whether any tender was awarded and whether any variations or any further information is sought. I can confirm that without question the Passenger Transport Board—and I would want no less—is ensuring that we get not only the delivery of current services by Transit Regency but also in any new contract an extension of those services and at a very competitive price.

In terms of the Auditor-General and the comments about being more proactive, I have discussed that with the Hon. Michael Wilson and members of the board and staff of the PTB over some time; so the comment from the Auditor-General was not unexpected. I share his concerns, as does the board.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I can tell you one of the reasons why we have been speaking to contractors or tenderers as well—and this relates not just to services outside the metropolitan area, as is Aldinga, but also to parcels of service for tender within the metropolitan area—and that is that the Government could be accused of being overly cautious in making sure that minimum conditions were set in terms of fares and the number of routes and in terms of the distance of routes from households. As long as I can remember, there has been a requirement that the old STA and now TransAdelaide operate services within 500 metres of every household.

Those sorts of provisions have been carried over into the contracts for tender, and many of the tenderers say that they are too rigid. That is why in some areas they may not be bidding for the work. Yet, the Government has deliberately set those minimum conditions in the best interests of the passenger. So, it is a matter of getting a whole lot of bids and weighing them up without deregulating the system. I am not sure whether that is what the Hon. Terry Cameron is suggesting. He may not understand the nature of his question—I suspect that is so—but what he is arguing for essentially is deregulation of the—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No, I am just pointing this out to you because you may not understand the implications of what you have said. I am just pointing them out for your benefit before it gets out amongst your colleagues, the unions and the passengers, but what you are arguing essentially is for the deregulation of passenger transport services. That is what the private sector wants in terms of encouragement and conditions to participate in tendering. The Government has maintained a regulated system in terms of competitive tendering, and it intends to maintain those minimum conditions in the interests of public transport patronage.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Terry Cameron!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The Government does not intend to move away from those conditions. If the Labor Party does, I would be interested to see whether the Hon. Terry Cameron has much support from anyone in his Party. I will bet that he does not. That is what he wants, that is what he is inferring, and that is what the private sector would like, but it is not what the Government will deliver, because it does not see that as being in the interests of the public transport sector and particularly passengers and the work force of this State.

WIRRINA MARINA

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the Wirrina Cove marina.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: In a report on the Wirrina Resort development in September 1995, the Public Works Committee stated that the Government would expend approximately \$10 million over a number of years on the establishment of infrastructure associated with that project. In November 1995, a second report on the provision of water supply and effluent treatment infrastructure for the Wirrina Resort indicated a total public funding commitment for those works of \$10 million. In the *Advertiser* of 19 September 1996 it is reported that work was under way on the Wirrina Resort's \$22.5 million marina which would eventually have 350 moorings with a first stage offering 206 berths to suit vessels measuring from 10 metres to 30 metres—not your average runabout.

The article also states that of the \$22.5 million marina cost the State Government is paying \$8.5 million for breakwaters and excavating the marina basin and half the cost of the \$2 million public access road. It has now been reported in the *Southern Messenger* that blasting of the seabed in association with the marina has damaged the fishery in the vicinity of the marina. My questions are:

1. Will the Minister confirm that the State Government is contributing almost \$10 million to the cost of the marina?
2. Will she explain how the public interest is served by this huge contribution to a marina for luxury yachts?
3. Does the Government intend to recover the costs of its contribution from users of the marina and, if so, how?
4. Who will own and operate the marina?
5. Given that the committed public funding to the project now appears to be \$20 million—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is your own member asking the question. The Hon. Paul Holloway.

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Now that it appears that the committed public funds to the project are \$20 million, does the State Government intend to provide any further funds to the Wirrina Cove development?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: The contract between Wirrina and the Government has been negotiated by the Department of Tourism or the Tourism Commission. I will refer the honourable member's questions to the Minister for Tourism and bring back a reply.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services in his capacity as Leader of the Government in this Chamber some questions about the present Government's policy on unemployment.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: In a supplement recently released—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I can stand here all day, Mr President.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Trevor Crothers.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: In a supplement recently released by the International Labour Office in Geneva, the unemployment rates for the years 1994 through to 1995 were released. The survey showed the rates for 32 countries and showed that, consistently, the highest rates of unemployment occurred in those nations which 20 years ago were regarded as being amongst the wealthiest in the world. Equally, they showed that the lowest rates were to be found in the newly emerging industrial nations in the world.

For instance, Australia had a rate of 9 per cent unemployed; Belgium, 14.1 per cent; Canada, 9.3 per cent; France, 12.3 per cent; Germany, 11.1 per cent; the United Kingdom, 8.7 per cent; the United States, 5.1 per cent; and New Zealand, in spite of its so-called economic recovery, 7.7 per cent. On the other hand, Hong Kong had 1.6 per cent unemployed; Japan, 2.7 per cent; and the Republic of Korea, 2.1 per cent. These figures of themselves must tell some sort of story, and in light of them I ask the Minister the following questions:

1. Does he believe that one of the deductions that can be drawn is that there has been a massive relocation of the world's industries and investment capital over the past 20 years and, if he does not agree with that, what then are his views on the reasons for the consistent disparity between the two sets of figures?

2. Does he agree with me that, in order for his Government to have an effective policy on unemployment, the reasons for its being so high have to be correctly understood by his Government?

3. What current policy has the Government in place in its efforts to deal with the very high levels of unemployment in South Australia?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am delighted to see the Hon. Mr Crothers is at least able to get up in Question Time to ask a question. I know the Hon. Mr Cameron has been filibustering most nights and preventing the Hon. Mr Crothers from getting up to speak on a number of issues.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the Minister should stick to the question.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Thank you, Mr President. Perhaps I might address that when I am free to do so in the Address in Reply. I thank the honourable member for his question. On the first question I will take some advice from the Treasurer's office and the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development's office in relation to the national and international questions that the honourable member has raised. I can make some general comment on the second issue and also seek further advice. Clearly, the Government's priority issue in relation to tackling the long-term industrial employment issues that

confront South Australia has been to try to establish a competitive investment base for industries in South Australia, both those that exist in South Australia—

The Hon. T. Crothers interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I must admit that I am not too fussed about New Zealand. We will look after our problems here. We will try to establish a competitive economic investment climate both for existing small and middle size businesses in South Australia and also attract new businesses to the South Australian economy as well. I will get a copy of an excellent publication for the honourable member (who has obviously not seen it) entitled 'Intercity Cost Comparisons', which is a cost comparison undertaken by independent consultants together with officers of the South Australian Development Council, I think, which looks at the same group of 10 companies if they were to operate businesses in Adelaide as compared to the eastern capital cities of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. It looks at those same companies and what the costs of operating those companies would be in each location.

It demonstrates that, in the long-term positioning of the South Australian economy, those businesses are very cost competitive, with cost advantages up to 20 per cent in a lot of important business sectors, and cost advantages in some areas as high as 30 to 40 per cent. I am not suggesting that applies across the whole industrial base, but it does apply in some sectors. In the broader term there are cost advantages of 20 to 25 per cent if a business were to do business in Adelaide compared to other States. True, we have disadvantages: we are small; and we are away from big markets, particularly the Eastern States, so we have to acknowledge the economic disadvantages that we have. The 'Intercity Cost Comparisons' is an excellent indication of one of the priority issues of the Government, to try to establish a cost competitive base here in South Australia for businesses to do business.

A lot of the schemes that Commonwealth Governments have talked about in the past are, as I am sure the honourable member would acknowledge, make-work schemes in terms of just training more and more people for jobs that perhaps do not exist within industry. Obviously, this Government is about doing as much as it can in that area, but we have to generate wealth and jobs within South Australia. We have to look long term and, therefore, the Government has looked at getting its cost structure right. I know it has been the subject of much criticism and derision from some of the honourable member's colleagues, but I am sure the honourable member would not stoop to that level because he is interested in the future economic development of South Australia and the Government has consciously tried to diversify—

The Hon. T. Crothers interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Exactly—our industrial base. We have a rural base that is important, particularly in good years. We have an existing manufacturing base which is still important but under great pressure and stress, which is why the Premier is fighting for the car industry in relation to the overall policies of the car industry. The long term will demonstrate what we have sought to do—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: My colleague indicates aquaculture, the wine industry and a range of others, but in particular the information technology industry. The Government does not say that the IT industry is the saviour in relation to the economic problems that confront South Australia. We say it is an important part of an overall jigsaw in terms of diversify-

ing the industrial base of South Australia. I have only briefly touched on some of the important long term and mid-term strategic issues that the Government is embarking upon. I shall be happy to get a copy of 'Intercity Cost Comparisons' for the honourable member and a package of other materials from the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development and the Premier as well in relation to what the Government is doing about the economic problems and, more importantly, the long-term structural employment problems that we have in South Australia.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Mr President, I desire to ask a supplementary question. Does the Minister for Education and Children's Services agree that, given the nature of the global village in which we now live, matters in respect of unemployment that occur internationally have impact on South Australia?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As is frequently the case with the honourable member—I cannot say that I always agree with him—he has hit the nail on the head. There is no doubting that national—and in the case of the question—international issues increasingly are impacting on South Australia and the national economy as well. We cannot cut ourselves off from the rest of the world, which is why many of the mid-term and long-term issues that this Government is looking at are issues that try to address the national and international issues as well.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As my colleague indicates, the water contract is a perfect example of trying to look nationally and internationally in relation to the sorts of investment contracts that South Australian companies might be able to attract in terms of contracts through the Asian region in particular.

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about the letting of roadwork contracts to South Australian contractors.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: This morning on Keith Conlon's 5AN program, a caller, Graham Kimber, raised the issue of the letting of construction works by the Government. In particular, Mr Kimber raised the desirability of Government contracts being awarded to South Australian companies. In view of the recent announcement about the letting of major roadwork projects, my questions to the Minister are:

1. Can the Minister provide details of the recent roadwork projects awarded in South Australia?
2. Can the Minister advise which South Australian companies were successful in gaining roadwork construction contracts?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I did not hear the broadcast to which the honourable member refers, but I was alerted to it and was surprised and disappointed to be made aware of the comments of Mr Kimber. I was interested to

receive at about 10 o'clock this morning a fax from the Civil Contractors Federation (SA Branch) dissociating itself strongly from Mr Kimber's remarks.

The Hon. R.R. Roberts interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: It is a reference to Mr Kimber being ill informed about what is happening in terms of roadwork contracts and the letting of those contracts in South Australia. In any given year about \$50 million of roadwork contracts are let from State sources. This year the value of those contracts let will be about \$100 million, so there is a big leap in the number and value of contracts. That has been undertaken deliberately by this Government to ensure that we cannot only deliver what people want in terms of long standing road infrastructure issues but also as a job creation program because everyone in this place knows that building roads is an important job creation and labour consuming task and we are undertaking it on those two fronts. I was hoping I would be asked a question on this subject. I seek leave to table a schedule of the major contracts awarded to industry in South Australia, 1 July 1995 to 30 May 1996.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: You're revolting.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I would ask that the honourable member withdraw that comment and apologise.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I did hear that comment. There is a point of order, and I think the honourable member should withdraw his remark.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I suspect that the Hon. Mr Cameron has a history which none of us would want repeated in this place and I suggest that he act with more caution.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I have raised a point of order and I ask for a ruling.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member should apologise and withdraw the comment.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Unreservedly apologise, Mr President.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: And withdraw.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I wasn't asked to do that.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, you were.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Check what he said. The President didn't ask me to withdraw; I don't do what—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have asked the Hon. Mr Cameron to apologise and withdraw.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: Withdraw.

The PRESIDENT: And apologise.

The Hon. T.G. CAMERON: I will do it again: you did not hear me the first time. I unreservedly apologise and withdraw, and I will put it in writing if you would like.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: You should apologise for yourself and personally withdraw; that would be the best benefit you could bring to this place.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: She is attacking me.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I did seek leave to have this schedule inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Department of Transport
Major contracts awarded to industry—1/7/95-30/5/96

Description	Contractor	Cost (\$)
Salisbury Highway, bridge over Port Wakefield Road	Built Environs Civil	3 280 238
Widening of Main North Road, Hogarth Road-The Grove Way	Bardavcol Pty Ltd	4 997 934
Bituminous and asphalt surfacing of various roads for DOT	Emoleum (Aust.) Ltd	12 157 650
Burra-Renmark Road, 20 km west of Morgan—The Gums	L R & M Constructions Pty Ltd	3 040 350
Cross Road (South Road-Margaret Street, William Street-Eaton Street, Ningana Avenue-View Street)	York Civil Pty Ltd	4 183 627
Nullabor Crushing Contract No. 3	Boral Resources SA Pty Ltd	2 175 595
Pilot tunnel, South East Highway, Glen Osmond-Crafers	Transfield Construction	1 322 176
Southern Expressway Stage 1 preliminary earthworks	Lorenzin Construction	762 395
Maintenance of roads in Mid North region (National Highway Corridor)	Robert Portbury Constructions P/L	2 349 912
Construction of 16 overtaking lanes throughout South Australia	L R & M Constructions Pty Ltd	6 170 000
Sturt Highway, shoulder upgrading and sealing between Gawler and Barmera	Stockport (Civil) Pty Ltd	2 302 167
Replacement of 700 m of revetments at West Lakes	Civilcorp Pty Ltd	640 084
Maintenance of roads in metropolitan region (Port District area)	Boral Asphalt	1 106 535
Adelaide-Crafers Highway. Advance work at Devils Elbow	T C M Nominees	1 343 537
Pavement marking on various roads throughout South Australia	Collex Pty Ltd	1 680 600
	Linecorp SA	1 493 200
	Linecorp SA	1 105 300
	Supalux Paint Co.	1 328 700

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I also indicate that the tendering for stage one of the Southern Expressway was designed with the civil contractors in terms of the staging so that there was every opportunity for South Australian contractors to be involved in the tendering for smaller parcels. That was a specific request from the civil contractors and it was accommodated in the letting process.

When the contracts came in, it was apparent that over the three stages we either went for many smaller South Australian companies at much greater cost to taxpayers or we went for one South Australian company, MacMahon, at reduced cost to the taxpayers with the commitment from MacMahon that it would be subcontracting work to South Australian contractors. On every count MacMahon, a South Australian based company but now operating on a national basis, won that contract. It should be applauded for not only being South Australia and winning but also being so competitive in the way in which it has structured its contract and has undertaken to subcontract a certain amount of work to South Australians.

Having read Mr Kimber's remarks this morning, I believe that he seemed to be puzzled and confused about whether there was too much work going out or there was not enough; whether there was too much work for South Australia's contractors and they were not geared for it and it was going interstate—in fact, it is not going interstate—or whether there was no work happening at all. Again, Mr Kimber was wrong. I understand that the Civil Contractors Federation will be taking up those issues with Mr Kimber, so that if he wishes to express his views in future he does so on a personal basis and does not reflect on the civil contracting industry as a whole in South Australia.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: No-one is suggesting that he not comment. They are suggesting that he not comment and pretend to be speaking on behalf of civil contractors. The federation, on behalf of the membership in this State, welcomes the Government's enormous and increased investment in road transport and the fact that the tenders have

gone to local contractors as is clear from the schedule which was inserted in *Hansard*.

I thank the honourable member for his question. He has been involved in South Australian industry for years and he would be as keen as I am—and as any member of this Government—that this Government with increased taxpayer investment in roads is supporting the regeneration of South Australian companies in road contracting business and South Australian jobs.

SCHOOL SUPPORT GRANTS

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement on the subject of school support grants.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Earlier today in Question Time, the Leader of the Opposition indicated that schools had not been advised of school support grants in South Australia and asked why the Government had dallied. I want to place on the public record that three weeks ago I made the decision to increase school support grants by 3 per cent next year. Two weeks ago a press release was issued to all media. I am told that it was carried on radio and was in the *Advertiser* on the following day. The money will be transferred to schools some time next week.

STUDY ABROAD SCHEME

The Hon. P. NOCELLA: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services, representing the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, a question about the study abroad scheme.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P. NOCELLA: On Wednesday 29 May this year, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education announced the establishment of a study abroad scheme. This scheme is intended for use by tertiary students

of languages and offers them an opportunity to study a language in the country in which it is spoken as a national language. The scheme was not an entirely new concept but an interesting concept nonetheless, and was considered to be of great advantage to students and a highly visible incentive for language study.

The Minister in his statement announced that \$50 000 would be allocated to this scheme. It is my understanding that the Minister has now received advice from university experts who work in the area of language teaching at tertiary level and who have costed the scheme that, in order to establish a decent scheme with a chance of success, it would require funding of about \$100 000 per annum on an ongoing basis rather than the one-off \$50 000 that the Minister has allocated. My understanding is that no arrangements have been made for study abroad this year. My question is: in view of the advice received, will the Minister undertake to review the funding arrangements, particularly the level of funding to a minimum of \$100 000, and the length of funding on an ongoing basis?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister and bring back a reply. As I understand it, it is an argument that new funding has been provided from the Minister for an initiative and people think that they could do with more money. Let me assure the honourable member that is a story replayed a million times over within the public sector in South Australia. We could always do with more money but the Minister has found much needed money in relation to this area. I will relay the question to the Minister to provide a response which I can forward to the honourable member in due course.

TEMPLATE LEGISLATION

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services, representing the Attorney-General, a question about template legislation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Last year this Parliament passed the Consumer Credit South Australia Act 1995, which was an Act to make provision for a uniform legislative scheme to regulate the provision of consumer credit. That Act stated:

The Act will come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation.

I understand that the Act will come into effect on 1 November 1996, although I have not verified that. I also note that the Act provides that the Consumer Credit Code in the Consumer Credit (Queensland) Act 1994, promulgated by the Queensland Parliament, will apply as the law in South Australia—in other words, what this Parliament did was to adopt that legislation. I understand that the term used for that process is 'template legislation'.

The issue of template legislation has been dealt with in this Parliament through the Legislative Review Committee, chaired by the Hon. Robert Lawson, and I commend its two excellent reports to everyone in this Chamber.

This morning I was approached by two solicitors who complained that they could not get a copy of the Consumer Credit Code in South Australia. I was told that they had approached both State Print and the Attorney-General's Department for a copy of the Consumer Credit Code. Both offices had informed them that they had to write to Queens-

land, enclosing a cheque for \$30 in advance, in order to obtain a copy of the legislation.

I understand, in terms of the advice that was needed to be given to their respective clients, that time was of the essence. I also understand that \$30 is a significantly higher cost than one would normally be expected to pay for a copy of legislation in South Australia. Indeed, the solicitors complained to me that, if people are expected to know and understand the law, copies of laws which we pass ought to be readily available to the legal profession and members of the public. In light of that, my questions are:

1. Will the Attorney-General look into developing a process where legislation adopted as template legislation can be printed in South Australia so that it is available generally?
2. In the event that it cannot be printed in South Australia, will the Attorney-General and/or State Print ensure that sufficient stocks are available for the legal profession and the public so that they can appraise themselves of laws that we pass?
3. Are there any plans in the pipeline for future template legislation in this and other States?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I will refer those questions to the Attorney-General and bring back a reply.

STALKING

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Education and Children's Services, representing the Attorney-General, a question about stalking.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL: An *Advertiser* article of Tuesday, 7 February 1995, entitled 'New force may target stalking', states:

A proposal for a Los Angeles style police unit to enforce South Australia's anti-stalking legislation may get the go ahead this year. The Hon. Mr Griffin and the Hon. Mr Matthew were agreed that a special group to deal with cases of stalking as they occurred would be a valuable asset in South Australia. Has this special force been set up and, if not, why not?

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

BELAIR RAIL LINE

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about what appears to be an apparent oversight by her office or department.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SANDRA KANCK: The closure of the Millswood, Hawthorn and Clapham railway stations along the Belair line has caused a great deal of heartache to many former railway commuters living in the vicinity of those stations, not the least of which was one couple who had to change their address to another suburb because of a disabled access problem—but that is by the by.

On 2 July this year in this Chamber the Minister for Transport indicated that she would be happy to provide my office with an executive summary of the report 'Transport management grows—report into the operations of the Belair line'. At the same time the Minister indicated that a copy of the summary had been forwarded to the rail lobby group, Friends of the Belair Line. My inquiries indicate that at the time the Minister made that statement the Friends of the

Belair Line had not sighted a copy of the aforementioned executive summary and now, three months later, neither my office nor the Friends of the Belair Line have received an executive summary of the report. My questions are:

1. Will the Minister undertake to provide both my office and the Friends of the Belair Line with a copy of the report 'Transport management grows—report into the operations of the Belair line' and, if not, why not?

2. If the complete report is not available, will the Minister undertake to provide both my office and the Friends of the Belair Line, as she promised on 2 July, a copy of the executive summary of the report?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: 'Yes' to the second question.

GREEN WASTE

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.G. ROBERTS: Many of the questions that I have asked in this Council in relation to landfill and the closing of metropolitan landfill dumps have been with regard to those dumps being filled or at least becoming unacceptable to the people living in close proximity to them. Most States are developing strategies to reduce landfill by up to 60 per cent, therefore not relying on landfill as a major part of waste disposal. Recently New South Wales issued a draft paper on removing green waste from the waste stream. This draft action plan includes composting, the use of green waste and separation, thereby making it a saleable material and reducing the cost to councils by selling the material to garden suppliers and other users of the material. My questions are:

1. Will the South Australian Government encourage the replacement of bins so that green waste can be collected and reused?

2. Is the Government encouraging the separation of green waste from the waste stream to reduce total landfill areas?

3. Does the Government have a green waste strategy or management action plan similar to that of New South Wales?

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

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Transport a question about construction contracts.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: Earlier today the Hon. Julian Stefani said that he was prompted to ask a question, after hearing a report on Keith Conlon's ABC show—to which I am sure he ardently listens, it being the station which revealed that he had made the least number of contributions to this place last session—about a contribution made by Mr Kimber. In her reply the Minister revealed quite clearly to the Council that she was aware of the matter and, clearly, it was a Dorothy Dix question. The Minister then mounted a vehement and cowardly attack on Mr Kimber.

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: I rise on a point of order, Mr President. That is just straight opinion.

The PRESIDENT: There is opinion in that question. I suggest that the honourable member cast the question differently.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I will put the question, Mr President: why, Minister, did you not utilise the same forum as Mr Kimber, who had the courage of his convictions to go on public radio and express his concerns about the employment prospects of South Australians and his company, instead of making what I believe could be assumed to be a cowardly attack in this Coward's Castle on Mr Kimber? Why did not you go on public radio—

The Hon. A.J. REDFORD: Mr President, I rise on a point of order. I ask that the honourable member withdraw the implication that the Minister is a coward.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think there is a point of order.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I said that it was a cowardly attack on Mr Kimber, not to take the opportunity to go out in public without fear of being sued, as Mr Kimber had had the courage to do. Why did the Minister attack him under parliamentary privilege?

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I am surprised by the question and the tone of the question. There is no attack. It was a factual presentation which I thought the Parliament deserved. I also indicated in answering the question that I did not hear the interview today because I was at various meetings and that the Department of Transport responded to a number of the issues just after 9 o'clock. As I said—if the Deputy Leader had listened—at 10 o'clock, after Keith Conlon's program had finished, I received a fax from the Civil Contractors Federation indicating that Mr Kimber had been presenting his views as though he was speaking on behalf of the federation. The federation wanted to make it very clear that Graham—as they said—Graham Kimber was not representing the federation, and I thought it was important that at the first opportunity the Council should be made aware of that fact and also that members would be interested in learning what the facts are in relation to the bigger investment by this State in road transport construction in this State and the creation of jobs.

If members of the Opposition are not interested in that, that is very illuminating, when their Leader keeps on saying we should be doing more about jobs. This Government is. We present the facts, we present the investment. Members of the Opposition do not like it, therefore they ask silly questions and make silly attacks and do not want to hear the facts. The Civil Contractors Federation will be interested in seeing the nature and tone of the honourable member's question and I suspect they will wish to dissociate themselves as they wished to dissociate themselves from Mr Kimber's comments.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 23 October. Page 264.)

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank His Excellency for his speech on opening this session of Parliament and, in doing so, I also thank His Excellency, on behalf of all members in this Chamber, in particular the Government members, for the excellent contribution that he is making to the position of

Governor and to community and public life in South Australia. Certainly, I think everyone to whom I have spoken believes that the new appointment of Governor has been an excellent appointment by the Premier (Hon. Dean Brown) and I am sure the new Governor will follow in the significant footsteps of the previous Governor who certainly did a magnificent job during her term in the position. I also thank members for their contributions to the Address in Reply. I wish to address some of the issues raised by some members, given the time available to me this afternoon.

At the outset, I would say that I was very disappointed with the nature of the contributions from most of the Labor members in this Chamber, and I guess that criticism also applies to the contributions from the members of the Australian Democrats as well. However, I address my comments to the contributions that Labor members have made to this Address in Reply debate. Certainly, looking from the advantageous position of being in Government, it was a great opportunity for members of the Labor Party, and in particular members of the front bench, to show that they had learnt the lessons of the past, that they had learnt the lessons of being out of touch for 13 years or so from mainstream South Australia.

It was also an opportunity for members of the Labor Party to demonstrate that they had some fresh, new ideas and initiatives which they could place before the Parliament and before the people of South Australia in terms of the ongoing structural economic problems and other problems which confront the State of South Australia.

Sadly, I have to say, the contributions from most Labor members—not all members, because there were one or two notable exceptions—were, as we have come to expect, and this is not new, a litany of negativism and destructive criticism rather than constructive criticism. It was a continuation of the leadership of the Hon. Mike Rann—who is sadly out of touch in terms of community feeling and the views of the broad stream community in South Australia at the moment—of just knocking, knocking, knocking all the time and criticising everything that the Government has done. That is true, too, of the comments of the Hon. Mr Elliott and, if time permits, I will address Mr Elliott's contribution later.

During the past three years the Labor Opposition has demonstrated that it is still, sadly, out of touch with Brown's battlers in middle South Australia—people from working-class backgrounds, blue-collar backgrounds, who fled the Labor Party in droves to support Dean Brown and the Liberal Party at the 1993 election. No Party, no Government, garners 60 per cent of the two Party preferred vote without a significant upswing and without a significant groundswell in support of a Party's direction, policies and philosophies.

That significant movement, which has been seen in the Federal arena as well, has come substantially from Labor's heartland, from blue-collar voters, from working class South Australians who believe that the Labor Party of the 1980s and 1990s is sadly out of touch with what working-class South Australians want. They have deserted them. The reason they have deserted them is that they believe that the South Australian Labor Party and the national Labor Party are sadly out of touch with the working-class aspirations of South Australians.

The sorts of issues which are of concern to working class South Australians are no longer the sorts of issues that the Mike Ranns, the Paul Keatings, the Carolyn Pickles and others of this world are comfortable and familiar with and on which they have the sorts of views that fit within mainstream,

blue-collar, working-class South Australians. Some of the contributions in the Address in Reply have demonstrated how out of touch the Labor Party remains. It is an important issue for the Labor Party. Hopefully, it will never learn the lesson—perhaps I should not be pointing it out—that it will have to spend its time in Opposition working out where it went wrong and, hopefully, offer a viable alternative Government to the people of South Australia. I shall highlight some areas.

The basic skills test is a perfect example of where the Labor Party remains a captive of the minority. It remains a captive of the hard core, left-wing dominated teachers' union movement, which is adamantly opposed to assessment and measurement and adamantly opposed to something as simple as the equivalent of a modern day spelling and arithmetic test. On two mornings out of 13 years of schooling our young people in year 3 and year 5 will have the modern day equivalent of a simple spelling and arithmetic test. Yet this Labor Party remains a captive of a hard core minority union leadership, left-wing dominated in this case—when I know that more than half of the shadow Cabinet does not support that view.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I know what the Hon. Mr Cameron's views are.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: How would you know?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I know this because Labor members have spoken to me. I could give the Hon. Mr Cameron the names of half the members of the Labor shadow Cabinet.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: No, not publicly.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Because they were private conversations. The only one who has gone public—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: You're the only one who repeats private conversations.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Cameron is very sensitive and very thin-skinned: he can dish it out but he cannot take it. The only one who has had the courage to put his views on the public record is Mick Atkinson who did so on the Bob Francis Show. I am a bit embarrassed about this. He not only supported the basic skills test but also the Minister for Education. He indicated that the Minister for Education was one of the best Ministers not only in this Government but in any Government that he has seen for a while. I am somewhat embarrassed by that effusive praise from an opponent, but he has at least had the courage to put on the public record that he supports the basic skills test. There are many other members of the Labor Party—

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

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Terry Cameron!

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister for Transport! I know it is warm in here, but if members continue in this fashion I warn them that it will get a lot warmer. The Minister for Education.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Council will come to order.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Cameron is very thin-skinned. He is constantly calling attention to the state of the Council and for a quorum. This time, there were only two Labor members in the Chamber. Most of the Liberal members were in the Chamber listening, but there were only two Labor members. All he has done is cause inconvenience to his own members by having them attend the Council. I use that as an example of where the Labor Party knows that it is out of touch.

The basic skills test is supported by 80 per cent of parents in the community. They want more information on the literacy and numeracy performance of their children, but the Labor Party, the Hon Mike Rann and the Hon. Carolyn Pickles are captive of Janet Giles and the left wing leadership of the Institute of Teachers. This is a perfect example of where three years in Opposition has not yet demonstrated to the Labor Party that working class South Australians, the battlers who supported Dean Brown and the Liberal Party at the last election, want to see those sorts of fundamental changes in portfolio areas such as education, and they are prepared to support those fundamental changes within Government.

I now turn to Hindmarsh Island. Without going into detail, this is another example of where the State Labor Party is sadly out of touch with what mainstream and working class South Australians, the battlers who supported the Liberal Party at the last election, think about this issue. In her contribution, the Hon. Carolyn Pickles unfairly criticised my colleague the Hon. Michael Armitage regarding the Government's attitude to Hindmarsh Island. This is a further indication of the way in which the Labor Party, the Hon. Mike Rann and the Hon. Carolyn Pickles are out of touch with mainstream South Australians who want the Government to take action to ensure that that particular development can proceed.

I refer to recent contributions in this Chamber by the Hon. Carolyn Pickles and the Hon. Ron Roberts on the issues of school closures and asbestos. The Hon. Ron Roberts referred particularly to buildings at Mimili. In respect of these issues, the ALP is treating working class South Australians as though they are stupid. Let me assure the Labor Party that working class and mainstream South Australians are not stupid. They can see hypocrisy where it is self-evident in terms of what the Labor Party says regarding these issues. They know that, literally for decades, Labor Governments of the past 20 years have allowed the use of Demac buildings containing a small percentage of asbestos not only in the Anangu lands to the north of South Australia but all over South Australia: in the eastern, northern, southern and western suburbs as well as in the Far North.

The Hon. Ron Roberts tried to treat with contempt parents in working class Australia by saying that this is a conservative Liberal Government with an anti-working class attitude because it sent Demac buildings to the Anangu lands when it would not send them to eastern suburbs or south-eastern suburbs schools. Parents recognise that hypocrisy. They also recognise the hypocrisy of the Labor Party regarding the issue of school closures. They know that the Labor Government closed 70 schools in its last seven years of Government between 1986 and 1993. They also know that the Liberal Government has closed about 30 schools in three years: exactly the same average number of schools being closed, about 10 schools per year, as the record of the previous Labor Government shows. Clearly, some school communities do not like that, as they did not like it under the previous Labor

Government, but what they recognise also is the hypocrisy of labor spokespersons when they purport to fight the battle of opposing school closures throughout South Australia.

The fourth broad area I have touched upon briefly but in relation only to the South Australian Institute of Teachers. Working class and mainstream South Australians are adamantly opposed to the excesses of union power being demonstrated not only in South Australia but also in Australia. Again, the Labor Party has not learnt that lesson. Yesterday, when we had the situation of a non-union member who consciously chose not to be a member of a union and who wanted to continue teaching students in a TAFE course, the Hon. Ron Roberts attacked that teacher in a cowardly way by calling him a scab and a rat in this Chamber. Again, this afternoon, the Hon. Ron Roberts most unfairly attacked one of my ministerial colleagues regarding the use of this Chamber. Yesterday, the Hon. Ron Roberts had no compunction at all in labelling a rat and a scab an honest hardworking teacher who just wanted to teach his students, and he was not prepared to withdraw in any way that imputation on that hardworking teacher in the TAFE system. That is a further demonstration of how out of touch the Labor Party remains with the views of working class and mainstream South Australians and the way in which they are still captive of their union masters and mistresses in the trade union movement in South Australia.

The final indication of the way in which they are out of touch—and this touches on a further category of just plain incompetence—was the magnificent expose yesterday of the Hon. Ron Roberts' economic illiteracy and incompetence by my colleague the Hon. Legh Davis. Obviously, he had gone to the trouble of reading the Hon. Ron Roberts' speech—which is no mean feat in itself—given that he had missed it in the Chamber. Perhaps he did listen to it, and it is no mean feat to be game enough to go back and read it again. What he found there was the Hon. Ron Roberts making an error of a lazy \$290 million in his calculations. He was only \$290 million out! He was saying that the State Bank was going pretty well—

The Hon. Caroline Schaefer interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Exactly. He said that it made a \$360 million profit last year, yet it was in fact only \$70 million. As my colleague the Hon. Caroline Schaefer said, he made a mistake of only \$290 million. Out of \$8 billion, that is not much at all. As I said yesterday, we can only hope and pray that the good sense of the people of South Australia—

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: He's not aspiring to be Treasurer!

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: One suspects that it is hard to find out what he is aspiring to be. He seems to flounder around—even though he is the shadow Minister for Primary Industries—just lurching from issue to issue, making mistake after mistake, trying to find something that he knows something about in terms of questioning the Government and its Ministers. But the point I am making is this: heaven help the people of South Australia should they ever have the unlikely circumstance of having the Hon. Ron Roberts join the Hon. Carolyn Pickles, Mr Ralph Clarke and the Hon. Mike Rann as the leadership group governing the economic direction, the whole policy thrust, of a Labor Government.

The Hon. Caroline Schaefer: It doesn't bear thinking about.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: It does not bear thinking about, as my colleague the Hon. Caroline Schaefer says. But sadly,

that is the alternative that the Labor Party offers the people of South Australia. I suspect that more than half the members of the Caucus, having thought about that, would probably vote for the Liberal Government at the next election, not wanting to inflict the Hon. Ron Roberts or the Hon. Carolyn Pickles on the people of South Australia. In a fit of honesty, in the privacy of a secret ballot, I suspect that we might have half the Labor Caucus voting for Dean Brown and the Liberal Government at the next election. They know, because they live with these people on a day-to-day basis, the ongoing and proven incompetence, the lack of preparedness for office and the extent to which these people (and leaders) are out of touch with the views of mainstream and working class South Australians on a whole range of issues.

There is a wide range of issues that are important to working class and mainstream South Australians, and members on both sides of the Chamber will have to factor into their thinking those issues which members might think are small but which are not, and which impact on working class South Australians. I have talked about some of the policy issues, but it is my view that issues such as members' travel, parliamentary salaries and those sorts of issues—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Speak to your colleagues the Hon. Frank Blevins and Ralph Clarke about that one.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: You can see why. But speak to your colleagues before you go too far out on a limb.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: They're going to sort you out; we've been assured. He is bit of a toe cutter, the Hon. Frank Blevins.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am delighted. I think that I speak—

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I didn't go to anyone; they came to us. The honourable member should have a word to some of his colleagues. He is a bit isolated, not only on this but on a whole range of other issues. The point that I am making—and this is a point that members of the Government and the Opposition need to factor into their thinking—is that issues such as members' travel, Ministers' travel and parliamentary salaries are the sorts of issues that really can cut at the authority of a Government, of a Parliament or, indeed, of an Opposition. Certainly, the publicity of recent weeks on the issue of travel, in particular, would not have done the standing of any member of Parliament any good at all. I am sure that that is the case in relation to the Government as well as the Opposition. Members on both sides will have to factor that important consideration into mind; that things such as travel, salaries and related issues are important issues for mainstream and working class South Australia. They are much more important than many of the issues that the Labor Party would believe to be important for the coming election.

I want to move on to some of the individual contributions. First, I must congratulate the Hon. Paul Holloway. There is no doubt that in 12 to 18 months he has got marginally smarter: this year he made sure that the Hon. Carolyn Pickles spoke before him rather than after him. He did not want the Hon. Carolyn 'Helen Demidenko' Pickles to come after him this time and plagiarise half his speech, as she did last time. The Hon. Paul Holloway is learning: it will happen only once, I suspect. I looked at the contribution of the Hon. Carolyn Pickles and have already addressed some comment about my

disappointment at the inability of someone who purports to be a member of the leadership group, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, to be in touch with what people think but, more importantly, to carve out any reason at all for anyone out there to contemplate voting for a Mike Rann-led Labor Party.

I know that the Hon. Terry Cameron shares the view that she is incompetent: I know that he makes that view known to his colleagues as often as he can. The sad thing is that he upsets his colleagues more often than he can help himself, I suspect, and I will refer to that a little later. Nevertheless, he continues to seek to undermine first the Hon. Ms Pickles and then, whenever he gets a chance, poor old Ron Roberts. We will refer to one of his statements yesterday in the Council in terms of the Hon. Ron Roberts' performance.

I want briefly to refer to an issue noted by the Hon. Carolyn Pickles and, I think, also by the Hon. Terry Cameron, and that is retention rates. I want to place on record the apparent level of retention rates in South Australian Government schools from 1990, which are as follows: in 1990, 64.4 per cent; in 1991, 76.8 per cent; in 1992, 87.6 per cent; in 1993, 80.5 per cent; in 1994, 75.5 per cent; and in 1995, 62.9 per cent. So, there has been a decline of some 24.7 per cent since the peak in 1990.

However, the important issue to highlight is the decline between 1992 and 1994, which was 12 per cent—virtually half of which occurred during a period controlled by the Labor Government budgets of 1992 and 1993. When the Liberal Government was elected in December 1993 it made no change to the Labor Government budget of August 1993, so the funding that was laid down in 1993 for the school year 1994 was not affected in any way by the Liberal Government. The Liberal Government's budget reductions were announced in the following year, 1994, and took effect in the school years of 1995 and 1996.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Very thin-skinned. It is hard to keep a straight face in all this. One thing you have to learn in this Chamber, and we are lucky in the Address in Reply, is that when you dish it out for 2½ hours, even if you only get 45 minutes back you have to be prepared to stand up and take it. Members have seen how thin skinned the Hon. Mr Cameron is and have seen his inability to take a very gentle rebuke and even the mildest of criticisms. As I said, the reduction of some 12 per cent in the retention rate from the peak of 87.6 per cent in 1992 was under budgets controlled by the Labor Government. The Liberal Government must accept part responsibility for the 1993 figures, because they were not solely due to budget considerations. That is the Government's contention: we believe significant other issues are involved. We certainly brought down the 1994 budget and we are responsible for the funding available in schools in 1995. It is important to highlight the hypocrisy of the Labor Government on retention rates. Half the reduction in retention rates occurred under budgets controlled and dictated by the Labor Government and the other half under a budget controlled and dictated by a Liberal Government.

I have indicated in speeches elsewhere some of the reasons such as the large number of part-time students, the significant increase in the number of students who went to university in 1995 and the significant reduction in year 12 repeaters. In 1994 we had 1 400 students repeating year 12 and in 1995 we had only 700, the simple reason being that the universities took many more students in 1995. The entry

score dropped by five or six points in some courses and students were accepted.

The Hon. T.G. Roberts: You'll have them back next year.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: That is possible and is one of the issues we need to address. The figure of 62.9 per cent is also, as I have said before, a significant under representation because in South Australia we have almost 3 000 students—30 per cent of students in year 12—who are part-time students. They are out there doing year 12, being retained within our school system but are combining part-time work and part-time study or are just undertaking part-time study to try to maximise their score over two years. We have almost 3 000 students not being counted by the Bureau of Statistics in these figures that are being used by the Labor Party on retention rates. If I was in Opposition, I would be using the figures as well. That is the role and job of the Opposition. It is the role of the Government to explain those situations. One of the by-product effects is that of a downward spiral in morale amongst young people and in our school system being generated by not highlighting some of the facts behind these retention rate figures. They are issues of concern: nationwide there has been a decline, but there are important considerations which would indicate that the situation is not as bad as those raw figures tend to indicate.

As to the Hon. Paul Holloway's contribution, he said the Labor Party was not opposed to outsourcing and would approach it on a case by case basis. If that is the case, it seems to be opposing every case that comes along. I have not seen any indication from the Hon. Paul Holloway or other Labor members supporting any of the examples of outsourcing entered into by the Liberal Government. Time does not permit me to go into too much detail about the honourable member's contribution.

I will now address comments about what I would term the bizarre contribution from the Hon. Terry Cameron, who bored his colleagues witless for 2½ hours in this Chamber and got to the stage where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked him to stop his remarks one night because he wanted to go home, and so did all his colleagues. That was the only way the Hon. Terry Cameron could be stopped on that evening. His colleagues have been complaining long and loud. On two consecutive evenings the Hon. Trevor Crothers, for whom I have some admiration, tried to get a contribution in. He tried to do that last evening. The Hon. Terry Cameron filibustered last night, but the Hon. Trevor Crothers had an important contribution to make and in the end was not able to make that contribution.

The Hon. Terry Cameron is not winning friends amongst his colleagues in this relentless push for the Leader's or Deputy Leader's position. He is making no friends at all amongst his colleagues. In making comments as he did yesterday about the contribution of the Hon. Sandra Kanck, saying, 'That is nearly as dopey a statement as the Hon. Ron Roberts made earlier,' he does not win friends. He made that comment about his own Deputy Leader in the Chamber when everyone could hear: clearly you are not making friends with your own colleagues by saying that. I assure the Hon. Mr Cameron that the Hon. Ron Roberts has a long memory, so he says. He says that he has a long memory and he will not forget, because he was hugely embarrassed. I could see his face. He rolled his eyes and was hugely embarrassed by the attack from his own backbench colleague saying, 'That is nearly as dopey a statement as the Hon. Ron Roberts made

earlier.' We then had in all his glory the Hon. Terry Cameron wanting to talk for 2½ hours about integrity and honesty.

An honourable member: Three hours.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Three hours, was it? To refresh my memory, I thought I had better get the judgment from the Supreme Court which touches a little bit on the integrity and honesty of the statements made by the Hon. Terry Cameron. The Hon. Mr Cameron was taken to court concerning the honesty of statements he made on behalf of the Labor Party prior to the last election. Let me hasten to say that this matter is not *sub judice*. We have a conviction: the case is finished. We have a convicted person in our Chamber, the Hon. Mr Cameron.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: Guilty!

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I am just talking about this issue.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: Fined \$300!

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Let me quote part of what the learned judges had to say because I will save the rest for another occasion in order to reinvigorate the debate about the Hon. Mr Cameron and remind him about his own personal standing. The summary states:

The appellant was convicted of authorising an election advertisement that contained a statement of fact that was inaccurate or misleading to a material extent... Held [per Ollson . . . Bollen . . . concurring Lander] concurring in a separate judgment. The advertisement was clearly intended to be a statement of fact, not a statement of opinion, and it was substantially at odds with the Liberal Party's statement. It could not be characterised as a fair and accurate projection of the impact of the statement. It was a gross distortion of that statement.

Further on it states:

Thus the statement must be inaccurate and misleading to a substantial. . .

For a person to be convicted, the statement has to be inaccurate and misleading to a substantial or significant extent. Time does not permit me to refer to all of the judgment. I refer to this statement:

In my opinion, the words are so obviously different that no person could reasonably reach that mistaken belief.

The words 'It was a gross distortion of that statement' are a fair indication of the Hon. Mr Cameron's approach to public propriety, facts and his willingness to knowingly and grossly distort the situation when he knew that what he was saying was not true. He is willing to grossly distort the truth. Time does not permit me on this occasion to go into other aspects of the Hon. Mr Cameron's public performance in relation to issues of public probity and propriety.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron: What about the Liberal policies? You haven't got the guts to refute them.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Terry Cameron has had a fair go.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Mr Cameron is hypocritical when he talks about issues of public integrity, propriety or honesty in relation to election policy promises and those sorts of things. People know what they are getting, they know what the Hon. Mr Cameron is, and he gets discounted even by his own colleagues. The Hon. Ron Roberts says that he has a long memory and he will not forget the Hon. Mr Cameron. The statements of the Hon. Mr Cameron are discounted by anyone who wants to have a significant or rational debate on any issue. There are many other errors of fact and 'gross distortions' (to use three learned judges' words) in the contribution of the Hon. Mr Cameron.

The Hon. T.G. Cameron interjecting:

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: No, I am meek and mild mannered and very temperate. I do not engage in those sorts

of things. I am very meek and mild mannered. It is the Hon. Mr Terry Cameron who is thin skinned about these issues. There were gross distortions and inferences in some of the claims being made by the Hon. Terry Cameron. The statement that there had been 2000 retrenchments in the Education Department: the man knows no bounds. He purports to give a statement which is headed (and I can only assume he put the heading on it) 'Job cuts in the various departments', and then talks about retrenchments and says that there have been 2 000 retrenchments. The man knows no bounds and, to rely on the words of learned judges, it is a 'gross distortion' of the facts. I can only concur with those learned judges in that particular case and apply that to these circumstances as well. There were so many other areas that I am not able to wrap up my comments about the Hon. Mr Cameron. We will sort him out on another day in a mild mannered and temperate fashion.

Again, time will not permit me to address the contribution of the Hon. Mr Elliott. I am disappointed that the Hon. Mr Elliott was unable to indicate that he was prepared to support the Liberal Government on anything over the past three years. Certainly, when time permits I will give him a considerable list: such as the basic skills test, new economic developments, new industries attracted to South Australia, new tourism and commercial developments proceeding, the new Art Gallery, the Southern Expressway and a range of magnificent achievements that this Government is implementing and will continue to implement. I will do that on another occasion.

In conclusion, I will address the issue of predictions for teacher requirements in our schools on another occasion. I am disappointed that time has run out. The Hon. Mr Cameron took three hours and, therefore, I was allowed only 40 minutes to wrap up this debate. I guess that he was trying to prevent too much rebuttal of the gross distortions of fact in his contribution. Finally, in the broadest possible sense I thank members for their contribution to this debate. It has enlivened the discussion and will enliven further debate within this Parliament on a range of issues.

Motion carried.

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

[Sitting suspended from 4 to 4.50 p.m.]

The PRESIDENT: I have to inform the Council that, accompanied by the mover, seconder and other honourable members, I proceeded to Government House and there presented His Excellency the Address in Reply to His Excellency's opening speech adopted by this Council today, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:

Thank you for the Address in Reply to the speech with which I opened the Fourth Session of the Forty-Eighth Parliament. I am confident that you will give your best consideration to all matters placed before you. I pray for God's blessing upon your deliberations.

MFP DEVELOPMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 22 October. Page 223.)

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports the second reading. With the Federal Liberal Government cutting out Federal support for the MFP project the character of the MFP must change if it is to continue in any meaningful way. The amendments brought in by the Government in this Bill make the MFP organisation a leaner operation and reporting requirements are reduced somewhat. The Opposition appreciates the Government's incorporating its proposal in another place to retain the Community Advisory Committee, albeit with reduced numbers, whereas the Government's initial idea was to abolish that committee. The Bill clears the decks for both the MFP Corporation and the advisory committee, allowing the Government to appoint or reappoint its own people to those positions. This heightens the responsibility of the Government to get results out of the MFP at a time when the Delphin Lend Lease proposal to build a smart city of 4 000 homes will probably make or break the MFP.

I note that the Government is yet to endorse that particular proposal. In any case, the Minister for Infrastructure has ample motivation to draw some solid achievements out of the MFP because he cannot afford any blemishes on his CV if he is going for the top job after the election. Of course, the Minister for Infrastructure has not been assisted in his vision for the MFP following the Premier's negotiations to have EDS housed on North Terrace rather than out at the MFP site at The Levels. Nonetheless, the Opposition offers its continuing support for the MFP but only for so long as stringent achievement targets are being met. It is in a spirit of cooperation for the economic welfare of this State that the Opposition supports the second reading of this Bill necessitated as it is by the Federal Liberal's downgrading of the MFP project

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT secured the adjournment of the debate.

MULTICULTURALISM AND ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. R.I. Lucas:

That the following resolution transmitted from the House of Assembly be agreed to:

That this House—

(a) affirms its support for policies relating to multiculturalism and Aboriginal reconciliation being based upon the principles of non-discrimination, racial harmony, tolerance and the Australian concept of a 'fair go' for all;

(b) recognises that South Australia is a multicultural society which places value on the significant contribution which continues to be made to the development of the State by all South Australians, irrespective of ethnic or racial background;

(c) reaffirms its support for the ongoing process of reconciliation and achieving a greater understanding between Australians of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal background and recognises the special needs of Aboriginal communities, especially in health and education; and

(d) calls for the conduct of public debate concerning multiculturalism and Aboriginal reconciliation to be undertaken according to these principles.

(Continued from 23 October. Page 273.)

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW (Minister for Transport): I am very keen to speak to this motion and I earnestly believe that there are few more important subjects that we could debate, discuss or address in this place. As a Liberal, a South Australian and Australian, I have always been proud of the fact that South Australia and Australia is a tolerant society and when one looks around the world at the

dreadful tensions—whether they be religious, political or historical tensions—we in Australia are so fortunate to have been a tolerant people who have been able to provide a safe refuge for many people who have been persecuted elsewhere in the world and could not live with peace of mind or opportunity.

Also, our country has provided a second opportunity for very many people. It is a thrill to meet people who have come as first generation immigrants to this country, whether it be come from Europe or other non-English speaking countries around the world, and to hear that they came with hope in their heart and that that hope has been realised if not in terms of all that they have aspired to in their own life but through their children.

I was fortunate to represent the Premier at the Ethnic Broadcasters National Conference on a Friday about a fortnight ago. The conference was held at the Patawalonga Motel at Glenelg, and it was attended by the Hon. Julian Stefani and many of my colleagues (Liberal, Labor and Democrat) and others from both Federal and State politics. At the conference, there were people from around Australia who now live here as Australian citizens but who (either they or their parents) would have been born overseas. I suspect that 100 different countries were represented on that occasion. I had the opportunity to meet with people from Ecuador, Peru and Chile, countries to which we do not always refer.

The Hon. T. Crothers interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I do not remember all their names, but I took an interest in a gentleman from Ecuador. I asked him about his background, and he rushed up to his room and came back with photographs of his mother and sister. It is a thrill to think that these people have come so far and made such a contribution to this country. He worked on Ethnic Radio and he was also a member of the work force. He was still very committed to his culture. Notwithstanding that commitment, he acknowledged that Australia was now his home and that it was this country that had provided him with opportunities and that, in spite of all the work that his mother had done on his behalf, she could not have provided these sorts of opportunities in his country of origin.

I was actually born in England but, as my parents are Australian, I see myself very much as an Anglo-Celtic Australian. People such as I often take for granted the opportunities that we have in this country. It is wonderful to work with people from other countries who appreciate the opportunities that we have been able to provide, opportunities which they would never have been able to enjoy elsewhere in the world. Therefore, I strongly support this motion, because I think it would be absolutely dreadful if we were not able to sustain the fine line—and it is often a fine line—between prejudice and opportunity. Opportunity and quality of life are so precious that I think we must work doubly hard to ensure that these qualities remain a force in this country. Therefore, this motion is particularly important.

I now turn to a song entitled 'I Am Australian'. The lyrics are by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton and the music is by Bruce Woodley. I first heard this song sung by the Bush Band at Hampstead Primary School some months ago when I went on a Friday afternoon to hear their concert after the primary school had won a National Crime Prevention Award. Hampstead Primary School had encountered a whole lot of difficulties at their school—vandalism, violence, truancy—and the principal decided that through music she would encourage the community—the parents and the kids—to

come together and look at the positive side of schools, not the negatives, and there was a time when the school was certainly looking at the negatives, and so was the media and the others.

Anyway, they have pulled together through the Bush Band and, as I have indicated, have won a national crime prevention award. The monetary return from that has enabled them to buy more instruments, music sheets and the like for the school. This was the song that they sang, 'I Am Australian':

I come from the Dreamtime from the dusty red soil plains. I am the ancient heart, the keeper of the flame. I stood upon the rocky shore. I watched the tall ships come. For 40 000 years I'd been the first Australian.

Verse two:

I came upon the prison ship bowed down by iron chains. I cleared the land, endured the lash and waited for the rains. I'm a settler, I'm a farmer's wife on a dry and barren run. A convict then a free man, I became Australian.

Verse three:

I'm the daughter of a digger who sought the mother lode. The girl became a woman on the long and dusty road. I'm a child of the depression. I saw the good times come. I'm a bushy, I'm a battler. I am Australian.

The chorus was sung as follows:

We are one, but we are many. And from all the lands on earth we come. We share a dream and sing with one voice. I am, you are, we are Australian.

Verse four:

I am Australian. We are one but we are many and from all the lands on earth we come. We share a dream and singing. One voice. I am, you are, Australian. I am, you are, Australian.

Verse five:

I'm a teller of stories, I'm a singer of songs. I'm Albert Namatjira. I paint the ghostly gums. I'm Clancy on his horse. I'm Ned Kelly on the run. I'm the one who waltzed Matilda. I am Australian.

Verse six:

I'm the hot wind from the desert. I'm the black soil of the plains. I'm the mountains and the valleys. I'm the drought and flooding rains. I am the rock, I am the sky; the rivers when they run. The spirit of this great land, I am Australian.

The Hon. Carolyn Pickles suggested it should become the Australian national anthem. I would resoundingly support that suggestion, because I think that song sums up what it is to be Australian. We are many, but we are one, and I think this is what the motion today in terms of multiculturalism and Aboriginal reconciliation reinforces, and therefore I support it without reservation and with pleasure.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: In the opening remarks of my contribution I want to pay tribute to both the Hon. Robert Lucas and the Hon. Carolyn Pickles, my Leader, for extending the time of this debate when certainly the Government wanted the matter dealt with yesterday so as to expedite the issue. However, both the Hon. Carolyn Pickles and the Hon. Robert Lucas, knowing that I wanted to make a contribution, very courteously extended the time of the debate in order to enable me to do so and for that I am grateful to them both.

The catalyst for this Bill—and I will not dignify or sully the debate by mentioning the member's name—was a former member of the Liberal Party who is now the Federal member for Oxley, and a former member of the Labor Party who is now the independent member for Kalgoorlie. As I said, I shall not sully the debate or even dignify them by mentioning them by name; they are both well known by name to me. But the members in question were both responsible. The public profile of the member for Oxley will ensure that, whether it is right or not, she will carry the major blame for being the trigger and the catalyst for this Bill's being debated. I might just pay tribute to the Hon. Dean Brown, the Premier of the State—something I do not often do—for having courage. I

think that we were the first Parliament in Australia to introduce such a Bill. Many other people who have made a comment have suggested that there might well have been another rationale with respect to the Premier's motives. I will not inject that into the debate when, in fact, what we are endeavouring to do is to reach across the divide, touch philosophical fingers together and endeavour, in so far as we can, with might and main, to reach consensus on the subject matter of this Bill.

I cannot leave the member for Oxley unless I put on record a couple of old maxims. One that immediately springs to mind with respect to her is that a little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing. Her contribution and the contribution of other people to this issue can best be served by the utilisation of the maxim 'Empty vessels make the most sound.' Migrants, of course, have made many contributions from the day of the First Fleet. After all, the fleet was transporting in its hold some convicts, many of whom were citizens of the nation in which I was born. But I will come to that later.

As for me, I regard myself, if I do not sound too immodest, eminently qualified to make a contribution to this debate, being a migrant myself and, of course, having married an Aboriginal girl and having part-Aboriginal children and grandchildren. I am very pleased that I had the opportunity, thanks to my Leader and the Leader of the Government, to participate in this debate. I am a migrant to this nation, having been born in Ireland some 58 years ago. And I guess you would agree with me that I am a very young looking 58! But I witnessed all the vagaries that were going on from the time of my first landing on these shores, when migrants were being called 'Balts', 'new Australians', 'eyeties', and 'wogs'; any appellation that could be given to them was given. Much has changed in my almost 40 years here, and today we see emerging from the maelstrom of migration since the Second World War a much more diverse nation, a nation of diverse cultures. I believe that Australia is a better place by far for that.

I refer to myself as a migrant to this nation from what has euphemistically been called John Bull's other island. I want to talk about the so-called Anglo-Celtic element of the Australian nation. The treatment of the Irish race by successive Governments in England has been nothing short of disgraceful in the history of humankind. The so-called Anglo-Celts came to this country because of political persecution in their homeland, because of a potato famine, because the corn laws prevented food from being landed to feed the starving Irish in about 1847 and because a blight took their major staple food, the potato, and consigned 1.5 million Irish people to death by starvation.

Included in that were acts of cannibalism and babies sucking at the breasts of their dead mothers—infants not yet ready to walk. That was a disgrace and a black mark on the history of the English Government of the day, which, in my humble opinion, had had much to commend it for its treatment of other native races in its former colonies. However, because it feared that Ireland would be to England in respect of its enmity with France what Cuba became in the minds of many in America in the cold war between the United States and Russia, the case for savage political repression is not to be borne when one looks back at those pages of history.

I am the eighteenth member of my race to have graced the halls and corridors of the South Australian Parliament. However, the last Labor member is a case in point—the member for a seat in the South-East of Mount Gambier. He

was a sergeant police trooper. The Labor Party of the day, in about 1912, thought that he might have an opportunity of winning the seat, so it put him forward as a candidate and, everybody's surprise, he duly won the seat. Incidentally, his grandson, of the same name, later became a trade union colleague of mine when for a time he was secretary of the Baking Trade Union. However, that Irish police sergeant got into some trouble with the Labor Party over conscription in 1916 and was expelled from the Party, but he went on to hold the seat as an Independent until he retired in the mid-1920s. I guess like all Irish men he could be led but not driven. The Irish have very decided and distinct views about the integrity of their own independence. Such was the case with my former colleague in the Labor Party, and it is still the case today with members of the Irish race.

As I said, there is often talk about the Anglo-Celtic stream in Australia. The fact is that the majority of Irish people here are descended from convicts who were put in prison hulks for daring to want their own sovereignty. They were put in prison hulks for daring to want their own sovereignty. Very few of the Irish, given the distance that had to be travelled, would have come here of their own free will.

It is interesting to explore why the First Fleet arrived in Australia. For many years the British Government of the day had used the South Carolinas as the repository for the overflowing prisons and gaols in England, so much so that many of the prisoners were incarcerated in war ships or hulks as they were called. In the early days we used something similar to house orphans at Port Adelaide. In order to get rid of that, they used to transport the convicts to the colonies in the Carolinas—South Carolina in particular. Probably one of the most famous transportees of the 1745 rebellion was Flora McDonald who, legend tells us, assisted in rescuing the Young Pretender from the clutches of the British Government.

In this case 'pretender' does not mean someone with pretensions to the British throne. Rather, it comes from the French 'pretendre', which means to claim. The title 'Young Pretender' relates to the fact that in law he was the rightful heir to the British throne but there were religious differences. This aspect raises its ugly head repeatedly, as do matters of race and ethnic and cultural differences. He was a member of the Roman Catholic Church and not a member of the established Church of England, as was required.

I now refer to contributions made by other ethnic members of the Australian community who have also served with some distinction in either this Chamber or another place over the years of which I have knowledge. The Hon. Julian Stefani may be Australian born but, irrespective of that, he is of Italian parentage and, in my view, would qualify. Others who spring to mind include the Hon. Paolo Nocella, Joe Scalzi, Dr Bernice Pfitzner, Carolyn Pickles, Mike Rann, John Quirke, Sam Bass and Mario Feleppa. I did not even know about the Minister for Transport.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: What about me?

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I did not know about you. There are many others I have not mentioned. I did not mention the Hon. Robert Lucas, who has just assured me that he fits into that category, as does Lynn Arnold and others too numerous to mention. I will now delve into history because I feel that we do not study our history enough. As a human race we seem to make the same mistakes over and over again, and the lessons of history seem to be lost on us with each succeeding generation. Those members who know me would know that I am an agnostic and, as such, I have no belief in

the Hebrew deity that was taught to me during my childhood. I stopped short of being an atheist.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: When did it happen?

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: It's a long story. One day, if you have five or six hours, I will give you a preamble. However, as I said, I believe that for the most part the historical records contained in the Bible are fairly accurate. It is the conclusions from those records that are drawn by both the writers of the epistles and the books themselves with which I somewhat disagree. Nonetheless, it is one of the oldest written records we have of a long period of human existence. When the God of the Hebrews thought his people had offended against his dicta, his covenant that he thought he had with them and his commandments that he had handed on to Moses—and he was talking about Babylon and some of the gay mayhem that was reported to be going on against those covenants and commandments he had thought he held with his chosen people—what did he do as punishment? The Bible tells us that up to that time there was a single common language of all the people on this earth. He confused the tongues. He created many more languages, thus encouraging bloodshed and mayhem as people's ability to communicate one to the other was thwarted by the introduction of the different languages, as opposed to what had previously been one common tongue.

Language scholars tell me that there is considerable evidence to show that a single language did exist on this earth. They determined that by many means, one of which is by studying the common use of certain words across all languages. They are not modern words such as 'tractor' or 'telephone' but words such as 'water' and words for 'mountain', and so on. Even assuming that was not true, it was a lesson that the ancients learnt—that a failure for human kind to have the capacity to communicate one with the other because of language difficulties could only lead to enmity and the demeaning of the human soul. And we have not learnt our lesson on that.

We have some other historical examples to which we should look. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, great changes were taking places in England's society. It devolved from being an agrarian nation in the eighteenth and nineteenth century into an industrial nation by the nineteenth century. History records that the people who then moved from rural England into the cities for employment could not find it. In order to while away their hours, a number of gin palaces were set up where the unemployed could go and feed their habit of letting alcohol deaden the pain of unemployment. Given the lack of money, this lead to other mayhem in the community—robbery, thievery and all sorts of things—as England made that very primary change from an agrarian society to an industrial one. The gin palaces of London were infamous for what they did to the changing face of that population.

Indeed, the Duke of Wellington, himself an Irishman, born in Merrion Square in Dublin but of County Kildare stock, was heard to remark, with respect to when Napoleon broke out of his incarceration on the island to which he had been consigned, 'Give me 15 000 of those cockney devils that served with me during the war in the Spanish Peninsula. I don't know what they'll do to Napoleon but they sure as hell frightened the living daylights out of me.'

Those are the lessons of history from which we do not seem to learn but they are there and there are many more, although time does not permit me to delve too deeply into them. If we come forward to the current day and look at the

intolerances based on race, religious difference or colour of skin, we find the intolerance of the Spanish against the Basques and the Basques' intolerance against the Spanish; the intolerance of all nations in the continent of South America of their indigenous natives; the intolerances in the break-up of the old Yugoslav federation amongst the Croats, the Serbs and the Bosnians based on religion in the main but, in part, to be blamed and laid at the door of ethnicity; and the current situation in the land of my birth that has been occurring since about 1136. It was not always based on religion but, of course, it is today. An old priest said probably a very true thing about the situation:

Our Ireland 'tis a lovely place

A land of mist and soil

Our Ireland 'tis a lovely place

Where man fights man for the love of God.

Truly, in a country that has produced its share of literary giants, that must stand as a quote of any particular century. The negroes and hispanics in the USA are railed against. At one time, the USA, because it was a Protestant nation, looked unkindly upon Roman Catholics. Irishmen, for instance, during the potato famine, arrived in Boston to be welcomed by the sign on boarding houses, 'No Catholics allowed' or 'There will be no rooms here for anyone of Irish extraction.' They are just a few areas where bigotry still exists.

I would say that if history tells us anything it is that, if society is to succeed, there is no place for racism and bigotry, whatever the basis for those twin ills. I make the following observation: if you cut any member of the human race, they still bleed red. Indeed, if you watch any baby up to about the age of 15 months as it goes through the primary processes of learning, you see that, whether that child is from native races deep in the Amazon jungle or the most sophisticated creche in New York, there is no difference to be observed in the behaviour of those infants with respect to their reaching out to learn in the first 12 to 15 months of their life.

Racism and intolerance is something we are not born with. Depending on the society in which we live, it is something that is imposed on us because of the prejudices of society. As I said, the real reason for Australia being visited by the First Fleet was the establishment of a penal colony to make up for the loss of the penal colony which England had in the South Carolinas and which it had lost by the victory of the Americans in 1788 in the US War of Independence.

I want to turn now to that ethnic grouping within Australia which has probably suffered more than most, that is, the indigenous people of this continent. When I first heard Aboriginals talking about the European invasion of Australia, I was inclined to be very sceptical about that. However, the longer I have thought about that matter, the more convinced I am that that is the proper description of what took place in 1788 when the First Fleet arrived. I am convinced of the rectitude of the use of that description.

The old legal doctrine, which was held firm by the courts for many years in this country, was that when Australia was first colonised it was *Australis terra nullius*, in other words, a continent without people. The ludicrous position of that is just so obvious that that piece of clever judicial work does not bear up in respect of any defence that might be proffered for it. That legal doctrine, as I am sure my friend the Hon. Robert Lawson, QC, would tell us, was overturned by a High Court decision in respect of an Aboriginal man from the island of Mer, which is now Murray Island, called Eddie Mabo.

Mer had another claim to fame. It was an island much written about by that great Australian author, himself the son of Welsh migrants to this nation, Ion Idriess. He wrote a book called the *Drums of Mer*, which was about an English convict escaping up there and taking over the rule of the island. The Mabo case overturned all previous legal tenets that had been upheld in the various courts of Australia.

When looking at the Aboriginal race, until recently, why did we shove into the back pages the genocide of the Aboriginal race of Tasmania imposed on them by Europeans, when they put a beaters line right across the island, flushed them out and killed them? Why would we hide that? We do not now, but we did.

For many years, Aboriginals lacked any formal education whatsoever. The dictum at the time was: out of sight, out of mind. It is only recently, certainly within my time in Australia, that Aboriginals have had some form of access to our education system, and it is much more equitable with that of their European brothers and sisters.

In the main, bad news is always reported by the media about Aboriginal projects and their lack of success, about the lack of accountability for the taxpayer's dollar expended from the public purse. There is always little or no coverage by the media in respect of the many success stories in Aboriginal-run projects, some of which operate export companies in their own right throughout the length and breadth of Australia, but more specifically in South Australia.

Do we say that, because of some of the excessive behaviour of company directors and chief executive officers in the 1980s, many of whom have had to face the courts and be found guilty—the Skases, the Bonds, the Laurie Connells—all company directors are bastards? Of course we do not, and nor should we. Nor should we do so with Aboriginals. Because they are human, the same as the rest of us, there will be excesses. Some Aboriginals will manipulate and abuse the system, but is that not the same of Europeans? Is that not the same of Americans? Is it not the same of South Africans?

I well recall a negro member of the J.F. Kennedy Youth Peace Congress going to a black nation in Africa to spend some time there, as was the wont of that body. When she came home she said, 'I find intolerable the way that the Negroes in that country are treating their fellow Negroes, whom they are employing as scullery maids, gardeners and cooks.' Examples such as that show me that racial intolerance and bigotry knows no national boundary; knows no colour bar; and knows no difference from race to race, continent to continent, religious group to religious group. It is the same everywhere you go. Intolerance is everywhere. It is to be despised and I, to some extent, parrot the words of Samuel Johnson, 'Racism and bigotry is indeed the last refuge of the scoundrel.'

As I have said, I have no doubt that there will be those in the Aboriginal community who will abuse the system, and that occurs in every other community in the world. I do not think there would be any exception to that rule, but let us not put to the sword any bigoted or racist lie. I believe that 95 or 96 per cent of Aboriginal people are law-abiding and successful in business. Let us not do that. It is not proper, nor is it right by the standard of any litmus test you wish to apply to the situation. As I said earlier, if ever a minority has been badly dealt with in this country—much more severely than any other minority group—it is the indigenous people of this continent.

Let us look at the places in which they live, their tribal lands—lands which have been deeded to them by various

Governments. Potable water is put in such a place that the very dogs in the community are licking at it; and, hygiene not being what it is (because nothing has been taught to them), faecal matter lies on the top of the potable water containers and, as a consequence, many subsequent illnesses that derive from those matters are communicated to the children in those communities. It is no accident of statistics that Aboriginal infant and adult mortality rates are far higher than those rates of any other grouping in the Australian community.

We go onto their homelands and build European houses. We then say, 'I went there and the place was filthy; it was untidy, and it was unkempt', but, by and large, we are responsible for that. We build permanent dwellings for these people who, after thousands of years, are a tribal, nomadic people when they live on their own lands and, as such, hygiene was attended to by those Aborigines because they were always on the move. The camps in which they lived were never occupied for more than a week or two and, as a consequence of that, the animal scavengers on the land in which they lived tidied up those camps. But we put them in European dwellings and we expect them to behave like we do, and that, in my view, is just Sunday too far away. As I said, I want to pay some tribute to the current Premier, Dean Brown. I do not often do that, but on this occasion it is warranted.

The Premier introduced the motion into this Chamber. Some of my colleagues have indicated that there may well have been other reasons for the Premier so doing; I do not care. Whatever the reasons are for the Premier's doing it, they pale into insignificance by virtue of the necessity for him so doing and I commend him for that.

Whilst motions such as the one currently before us are to be applauded, they are, by their very nature, only rhetoric. The real test in respect of this motion will be the actions of the various State and Federal Governments when Mabo cases are put to the test. That is the time, in my view, for us all to stand up and be counted in respect of minority groups and the motion currently before us.

I said that I thought I was fairly well able to put a point of view and I referred to the fact that I was a migrant and that my former wife was a full-blooded Aboriginal. Therefore, my four children are half-caste Aboriginals, if you like, though I tell them, 'Remember and always be proud of the fact that you are 50 per cent Aboriginal, but be equally proud of the fact that you are 50 per cent of Irish extraction too, and, above all, remember that you are Australians, you are Australians by right of birth.'

I must say that it sometimes irritates me—and I have to put this on record—that there are people who may well be of the twentieth removed from their Aboriginal parent and, because it seems the right thing to do currently, they stand up and claim only Aboriginal descent. To me that is a disgrace and it is a practice not to be encouraged. By all means, let them be proud of their Aboriginal heritage, indeed they should be, but let them also recognise that there are other streams of blood running through them. It is people such as that who used to impose infliction and hurt on the 96 or 97 per cent of people of the Aboriginal race who are decent, law-abiding citizens as one finds in other races. That is what I have told my children and indeed my 12 grandchildren.

My own deceased son when he was seven or eight—and he was very dark—used to come home crying to me about the racial abuse he had to suffer day after day from European children. They used to call him 'liquorice legs', 'nigger' and all those things in our own schools some 20 years ago, which

is not that long ago. The people who said, 'Scratch an Australian, you may well find a racist' are probably still right. I am very proud of my children. I have—and I say this not as a doting grandfather—12 grandchildren. With one exception, they all appear to me to be of above average intelligence. Let us not forget that they are, in part, Aboriginal. Let no-one cast a stone in respect of saying that Aboriginals are not really Australian because they are not intelligent enough. What utter nonsense—the only race on this earth to make a stick which once thrown came back to them. What utter nonsense. I find that appalling.

As I said, I commend the motion to the Council. I am pleased that both my own Leader (Hon. Ms Pickles) and the Leader of the Government gave me the courtesy of extending the time for debate on this motion so as to permit me the opportunity to speak. I would that I had much more time. If Australia stands firm on this, if it passes the litmus test in respect of Mabo, then truly it will be well on its way not only to becoming one of the great nations of this earth but also to becoming a nation which, to some extent, following in the footsteps of Brazil, will be truly multicultural and, as the motion says, will be truly all for reconciliation. That is the path that history tells us we have to go down. I commend the Government on the motion. I have nothing more to say at this stage, but I reserve my right for some other time when time is not of such essence.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I support the motion. My contribution will be brief, but I do not want the opportunity to pass without some comment. Racism's roots are very much within ignorance. It is unfortunate that some people chose to build their political careers feeding on this ignorance. Having said that, it is pleasing that we have in this Council no displays of that ignorance or desire to feed upon it. All members of the political Parties represented take a very strong stand in support of multiculturalism and Aboriginal reconciliation. It is important that we continue to stand up strong and united in our resolve to oppose the racists who care to create dissent within our society.

The whole Australian population is made up of migrants, and even members of the Aboriginal population, albeit 170 000 years ago, were migrants at some time. People become migrants because they have been displaced. They are fleeing persecution, seeking freedom and fleeing poverty and hunger in search of a better life. That is the only reason anyone would shift from one place to another. In general terms, migrants do not come as invaders, although I have to agree with the previous speaker that the first arrival of Europeans in the early decades was very much an invasion. All Australians are here as descendants of people who came in search of a better life or, indeed, came themselves for that very purpose. I am astonished to see some of the racists at work.

With respect to the leading protagonist of racism in South Australia, his mother and father came from southern Europe, from Spain. In his school days he must have suffered significant persecution, and yet he now is prepared to offer the same sort of persecution to the next wave of migrants who have come after him. That sort of behaviour astonishes me. It is a question of when we arrived. It appears always to be the most recent migrants who tend to suffer the greatest persecution.

Throughout my life I have not had a great deal of contact with the migrant communities. Growing up in the South-East, I recall that migrants arrived in relatively small numbers,

particularly from southern Europe. We had a lot of English migrants and a smaller number of Dutch migrants. It was only in my later years at school that I recall the first Italian migrants arriving in Mount Gambier. My closest contact with migrant groups over a prolonged period occurred while I was teaching in the Riverland. I had very extensive contact with the Greek community there.

I used to comment to my friends that the Greeks were more Australian than Australians. Australians used to talk about mateship, but until you had seen a Greek family and their friends at work you did not really know what mateship meant. They do for each other and behave with each other the way Australians—and when I say 'Australians' I mean those of British extraction—like to believe mateship to be. I found that in my many dealings with the Greek people in the Riverland they could never do too much to help as neighbours and friends and were wonderful people. I recall in the last years I was teaching there that the next wave of migrants after the Greek population were Sikhs and Vietnamese. I can say that both those groups were held in very high regard by the local community generally. They were seen as honest, hard working people who strove very hard to fit in, if I might use that term. They certainly were not seen as invaders, coming to displace those who were already here.

I always intended that my comments would be brief, not only on the question of migrants coming to Australia. We have so much in common with each other that there is no place for resentment. We should seek to recognise what we have in common with each other rather than seeking differences. In fact, it is our differences that have made this country so great. Australia's cuisine is now recognised world wide as a new cuisine; it is a synthesis of all the different cultures that have come to Australia. We are indeed very lucky—I think the luckiest place on earth—that we have this blending of cultures. I get just as stirred by Scottish bagpipes or the chance to get out and do some Greek dancing; they are all absolutely delightful.

The Hon. T. Crothers: They both wear kilts.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: Perhaps I am into dresses; I don't know. On the issue of Aboriginal reconciliation, I note that when South Australia was settled the letters patent under which the settlement of South Australia was established made quite clear that no land was to be taken that was in the use and enjoyment of indigenous people. I am rather surprised that there has been no legal challenge on that basis, because the whole settlement of South Australia was based on the letters patent and all our law has grown from that point. In fact, much of the occupation of South Australia was clearly illegal under the terms of the letters patent. The first Europeans clearly came as an invasion, because that very clear instruction was very rapidly breached. It is quite amazing how quickly Europeans spread across the South Australian landscape, occupying every bit of land that had any capacity to grow a crop—and some land that should not have been growing crops in the early days—and quickly digging their first holes in the ground, looking for minerals. I have been bushwalking in the Gammon Ranges—the driest, most godforsaken place you could imagine—and saw that people were up there searching for minerals within years of the first settlers arriving in South Australia.

People try to suggest that this all happened a long time ago; that South Australia was settled more than 150 years ago, Australia more than 200 hundred years ago, so why should we continue to feel guilty about what was done to the Aboriginal people? There seems to be a lack of understanding

that what has been done to Aboriginal people is not something that happened 150 or 200 years ago: it continues to happen. Aboriginal people now living were wrenched away from their families as children, against the will of both the children and the parents. We are talking about living people, and they have had to carry those wounds for the rest of their lives. Unfortunately, those wounds are often carried across the generations.

More than anything else what we have done is to totally destroy the Aboriginal culture. People must recognise that one of the reasons why so many new migrant groups have settled in Australia is that they have had their own culture to go back to, whether it be through the Italian Club, the Greek Club, the Caledonian Society or whatever else. Often, the strength of your own culture gives you the confidence to go into a different culture. It is the destruction of the Aboriginal culture, producing a lack of anything to grip upon, which I think has been the most damaging thing that has been done and the reason why we should recognise multiculturalism generally and seek not to deride the Aboriginal culture but to rejoice in it as we should seek to rejoice in all the cultures that make up Australian society. I said I would be brief. I support the motion as an individual and on behalf of the Democrats, and I applaud all members of this place on their commitment to such a strongly worded motion.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank all members for their contribution. I suspect that this is probably one of the few occasions on which virtually all members of this Chamber made a contribution in one form or another. I would also like publicly to acknowledge the contribution of the Hon. Trevor Crothers. I was privileged to be in both the Gallery and the Chamber to listen to his contribution. I am sure that all members on both sides of the Council know of the love that the Hon. Mr Crothers has for his children and grandchildren. I will remember always many of the phrases that the Hon. Mr Crothers uses, but I think we could all take away that lovely description that he used when he spoke of, I think, his son, who came to him at the age of eight and said, 'Be proud of your 50 per cent Aboriginal heritage and your Irish background, but most of all be proud of the fact that you

are an Australian.' That one sentence probably summarised the many hours of debate that we have had. As I said, I was privileged to hear the Hon. Mr Crothers' contribution, and I thank him for it.

All members would acknowledge that in the end a motion before this Chamber does not change anything, but it is important and we should not downgrade its significance. It is a statement of intent and a statement of our joint belief as individuals. As members of a variety of political Parties, we disagree on many things, but on this particular motion we unanimously agree with the importance of the sentiments expressed in it, and I thank members for their unanimous support.

Motion carried.

**SUPERANNUATION FUNDS MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
(LIABILITY TO TAXES, ETC.) AMENDMENT
BILL**

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

**LOTTERY AND GAMING (SWEEPSTAKES)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

**MOTOR VEHICLES (DEMERIT POINTS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6 p.m the Council adjourned until Tuesday 5 November at 2.15 p.m.