HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 23 November 1995

The SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn) took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: WIRRINA RESORT DEVELOPMENT

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I move:

That the seventeenth report of the Public Works Committee on the Wirrina Resort Development—Second Report: Provision of Water Supply and Effluent Treatment Infrastructure, be noted.

Wirrina Cove is a coastal resort property situated approximately 80 kilometres south of Adelaide on the Fleurieu Peninsula. The privately owned property has a land area of some 524ha and contains a variety of tourism facilities including tourist accommodation, convention facilities, an 18-hole championship golf course, a boat ramp, and numerous outdoor and recreational facilities. The property was purchased in June 1994 by the Malaysian MBf Group of Companies, and is currently being developed by MBfl Resorts Pty Ltd with the intention of upgrading the resort to an international standard tourist destination.

In June 1994, a memorandum of understanding, which details various upgrades and additions to the complex that are to be undertaken by MBfl Resorts, was signed by both the State of South Australia and MBf. Via this document, the State of South Australia acknowledged that it would support the proposal in principle and would assist MBf by providing an agreed level of public infrastructure to the resort. This included assistance with the present water and sewerage systems and the provision of a reticulated water supply system from Myponga Reservoir.

It is proposed that these infrastructure components be introduced in two stages. The first stage is a self-contained waste water or effluent treatment plant and a domestic water supply treatment plant to service the Wirrina Cove Resort. This is an interim measure until the reticulated water supply is connected to the property. The connection of this reticulated water supply forms stage two of the project and will be reported on subsequently.

The Wirrina Cove Resort is not connected to a public sewerage system and it is neither practical nor economic to provide such a connection at this time. Currently, the effluent is disposed of using a series of outmoded evaporation lagoons close to the existing resort complex. The committee believes it is necessary to provide a self-contained waste water or effluent treatment plant to cater for the effluent from the resort in those portions of the development thus far approved. It is also designed to be expanded to cater for future increased demand and, based on current expectations, it would need to be expanded during the next phase of development, that is, once the SA Water reticulated water supply is connected.

With regard to domestic water supply, a water treatment plant is currently used at the Wirrina Cove Resort. This is used to improve the quality of the water obtained from the Wirrina Cove reservoir so that it meets the appropriate standards for potable water supplies. However, the capacity of the existing water treatment plant is inadequate to cater for the full development being undertaken and its design does not enable it to be easily or cheaply upgraded to a suitable capacity. Therefore, a new water treatment plant is required to maintain the water quality in the resort until the SA Water reticulated water supply becomes available.

It is proposed that a modular treatment plant be installed, which can be expanded if necessary prior to the SA Water supply being connected. With such a system, it is expected that the plant could be operational within about eight weeks after a contract is awarded. As this is an interim measure until the SA Water reticulated supply is available, several options are available for its provision, and each of these was looked at closely by the committee.

First, the plant could be purchased from the supplier, used until the SA Water reticulated supply is available, then decommissioned and sold. In this instance the proceeds of the sale would be shared equally between the Government and MBfl Resorts. Secondly, the plant could be purchased from the supplier, used until the SA Water reticulated supply is available and then maintained by MBfl Resorts as a backup system. In this instance MBfl Resorts would be required to pay the Government half the salvage value of the plant at the time of connecting to the SA Water reticulated supply. Thirdly, the plant could be provided under a leasing arrangement from a supplier until the SA Water reticulated supply is available. In this instance the Government and MBfl Resorts would share the leasing costs equally.

The final decision on which option is chosen will be based on the most economic tender offered when tenders are called for the water treatment plant. The committee regards the first of these options as the least desirable, and has requested the Tourism Commission to keep the committee informed as to the most economic option, as they and MBfl see it, for the Government. It is important for members to note that the capital cost of the interim infrastructure requirements will be shared equally between the Government and the private developer.

Stage two of the project will involve the construction of a reticulated water supply to Wirrina Cove. Currently, water is obtained from a private reservoir constructed on the property which is located towards the mouth of the Congeratinga River. This reservoir has sufficient water to cater for the existing needs, plus the stages of development which have already been approved, including the marina facility. However, development of subsequent stages will require the water supply to be augmented from a different source. Several options for this have been examined and the committee is of the opinion that the only viable alternative source of water available for use on the Wirrina Cove property is a reticulated supply from Myponga Reservoir. But at this point I stress that, before any decision is taken on that, this aspect will be thoroughly investigated and reported on further by the committee.

SA Water has investigated the requirements and has prepared a preferred option for providing a reticulated water supply to the northern boundary of the Wirrina Cove property. This is based on linking into the existing Normanville/Carrickalinga/Yankalilla system at its closest point to the northern boundary, and providing a header tank and feeder tanks in locations to provide adequate water pressure throughout the Wirrina Cove property in three pressure zones.

MBfl Resorts has indicated that it will require the SA Water reticulated water supply to be available to the Wirrina Cove Resort by the end of 1996 to enable the next phase of its redevelopment and development programs to be undertaken. SA Water has estimated that the construction

work is likely to take 10 to 12 months to complete, with a contract being awarded to a private company for the supply and construction work based on a competitive tendering process. This process, along with all the design and documentation, will be undertaken by MBf. As I have already said, this second stage will be the subject of further examination by the committee as the requirement for it becomes clearer later in the evolution of the development.

In July 1995 the Public Works Committee conducted an inspection of the Wirrina Resort and its environs. This inspection gave the committee a useful appreciation of the scope of the project, its relationship to the natural environment, its commercial potential and, importantly, the potential value of the Government's proposed investment in infrastructure. The committee believes that the tourism industry is an important component of the State's economy and should be fostered. The use of Government funds to provide public infrastructure components for private sector developments is an established and effective means of providing incentives to investors and developers who are considering tourism opportunities in key areas of the State.

The company, MBfl Resorts, has already made a substantial financial commitment to the Wirrina Cove Resort, which has been undertaken before any significant public funding has been expended on the project. The committee believes this creates a positive impact on both employment and economic investment at both local and State levels.

In summary, the committee has examined the development proposal and supports the broad concept put forward by MBfl to create a world-class development. Through the course of this project, the committee has its support for the concept of Government provision of infrastructure proposed by the Tourism Commission, but I stress that this support is contingent on financial guarantees being finalised that are commensurate with Government financial exposure at each stage of the project.

The committee will closely follow the progress of this proposal pursuant to its statutory obligations, and will report further to Parliament as subsequent infrastructure proposals are brought before it. I remind members that this is the second report on the development at Wirrina Cove and should be read in conjunction with the first report that was given some months ago. Pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to Parliament that it recommends the proposed jointly funded Stage 1 waste water and domestic water treatment infrastructure works within the boundaries of the development.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I support the motion. This report, as indicated by the previous speaker, is the second in a series of reports. The report currently before the House deals with a self-contained effluent treatment plant and a domestic water supply treatment plant to service the Wirrina Cove Resort as an interim measure before mains water is provided to that resort. This development constitutes Stage 1 of the future provision of water supply and effluent treatment infrastructure to the resort. It is proposed that Stage 1 be jointly funded by the public and private sectors; therefore, State Government commitment is involved in the project.

It is important to emphasise that, while there is expressed support for the broad concept of the world-class tourist development at Wirrina Cove (and the private sector investment involved in that), committee support is contingent, as indicated by the previous speaker, on financial guarantees being finalised, which are commensurate with the Government's financial exposure at each stage of that project. This is important as it underlines an issue emphasised by the Auditor-General in his recent report to the Parliament: that risk should be managed and that risks should be attributed appropriately to the private sector in such build own operate and build own operate transfer type schemes. There is a sizeable investment by MBf in this resort. Stage 1 includes a part Government contribution to the infrastructure, and I support the motion.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): My purpose in contributing to this debate is to commend the committee for the work it has done and to seek from it the possibility of some further information about the particular service to be provided here, that is, water supply and effluent treatment. The committee was provided with estimates of the quantities of potable water that are likely to be needed there, and that formed part of the basis for the recommendations of the way in which that water is to be obtained and delivered. The effluent treatment, on the other hand, must deal with the water coming out to ensure that it is environmentally sound before being released.

I would be pleased to discover what those projections of consumption of potable water are from now until the time when the proponents believe it will settle down into a steady State demand. In other words, what is the upper limit, and how long will it take us to get there? Also, and more important than all of that, we need to work out the cost per kilolitre of providing that potable water, by the infrastructure and services that support it, to Wirrina by using an internal rate of return of 8 per cent and current depreciation rates on all of the equipment involved, then to amortise that equipment, add in the cost of the human services to keep it functioning and arrive at a cost per kilolitre of water three years out, five years out and 10 years out from now, so that we have a microcosm of the cost basis for providing these smaller water schemes, in satellite form, around the State.

It would be very useful to us to have that information. There is no other way that we, as a Parliament, can get it onto the public record knowing that there is integrity in that information, because all the evidence collected by the committee would be collected knowing that it is factual. The committee would not be misled by engineers, whether public servants or consultants, or anything else. It will remove forever any prospect of politicising that kind of analysis, and thereby ensure that the people of South Australia can rely on that kind of information when we, in future, contemplate similar developments of the Wirrina type.

Mr Speaker, you and I both know that in your large electorate of Eyre there will be instances in which, as our tourism product grows, companies will want to establish facilities such as this there. It will be of great benefit for us to have that general framework of cost calculation in place and factual information on which we can base it, and remove that from the argument in the political arena that would otherwise muddy the waters about such decisions. I am quite sure that other members, in their electorates outside the metropolitan area, will also know of instances in which similar kinds of developments, such as Wirrina is, could be located. I thank the committee for the work it has done thus far and commend it, and I support the motion.

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I will address briefly the issues that were raised by the previous speaker. First, I can assure the member that the committee was given very

detailed evidence on the water needs and the effluent treatment plant which is presently on site at the Wirrina Cove Resort. Evidence quite clearly indicated that, by the end of next year, there will not be an adequate water supply at Wirrina Cove for the development as it will then exist. The committee also inspected the existing effluent treatment plant, the technology of which is very old. The plant is inadequate and there is no doubt at all that it needs to be replaced by an effluent treatment plant which will be capable of handling the waste. At the moment it is an eyesore and, at times, odours emanate from it which should not be associated with such a development.

However, the member addressed mainly the question of water. Evidence given to the committee showed that projections are such that the resort will require a water supply from somewhere other than from within Wirrina Cove, as it is at the moment, by the end of next year. I also stress to the honourable member that the provision of the water supply will be part of an expansion of the systems to the towns of Normanville, Carrickalinga and Yankalilla.

In other words, the system will not be expanded solely for Wirrina Cove but because there are towns south of the present supply which also require to be connected to it. So, when it goes through it will not be a water supply provided solely for the resort, because it will supply towns situated between the present end of the SA Water connections through to Wirrina Cove. So the advantages will be much more than for just the development itself. The honourable member asked for some very specific detail which I do not have available, but I assure him that the secretary of the committee will furnish him with the details that he seeks in writing so that he will have that information before him.

Finally, I remind members that this is a major tourist development in South Australia. It is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, outside the metropolitan area, and one which the committee has been reassured warrants the level of Government support that is proposed. I also remind members that the developers themselves are putting far more money into the development and support of infrastructure than the South Australian Government will. With those points, I assure the honourable member that he will be given the details that he seeks, but I wish to reassure him that the water supply as it moves south to the Wirrina Cove Resort will be made available to towns and other householders *en route*.

Motion carried.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: SELLICKS HILL CAVE

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): I move:

That the eighteenth report of the committee on the Sellicks Hill quarry cave be noted.

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee to move this motion. In September 1991, a large cave was uncovered during the course of operations at the Sellicks Hill quarry. At the request of the quarry's owners the cave was explored over the next two months by local cavers. Towards the end of 1991, access to the cave was denied on operational and later on safety grounds. Two years later the cave was imploded. Soon after this, amid a public outcry, Parliament asked the Environment, Resources and Development Committee to examine all the circumstances surrounding the implosion. Yesterday, as Presiding Member of the committee, I tabled its comprehensive report into the Sellicks Hill cave and its implosion. There is no doubt that, as with other areas of natural heritage, the preservation of caves has the capacity to elicit considerable public sympathy. However, caves have a fascination beyond their scientific value or aesthetic appeal. Their destruction, whether potential or real, has the capacity to generate considerable passion and outrage.

The entrenched partisan positions adopted by the two main groups who gave evidence to the committee—the cavers on the one hand and the mining fraternity on the other—made it extremely difficult for the committee to arrive at a balanced view of the events surrounding the implosion and what should be done in response. The committee concentrated its efforts on attempting to reconcile these entrenched positions, finding common ground and ultimately making recommendations which would satisfactorily resolve all the competing public and private interests involved in the controversy.

The report begins with a summary of events set out in chronological order. As requested by Parliament, the committee has also considered the role of the Department of Mines and Energy and the quarry's operator, Southern Quarries Pty Ltd. The committee found that officers of the Department of Mines and Energy were active participants in the decision to implode the cave rather than simply advisers who supported the company's decision. Although the committee concluded that Southern Quarries' role in the implosion was central and crucial, it also criticised the department's failure to involve other agencies with greater expertise in a wider range of disciplines in the decision making process. The committee is also critical of the lengths to which the department has been prepared to go in an effort to re-write the history of its involvement in this controversy. Southern Quarries Pty Ltd accepts responsibility for the decision. The committee found that the company made its decision on perfectly reasonable economic grounds but, more importantly, out of concern for the safety of its employees.

In turning to the role of the cavers in these events, the committee concluded that they performed a valuable and unique public service by exploring the cave in difficult circumstances. Theirs is the only record of that part of the cave system now destroyed. It is a record carefully and conscientiously obtained in physically and mentally demanding circumstances. However, the committee also found that the cavers need to broaden their consultation processes after the discovery and exploration of new caves so that any scientific, heritage and potential recreational value can be properly assessed and, if necessary, protected.

The committee heard a great deal of conflicting evidence about what precisely remains of the cave under the quarry. Not surprisingly, the committee was unable to determine conclusively how safe the cave is now and the amount of damage that may have been caused by the implosion. The committee found that the only way of properly assessing the current condition of the cave would be to examine it at first hand while being mindful of the disruptive effect which such an inspection would have on the quarry. The committee heard that the cave had significant aesthetic value and tourism potential at the time of its implosion, and that it was of considerable geological and geomorphological interest. Further evidence suggests that its scientific potential remains whatever the damage caused by the implosion.

The committee also heard that the cave may still have biological interest as small organisms, such as insects, fungi and micro-organisms, could be present in a relatively undisturbed environment. The possibility of finding fossils

in the cave should not be dismissed lightly. If fossils are present, they will be of extreme scientific interest. The committee was also told that the Sellicks Hill cave has great potential as a recreational resource. However, it found that its possible future use purely for recreational purposes must be balanced against the damage which can be caused by caving enthusiasts. Ultimately, the committee found that the cave's significance can really be assessed only after a detailed expert examination of the evidence collected during the course of a carefully structured inspection of the cave.

The committee received a great deal of valuable information about the economic impact of the quarry and the possible co-existence of cave-related activities on the site. Most of this information was not available to the authorities at the time the decisions were made about the attempted implosion and the future of the cave. There is also no evidence that any independent expert financial assistance was sought in considering the question of compensation. The committee concluded, therefore, that all the economic impact and compensation issues surrounding the implosion of the Sellicks Hill cave have yet to be explored to the fullest extent possible. On the basis of the evidence presented to the committee, it is clear that these issues deserve more attention and more adequate treatment.

The committee's report ends with a series of recommendations about the best way to handle similar incidents in the future and recommendations about the Sellicks Hill cave itself. The committee wishes to look positively to the future rather than to dwell on the negative aspects of the history of the controversy surrounding the cave. The report endorses the general thrust of the State Government's detailed tenement incident procedures for dealing with similar incidents which may occur in the future, and the committee suggests a number of amendments to give them proper force. Clearly, caves will be covered by those procedures, but they will also apply to other items of potential environmental or heritage significance. The committee's recommendations reflect the broad scope of the new tenement incident procedures by referring not simply to caves but to all items of potential environmental or heritage significance.

The committee also recommends that the Government review all existing legislation and procedures that deal with the environmental assessment process to ensure that caves and other non-living heritage items are properly or appropriately recognised and cannot be overlooked in any initial assessment of new developments which may be undertaken. On the crucial question of compensation, the committee recommends that the law be amended to reflect clearly an owner's right to compensation for disruption to the normal use of land which may be required in order to protect caves or other items. However, the committee makes clear that owners should not be compensated for undertaking investigations or work which they would have to undertake during the normal course of their operations as a result of encountering unusual or unsafe operating conditions.

The report recommends that provision be made specifically for an independent review of any decision about the amount of compensation which should be paid in the event of any direction under the tenement incident procedures which modifies normal mining operations. The report concludes that the current condition and status of the cave should be clarified as soon as possible.

We therefore recommend that the cave's current condition be quickly evaluated by way of a down-hole camera study. We recommend that the Mines and Energy Department consult with all relevant parties—especially Southern Quarries—to ensure that this initial study, although likely to be non-intrusive, does not interfere unduly with the quarry's normal operations. We also recommend that this consultation take place urgently and that the down-hole camera study take place as soon as possible. After consulting with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Mines and Energy should recommend whether to abort or continue the study at the end of this stage.

It seems to us that there are three possible outcomes of this initial study, leading to three possible sets of recommendations. First, if it is decided to abort the study on the basis that there is nothing left of the cave or that nothing of significance is left, we recommend that no further action be taken. Secondly, if it is necessary to abort the study purely on safety grounds or because there is no feasible means of access without major excavation or without other substantial disruption to the quarry's normal operations, we recommend that a moratorium on further investigation should be imposed and that the cave be left protected until it is likely to be uncovered in the coming years in the normal course of quarrying. If and when it is uncovered again, we recommend that the tenement incident procedures be fully invoked to suspend any future operations which are likely to cause damage to the cave so that it can then be fully assessed.

The third option is if the initial assessment finds that a cave still exists, that it retains its potential value, that non-intrusive and non-disruptive access is possible and, most importantly, that it is safe to enter. In that case we recommend that MESA consult with all relevant parties at this stage on the possibility of excavating an entry into the cave for assessment. In considering whether to enter the cave to assess its current condition, the safety of those above in the quarry and below in the cave should be the paramount and overriding consideration. If all those considerations enable further investigations to proceed, the next stage of the proposed detailed study should involve a number of experts investigating the cave and collecting data to solve the questions about its significance, which cannot be answered at present, due to a lack of information.

We recommend that the full cost of this investigation should be borne by those directly involved and that at this stage the company should bear only those costs which it volunteers to incur. If these investigations reveal that the cave is worth preserving, our report recommends that any future tourism development should be postponed until operations have ceased in the quarry. In the meantime we recommend that access should be restricted to those visits necessary to monitor the cave's status; for scientific study; and possibly to collect data for use in the planning of the final development of the cave. We also recommend that the Government consider the possibility of an independent review of the decisions ultimately taken about the cave. We anticipate that these recommendations will not expose interested parties, the public or the Government to substantial claims for compensation by the company.

I commend the committee's report to the House, and I look forward to a positive response from the Government to the recommendations that we have made. They are all designed to prevent future conflicts of the kind which regrettably occurred over the Sellicks Hill cave. This has been a reasonably lengthy and complex issue, and I thank the members of the committee for their attendance to committee responsibilities and the many hours expended in compiling this report. The committee commends both Geraldine Sladden

and Ray Dennis for their untiring commitment and effort supporting the committee's workload. I again compliment the members of *Hansard* for their continuing forbearance and professional abilities, which all the members of our committee appreciate.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): The Sellicks Hill quarry cave was discovered after Southern Quarries had excavated some 100 metres of hill face at Sellicks Hill in a working quarry. As part of the mining operation a cavity was discovered, and Professor David Stapledon referred this find to the Cave Exploration Group of South Australia. This inspection took place in September 1991, principally by Mr McDonald and Mr Gartrell. Inspections and mapping were ongoing and finally the cavers and the company signed a non-disclosure form to prevent general knowledge of this cave getting out into the community. Later in 1992 the company gained permission to extend quarry operations to the south, and the company advised the cavers that legal advice was sought about the safety for cavers exploring further. By the end of 1992 it appeared that agreements between the company and the cavers were falling down. Disagreement arose about the interpretation of drill results in the cave cavity and the company reminded the cavers of the strict confidentiality required, or access may be completely denied.

Professor Stapledon's report on the drilling program concluded that there were 6 metres of rock cover on the cave and no risk to cavers or risk of breakthrough from the quarry floor. Mr Boyce (Principal Mining Engineer and Inspector of Mines) and Mr Matthews (MESA Chief Inspector of Mines) met and inspected the site in September 1993. Boyce stated his opposition to any investigative consultancy on the grounds of safety. In November, quarrying was moved to the north and a decision was taken to implode the cave. This was supported by the Department of Mines and Energy. This inquiry, the report from which is being tabled today, has resulted from that implosion of the Sellicks Hill quarry cave at about 3 p.m. on Friday 10 December 1993. This was indeed a very fateful day, being as it was the day before the last State election. An amount of 3 150 kilograms of explosives were fired around 50 holes drilled in a sequence to cause this implosion and designed in such a way as to specifically throw exploded rock into the cavity.

Anyone having ever spoken to, or watched the video material produced by, Dr Gartrell would understand and appreciate the public reaction which followed this implosion. The public reaction was in response to the potential tourism and heritage value that was lost and concentrated greatly on this loss without consideration of any economic value to either the community or the quarry owners. This inquiry was briefed to examine all aspects of this matter and in particular the role of the Mines and Energy Department and Southern Quarries, the adequacy of the examination, the economic impact and compensation issues and, most importantly, whether there should be remedial legislation. Basically, the community was starting to ask: why, how, when, where and what for? Was it appropriate? Should it be allowed to happen again? What legislative changes were required to protect such caves in the future from this type of activity?

It must be said at the outset that this was a very difficult situation. We were talking about a working quarry representing a valuable resource to this State and offering current jobs to many in the community, and against this we were also talking about what had been described as a site with exceptional heritage and tourism potential, albeit that the potential had not been adequately examined. It is apparent from the comments made by many in the months after the implosion that there was a general attitude that the two were in conflict. It is indeed disappointing that more was not known about the existence of the cave and that the previous Government did not have in place the appropriate mechanisms to investigate the situation of a working quarry versus potential heritage tourism.

It is my hope that as a result of this loss we have learnt enough to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are now put in place to prevent this type of tragedy ever happening again. I therefore support the committee's recommendation that the Mining Act be amended so that licences under the Act would require the licence holder to report any caves and other items of potential environmental and heritage significance discovered during exploration or mining. The committee found that inadequate attention was paid to the Sellicks cave regarding its potential significance before implosion. Therein lies the tragedy, because the cave enthusiasts were keeping the situation close to their chests, and so was the quarry. The company's prime concern—and quite rightly—was the safety of the workers doing their jobs in and around the quarry. The judgment falls down most heavily on the Department of Mines and Energy representatives, whose role should have been merely to advise in this situation, but the committee has found that in fact they took an active role in the decision making process to implode the cave.

I was on 10 December 1993 and remain today very disappointed and angry at the department's workers who did not see fit to involve any other department for advice. On face value, one could forgive that, because we are talking about a working quarry overseen by the Department of Mines and Energy, but the obvious value of these caves should have pricked a conscience in someone in any of those departments to seek further advice from other departments. In no way has the committee found that the company, Southern Quarries, acted in any way other than in the best interests of its workers' safety; and the committee has accepted that the company accepts responsibility for the implosion and has not impugned any wrong motives on the company.

As I know the management of Southern Quarries and see first-hand every day its activities because I live 500 metres from the main road that leads to the quarry, I am of the opinion that considerable effort is being made by that company to mine, quarry and rehabilitate in an environmentally friendly way. The committee has found that the cavers played a vital role in the discovery and exploration of these caves. I am sure that they have learnt a valuable if not heartbreaking lesson from this exercise with regard to full disclosure to a range of departments about their finds. I also agree with and applaud the committee's recommendations that the Mining Act be amended to permit conditions which will protect caves of significance and that the Heritage Act be extended to include those areas of significance. I also agree with the further recommendation that the Mines and Works Inspection Act be reviewed to allow that department to protect caves but I suggest that it should be empowered to make contact with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to seek comment. It is essential that these employees of departments have professional training to recognise the environmental significance of things they discover.

As a balance, it is necessary to remember that the quarries conduct a business and that to carry on those businesses there may be need for compensation. It is still important to know

the future of the Sellicks Caves, and there are recommendations that down-hole cameras be used to study what remains. The cavers and the quarry owners deserve to have this issue finalised. I applaud the detail the committee has given to the flow-chart in the report and the suggested events that will do just that. I concur and agree in the public concern about the lack of due consideration for the full value of the cave system.

I refer to the comments of Dr Fardon, Director-General of the department, who, in a memo to the new Minister of Mines and Energy, stated that he had consulted widely and that the cave had been known about for only a year. In fact, the caves had been known about for two years and so the wide consultation process had failed in terms of the most basic of information. There is no evidence that he had even attempted to consult any other departments with regard to the environmental issues. One of the most important comments made in this report was by Mr Mathews who said:

> MESA, because of its limited legislative powers, could not issue directives to the company on this matter.

This must change. The loss of potential tourism and heritage items from the Sellicks Beach area is extremely disappointing. Equally, the loss of a viable quarry to our State would also be disappointing. The key concern with this whole saga is the lack of adequate independent consultation. The recommendation of the committee, if accepted by the Government, will go a long way in preventing such a problem happening again. I congratulate the committee on an excellent report.

Mr VENNING (Custance): I commend the report to the House and congratulate the committee on its excellent and extensive report on a very difficult issue. I also congratulate the committee's officers, Ms Geraldine Sladden, Secretary, and Mr Ray Dennis, Research Officer, as well as the chairperson, the member for Newland, who once again led the committee very well and put in a power of work. I also mention the other members of the committee, which I have not done before, because a lot of work was put into this report: the Hon. Caroline Schaefer, the Hon. Terry Roberts, the Hon. Mike Elliott, the member for Napier (Ms Annette Hurley) and me. I hope that members of Parliament will look at this report, because it is extremely extensive and very in-depth.

Evidence was heard from witnesses who had great experience in relation to this issue. As you know, Sir, it was an emotive issue. The implosion of a cave the day before a State election does create a mystique or a mystery, and it surrounded this issue with more emotion than it probably should have had. Many people with very strong personal views about this matter were involved. The committee recommends that we must find out the current condition of the cave. It should be fully explored and its status clarified. There is an excellent video record of the cave and I recommend that interested members avail themselves of a copy.

I congratulate the cavers, particularly Dr Grant Gartrell, for giving us the only record that we have. It was difficult for them because a condition of entry to the cavers required them to sign a secrecy code with the owners of the quarry. The cavers were later criticised for that. It was a very difficult matter because, if they had not signed that document, they would not have gained entry to the caves. It is a matter of which comes first—the cart or the horse. I believe that the cavers acted honourably and correctly, because they gained entry to the cave and carried out inspections to see whether or not this cave was safe, particularly in relation to the quarrying operations above. I thought that that was valuable for all concerned. Also, they explored the cave and noted and photographed the geological features. I congratulate the cavers on the work that they did and for the very good submission they put to the committee.

I also congratulate the owner of the quarry, Southern Quarries Limited, first, for allowing the cavers entry and, secondly, for being reasonable and cooperating with all parties concerned. The company could have taken a blinkered vision and said that it had the right to mine, which it had and still has. It could have gone on regardless by not allowing entry and by being uncooperative. But I congratulate the company and its representative, Mr Salkeld, who gave evidence before the committee, because they did the honourable thing by cooperating and realising that this inquiry could have ended up a major hindrance to them.

Compensation is an issue that will have to be discussed if the cave is to have a future. As you know, Sir, this cave is right underneath the quarry. Compensation clauses will be required in tenement agreements in the future, otherwise quarriers will not see these caves and we will not hear about them. We have to encourage any quarry operator who finds a significant cast, cave, fissure, passage or whatever to notify the authorities, particularly the Department of Mines and Energy (MESA), so that it can be fully investigated. If such a matter is significant enough, the body that had the courage to report it should be able to seek compensation, otherwise commonsense tells us that we will not ever hear about these significant finds.

As a legacy from this difficult issue, the committee has recommended that, in the future, tenement procedures be in place. I found the inquiry and the evidence presented quite fascinating, because I am a bit of a navvy. All committee members were interested in the proceedings of the committee as no-one drifted off the subject. The implosion the day before the election gave this whole issue something more of an emotive tenure than it should have had, because there were all sorts of comments as to why it happened then. The committee's report has found that that is unfounded; it just happened to be the calendar day before a State election. All the players have been shown to have acted reasonably and honourably. The Department of Mines and Energy had a few problems, which are quite clearly mentioned in the report, because there were no guidelines. It was criticised for its lack of professionalism in its communications, and some would say that it acted with undue haste. I congratulate the department on the way in which it recognised and addressed those problems. All the evidence is in the report. I did not think it was unreasonable because no guidelines were in place. Tenement procedures have been recommended and I hope that Parliament will pick them up and bring them into law.

This is an excellent report and I hope that members will at least go through the recommendations, look at the body of the report and appreciate the work and the effort that went into it. This is the committee process of Parliament working at its best. As I have said before, when I was first nominated to a committee, I thought, 'Oh yes, another quirk of the Parliament,' but I have to say that it is absolutely fantastic that a committee can do work like this. Unlike the committees, Parliament does not have the time to take this sort of evidence and put together such an in-depth and detailed report. Once again, I congratulate all those who were involved with the report, particularly those who gave

evidence and those who did all the assessment work, and I also congratulate my colleagues who served with me on this committee. I have much pleasure in commending this report to Parliament.

Motion carried.

GRAND PRIX

Ms GREIG (Reynell): I move:

That this House congratulates the Adelaide Grand Prix Board, organisers and officials, CAMS, the Adelaide traders and taxi drivers, volunteers and residents for their efforts in making the EDS 1995 Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix the grand finale event that will be remembered throughout motor racing history.

I do not have to speak for long on this issue because we were all witness to the festivities, the music, the carnival atmosphere and the people—lots of them—and all this is why we are Sensational Adelaide. Our last blast, as it was described by the *Sunday Mail*, rocketed into world record books, attracting what was believed to be the largest crowd for any sporting event over four days. The Sunday sellout of 205 000 people, which boosted the four day crowd total to 511 000 people, was an all-time world record crowd in the 45 year history of the Formula 1 modern era.

The race is the event and the reason why we had a significant influx of interstate and international tourists, but for many of us who live here in Adelaide the sensation of the Grand Prix is the atmosphere, the liveliness of the city, the pace of the city streets, the vibrancy, the outdoor cafes and, of course, the good weather. A comment that was very common throughout the weekend was how pleasant and how friendly the staff of our city stores are. For instance, cafe staff always served you with a smile. They questioned visitors on where they were from and took the time to indulge in some light-hearted conversation. No matter where one went, traders were more than keen to welcome tourists to Adelaide, and I am sure that many tourists have left with very pleasant memories of their visit here.

Our taxi drivers; what service! Again nothing was too much trouble: they were a wealth of information. Anything you wanted to know, anywhere you wanted to go, they had the information at their fingertips. I recall trying to catch a taxi on Dequetteville Terrace on Saturday. The awaiting taxi I approached was already booked. The driver apologised to me and said, 'No worries. I will radio in, there will be another taxi here in minutes,' and sure enough there was.

There were 5 500 workers on the track and 1 000 were volunteers. As the Minister for Tourism has already said, they did a fantastic job. I also acknowledge the magnificent efforts of members of the on track and Royal Adelaide Hospital medical teams who treated injured McLaren Mercedes driver Mika Hakkinen, thus avoiding a potential tragedy. I think all members in this House appreciated what our medical team did. It was the prompt action in those first few minutes that saved his life and significantly avoided brain damage. The level of care given has been exceptional. I do not think anyone could praise the medical team enough for the job they have done.

The residents who live around the circuit and those who opened their homes to visitors again deserve our thanks. To the Grand Prix Board and staff of the Grand Prix office, in fact, to all involved in the program that extended over 16 days, we have to pay a tribute. The 16 day program featured 71 non-motor sport events, including the Sensational Adelaide Channel 9 family concert, the Sensational Adelaide East End food fair, the Canine Grand Prix and the Pit Straight Family Open Day, the Grand Prix Ball, the Australia Remembers fly past and, of course, the race itself.

All South Australians should be proud of our Grand Prix achievements. During the past 10 years, the Grand Prix played a major role in opening Adelaide—in fact, South Australia—to the rest of the world. In closing, I again congratulate all involved for giving us an event that will be remembered as the most exciting and best organised Grand Prix on the Formula 1 Adelaide circuit.

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): I support the motion of the member for Reynell to congratulate the Adelaide Grand Prix Board, the organisers and every single person associated with making the Grand Prix this year such an outstanding success. The carnival is over and it seems but yesterday when we watched Keke Rosberg whiz around the track in the 1985 Grand Prix and, over the past 10 years, we have seen some outstanding drivers—the late Ayrton Senna, Nicki Lauda, Alain Prost and Nigel Mansell. We all appreciate the champions. However, as we know, the Grand Prix has been sadly whipped away from us, under our very noses, and will be held in Victoria from now on.

It is with interest and importance that we note the economic value of having the Grand Prix here in South Australia over the past 10 years. A very comprehensive report has been done by Price Waterhouse on the Grand Prix event, and some of its points are worthwhile noting. First, an estimated $204 million has been delivered into this State during the past 10 years of the Grand Prix, and that does not take into account this year's record Grand Prix, because the figures have not yet been disclosed. This figure covers ticket sales, sponsorship and corporate facilities but does not include the impact of the event on associated industries, including transport, accommodation and restaurants, in relation to which it is difficult to estimate a precise figure.

More than three million people have attended the Adelaide race in the past decade, and the event has been seen by millions of people around the world, resulting in valuable tourism exposure. Over the past 10 years the event has also raised South Australia's profile as an international business market. Many people probably did not even know where Adelaide was until the Grand Prix was staged here, but now Adelaide is well and truly on the map. A 1993 Price Waterhouse study reports:

The benefit cost ratio of the event is four to one.

This means that $4 is generated for every $1 spent by South Australians to stage the event. This level of spin-off benefit has not diminished over the past decade of the Grand Prix but has remained stable. It is conservatively estimated that the State Government received about $1.1 million a year in additional tax revenue as a result of expenditure by visitors to the State for the Grand Prix. During this exciting week almost 1 000 casual part-time jobs were created by each Grand Prix, in addition to work generated for full-time or permanent part-time jobs. According to this survey, overseas visitors would spend an average of 10.6 nights in South Australia over Grand Prix week, and interstate visitors spend a much smaller average of 5.8 nights in South Australia during the Grand Prix. As I said, the carnival is over. It is a tragedy that we have lost the Grand Prix. Victoria has the job—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr LEGGETT: The honourable member can say that it is a tragedy, yet it was pinched from under the nose of the Labor Government. For the sake of the honourable member, the Grand Prix has gone. We ran the Grand Prix well, but Victoria has the event and I believe, try as it might, it will never do it better than South Australia.

Mrs HALL (Coles): I support the motion moved by my colleague the member for Reynell. Let me, too, add my congratulations and vote of thanks to all individuals and groups of people whose efforts contributed to the spectacular send-off that we gave the Australian Grand Prix. The 11 Grand Prix hosted here produced a host of memories and a previously unseen level of excitement around our capital, and enhanced our reputation and that of quite a few South Australians. Among the more notable are Mal Hemmerling, the Grand Prix first chief executive, who has now moved on to become the CEO of the Organising Committee of the Sydney 2000 Olympics; Glen Jones, formerly the operations manager of our great race, who went on to run the Indy car organisation at Surfer's Paradise; and Judy Griggs, our former legal consultant and latterly Bernie Ecclestone's senior legal adviser, who has now become the chief executive of Melbourne's Australian Grand Prix. We wish them well in their future endeavours.

However, the reputations of some other South Australians were far from enhanced. Of course, I refer to those truly responsible for the loss of our race: the members of the Arnold Labor Government. For the very major part of the past 25 years, the people of this State have suffered under Labor Governments. During that time they presided over the dismantling of enterprise and destruction of living standards in South Australia. Successive Labor Governments turned Adelaide into a city of branch offices and drove thousands beyond the borders in search of a future. Their egalitarian Eden, where opportunities were zero but where the quality of result was guaranteed, brought forth bankruptcy and despair, yet in their drawn-out dying days they promised still more. 'Trust us,' they cried. Bread and circuses, they promised and they never delivered the bread and even the circus skipped town.

The loss of our Grand Prix is a tragedy, despite the member for Giles's view. If the people of South Australia could not comprehend the size of the massive debt level left to us by Labor, then every South Australian can now contemplate the loss of tourists—the annual energy and buzz of our city that Labor turned into Brigadoon. The Grand Prix was to be Labor's only legacy of largesse in our State and they watched that disappear, too.

After the State Bank episode, where the size of the debt was matched only by the depth of denial, the Labor Government was telling the public it had an agreement to host the Grand Prix beyond the year 2000. In truth, it had failed to nail down any such deal, its ineptitude and incompetence allowing yet another of our valuable assets to slip through its fingers. It was well known that the Victorians had always wanted the Australian Grand Prix and had been lobbying Bernie Ecclestone in London constantly.

The previous Government should have been vigilant in making sure that any move by the Victorian Government or its representatives were immediately counteracted by making sure that we had a long-term secure formal legal contract. The people of South Australia will not forget. As with all of Labor's disasters inflicted on South Australia, it was left to the Brown Government to pick up the pieces, but this Government and the people of South Australia did much more than clean up the mess. The slogan 'Sensational Adelaide' said it all. If the success of the 1994 Grand Prix mildly surprised some, then the recent grand finale stung the Formula One world.

A world record 205 000 people turned up at the parklands on race day to say goodbye to the speed merchants, and over 500 000 people visited the track over the four days of the carnival. The after race concert, with Bon Jovi and Yothu Yindi, drew 100 000 people; 1 400 attended the Grand Prix Ball and another 1 000 still could not get a ticket; the Australia Remembers Fly-By was spectacular, comprising the largest ever gathering of planes from the two World Wars. Let there be no doubt that Adelaide can host the big events. Let us bury the culture cringe; let us eliminate the term 'world-class' from our lexicons because it should be evident that anything they can do we can do as well, and we can do it better, and now the world knows it. The signage at strategic locations, and the stunning choreographed opening ceremony, left 400 million viewers in 119 countries in no doubt as to the identity of the host city.

As the member for Coles, I am especially proud of one of my constituents, the man who headed up the Grand Prix team. Sam Ciccarello took over the reigns as chief executive and turned on the most spectacular and successful event yet: 5 500 people at the track, including 1 000 volunteers, all worked toward the same goal. Everyone succeeded brilliantly from go to whoa. This was a winner. As the song goes, we went and we saved the best for last!

That all the elements came together so successfully is a tribute, I believe, to this Government, to the Premier, and to my friend and colleague, the Minister for Tourism, Graham Ingerson. When this Government took office two years ago, the first news we heard about the Australian Grand Prix in South Australia and by this Government was that we had the lost the sponsor for the race. A couple of days later, we discovered that we were to lose the race. Despite these amazing setbacks, the Government, and the Minister for Tourism in particular, never doubted that Adelaide could go out with a bang. His energy and drive ensured Adelaide '95 to be a big winner.

While each of the Grands Prix have been a boom for many South Australian businesses, and the event helped to swell the number of tourists in our State, the Grand Prix itself operated at a loss for nine of the 10 previous years. Obviously, that did not sit well with the Minister for Tourism, who ensured that the final race, on top of everything else, turned in a tidy little profit. The Minister's efforts are worthy, in my view, of the commendation of this House.

Mr Deputy Speaker, a joke is going around the traps at the moment that sums up the feeling of a lot of South Australians. It is as follows; 'Question: what is the difference between a State Labor Government and the Adelaide Grand Prix? Answer: Before I die I would like to see the Grand Prix come back.'

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I wish to make a quick but factual comment. This motion addresses the Adelaide Grand Prix and congratulates many people involved therein. I notice that there is one exception, and that is all the workers who were responsible for setting up the infrastructure, and I understand that my colleague the member for Price intends to address that by way of amendment.

It does have to be said, in the light of the previous two speakers, who felt obviously quite at ease standing up in

hypocrisy and talking about a Labor Government—when they talk about the loss of the Grand Prix—that it is an undeniable fact that the Liberal Party spent year after year bagging the race—

Mr Condous interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Colton!

Ms WHITE: —and to think that they did not contribute to the loss of the race is naive in the extreme.

Mr Condous interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Colton!

Mr Condous: 'Shame, shame, shame' is what Hinch would say.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Colton has been admonished three times.

Ms WHITE: They had little to say about the secret deal between Dean Brown and Jeff Kennett to give away the race to Victoria a year early, the detail of which we really do not know. Certainly, we hear much about the Government saying how much it wants a race after it gave away the Grand Prix a year early and sold all the equipment. I hope that that does not jeopardise any future chance we might have to attract a Grand Prix.

Mr BUCKBY (Light): I support this motion. I will point out a few facts about the Grand Prix and the benefits that it brought to South Australia. Many people on radio and in the local newspapers have been advocating the fact that we will lose very little from the Grand Prix going to Melbourne. For example, I have heard said, 'There really were no economic benefits from this at all,' and that type of totally ill-informed comment over the radio. The Grand Prix did have a significant impact on South Australia and we will miss that event. It is very sad to have seen it lost. I believe that it will be very difficult to replace it with one event. This Government will have to look at a range of events such as the Military Tattoo to attempt to generate the same sort of income that the Grand Prix provided in this State.

I will run through a few of the economic impacts that occurred in South Australia which are not mentioned on radio or in the newspaper. One of the factors that I saw over the 10 or 11 years that the Grand Prix was run was that of hotel occupancy. In my electorate, and the adjoining electorate of Custance in the Barossa Valley, all available accommodation during the Grand Prix was booked out. In fact, people could not get a bed the Adelaide side of Burra at the time of the Grand Prix. That was a definite bonus to the motel and the hotel owners of South Australia. It is not only the beds that are occupied, but also the meals and the drinks that are consumed by those people, plus the souvenirs and those types of things that they purchase.

Particularly, in the Barossa Valley there is the wine that was purchased at the same time. It is worth thousands of dollars to wineries in South Australia and, in particular, the Barossa Valley—and I am sure the Southern Vales as well—to have an event of that size; to have interstate people come to South Australia for one event and to spend their money. That is money which we would otherwise not have received. Many people, again on radio, have indicated that this is just money that has been transferred from one form of entertainment in South Australia to another. That is true for those South Australians who attended the Grand Prix, but it is not true for those people who came from interstate and overseas to attend the Grand Prix. That is new money, foreign money, and money that we would not otherwise have come to this State. As a result, it is of particular benefit to the South Australian economy.

Other areas have also received benefits. All we have to do is look at the eastern side of Adelaide and, in particular, the Stag Hotel, the Botanic Hotel and the buildings in that area that have been refurbished and revitalised only because of the Grand Prix and the trade that it generated during that time. Not only has it meant trade for them but the flow-on effect is that you end up with builders doing renovations, and suppliers supplying goods to those builders. It goes down the line and offers employment to people who otherwise would not have been employed, suppliers who would not have supplied goods, and as a result is of benefit to the South Australian economy. A little further along the track, places such as Prince Alfred College benefited from the Grand Prix in terms of the money it received from parking, sponsor's tents that were set up on its grounds, and so on. Again, that is income it would not have otherwise received from any other form of entertainment or event.

Finally, let us not forget the accommodation offered by private people in Adelaide. One friend rented out their home to the Porsche Club of Melbourne. They received $1 500 for the four days the Porsche Club was in residence. That is $1 500 which those people would not have otherwise received and which would not have come into this State. That is a definite benefit to South Australia. Again, I can assume only that the people who say that this event had no economic impact and was of no benefit whatsoever to South Australia have no understanding of how an economy works or the flow-on effects in this State of people from interstate spending money. One only had to the look at the employment available on the four days of operations at the track to see that many young people received employment opportunities, either in the supply of food or other facilities around the track. That is four days' employment they would otherwise not have received and, again, that is an economic benefit to this State.

I conclude by saying that I congratulate the board and all those people who are and have been associated with the Grand Prix. It has been a world-class event. It has received accolades from all sectors of the media, drivers, teams and from anyone who has been associated with the Grand Prix. It has received accolades from spectators for the ease with which they could move around the Grand Prix. In respect of the horrific accident we saw, accolades were given to the Royal Adelaide Hospital staff for their quick action and for saving the life of a Grand Prix driver. I can only add to the comments of other members by saying that this has been a successful event, particularly in the past two years where it has been close to a profit and this year where it ran at a profit. However, we must remember that, even though the Grand Prix did not make a profit in many years running up to the final year, the economic benefits generated far outweighed the level of debt the Grand Prix incurred just in the administration area. So the benefit to the State was immeasurable.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Brokenshire:

That this House condemns the Australian Labor Party for locking out a political journalist from the Australian Labor Party's annual conference because he was not a member of a union.

(Continued from 26 October. Page 424.)

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I endorse the words of the member for Mawson. Locking out political journalist Mike Duffy from the Labor Party's convention was directly against the basis of democracy. However, it is not a surprise, when I understand one of the resolutions debated at the convention was that members of Parliament should no longer have the right to a conscience vote on matters acknowledged to be decisions that should be decided by an individual's conscience. This is an attempt to stifle further expression of opinion by a political Party that already will not allow a diversity of voice on other matters, let alone allowing a member to cross the floor on daily matters that are of particular concern to them.

It is a very unhealthy state not to allow dissension. It does not take much imagination to see how such an attitude can lead to the dangerous totalitarian states that have been so disastrous in the history of the world. One can see how this Party tries to gag any opposition and to control people. The Labor Party's rationale for excluding Mr Duffy was that he was not a member of a union. If you could make every adult join a union of your choice and then get the union to totally dictate what its members will and will not say on pain of expulsion and exclusion from the workplace, obviously you can control all opposition. How dangerous is this, particularly when it involves the media? The action against Mr Mike Duffy must be strongly condemned by all thinking people of all Parties.

Mr BASS secured the adjournment of the debate.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mrs Rosenberg:

That this House condemns the Federal Government, and in particular the Minister for Human Services and Health, for the lack of action to curb the massive movement away from participation in private health insurance and the consequent pressure on the public health system this is causing, and further this House urges the Federal Government to look at all steps available to it to attract people back into private health insurance.

(Continued from 19 October. Page 317.)

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I am happy to have an opportunity to debate this motion. There are three points: first, the movement away from private health insurance; secondly, the supposed lack of action on the part of the Federal Government in dealing with this; and, thirdly, the consequent pressure on the public health system that it is supposedly causing. I am happy to address all three points. The proportion of the Australian population covered by private health insurance has fallen significantly since the introduction of Medicare, understandably so in those early days. In February 1984, 59 per cent of the population were covered by private health insurance. This fell to 50 per cent in June 1984 and to 38.4 per cent in December 1993.

It is important to realise the complexities of the situation, so I will simply outline two points and move on. Private health insurance cover is divided into two categories: first, the basic cover which provides full coverage for standard hospital services for private inpatients in public hospitals; and, secondly, the supplementary cover, which provides additional coverage for the higher charges for private hospital services. It is important to note and understand where the fall-off in private health insurance cover has occurred, namely, overwhelmingly in the cover for basic hospital care. It is interesting to note also that the level of usage of private hospitals themselves has actually risen over the past 10 years. Between 1982-83 and 1992-93 admissions to private hospitals rose from 23 per cent to 29.6 per cent of all admissions. So, while private health insurance has certainly declined, the membership of the supplementary tables—the second category I mentioned—on which private hospitals so much depend has been much more stable. As a result of this there is certainly no threat to the private hospital industry as such.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: If the member for Mawson would listen, he might learn something. Are these changes cause for concern? The substantial and continuing fall in the proportion of Australians with private health insurance has led to concern that increasing demands will be placed on the public health system which will eventually require significant additional Government expenditure on health. This has not yet occurred, arguably because many Australians who have chosen not to obtain private health insurance are young and healthy and do not currently need or use many health services. As this uninsured and expanding population ages and its health declines, however, it is anticipated that the demands it will place upon the public health system will increase. So, given the present situation, in future there will be a problem.

Why has the fall in private health insurance occurred? The fall in private health insurance participation levels, in combination with the ageing of the privately insured population, is widely seen as an indication that a vicious circle has developed: young healthy people drop health insurance, premiums rise as the proportion of the aged increases, more young healthy people drop their health insurance, premiums rise, and so it goes on. Raising premiums is a disincentive—probably the main disincentive to participation in private health insurance, particularly in a recession and when times are tough.

Another factor identified by many commentators as affecting the rate of participation is whether potential purchasers of insurance believe that they are being offered value for money. People may be prepared to pay higher premiums if they believe that the private insurance cover they are purchasing offers them substantially more benefits than reliance upon Medicare as a public patient. The trend towards supplementary rather than basic health insurance reflects this. But most people who leave private health insurance have made the decision that it is just not worth it for them. The third point—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: Listen; you have again not understood. The third point is that even the maximum coverage offered under the supplementary tables does not always cover all expenses, so people have to make the gap payment. These three factors mean that many Australians have reached the conclusion that the insurance product they are offered is not sufficiently attractive to justify their expenditure on private health insurance.

The member for Kaurna in her motion has suggested that the Federal Government has done nothing to address these issues. Obviously, she must have had her eyes shut or her ears closed, or whatever, because she is unaware that legislation has passed through the Federal Parliament, and that legislation came into operation at the beginning of October—one month ago. In the new legislation the Federal Government—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson will have the right to speak later.

Ms STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. In the new legislation the Federal Government has taken steps to address this matter in a way that can lead to some success. In the new legislation it has removed regulations that restrict efficiency and competition, allowing insurance funds to negotiate with hospitals and doctors to arrive at a better deal on behalf of their members and, hopefully, drop the costs—the main reason why people are not taking up private health insurance.

The legislation allows funds to cover members for the full cost of medical services if they can reach agreement with doctors, eliminating out-of-pocket expenses in respect of those services. The legislation introduces a system of single billing for hospital treatment and care in all cases, except those of medical practitioners working within our hospitals, and it has seen the development of an independent Private Health Insurance Complaints Commission. For the member for Kaurna to say that nothing has been done is ignorance in the highest degree.

I note that the honourable member moved a similar motion last session, and she has said that people were unwilling to debate her on this issue. We are not unwilling. I notice that she changed her previous motion because in that motion she suggested one of the ways out of this would be to offer people tax reductions. Even the Federal Liberal Party has given that one away—a complete and utter furphy.

I will address the last point she made. She said that, because of this inaction, there was greater pressure on the public health system. Let us look at where the pressure on the public health system in this State is coming from. It is coming from the $80 million worth of cuts inflicted on our health system by this State Government. I might add that these cuts have been inflicted by the State Government while, at the same time, funding to health in this State and other States from the Federal Government has increased markedly. Federal funding to South Australia in 1988-89 was $281 million. This financial year, Federal funds to the State of South Australia totalled $434 million, a 54.4 per cent increase. I know, as would many other members, of the garbage being put around in this State, that it is all the fault of the Federal Government. That is a complete misrepresentation. The pressure on our health system comes from this State Government.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Thank you members.

Ms STEVENS: I have had pensioners come to my office who say that they have been told the only way they can get an operation is to mortgage their homes, would you believe, to pay $15 000 for a hip replacement operation that should have been available to them in our public health system. Let us not forget that the problem with our health system in this State rests with this State Government. The Federal Government is aware of the private health insurance issue and is moving and has moved to address it.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): What we have clearly seen once again in the last 10 minutes is the absolute incompetence of the shadow spokesperson for health. Let us put a few facts on the board. First, the fundamental ideology of the socialist Labor Party is to pull apart the private health system completely. We all know that. In 1982, when Bob Hawke introduced Medicare into Australia, 70 per cent of all South Australians were in private health, the largest per capita percentage out of Australia. Today it is between 33 and 35 per cent. Do members know what the situation is with Medicare at the moment? In 1993-94, the income from Medicare totalled $2.9 billion. Expenditure for Medicare in 1993-94 was $13 billion, resulting in a $10 billion deficit in the Medicare budget. Out of a $100 billion total budget of the Federal Government, in excess of 10 per cent of that is going in a deficit just in the Medicare arena.

Let us look at the facts. I support the member for Kaurna who has a particular interest to see that people have the opportunity to get back into private health. We all know that what the Opposition spokesperson for health has said in the last 10 minutes is a total furphy. She is committed to that ideology, but—

Ms Stevens: Show me the facts.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: She says that the Federal Labor Government has done a great job in providing $400 million to health in South Australia. We spend about $1.2 or $1.3 billion a year in health. She refers to the Federal Government's measly $400 million out of an expenditure of about $13 billion. It is not enough money. That was not supported by me, because I am not an expert, and neither is the shadow spokesperson, but it was supported by the experts at a conference in Adelaide only two weeks ago, when they said that one of the fundamental problems with health in Australia is the fact that the Federal Government is not putting enough money into health in Australia. They have to stand up and admit the facts, and they will have to admit them next year, because the very silent sleeper at the next Federal election will be health.

I want to put on the public record now that, if Paul Keating is returned to office next year, before the year 2000 Australia will have the biggest health crisis in its history. The Opposition spokesperson says that things have levelled out. A 50 per cent reduction in the number of people in private health in a 10-year period spells out to the health business exactly what it would to any other business: the health system in this country is heading towards the point where it will tip over. With the situation now, if we lose another, say, 3 to 5 per cent, to about 30 per cent of people in private health care, it will be so costly to be in private health that most of the rest will drop out, and that is when we will see the national health crisis.

What will Paul Keating, Mike Rann and the purported Opposition spokesperson for health do about it then? The member for Elizabeth will stand up in this place, day in and day out, running off on different tangents—depending on where she thinks she can get her face on the electronic media for the night—saying this and that and all the negatives about health. But she will not stand up in this House, she will not stand up in her Caucus room and she will not get into her Federal mates in Canberra and tell them that they must get people back into private health.

The member for Elizabeth, when in my electorate two weeks ago, said to my constituents that she was happy to help. I challenge her in the Chamber to get on with the job of helping, that is, to say to the Federal Government that it must do two things. First, it has to put more money into public health throughout Australia and, secondly, it must bring in incentives for people to get back into private health. People in my electorate say to me, 'Robert, I would dearly love to be able to stay in private health.' But let us consider the situation.

They came out of locked interest rates in the middle of 1994, because Paul Keating said that he had to take the heat

out of the economy. We know how Keating does that. He plays around with interest rates. My constituents are not all young; they are family people who dearly and badly want to be in private health, but they had to pull out of private health because they came out of locked interest rates to variable rates and they could no longer afford private health care.

My constituents have said to me, 'Give us a tax break.' We do not expect a 100 per cent write-off by the Federal Government, but we would like to see three things done by the Federal Government and by Carmen Lawrence, if she is serious about health—rather than using taxpayers' money to support her, when she tells lies, absolute lies, to the people of Western Australia. They were absolute lies supported not by the Liberal Party but by her own Cabinet colleagues. She is a liar, and she has spent nearly $1 million of taxpayers' money defending herself when that money could have gone into the health system, if she cared about health. But she does not care about health. She is like the rest of her cronies over there. All she cares about is how far she can get her nose into the gravy train.

So let us have a look at the situation; let us do two or three things if we are serious about the matter. We must give people proper tax breaks to get them back into private health. They would like to see about a 33 per cent opportunity to write off that $2 500 a year for their families. They also ask why they should have to pay a Medicare levy if they are in private health? And why should they? They are supporting their own health, so why should they pay the Medicare levy as well? That does not mean that I do not support Medicare. It is a great principle for pensioners, those people on very low incomes and people who are in difficult socioeconomic circumstances, but for the rest of us there should be absolute encouragement to be in private health. Before 1982 there was no health crisis, but we have seen it slipping down.

Mr Becker interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: As the member for Peake has just said—and he has been around for a long time and he knows—Australia had one of the best health systems in the world until 1982, and the Federal Labor Government has destroyed it. As I said there will be a national health crisis, if it is not already here, within a couple of years. If the Opposition spokesperson went to New South Wales—where my sister lives, and I feel sorry for her living under Bob Carr's Government—she would see how bad the health crisis is. The Opposition spokesperson would never give Minister Armitage a compliment, but what she forgot was what occurred last year, even though there was a cut—and why was there a cut? It was because from about 1982, just by coincidence, we saw State debt increase from a comfortable and affordable $2.5 billion to about $8.5 billion by the time we came into office.

That is why the cuts in health had to occur. Had it been a reasonable manager we could have put in a lot more money to offset the negligence of the Federal Labor Government, but I do not expect the member for Elizabeth to tell the truth—and why should I. The honourable member is not interested in all that, and she is also not interested in talking about the fact that under Michael Armitage, the Minister for Health, 10 000 extra public operations had to be done in this State in 1994, because those people were in the private health system in 1993 but could no longer afford to stay in it.

The situation in Australia has reached the stage where the first priority for people in my electorate who are proud of being part of a family group is to put a roof over their head. Their second priority is to have private health cover. Thanks to the health debacle nationally and thanks to Mr Keating who caused a lot of the problems when he said, 'No-one needs to be in private health.' That was very irresponsible from someone who is supposed to be a Prime Minister. That is fine for Paul Keating who happens to be a multi-millionaire. I would like to know, given that he went into politics at the age of 23 and given that, whilst the salaries are not too bad, how he got all that money. I would love to have an audit done on how Keating got his money. I have a fairly good idea. Keating can get into private health whenever he wants to because he is a multi-millionaire. He is the biggest capitalist that I have ever seen. People should read *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, because Paul Keating is stamped all over it.

In conclusion, I support the member for Kaurna. Once again, I call on the shadow spokesperson and the South Australian Labor Party to advise the Federal Government that, unless it brings back incentives and support to private health, we will have a national health crisis. No matter how good the Liberal Government is as a manager in South Australia, there is only so much it can do in the health arena when it is not getting support from the Federal Government. Once again, I look to the member for Elizabeth, and I will continue to do so, even though I see no evidence so far—and I do not believe there will be—of the shadow spokesperson genuinely doing anything about the debacle.

Mr BECKER (Peake): I commend the member for Kaurna for bringing this motion to the House and for the opportunity to draw out from Opposition members their opinion on the health system in this country. The member for Mawson is quite right when he says that this country is fast heading towards a crisis in the health system.

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Elizabeth has had her opportunity; she cannot make an extra speech.

Mr BECKER: In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, under the Liberal Government, people in this country had one of the greatest health systems in the world. I had the opportunity of taking a study trip and looking at the health systems in Europe, England, Canada and America. Everyone was envious of our system. We do not want an American style health system, and we certainly do not want to go down the track of the British system. In the late 1970s, the Public Accounts Committee, of which you were a member, Mr Speaker, looked at the then Hospitals Department. The very poor management that it found was unbelievable. The committee's report was so effective that the then Minister for Health was replaced by Dunstan, and certain senior people within the department were also replaced. That is how the South Australian Health Commission came into being, but the Health Commission was not totally the answer. The legislation that was presented to the Parliament recently should have been amended so that we could get rid of the Health Commission and start again.

For the benefit of the shadow Minister, if she wants to be a reasonable representative of the health portfolio in this House, I suggest that she study one very important document: the Auditor-General's Report. All the information that one needs to know about our health system, how it is funded and what is going on, is contained in that report. Over the years, the Auditor-General has provided some valuable information and statistical data for the Parliament. Let us look at what he says in his latest report. On page 580, under the heading

'South Australian Health Commission—interpretation and analysis of financial statement', he states:

> The financial statement and notes thereto, reflects a summary of all transactions on a cash basis conducted through the commission's special deposit account. The statement and notes are followed by tables, which show more specifically, payments and receipts associated with the Public and Environmental Health Service division of the commission and the intra-agency support services aspect of the commission's operations (ie. Office of the Minister and the central support divisions of the commission). Separate tabulated unaudited financial information relating to health programs and health unit activity is provided later on in this section of the report. Specifically, in relation to the financial statement of the commission, the statement reflects the following:
>
> · Net funds—

Mr De LAINE: I rise on a point of order, Sir: I ask that you rule on relevance to the debate.

The SPEAKER: The motion is fairly wide ranging, and if the honourable member links up his remarks to this motion he will be in order. The Chair does not believe that there is a point of order at this stage, but I suggest that the member for Peake ensure that, as is the case in all debates, he links his remarks to the motion moved by the member for Kaurna.

Mr BECKER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am leading up to the cost of health provision in South Australia and how that is impacted by the lack of people with health insurance. The report continues:

> · Net funds allocated to health units and associated activities was $1.3 billion, the same as in the previous financial year.

The Opposition shadow Minister for Health made great play on the costing of those funds. The report continues:

> · Of the net funds allocated, $1.247 billion ($1.226 billion [the previous year]) was applied for recurrent purpose and $61 million ($73 million) for capital purposes.
>
> · Funds appropriated from the Consolidated Account towards the net funds allocated was $691 million ($728 million [previously]). This reduction of $37 million was offset by an increase in receipts of $59 million.

That is what the Opposition is jumping up and down about, at the behest of the Nurses Federation—the cut-back in funding to the health system in this State—but do not forget that they earned extra money. Stop trying to sabotage our health system. The report continues:

> · Receipts of $630 million ($571 million [previously]), comprised mainly of Commonwealth receipts of $569 million ($513 million [previously]).

So, we do give credit where credit is due. I want to explain the large sums of money that are pumped into the health system in this State by the efforts of the hospitals and by the efforts of the management of those hospitals; and they manage very well. We heard all sorts of stories about how the QEH was being run down and what was happening at the QEH. Let me remind the shadow Minister for Health. She replaced the former Minister for Health, whose contribution to the Parliament and the health system in this State was so small that it was absolutely disastrous. I hope he is not advising the current shadow Minister. If he is, God help South Australia; we have plenty to fear, because we will not have a health system left.

I will discuss the QEH, because it is on my side of town. The previous Labor Government allowed the QEH to be run down to such a stage that the capital expenditure there will require tens of millions of valuable dollars, which will have to be plucked out and pumped into that system just to upgrade the facilities. We need equipment, and we need to upgrade and improve our specialist equipment. At one stage in 1982 I estimated that we were 15 years behind Canada in neurological services alone. We were in Government in those days, and I sharply reminded my Party of what we had to do.

How can we develop and improve our health system if the people of this country are being encouraged to withdraw from the health insurance funds? It started when John Cornwall was Minister for Health, then Peter Duncan came in and I was the shadow Minister for Health. I was urging and encouraging anybody and everybody to take out health insurance. The Labor Party had the stupid obsession that the bail-out that was set up as Medicare would mean that we had no problems. It does not work that way. It is best to share the whole cost of the health system through the people who can afford it.

As I said, we had one of the best systems. If you were a pensioner or disabled or financially disadvantaged, you had no problem going to a public hospital and getting the best of treatment. If you go to a public hospital with a stomach ache, there is something like 38 tests which have to be carried out (which can cost hundreds of dollars) before the problem is found. So, I ask members to think about the cost of the health system. What really annoys me is the Federal Government's dictating to the medical profession and to the hospitals. It does not matter if you go to hospital today with or without health insurance because it is all averaged out. If you go to hospital for a hernia operation, you will be there, on average, for three or four days. If you go to hospital for a gall bladder operation, you will be there for four days. If there are complications and you stay longer than that, it costs the hospital. But if you are discharged in two days, it is a bonus for the hospital. That is the stupid averaging system which was brought in by the Federal Government, which wants to keep right out of the system but still encourage people to take out health insurance.

If you encourage people to take out health insurance by making its cost tax deductable, the whole of the community will share the cost of the health system to the benefit of the disadvantaged who need it. There are very few people in this country who will ever miss out on the opportunity to have the best health services there are. They are available to everyone. The health profession is committed to that. Indeed, we are very fortunate. Recently, an Indonesian medical officer was in my area doing work experience. She said that people in her country died because they could not afford the medication let alone the treatment that the average Australian receives. People from Asia and other countries better off than Australia are amazed at the health system that we have. But we have had to fight for it. For goodness sake, I encourage people to take out health insurance. I commend the motion.

Mr ROSSI (Lee): I concur in what the member for Kaurna said in respect of her motion. As the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is in my electorate I have experienced the changes it has gone through since the Federal Government introduced Medicare. As a child in private health cover I found that everyone had access to medical attention no matter how poor or how rich they were. In those times doctors did not ask for fees from those people who genuinely could not afford medical treatment. Since the Federal Government introduced Medicare, I have found that the services at public hospitals are held up by waiting lists and that hospitals partly funded by the Federal Government and partly funded by the State Government do not get paid for the number of patients they put through but receive a lump sum from the budget every year which they are required to adhere to.

I have also experienced the situation where people who cannot get medical treatment interstate come to South

Australia to try to jump the queues, so to speak, and receive medical attention. The sooner the Federal Government encourages people to take out private health insurance by making it tax deductible, the better the waiting lists in South Australian hospitals will be, because, for every 1 per cent increase in the number of people in private health cover, there will be a 2 per cent reduction in the public waiting lists. I totally support the motion.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): I thank those members who contributed to the debate. As I said, I tried this exercise in another session of Parliament, so it is nice to see interest in some important issues in private members' time. I should like to raise a couple of issues in closing. One concerns the comment made by the shadow spokesperson for health that the debate lacked fact. The honourable member referred to the changes that have gone through Federal Parliament recently and, if she reads my speech, she will find that four or five paragraphs of my contribution referred to that item. The speech was balanced because I added the comments that have been made by the AMA, various private health groups and hospitals to indicate that, in their opinion, the measures that have been introduced by the Federal Government will not work.

As a State member of Parliament who has very little control over the private health issue, I find it disappointing that we cannot expect bipartisan support from the other side of the House so that we can try to find a solution to this problem. I agree with the member for Peake that, if we do not find a solution, we will be in crisis. Heaven knows that the health system in South Australia and in the other States is bad enough already. Everybody and every Government shares some degree of blame for that. What is most disappointing about the tone of the debate from the Opposition is that, as usual, we have not been able to get bipartisan support for a motion to make comment to the Federal Government about possible solutions to the problems of the constituents of South Australia.

Motion carried.

TELEPHONE, TOLL-FREE CALLS

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Lewis:

That this House urges all Ministers to direct all departments and agencies established by statute to install a toll-free telephone number to provide STD callers with equal access to services provided by these agencies.

(Continued from 12 October. Page 226.)

Mr De LAINE (Price): I support the motion. Representing a metropolitan electorate, I was not aware of the problem as described by the member for Ridley. However, I understand the problem now that he has raised it and I sympathise with people who live outside the metropolitan area and who want to make contact with Government agencies or departments. Because of the delays, they are sometimes subjected to considerable expense in the form of telephone bills, which many cannot afford. Country people are at a big enough disadvantage in terms of distance and extra living costs without this added impost.

Government departments and agencies are supposed to exist to provide services to all citizens of this State, and this initiative will assist in that regard. The honourable member says that some Government agencies have toll-free numbers for STD callers, so why should not all agencies provide this facility to make the situation uniform? Finally, the member for Ridley is correct: this is a social justice issue and I fully support the motion.

Mr BASS secured the adjournment of the debate.

EDUCATION RESOURCES

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Clarke:

That this House condemns—

(a) the way in which the Minister for Education and Children's Services has broken the Government's election promise on education and embarked on a policy of cutting resources for education in South Australia;
(b) the reduction of 790 teachers and 276 ancillary staff between 30 June 1994 and 31 January 1995;
(c) the Minister's decision to cut a further 250 school service officer full-time equivalents from January 1996 that will result in up to 500 support staff being cut from essential support work in schools; and
(d) the Minister's decision to cut a further 100 teachers from areas including the open access college, special interest schools and Aboriginal schools.

(Continued from 12 October. Page 227.)

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I fully support the motion. Not one of us could fail to acknowledge that education and a good public education system is now and will be in the future one of the cornerstones of our society. In travelling around the schools in my electorate, I am aghast at the concern expressed by teachers, principals, school services officers, parents and students about the current situation facing schools and the future of our students and children. First, I want to speak about reductions in the number of school services officers, because that has involved the most topical conversations I have had in a number of places—

Mr Becker interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: —we didn't do what you are doing—before dealing with the issues relating to teachers. As all members would know, the role of school services officers in our schools has changed markedly over recent years. No longer are school services officers in the back room pasting and preparing materials and the like. Almost all their work—particularly in primary schools—is hands on work related to student programs of various types. Obviously, there is a person who works in and manages the front office and reception and who handles contacts with the outside world and the local community, and so on, but almost without exception the rest of the time is devoted to programs for students.

On Monday morning I was in a school in my electorate talking to a group of school services officers and I went through with them some of the services that they provide. Indeed, they provide a great bulk of the speech therapy in schools. Members will recall that one of the Minister's promises in his early years strategy was increased speech therapy. They spoke about the fact that somehow that school would have to lose its batch of hours but that they had no idea from where those hours would come because all the programs, including speech therapy, were critical. They made the point (and I know this from my shadow health responsibility) that speech therapy is no longer available to the extent that it was in hospitals, where it has been cut back, as well as in schools. There is no method to this madness at all.

School services officers have a huge role in looking after and providing programs for students with disabilities and those on negotiated curriculum plans. It is a huge role, and

even now there are waiting lists of students trying to get assistance. These kids will not have a chance unless we can put into place the programs that they need to enable them to achieve. The reading recovery program takes place in this school, and I am particularly interested in that, as was the Minister, because I actually took him out to two other schools in Elizabeth to look at this program. But it is supported greatly by school services officers. You cannot have programs such as this unless you put in the resources.

These programs actually work; they actually nip problems in the bud. You have students aged six, seven or eight who are picked up as having a problem, worked with, the problem is corrected and the student is on his or her way. However, we will not be able to do this; students will not be able to cope; they will have behaviour problems or withdraw; and the problem will compound out of all sight by the time they reach secondary school. This is not the way to produce the sorts of skills and expertise to ensure that young people are not unemployed, but are actually ready, able and well prepared for the jobs that are supposedly coming to this State in their hundreds as a result of this Government's program. So, let us look at the whole picture.

The other issue to which I refer is that of decreases in certain categories of teachers. I would like to concentrate on music teachers, because I have a special music school in Elizabeth. Like the other music schools, it is leading the charge throughout the State over the reduction and pulling back of resources in the teaching of music. What we appear to be saying is that the arts and excellence in music and performance are no longer a priority in our education system. Over the past few weeks I (and, I am certain, many members of this House also) have had many parents and students contact me about the short-sighted nature of this decision.

Even at the launch of Seniors Week, in front of 300 or 400 people in the Festival Theatre, the point was made that students would no longer be able to perform because schools would no longer be able to provide those programs. But it is worse than this, and I am not even sure that the Minister realises the full implications of the decision that is being made. When we cut back on instrumental teachers across our schools, students will not even have the skill levels to be able to do year 11 SACE stage 1 music, so a whole section of the curriculum is being undermined. This is a short-sighted and ill-considered decision.

I would like to return to the school services officer issue with something which I failed to mention before but which was raised with me when I was speaking with those school services officers on Monday. In the teaching of literacy, as I mentioned, the reading recovery program would be cut back; the students with disabilities program would be cut back; and the special social justice tier 2 staffing allocation for disadvantaged schools is to be cut back. The point was made that this school is getting a small amount of money from the Minister for the early years strategy in literacy. The amazing situation is that they get a small amount of money, which will go nowhere towards restoring the losses that they will endure as a result of the changes in the number of school services officers, yet the Minister can stand up in another place and laud the fact that he is actually providing extra funds for an early years literacy strategy.

That is a joke, and people in our community know that it is a joke. It is a cynical move by a Minister who is so laid back, so able to cut himself off from the reality of what is happening in classrooms between children, parents and teachers, that he can confidently and cockily say that we are providing resources to address literacy in the early years, while he removes in much greater proportions the very people on the ground who are delivering the services, working with the kids, working with the teachers and working with their parents. It is a disgrace.

The decision to reduce funding for education is something for which our community and our State will pay the price for many years in the future. It is not something that we will see this year, next year, but 10 years, 15 years down the track, someone will to have to pick up the pieces and start all over again. Is this really what we want in South Australia? Is it not true that this Government has entirely lost sight of the real priorities in governing and in leading a community to the future.

Mr BASS (Florey): I am the lead speaker for the opposition and I will be opposing the motion. If I have ever heard a hypocritical speech, it comes from the member for Elizabeth. The reason we are in this situation today is that the member for Elizabeth's colleagues have completely ruined this State. As all members are aware, this Government was elected to clean up the financial mess left by the previous Government, which meant that every year the State was spending $300 million more than it earned. The State's debt is so large that the Government pays $3 million a day in interest alone. As the State could not continue spending in this manner, the Government's first two budgets have aimed to put the State on track to balance the budget.

Even with these financial pressures, the Government continues to give priority to education spending. For 1995-96, the budget for education was $1 138 million, which represents an increase of $40 million on what was actually spent last year. South Australian schools still enjoy the lowest student-teacher ratio of all States in Australia and we continue to spend more per student on education than other States. With this level of funding, there is no reason why we cannot have the best quality education system in Australia.

To address the budget deficit, the Government last year made the difficult decision—and it was a difficult decision—to make a reduction of 422 teacher positions to address the appalling Labor organised State debt. The taxpayers of South Australia are now confronted with a wage and conditions claim by the South Australian Institute of Teachers which could cost the Government at least $137 million. Even the union leadership has agreed with the Government regarding the approximation of the cost of this pay claim. The union is not only pursuing the $53 per week pay rise: it wants reduced teaching time. As soon as you reduce the teaching time—and the pay claim is 2.5 hours for every teacher—it increases the cost of the pay rise. They also want changes to class sizes.

The Government offered a $35 per week salary increase, which would have cost $35 million per year. This offer was rejected by the union. The Government must, therefore, sensibly provide for a potential salary increase for teachers in the 1995-96 financial year by achieving savings within the existing education budget. Therefore, in June this year, the Government announced that there would be a reduction of up to 100 'above formula' teacher salaries. These salaries are not for classroom teachers and the decision reflects a commitment not to change class sizes.

Another key budget decision taken this year to provide for the salary increase was to reduce the number of school service officers at the end of the year. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his speech accused the Minister of playing games with statistics, but the fact remains that after the

reductions South Australia will still have almost 10 per cent more SSOs than the national average for all States, and even the unions agree that we will still be higher than the national average for all States. So, South Australia will not be reduced to the national average or trail all other States in providing support for schools. Therefore, it is clear that we can undertake the essential tasks required in our schools, given continued support through the above average provision of SSOs. Suggestions that phones in schools will not be answered or that first aid rooms will be closed are preposterous.

It should be noted that taxpayers in South Australia have now invested approximately $16 million in EDSAS, the new administration computer software package for schools which was introduced by the previous Labor Government. The package is intended to reduce the amount of time SSOs have to spend undertaking administrative tasks. Consultants to the previous Labor Government predicted EDSAS would reduce administration time in secondary schools by approximately 30 to 50 hours and in primary schools by 10 to 12 hours. Even if these views are optimistic, it is clear that the $16 million spent on EDSAS will reduce some of the administrative load on schools in future. While the Government does not argue that savings from EDSAS will completely offset the budget reductions, it is clear that they will be partially offset by the introduction of the EDSAS package.

The Government through the Minister recently announced a further injection of $2 million in the form of direct grants to schools which can be used in any way that the school wishes, although it cannot be used for administration and clerical work. However, it can be applied to the early year strategy or spent entirely on SSO hours. As far as I am concerned, from the letters and phone calls I have received at my office, the main concern of constituents is the reduction in SSO hours. So, with the Labor EDSAS package, the hours that it said it will save and the injection of the $2 million in the form of grants to schools, we have offset the majority of those reductions.

Recently, my colleague the member for Unley said the Liberal Government does appreciate the importance of school service officers within schools and the role they play in helping to ensure that the best possible education outcomes are achieved for our State's children. The Minister, and no-one on this side of the House, would disagree with that statement. The Government is aware of community concern over the decision. The allegation that the Minister is not listening to the concerns expressed by schools is ridiculous. I am informed that the Minister has met with dozens of school groups—and, in fact, I took a delegation to him recently and he listened to their concerns—and has received considerable correspondence in relation to this decision. The Minister is responding to every piece of correspondence and has repeatedly stated that making this decision was not something the Government, or he as Minister, enjoyed doing but he had to do it. The fact remains that the financial mess in this State needs to be fixed and that means tough decisions have to be made, tough decisions that were never made when the Labor Government was in office.

In his presentation the Deputy Leader of the Opposition also raised the issue of technology in education and claimed that last year the Government withheld an annual $360 000 grant to schools to buy computers. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should check his facts rather than rely on the nonsensical claims of his colleague the Hon. Carolyn Pickles. If the Deputy Leader had followed up his outrageous suggestion, he would have discovered that, as usual, Ms Pickles got it wrong. The fact is that $360 000 was fully spent in 1994-95 to meet existing commitments to provide computers and associated equipment to South Australian schools. The simple reason for no new schools being added to the scheme in 1994-95 was that the total of $360 000 in the scheme was already fully committed to other schools. The $360 000 in funding for 1995-96 will also be fully committed to helping our schools purchase or upgrade their computer equipment.

Already schools in this State are way ahead of their interstate counterparts, with one computer for every 10.8 students; for example, in New South Wales that number is one computer for every 20 students. Our good record on computer acquisition is due to initiatives such as the computer assistance scheme and the magnificent fund-raising efforts of many parents and school councils.

The motion also suggests that there has been a reduction of 790 teachers and 276 school support staff since last year. The Labor Party has been told consistently that that is not correct. The Labor Party is comparing January figures with June figures—not comparing apples with apples. The only accurate comparison is either January to January or June to June. In fact, the June 1994 to June 1995 comparisons show an estimated reduction of about 530 teachers and 40 school support staff—nowhere near Labor's allegations of 790 teachers and 276 school support staff. Of course, these figures do not suit the Labor Party's argument, so it continues to ignore them and spread misinformation.

In closing, I reiterate that the Government is confident that we have the lowest student teacher ratio of all States; that we spend the most per student on education of any State; and that we would have about 10 per cent more school services officers than the national average, which means that we can continue to have the best quality education system of all States in Australia. One must remember that continuing on with Labor's strategy of the past decade of borrowing money endlessly in order to deliver essential services would mean that our children would have no future in South Australia, because the State would be bankrupt.

While this Government is in office, we are planning for the future, and we will ensure not only that we will be able to educate our children but that we will be able to give them a future with employment in this State. No-one with children would want to see them educated and then having to go interstate or overseas to find employment. I oppose this motion.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I rise to support the motion, because I and many others are greatly concerned about the horrendous dollar cuts to our education service. It is causing harm to our children's future, as well as creating concern and confusion—and, I must say, great anger—in our communities. In the electorate of Torrens, I have two schools that cater for hearing-impaired students from their very early learning years to the final stages of their education. These students need additional assistance, and that means that they need extra support from staff. School services officers play a major role in this area and, indeed, a major role in the running of all our schools.

The cuts to the number of these positions means that these children are further disadvantaged. I have a brother-in-law who is hearing-impaired and I have watched him go through his schooling and, if it was not for the extra assistance provided by his teachers and others in the school system, he

would not have been able to complete his education. I certainly understand the problems experienced by hearing-impaired people. These cuts are denying students the opportunity to participate in music activities, which particularly disadvantages people on low incomes. As we are all well aware, the cost of private tuition is expensive, and for those on low incomes even $10 a week is well beyond their means. These cuts are shameful and I am concerned about them, as are many others in the community, and I therefore support the motion.

Mrs HALL secured the adjournment of the debate.

7.30 REPORT

Consideration of the Legislative Council's resolution:

That—

1. The Legislative Council expresses its concern about the impact of the cessation of local production of the *7.30 Report* and other local current affairs programs on the depth and diversity of current affairs coverage in South Australia;
2. The Legislative Council calls on the Board of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to ensure that the ABC does not centralise the presentation and production of daily ABC current affairs programs in Melbourne and Sydney.
3. The Legislative Council calls on the Board of the ABC to reverse its decision to cease local production of the *7.30 Report*; and
4. A message be sent to the House of Assembly transmitting the foregoing resolution and requesting its concurrence thereto, and that the foregoing resolution be referred to the ABC Board and the Federal Communications Minister, Michael Lee, for their consideration.

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): I move:

That the resolution be agreed to.

I will not speak to the motion at length, as we are short of time. Members will note that it relates to the cutting of the *7.30 Report* in South Australia. The advantage of the motion is that it will go to the board and be communicated to the Federal Communications Minister. I commend it to the House.

Mr De LAINE (Price): The Opposition supports the motion.

Motion carried.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

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

WATER, OUTSOURCING

A petition signed by 12 667 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to retain public ownership, control and operation of the water supply and the collection and treatment of sewage was presented by the Hon. M.D. Rann.

Petition received.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

A petition signed by 38 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government not to force local government amalgamations without further consulting residents was presented by the Hon. M.D. Rann.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs—Report, 1994-95

By the Treasurer (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Friendly Societies Act—Lifeplan—Manchester Unity—General laws

By the Minister for Industrial Affairs (Hon. G.A. Ingerson)—

WorkCover Corporation of South Australia—
Report, 1994-95
Medical Services Statistical Supplement, 1994-95
Statistical Review, 1994-95

By the Minister for Health (Hon. M.H. Armitage)—

Abortions Notified in South Australia—Committee Appointed to Examine and Report on—Report, 1994-95

By the Minister for Emergency Services (Hon. W.A. Matthew)—

South Australian—
St John Ambulance Service Inc—Report, 1994-95
State Emergency Service—Report, 1994-95.

WORKCOVER

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Minister for Industrial Affairs): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: The State Government's determination over the past 12 months that this Parliament overhaul WorkCover legislation and reverse its deteriorating financial position has been confirmed by the WorkCover Corporation's 1994-95 annual report which I have tabled today before this House. WorkCover's annual report for the full year 1994-95 includes a report on the scheme's unfunded liability. The independent actuarial assessment has reported that the scheme had an unfunded liability of $276 million at 30 June 1995.

On 9 March this year I told Parliament that WorkCover's unfunded liability to 3 December 1994 was $187 million, and deteriorating at the rate of $12.5 million a month. I foreshadowed an unfunded liability of 'close on $300 million' in six to nine months. At that time the State Government was criticised by the Labor Party, the Australian Democrats and the trade union movement for being alarmist in describing WorkCover's unfunded liability as a financial crisis. Today's evidence of a $276 million unfunded liability is the result which the State Government predicted six months ago due entirely to the legacy of Labor's WorkCover scheme.

The State Government's determination earlier this year to make legislative changes to bring the WorkCover scheme under control and restore its financial position has been fully vindicated. Key elements of the State Government's legislation, first introduced last December but not passed by Parliament until April this year, came into operation on 25 May 1995 and 17 August 1995. Outsourcing of claims management came into operation only on 1 August 1995. This has meant that these legislative changes have been unable to be taken into account in assessing the scheme's unfunded liability at 30 June 1995. The legislative changes

advocated by this Government earlier this year are one of the keys to reining in Labor's $276 million legacy.

WorkCover's Chief Executive Officer states in this annual report that the benefits of the legislative changes made earlier this year are expected to occur over the next 12 months and will be taken into account by the actuary in the fund's assessment in 12 months. At that time we will know what effect has been caused to WorkCover by the Labor Opposition and the Australian Democrats as a result of delaying and amending the Government's legislative reforms. On a more positive note, I am pleased to report that changes which have been implemented by the State Government in relation to workplace safety programs and which have been able to be assessed in this annual report indicate that the Government's occupational health and safety strategy is on target to meet its goals for safer work places.

The annual report indicates that the number of WorkCover claims in the past 12 months has fallen by more than 1 000, to be the second lowest on record, and the number of compensated days lost claims is 15 per cent below the previous year—the lowest ever. These trends indicate that the Government's removal of journey accidents, strengthening of occupational health and safety regulations and implementation of its election commitment to invest $2 million into occupational health and safety programs is bearing fruit. These trends also suggest that the Government's desire to reverse the compensation culture and replace it with a return to work culture is moving in the right direction.

The former Labor Government's negligence in failing to reform the WorkCover system has now been fully exposed. In the public interest this State Liberal Government has taken steps to reverse this situation and again clean up Labor's negligent financial administration. The community can be assured that WorkCover and occupational health and safety reform under this State Liberal Government will continue at all levels, including the legislative level, until WorkCover is returned to financial stability.

QUESTION TIME

WATER, OUTSOURCING

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Does the Premier have full and unqualified confidence in the Minister for Infrastructure in his handling of the negotiations of the water contract, and is the Premier satisfied that information provided to him by the Minister for their joint announcement on 17 October was accurate?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Yes, the Minister does have my confidence. The Leader of the Opposition is trying to imply that some incorrect information was given to the press conference when the announcement was made. That is not correct at all. I therefore assure the honourable member that the Minister has accurately outlined to the House the information in terms of the company that is to receive the contract. The Minister has given accurate detail to this House in both his answers to questions and ministerial statements.

SOLAR OPTICAL

Ms GREIG (Reynell): My question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair will see that Standing Orders are enforced.

Ms GREIG: —is directed to the Premier. How important to South Australia is the new research and development centre for Solar Optical at Lonsdale, which is to be opened tomorrow?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Sola Optical research and development facility at Lonsdale is a major coup and a major step forward for the southern districts of South Australia. I do not know whether people appreciate the extent to which Sola Optical is now a major international company that has supplied optical lenses of the sort that I wear to about 100 million people around the world:100 million people around the world rely on this company's product, which was originally developed in South Australia 35 years ago. About 60 000 lenses a day are produced at this magnificent facility. This company grew out of the old Laubman & Pank company with people such as David Pank. In fact, I went to school with the children of one of the key people who developed the research and technology for the first optical lens.

I am delighted to say that since those days it has grown to the point where now a new $4.5 million Government facility for research and development has been built at Lonsdale, and I will open that magnificent facility tomorrow. It is important in a number of areas to keep this company ahead of its competitors throughout the world. Through this research and development at Lonsdale, the company has developed, thinner, lighter lenses that can actually be darkened when they are worn in the sunlight—and that is of great benefit to people who do not wish to carry two pair of glasses. As the honourable member to my right indicates, he wears them as well.

The other important thing that this company has achieved is a graduated light plastic lens so that the wearer can read something and then look at something in the distance. I confess that I use these graduated lenses, and they are magnificent. Tomorrow, I will open this magnificent facility, which is a significant step further forward for Sola Optical and the high technology industry in this State.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Does the Minister for Infrastructure believe that he has the full support of the Premier—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Just wait a minute. I know that you have all been told, at your meetings in the middle of the night, to laugh. Don't be too nervous—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader will ask his question.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: It is a bit difficult, Sir.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader knows the rules.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Does the Minister for Infrastructure believe that he has the full support of the Premier to bring contract negotiations with United Water to a successful conclusion, given the Premier's criticisms of him at a meeting last night with Liberal MPs regarding his handling of the water contract? I have been informed that, following a question by the member for Hartley at last night's meeting, the Premier was critical of the Minister's failure adequately to inform him of contract details. The Opposition has been offered information about the Minister's handling of this contract by Liberal MPs and a member of the Premier's own staff.

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier!

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

The SPEAKER: And the member for Gordon!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has the call.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yes.

ESTCOURT HOUSE

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Will the Minister for Tourism provide details of the sale and future use of historic Estcourt House which is on the beach front at Tennyson and which has been vacant for several years?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Obviously, the honourable member has a special interest in this magnificent old house on the seafront. I am pleased to advise that last week Mawson KLM purchased the property from the State Government for $3.8 million. The State Government had formerly purchased this building for $2.3 million in 1989. The developers will have the task of restoring that magnificent building, making sure that the rest of the development falls into line with the sea frontage and that a profit is made for all concerned.

It is very important that heritage buildings such as this be maintained for the State. It is also very important that they be developed in a way which we can all be very proud of. This is one of many new tourism opportunities that will occur in this State. As a Government, we are a proud to make sure that it gets done. I thank the honourable member for reminding me that it had been sitting there for well over a decade and falling to pieces: the previous Government could not organise the private sector to put together such a magnificent development.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Did the Minister for Infrastructure inform the Premier before Tuesday of the two-company structure of United Water and the 100 per cent foreign ownership of United Water Services? Yesterday, the Premier told the House that he first became aware on Tuesday that United Water Services would be wholly foreign owned.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that at the end of the day this fishing expedition will get nowhere and we will have a somewhat wasted Question Time when there are clearly more important issues for South Australia's elected representatives to discuss today. I would have thought that, in the order of priorities, there were issues out there in the community that were of particular concern to people that the honourable member ought to be championing in the House, not the irrelevant nonsense he has gone on with in the past couple of questions.

In relation to this proposal, when it came in from, I think, 7 August, when the bids were put forward and a preferred bidder was put in place, there was a senior officials working group that looked constantly at this matter and a Cabinet outsourcing committee that met on a number of occasions in relation to this contract.

As I said yesterday in my ministerial statement, this is an evolving process. We said that we would go forward into six weeks of extensive negotiations with the preferred bidder. That was the case four weeks ago, it is the case today and it will no doubt be the case for the next two weeks. Circumstances will evolve as we negotiate at the table. If the Leader of the Opposition does not understand basic commercial agreements or how you negotiate that, I will bring it down to a common denominator. I presume that the Leader of the Opposition has purchased a house or a car at some stage in his life. Having done that, and having picked the model or the house, he no doubt entered into negotiations with the agent to work out the deal. During the negotiations things changed; they went backwards and forwards until the parties were satisfied and could sign off on a deal. The only difference is that this is a $1.5 billion deal for the State of South Australia, but the principles are the same. I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition wants every member of Parliament sitting around the negotiating table. It is almost as if that is what he is suggesting: that would be a great farce, would it not? We are demonstrating commercially to Australia and internationally that we can put major deals of this nature together and that they are world-leading firsts.

The World Bank has nominated this model as being well timed, well planned and meeting the needs of water and infrastructure requirements in the Asian region in the next 10 years. At the moment, we are negotiating with CGE and Thames, which has a capital base of $16 billion—four times larger than the next biggest company in water services worldwide. We have them here in Adelaide talking to us. That is not bad for the State of South Australia. I know that the Leader of the Opposition does not like that, and he continually knocks the position we have in South Australia but, knock it as he will, let me say that at the end of the day we will have a deal for South Australia that is a damn good deal for this State. It will generate 1 100 new permanent jobs in this State; it will generate $628 million worth of exports over the next 10 years; and it will save 20 per cent off the top in the provision of those services to South Australians. That is the deal. We have this land bridge from this State, repositioning South Australia in economic terms, in the market place internationally.

We are repositioning this State to go into Asia, which is something the previous Administration never had the capacity, ability or initiative to put in place. This Government has put it in place now on two occasions, with data processing and EDS, to once again position this State ahead of the other States of Australia. We are negotiating a position in relation to water and sewerage infrastructure to ensure that this State is placed ahead of the other States of Australia. Does not the Leader of the Opposition want us to carve out a position as leaders in Australia on something? Does he not want to carve out 1 100 new jobs for South Australians in the future? Does he not want us to go into the export market opportunities, not having been able to do so in the past? Either be a proud South Australian or go away.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): In answer to the last question, the Minister for Infrastructure advised the House of the World Bank's endorsement of the Government strategy in respect of water. Can the Minister—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Playford will get his chance later.

Mr BRINDAL: Can the Minister for Infrastructure inform the House what the preferred bidder for the outsourcing of the water contract—United Water—has been doing to generate economic development and export potential for the South Australian water industry and also outline what success the company has had this week in winning contracts in Asia?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Well the Opposition might groan. They do not like the good news stories underpinning the policy direction we are taking, because it puts the lie to

what they are proceeding to do. Let me assure them—barbs as they are—that they can keep on for as long as they like but there is one thing that will occur at the end of the day. The Opposition will not deter me or this Government from proceeding down a track and implementing a policy that is a good deal for the people of South Australia. You will not stop that at the end of the day, try as you will.

In reply to the member for Unley's question, in Thailand yesterday, United Water partner Thames Water finalised a contract to build a new major water treatment plant to serve the northern side of Bangkok. The plant, with a distribution network, will take three years to construct and includes an agreement for Thames to operate the plant and system for a subsequent 25 years. It is a major private sector project to provide water supply in Thailand. It is of great strategic value, as a further five projects are proposed by the Provincial Waterworks Authority over the next three to four years. This is about positioning us for these market opportunities that are emerging in Asia with a company which is in there and actually winning the business now and with which we are currently negotiating to strike a contract.

That success follows on the back of a major coup for Thames, which last month signed the first major water contract in China. This contract includes a major construction project and subsequent operation of the plant for 15 years. On 1 October this year Thames Water took over the complete water supply system for the State of Kelatan in northern Malaysia. It has a population of 1.4 million, which means the size of the contract is similar to that envisaged in Adelaide. Thames will operate the complete water supply for 25 years, progressively delivering both cost and quality improvements.

In the Malaysian State of Selangor, CGE is now operating 27 treatment plants which are being progressively refurbished, involving an expenditure of $60 million. The award of these contracts and the continuing work involving already established operations in the Asia Pacific region will mean that United Water in South Australia will be able to rapidly benefit from design procurement and management opportunities following the conclusion of the contract with SA Water.

The examples that I have given clearly demonstrate that South Australian companies will benefit directly from supplying the goods and services required by the contracts and will be part of the future export potential being offered by United Water. We have already demonstrated to the public of South Australia how Pope Electric Motors has already supplied equipment and has ongoing contract opportunities. Those contracts are not 'maybe's' or 'would like to be's': they are actuals; they are signed contracts. That is business that can come here to benefit South Australians in future. That is the sort of deal and opportunity we have opened up, and that is the sort of challenge that exists to create something good for the State of South Australia: economic rejuvenation, economic rebuilding, economic activity—more jobs for South Australians.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Given the Minister for Infrastructure's reply to a question a few moments ago about the role of the Cabinet subcommittee in the negotiations, does the Premier stand by his claim made in the House yesterday that he first became aware two days ago that the company to operate Adelaide's water supply, United Water Services, would be 100 per cent foreign owned, which led to his criticism of the Minister to Liberal colleagues last night?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I love the way in which the Leader of the Opposition strings about four or five different claims together so that whatever the reply is to one of them will automatically suggest that it replies to everything. Let me go back and cover this matter again. Indeed, it was covered in great detail in the House yesterday. It was covered in the ministerial statement which the Minister gave—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I have made the statement in the House already. I made the statement yesterday. The Minister made a ministerial statement yesterday as well.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition just sit back and wait. As I told the Parliament yesterday, the fact that the services company was fully owned by both the French and the British was brought to my attention only yesterday. The Minister made a ministerial statement to the House yesterday which clearly set out the relationship between the services company and the international company for United Water, and that adequately answered the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: When the House can conduct itself as the public expects, we will proceed with Question Time. If members do not want to ask any more questions, that is fine with the Chair and we will proceed with the business. The honourable member for Frome.

MINERAL EXPLORATION, YELLABINNA

Mr KERIN (Frome): Will the Minister for Mines and Energy tell the Parliament what efforts the Department of Mines and Energy is making to ensure that mineral exploration activities in regional reserves, particularly at Yellabinna, are undertaken in a manner which minimises the impact on the environment?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: I would like to inform the House of the results of an environmental audit undertaken on past exploration activities in the Yellabinna regional reserve. Carried out with the full knowledge of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, it shows that between that department and the Department of Mines and Energy we are caring for the environment and ensuring that we do have audits to see what goes on. This audit was commissioned as part of our continuing review of past exploration to ensure that there has not been any detriment to the environment by exploration in the past. Of course, as we set the rules and regulations for explorers in the future, as part of that ongoing audit we write into the permissions and exploration leases that are granted any problems that have been encountered in the past.

The whole Yellabinna Reserve audit proved to be very beneficial. It showed that good environmental practices had gone on in the past. All the comments of that audit will go into future exploration leases and licences to make sure that, between the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources and the Minister for Mines and Energy, we continue to care for the environment in South Australia.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. Did the bid documents lodged with the Government by United Water Services include details of proposals for a

two-company structure and detail the foreign ownership of United Water Services? The Opposition has been advised that United Water's bid documents, considered by the Cabinet subcommittee, which comprised the Premier and the Minister for Infrastructure, included full details for a two-company structure and that United Water Services would be a 100 per cent foreign-owned company.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: First, I point out to the honourable member that the bid documents do not go to Cabinet or to the Cabinet subcommittee. They never have. No contract whatsoever has done so in all the time that I have been in government. What happens—and the honourable member has been told this in relation to the EDS contract and other major contracts—is that the bid documents go to a special room and to a special assessment team. That assessment team signs confidentiality agreements. The Ministers are not privy to those bid documents. The bid documents are there for independent public servants within the Government to assess and make a report on. The suggestion by the member for Hart that the bid documents float around Government, go to Cabinet, a Cabinet subcommittee or anything else is entirely false. Frankly, as a former senior adviser in the Premier's Department to the former Premier of this State, I would have thought that he would know that only too well. Any Government that floats around the bid documents in that manner is clearly negligent in the way it assesses these bids and opens the whole thing up to ministerial interference, which is entirely improper.

YOUTH TALENT QUEST

Ms GREIG (Reynell): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education indicate whether the recent TAFE/Youth SA talent quest was a success and, if so, are there any plans to expand this community musical spectacular?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Last Friday night we had a successful TAFE/Youth SA sponsored young music talent quest. In conjunction with Messenger Newspapers and the Rotary Club of Reynella, TAFE and Youth SA sponsored the awards for the southern area. They were so popular that they attracted young people from throughout the metropolitan area. In fact, the contest went for seven hours, and the entrants ranged in age from six to 18. The talent quest revealed what we already knew—that there is tremendous talent amongst our young people in South Australia.

I would like to commend the Rotary Clubs for their support, particularly the Reynella Rotary Club, and also Messenger Newspapers for supporting this function in the lead up to Carols by the Lake, which will take place in Reynella on 17 December. I am looking at the possibility of extending the concept of a young music talent quest to cover the whole State, in conjunction with Rotary and commercial sponsors, because there is no doubt that parents and young people are keen to have the opportunity to demonstrate their talent to the wider community. I would also like to pay tribute to David Sabine, who was the compere, because once again he has given freely of his time to support community-based projects. It is a wonderful outcome and a precursor to an extension of that program throughout the State.

The SPEAKER: Order! Questions that normally would be taken by the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources should be directed to the Deputy Premier.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Why did the Minister for Infrastructure tell the House yesterday that the agreement with the unions was finalised with United Water Services because United Water International did not yet exist? United Water International was registered with the Australian Securities Commission and has been operational since 28 September with the same directors as United Water Services.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: These questions are getting more inane.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members should be aware that the same question cannot be asked repeatedly.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I note that a very similar question was asked yesterday. I should have thought that, given the reply yesterday, the member for Hart would not have come back again today with a similar question. The nature of the question indicates a naive attitude to the process that is being undertaken. I will go through it again for the benefit of the member for Hart.

United Water Services was the initial vehicle, with CGE and Thames Water, and it was the basis upon which the company opened up negotiations and struck an enterprise agreement with the union movement in South Australia. I would have thought that was a smart move. It demonstrates that this company is serious about establishing good industrial relations with the work force in South Australia, and it put that in place with United Water Services when it entered the enterprise bargaining agreement with the union movement.

Subsequently, United Water Services made an offer to the Government to establish United Water International, which would be a 60 per cent Australian equity company with six of the 10 directors being resident in Australia. I say again, that is non-negotiable in this negotiating phase of the contract. The member for Hart should have some patience, because that will be incorporated at the end of the day.

Of course, it formed that company having made an offer for it in the proposal documents that came forward. It is sitting there waiting for the contract sign-off date so that it can put in the $3 million to establish the company upon which the negotiations are currently taking place. When the contract is concluded and negotiations are complete and it signs off and puts in the $3 million, that is the next step. If the member for Hart cannot follow that process and sequence and after replying to the question on two occasions he still cannot understand, it defies logic to convince the member for Hart of almost anything.

What amazes me about the Opposition is that it must have a very short memory. Many of us remember the power stations. Do members recall the leasing arrangements for power stations put in place by the former Government? I think the company was Lashkar, a Japanese company. We actually let the assets go under a lease-buy back agreement as a tax scam. It was a tax scam to get some financial advantage. That is what the former Administration did when in office.

Mr Becker: Who got caught for the tax?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Exactly. The chickens came home to roost for the taxpayers in that regard. It was part of the lousy deals put in place by the former Administration at a cost to taxpayers in South Australia. Let not anybody forget what the former Labor Government did on deals of that nature. It is absolute hypocrisy for this Opposition to make the claims that it is making about a contract that we are still

negotiating, but not under the guise of commercial confidentiality that members opposite raised every time a question was asked. It is absolute hypocrisy for the Opposition to question the process that we are going through compared with its actions when in Government.

CANE TOADS

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): Will the Minister for Primary Industries tell the House about any precautions he knows that are being taken to deal with threats by a disgruntled rabbit shooter to release a number of Queensland cane toads in the Murray-Mallee?

Members interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I do not think that the consequences of the calicivirus need any explanation.

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: I notice Opposition members laughing. I apologise that this question has had to be rushed into the House, but it is a very serious matter. As members will understand, the calicivirus escaped on to the South Australian mainland three or four weeks ago and has been spreading quite widely around the State. There have been some adverse effects not only to the rabbit meat industry but also to the livelihood of some rabbit shooters. The Premier has commented on that, and I have written to Senators Cooke and Collins saying that there have been serious effects on some people in South Australia, that employment has been affected and that we believe there should be compensation for those people because of the early release of the calicivirus.

However, something more serious has happened within the past 24 hours. We have received a report from a disgruntled rabbit shooter—it was on the Australian Conservation Foundation's calici hotline—claiming that he (we presume it is 'he') has released 637 cane toads between Burra and Tailem Bend. We have alerted the Animal and Plant Control Commission's eight boards in those areas. It is illegal to release cane toads in South Australia under section 44 of the Animal and Plant Control Act. We have no proof at this stage that it is a hoax, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been informed. This is a criminal matter.

I think that this Government has done as much as it can to keep the people who are affected informed about this, because it could be very serious for South Australia. There is no proof that it is a hoax. We have been consulting this morning to consider whether we should make the matter public. It is thought serious enough to be made public, and I ask anyone who has been affected by the early release of the calicivirus to contact us and we will contact the Federal Primary Industries Minister and others to see what can be done to help them.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Why did the Premier tell the House yesterday that the issue of 60 per cent Australian equity after 12 months and six Australian directors for United Water International was still subject to negotiation when the Minister for Infrastructure said that these issues were not negotiable? Yesterday, the Premier said, 'There should be a 60 per cent equity after 12 months and six Australian directors on it, but that issue is still subject to negotiation.' However, the Minister for Infrastructure yesterday also said that these issues were not negotiable.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: All I was pointing out to the House was that these are issues that the Government has put down as absolutes and that the contract is still being negotiated, as everyone knows. There is nothing unusual about that whatsoever.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr BUCKBY (Light): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education provide details of an innovative program involving students from high schools that allows them to gain valuable skills for future employment in the building and construction industry?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Light for his question and for his presence at the launch last Friday of a new program—a first for Australia—and attended also by the member for Hanson, whereby high school students can start training in modules which will give them the advantage of being able to enter a traineeship or apprenticeship in the construction industry. The training takes place at the Netley Centre, which is funded by the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation and the Construction Industry Training Board in a joint venture with the Master Builders' Association and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

It is a great achievement to have the employer body and the unions working together to help our young people. But what is very significant is that students from Gawler High School travel to Netley as part of their every-day curriculum to gain accredited training in the construction industry. Some of these young people are so keen that one lad has ridden his bicycle from Gawler to attend the Netley Centre. All the young people have arrived at least half an hour before starting time, and their teacher has described their behaviour as 'outstanding'.

This project is an example of how the high school system is accommodating vocational training and giving young people, who want to access a vocational career, the opportunity to start that training within the high school system. This project is a first for Australia and it caters to the desires of young people who want to take up a career in the building industry or in other vocational areas. It enables them to start much earlier at the high school level. I commend Gawler High School for its initiative, I commend the Master Builders' Association for its positive support, and I acknowledge the significant financial support from the Construction Industry Training Board, as well as the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation. This is a good news stories, and I trust that the Opposition will support these sorts of good news stories rather than focusing on the negative, which is its usual practice.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Did the Government seek independent expert advice on the viability and likely success of United Water International's proposed public float? What advice was received, and from whom was that advice received?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: That is a matter for the negotiating team in recommending, following the conclusion of negotiations, a position to the Government that will be taken to the board of the SA Water Corporation—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —which will be subsequently signed off by the Cabinet in South Australia. In response to the interjection, let us go over it again.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart. Repetition is out of order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Let us go over it one more time. At the end of the process, when the bids were in, a preferred bid was selected and, in that preferred bid, there was an offer to put United Water International in place, which would seek 60 per cent Australian equity and six out of 10 directors would be Australian residents. That is on the table; that is being negotiated. The negotiating team is going right through this whole process and will present a conclusion at the end of the day. Negotiation is taking place within the principles set down by the Government at the press conference that the Premier and I jointly put in place some four weeks ago. I ask members to show some patience and have no fear. It will be a good deal and it will be in the best interests of every South Australian.

TRADE, TARTARSTAN

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Gordon): Will the Premier advise the House of his talks this week with the Prime Minister of Tartarstan and how they will benefit South Australia?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Prime Minister of Tartarstan has been in Adelaide since Sunday. This Parliament should understand the very important significance of that visit to this State and the opening up of a major new opportunity between South Australia and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the former USSR. For the first time, Tartarstan has opened up a representative office in South Australia—in fact, it is the first office in Australia. One of the wealthier States of the former USSR has decided that enormous opportunity exists to develop industry and trade opportunities between South Australia and Tartarstan.

It is worthwhile looking at some of the areas in which Tartarstan is looking to buy technology from South Australia, first, in the area of land titling. It is recognised that, with the Torrens title system, South Australia has one of the best land titling systems in the world, and South Australia is being asked to help establish that system in Tartarstan. Secondly, it is looking at South Australia's food processing technology. The party from Tartarstan visited a number of companies, particularly San Remo, and acknowledged that this company has technology that could be used in Tartarstan. A significant wool industry exists in Tartarstan but its wool technology is well behind that of Australia, and it is looking to take South Australian wool technology into Tartarstan.

They have opened a liaison office in Melbourne Street, which is very important in terms of developing this two-way trade. When I left the Prime Minister this morning he indicated that he expects to be buying quite a significant amount of wine from South Australia. Tartarstan is looking at buying our meat technology and, in particular—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It will help the Barossa. I am delighted to say that Tartarstan recognises the fact that, across the board, South Australia has agricultural technology and management skills that would be very valuable as its collective farms are broken up and, through those collective farms, as it introduces our type of technology, whether it relates to food processing or fruit, crop or animal production. I believe this will open up huge new opportunities. Tartarstan is outside the Asian area, and I am delighted that the Leader of the Opposition supports me in this, because the whole of that Russian area has had enormous money poured into it from the European market. An opportunity now exists to open up major new markets in the region for South Australia.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the different statements made since Friday by the Premier, his Minister for Infrastructure and the Chairman of United Water, Mr Malcolm Kinnaird, about the water deal, does the Premier believe that the Minister for Infrastructure should give evidence and that United Water executives, including Mr Kinnaird, should be recalled to appear before the select committee of the Legislative Council so that the truth can be established?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Leader of the Opposition fully understands that, as a member of the Lower House, I have no say whatsoever in a select committee of the Upper House. The select committee of the Upper House is master of its own destination.

HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Will the Minister for Health inform the House of action that the Government is taking to address the medical equipment needs of the State public hospital system?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I thank the honourable member for his question, because it is a very difficult matter to deal with given what we took over. We inherited a health system with crumbling infrastructure, and there is a huge bill to bring the State's infrastructure up to acceptable standards so that we can provide South Australians with the best possible care. The previous Government, as all South Australians remember only too well, invested in ASER projects and Remm-Myer centres rather than hospital buildings and equipment. We now face the twin problem of repaying the debt and ensuring that the infrastructure is appropriate.

As an indication of the sorts of problems the Government is facing, I cite the example of the radiotherapy simulator at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The existing simulator was installed in the oncology department—and the radiotherapy and oncology departments, for those who may not know, treat cancer—at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in mid 1982, during the term of the last Liberal Government. At that stage it had an expected serviceable life of approximately 10 years. Everyone would realise, of course, that that expected serviceable life span has well and truly passed and the previous Government did nothing about it.

It is the only machine of its kind in the State, and any breakdown will see cancer therapy service brought to its knees. In 1994-95 this machine carried out 1 936 megavolt patient courses, but the Australian Institute of Radiotherapy recommends a maximum of 1 500. Therefore, this machine carried out nearly 33⅓ per cent extra courses. That obviously puts a strain on ageing equipment, and it means there could be a further breakdown.

To ensure that radiotherapy and cancer services are not jeopardised, or at least those which require radiotherapy simulation, I am pleased to inform the House and the people

of South Australia that, recently, I approved the purchase of a new radiotherapy simulator for the Royal Adelaide Hospital at an estimated cost of $925 000, with $675 000 being provided from the South Australian Health Commission's capital works program. This will allow for an additional unit to be built to support the current machine, and hopefully with that extra support that machine will be able to carry on for the next five years. I assure the House that the Government is pleased to be restoring the capital base of the health system, and it will invest in appropriate equipment rather than waste taxpayers' money.

WATER, OUTSOURCING

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Premier's confirmation that he learnt that United Water Services would be 100 per cent foreign owned only last Tuesday, can he tell the House why he was not informed of this earlier and who failed to inform him?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: What the member for Hart fails to look at is the enormous benefit of this contract to South Australia. He tries to shoot down every single contract that this State Government puts up: whether it is a new industrial development in this State or whether it is attracting EDS and information technology, we can be assured of one thing and one thing alone—that the member for Hart together with the Leader of the Opposition will try to drag it down.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: This contract has enormous benefits for South Australia. I challenge the member for Hart to say whether he supports the building up of a new water industry in this State, bringing major new job opportunities to South Australia, exporting $625 million worth of water products and services out of South Australia, and saving about $10 million (20 per cent of the total value of the work) for the taxpayers of South Australia every year? Quite clearly, anyone who looks at the facts will say that this is good for South Australia. Certainly, the Government is backing it, but it is time the Opposition backed this contract as well.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart is warned for the first time.

WATER BORES

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is directed to the Treasurer, representing the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. Will the Minister provide details of the number of backyard water bores that are being drilled in metropolitan Adelaide and whether this number is increasing? Attention is currently being placed on protecting the State's water resources, and I would like to know whether backyard bores are being considered as part of that work?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: It is with great pleasure that I take on a new subject area.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The question is about bores, but there are some that you do not have to dig for. The answer to the question is that I am advised that, for a range of reasons, there has been an increase in the number of bores.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: There are one or two over there. The answer is that, with reference to the metropolitan area, some 1 500 licences have been issued over the past 18 months, taking the number of licences to approximately 3 000. So, there has virtually been a doubling of the number of bores. As I recall, because I actually looked at the proposal myself, there was some indication of a better way of watering your garden than via the tap. However, given the explosion and proliferation of bores in the metropolitan area and concerns about the aquifer, further research must be done on this issue. Given the expanding number of bores, concerns have arisen as to whether they may lead to a diminution in water quality or an increase in salinity. So, a technical review of Adelaide's metropolitan underground water will be completed soon, and this will enable us to improve further and pinpoint management strategies as they relate to bores.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, and for Youth Affairs. Why is there no-one on the Government's Youth Unemployment Task Force who is much under the age of 40?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The composition of the task force is still being considered in that we intend to add someone from the rural community, and the age of that person will be made known at the time we make the announcement. However, I can inform the honourable member that the members of that task force are not known for the age characteristic: most of them happen to be fairly youthful people.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to members that they realise that the people observing the sitting of the House would not be particularly impressed.

BUSHFIRES

Mr EVANS (Davenport): Will the Minister for Infrastructure provide the House with details of the emergency bushfire risk day currently undertaken by ETSA Corporation and what that might mean to the safety of South Australians?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: ETSA Corporation is currently undertaking an emergency bushfire risk day simulation exercise. The exercise, being held at ETSA Corporation's headquarters on Anzac Highway, commenced yesterday and will conclude today. The test will prove out ETSA's communications during a simulated disconnection and reconnection of supply on South Australia's West Coast due to bushfire danger. The simulation will be coordinated to ascertain the quality of ETSA's bushfire risk procedures with results and outcomes being rigorously analysed to test how ETSA's response times might be improved. The testing and analysis will be conducted at the conclusion by ETSA's bushfire risk analysts.

As members would be aware, ETSA Corporation manages the bushfire risk potential of power lines to start a fire on days when prevailing conditions are adverse, that is, exceptionally hot and windy conditions. Severe weather conditions can considerably increase the risk of fire start to unacceptable levels. In these circumstances, the corporation's operating procedures include disconnection of supply when circumstances warrant on total fire ban days specified by the Bureau of Meteorology. Wind speeds are monitored by the corporation on a local basis, and critical decisions are made as to whether individual lines will be disconnected. South Australians can be reassured that ETSA Corporation's own

internal systems are regularly tested and examined and that statewide simulations such as this one today ensure that personnel, procedures and equipment are in readiness for the impending bushfire season.

HOUSING TRUST EMERGENCY FUNDING

Ms HURLEY (Napier): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. Have the emergency funds for tenant removal and other expenses been transferred from the South Australian Housing Trust to Family and Community Services, and how much funding is to be transferred for that purpose? The Minister has advised that funds formerly available under the private rental support scheme of the Housing Trust for emergency transfer will be transferred to Family and Community Services. I am now receiving reports that refugees of domestic violence are still having difficulty in accessing funds.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: The arrangement has been entered into between the Minister for Family and Community Services and me for the transfer of funds. It is my understanding that the administration work within the department has taken place and that those funds are now available to the Department of Family and Community Services. Next year, it will be picked up in their own budget. I will check this afternoon to ensure that that has taken place, but as far as my department is concerned the matter is now closed. The money has been made available, and these services are now being provided through the Department of Family and Community Services.

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES TECHNOLOGY

Mr VENNING (Custance): Will the Minister for Primary Industries tell the House what developments are under way to improve the flow of information within the primary industries sector?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: I thank the honourable member for his question and for his interest in primary industries matters. As members would know, the department has been working very hard on information technology. In fact, the Premier and I attended the annual meeting of the agriculture bureaux at Victor Harbor earlier this year. In conjunction with the agriculture bureaux, they have prepared an AGSA 2000 computer program which will tap into primary industry information not only in South Australia but all around Australia and ultimately overseas. That is a great step forward and puts South Australia at the forefront of the information technology area.

Today, we have announced the launch of a new service which will be offered by Primary Industries South Australia called Agrifax. Agrifax has 125 topics on it and is very similar to the Pollfax by which many of us get weather forecasts. Like the member for MacKillop and many other members of Parliament, it is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. It is very important, because farmers are now becoming much more aware of the technologies that are available to them. With 125 topics able to be accessed through one number, Agrifax provides the extra information available, as users require it. It adds to the AGSA 2000 computer technology that will be available; it adds to the farm plan that has been developed within Primary Industries; and it adds to the Landcare initiatives. Within a few weeks PISA intends to have Internet available to farmers. Once again, all elements of the South Australian Government are entered into information technology to make sure that our farmers receive the benefits that information technology can provide.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Giles has nothing to do with this debate.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Of course, on this side of the House we realise that the member for Giles is keen to get into retirement but the Opposition would not want to have a by-election in Whyalla at the moment, although I must say that the honourable member seems to be half on a by-election as far as leaving this Chamber early every Thursday is concerned.

During the Grand Prix, I was involved in a trade delegation with the Minister for Trade and the Minister for Primary Industries in Hong Kong. I was absolutely delighted to see the work being done in Hong Kong by Joyce Mac, who heads up the South Australian centre there. Whilst there, I was told that Western Australia and South Australia are the only two States doing anything serious about further developing network opportunities for business development throughout that region of Asia. I was also pleased to see how closely the South Australian Economic Development Authority, through Joyce Mac, was working with Austrade in Hong Kong.

I was particularly impressed by a dinner held on the Tuesday evening attended by 100 key investors and business people from Hong Kong. I was lucky enough to sit at my table with some of those people who have already started to do significant amounts of business with South Australia. One person has 125 000 square feet of retail space in his own right in Hong Kong. That is an enormous amount of retail space in that city. He also has five other major agency groups that are looking to expand retail and wholesale opportunities between South Australia and Hong Kong.

I was especially interested in the fact that two years ago this particular gentleman started importing wine from Mount Hurtle Winery at Woodcroft in my electorate. A great winemaker and business person, Geoff Merrill, runs that winery. The gentlemen concerned was telling me how acceptable that wine product is within the region. He will be coming to South Australia soon, and I believe that during that visit my electorate of Mawson will see further opportunities developed for more of our wineries to export into Hong Kong.

We also need to realise—and I congratulate the Government on getting on with this job—that Hong Kong is now clearly the gateway to China. In 1997 China will officially take over Hong Kong from Britain. It is important that we continue to make sure our stamp is put on that region because a lot of work is taking place there at the moment. During my time there I also went to Okyama in Japan and had the opportunity to be involved in some agreements that were signed. One of those was significant for South Australia

because it was an agreement signed by the Onkaparinga TAFE Institute in my electorate with a dairy college in the prefecture of Okyama and in the village of Yatsukason. Those people are very proud of their dairy industry, which is a lot larger than I had thought, but they still import a lot of South Australian product, particularly through Dairy Vale.

It was a very good initiative on behalf Minister Such and Madeline Woolley, Director of the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE, and Tony Sutherland, lecturer in dairy studies at the institute, to have facilitated this closer agreement and this exchange relationship between students. They realise how important agriculture and the dairy industry is to Japan. Next to the rice industry it appears to be the single largest agricultural industry in that region. They want to continue to build up those links.

It is important that all members realise that we must continue to work on the social development links as well as the economic development links when it comes to continuing to build our opportunities in the region. No-one can expect it to happen overnight. You have to build up trust and be patient as you work through these issues with our Asian neighbours. Half the world's population is on our doorstep and we have enormous opportunities and wealth in South Australia, particularly when it comes to the dairy and wine industries in the southern region which I represent. It is fantastic that the South Australian Government is heading forward and getting on with the job instead of sitting back and capitalising on things such as the Grand Prix, which has finished now, in any event.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): In October, the public of South Australia were not told the truth about this water deal. The things that the Opposition had been saying for months about our water system being run by a French and British conglomerate were denied specifically by the Premier and by the Minister for Infrastructure.

Mr MEIER: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I draw your attention to Standing Order 104, because I believe that the Leader is not adhering to that Standing Order.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members should address their comments through the Chair.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I may well do the same as the Premier does and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair does not want to constrict the honourable member's remarks, but he knows that those comments are out of order. I suggest that he get on with his business without being foolish.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: On Friday, the head of United Water described the fundamental part of the Premier's and the Minister for Infrastructure's announcement as a beat-up. That is why we want to see Mr Kinnaird, the Chairman of United Water, Mr Anderson, Mr Doyle and also the Minister for Infrastructure called before the select committee.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the member for Ridley wants to take a point of order. I ask him to proceed as quickly as possible.

Mr LEWIS: Certainly, Sir. Standing Order 120 provides:

> A member may not refer to any debate in the other House of Parliament or to any measure impending in that House.

Referring to Friday, the Leader is now quoting proceedings impending before that House in a measure of that House.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair is of the view that the matters referred to by the Leader were reported widely and referred to a committee proceeding.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is just part of the cover-up. There were no answers to the questions today and the cracks were all papered over. Let us talk about what happened yesterday, when we saw the Premier distance himself from the Minister for Infrastructure.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If members continue to disrupt, I will increase the amount of time available to the Leader.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yesterday, we saw the distancing that occurred. Despite the Minister for Infrastructure's interjection on the Premier, 'Yes, it will start on 1 January,' the Premier was taking no notice. He was at arm's length. The Premier said he was not told about the company that was going to run our water system until two days ago. He said he did not know it would be 100 per cent owned by foreign interests from France and Britain, and last night all hell broke loose around these corridors. There were meetings in which the member for Hartley, at one meeting, read from a prepared script and asked the Premier why he did not know, and the Premier unloaded the Minister for Infrastructure for not telling him, for misleading him and making him mislead the public of South Australia. There was then a series of meetings involving supporters of the Minister for Infrastructure and supporters of the Premier, and resignation was discussed.

Let me tell the House that the Opposition was provided with information by a number of members of Parliament and offered information by an adviser to the Premier to ask questions of the Minister for Infrastructure so as to damage him. Of course, there was a meeting at midnight—there was one at 11 o'clock—and the Minister for Industrial Affairs was locked away with the Premier; the member for Coles was involved—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: They were rushing around the place plotting and hatching, but this morning wiser heads prevailed after the front page of the *Advertiser* revealed what was going on. This morning there was a meeting and they said, 'For God's sake, we were in opposition for 20 years and we don't want to blow it now.'

Mr BASS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Earlier you made a ruling about speaking through the Chair. The Leader of the Opposition has now been speaking for 90 seconds and has not even addressed you.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to proceed. He is well aware that he should speak through the Chair.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I hope I will get an extension of time, because this is all about a cover-up, smoothing it over, pretending, not answering the question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —and perhaps the media will follow cane toads, Trivial Pursuit, or what have you. The fact is that the Premier of this State was not told by the Minister for Infrastructure. The Premier bagged the Minister for Infrastructure to colleagues last night.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader's time has expired. The honourable member for Mitchell.

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Once again we have been privileged to hear 'Wrong again Mike.' 'Wrong again Mike'

has dreamed up the fact that there was a backbench meeting at which the Premier was supposed to have canned the Minister for Infrastructure. Wrong again, Mike: no such meeting was held at which any particular bagging occurred. The Leader of the Opposition claimed there were a number of meetings after the Parliament adjourned last night. Wrong again, Mike. No such meetings were held anywhere in Adelaide. Certainly, I never got an invite. I was having a cup of coffee with the member for Unley last night and we did not get invited to any meeting. So, wrong again, Mike. What is wrong with the Opposition when it has to beat up a case to say that all these meetings occurred? No such meetings have occurred. The only meetings that are occurring are meetings for the development of the State, meetings for getting on with the signing of the contract with United Water International for the maintenance of South Australia's water services.

Once again,'Wrong again Mike' has got it completely wrong. As to meetings, I had a meeting with the member for Hart last night, outside the Casino at about midnight, at which the honourable member said, 'Listen, Colin, let's go and have a beer. I'm sure we can work out what the heck is going on in this House. I'm sure there's a meeting or two that we can dream up.' No such meetings were going on. There is not a problem with regard to the Minister for Infrastructure, and there is not a problem between the Minister for Infrastructure and the Premier; in fact, they are getting on very well.

The situation is working well; we have an absolutely magnificent team; and we have an absolutely magnificent front bench performer for this House and this Government. The crux of this whole problem is that members opposite see an excellent parliamentary performer and speech maker in this House doing wonders for this State, and they are jealous when they look at what they have on their side of the House.

The Opposition has 11 misfits, 11 members who would not even match the Minister for Infrastructure's shadow. When we look at the Opposition, we might ask, 'Would you allow these people to run the State for us?' We can look at the members for Torrens, Hart, Taylor, Spence, Playford and Ross Smith—the vacant front bench. Then we can look at the members for Price and Napier.

The member for Giles has to catch the 3 o'clock bus because there is no way in the world that he wants to be late in getting back to Whyalla. To hell with the people of South Australia, the member for Giles has to catch a bus. Unfortunately, the member for Giles did not take the Leader of the Opposition with him when he caught the bus. It would have been nice if he had taken 'Wrong again Mike' with him to Whyalla.

On behalf of all the backbenchers who were supposed to be at that meeting, who were supposed to be asking questions and who were supposed to be witnessing the Premier dumping the Minister for Infrastructure—on behalf of all the Government backbenchers—I say that we have the utmost confidence in the Minister for Infrastructure; we have the utmost confidence in the Premier of this State; and we have the utmost confidence in the negotiations that are progressing with respect to the water services of this State, because this can only be good and right for South Australia. For too long we have seen the inefficiencies that these people have scorned on the people of South Australia. We have seen the inefficiencies that they have created, and no longer are we going to put up with them. No longer will we allow these people to run this State. We have the utmost confidence in the Premier, in the Minister for Infrastructure and in the ministry.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Venning): Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): What a performance from the member for Mitchell, someone who will spend the rest of his career on the backbench. The reality is that what we have seen in the course of the past week in this Parliament—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley is out of order. The House will come to order, because every member has the right to be heard. The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Don't we have a sensitive mob! They were all running around the House last night in their huddles, having meetings and planning and conniving. Half the Liberal Caucus wanted to sack the Minister for Infrastructure, while the other half backed the Premier.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have been accused of running around the House. I had guests in from the Hackham Sports and Social Club and I was not running anywhere.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The honourable member knows that: he has misled us again.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson will resume his seat.

Mr FOLEY: The fundamental point is that yesterday we saw a performance from the Premier of this State when he cut the Minister for Infrastructure adrift. We saw a belated attempt today by the Premier to defend his Minister, but he was not doing that yesterday. We all saw the looks on the front bench yesterday: there simply was not one ounce of support for the Minister for Infrastructure yesterday. The fundamental issue is that we are a matter of only four to five weeks away from signing away our water to an international company for 15 years. The reality is that we still have major disputes and points of major issue between the Government and the tendering company. Those issues remain unresolved to this day, yet the Minister intends signing the contract within the next fortnight.

What an absolute debacle for the Premier of this State not to be made aware of the fact that the company operating and running our water will be 50 per cent British and 50 per cent French. Last night it certainly worried the member for Hartley who, along with other members, raised it with the Premier. Members opposite should not come into this House today and deny the events of the past 24 hours. The reality is that the Minister for Infrastructure has not done his homework on this issue or the proper work that he should have on this contract. The Premier of this State realised and understood that yesterday and was less than supportive of his Minister.

Let us put the politics to one side and look at the issue. Five weeks from day one of operation of the largest contract this Government will ever enter into we have a major dispute. Members should not have the gall or the cheek to tell the Opposition that it is all part of the negotiating parameters. The Government has some pretty wide negotiating parameters if it is still running around in circles trying to work out who owns the company, how much equity—

Members interjecting:

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

Mr FOLEY: They don't like the truth, do they, Sir? The reality is—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: I warn the member for Unley for shouting across the Chamber.

Mr FOLEY: The member for Unley certainly does not appreciate the truth. The reality is that five weeks from day one of the operation commencing we do not know who owns the company, whether there will be Australian equity, which company will employ the 400 employees and whether or not there will be a share float. All of those questions remain unanswered. The most frightening aspect of this is that 24 hours ago the Premier of this State, on his own admission in this Chamber, was unaware that the company that will operate our water in this State for the next 15 years is 100 per cent foreign owned. Explain that one to your marginal electorates. Explain that one to the electors of Reynell and to all the other marginal seats, because they do not appreciate Governments that are not truthful with them.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I remind the House that every member of this Chamber has the right to be heard. I would ask members to remember that and to act with due decorum.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): It is interesting to follow a member who continually knocks the State—knock, knock, knock. The premature release of the rabbit calicivirus has focused public attention on rabbits and their management. Most of the emphasis has been on the risks and potentially adverse consequences of this release, not on the benefits of rabbit control. The rabbit is Australia's most damaging pest animal. The soon to be released review of the Animal and Plant Control Act points to an estimated annual $62 million benefit from controlling rabbits just in South Australia. A recent report into the savings for the Commonwealth from eradication of the rabbit amount to a staggering $600 million benefit per year. In this State the South Australian Farmers' Federation estimates that the State's farmers spend $1.5 million per year on rabbit control. At least two thirds of this amount comes straight out of farmers' pockets.

Rabbits were introduced into Australia last century. Records of the Eyre Peninsula show that the man who brought rabbits into Middlecamp near Cowell on Franklin Harbor threatened instant dismissal to any employee found killing a rabbit. A book titled *Franklin Harbor District Council 1888-1988* states:

> The rabbits flourished in their new environment and multiplied at such a devastating rate that they were well established in all parts of the district by the time the area was surveyed for agriculture in 1878.

Poisoning, trapping and ripping of burrows have little effect on the rabbit population. In limestone country on the West Coast of Eyre Peninsula professional trappers could easily net up to 3 000 rabbits per night without visibly reducing the numbers.

Today it is difficult to envisage the millions of rabbits that abounded in the countryside. Rabbits were responsible for not denuding areas of all growing plants. Sheoaks were particularly susceptible. Captain Matthew Flinders noted on his exploration in 1802 that the hills near Port Lincoln and Tumby Bay, visible from the sea, were clothed in sheoaks. One of these properties was the White River Station at Louth Bay. The late Clarrie Proude said that the White River Station homestead block was on the market for two years before he and his father bought it for £4 an acre ($12 per hectare) earlier this century.

They were told that they would go broke and that they would never pay for the block because it was so badly infested with rabbits that income from the property was very low. The sheoaks had all gone from the hills which were bare because rabbits ate all regeneration as it appeared. Sheoaks were also plentiful on the western side of Eyre Peninsula but few remained by the 1950s. In 1990, Bill and Maureen Nosworthy of Elliston won the Ibis Award for landcare for sheoak regeneration and revegetation on their property at Lake Hamilton. Even then, fencing to exclude rabbits, along with other means of rabbit control, was an essential part of the project.

The regeneration project was only possible when it was begun in the 1980s because of the drop in rabbit numbers, brought about principally by myxomatosis but aided by conventional methods of rabbit destruction. In the 1950s, new hope emerged with the release of the myxomatosis virus, which was spread by mosquito. Rabbit populations dropped dramatically. Land that had been unable to be used for agriculture was reclaimed and productivity blossomed. The distinctive rabbit edge to crops disappeared and crops grew to the limit of the worked ground.

However, over the years the effectiveness of myxomatosis has declined. Now we have a new weapon in the rabbit calicivirus. Fears that native fauna would be targeted by predators if the rabbit was removed as a food source would seem unfounded going on past experience. The initial effects of myxomatosis was as dramatic as that of calicivirus. The drop in the rabbit population at that time was an inestimable boon not only to native fauna through the lessening of competition for available food resources but also to native flora and agriculture. I believe that the Federal and State Departments of Primary Industries are looking at the loss of livelihood by rabbit shooters and processors. Shooters were the first to suggest that they be assisted to shoot foxes whose skins, at present, are unsaleable, which would help to prevent possible targeting of native animals by foxes.

However, I suggest that courses in tractor driving and machinery operation for rabbit ripping be also considered. Perhaps this could form the basis of a Commonwealth job scheme for the long-term unemployed to help farmers. Now is the opportunity to eradicate the rabbits before they build a tolerance to the calicivirus as they did to myxomatosis and their numbers rise once more. The Rotary Club of Australia already has a plan in place to do this. It is called ACRE (Australian Campaign for Rabbit Eradication) and it should be supported. Consideration should be given to gaining tax deductions for this important work by farmers and others.

Ms GREIG (Reynell): This afternoon, we have listened to a lot or drivel in the House from members opposite who thought they knew what was going on last night. It is a sorry state of affairs when people who brought this State down in the first place look at what is happening and cannot see the benefits to this State but want to bring us down further when they do not even know what is going on. The Premier must have been a very busy man last night, because I met with him for a while and discussed industrial development in my area. He is a clever man and, according to other people's imaginations, he can spread himself over many issues. Enough knocking—the taxpayers have had enough of their time wasted on that.

Earlier today, the Premier highlighted to this House a success story for a company within my electorate—Sola Optical Australia, which is situated in the heart of the industrial area of Lonsdale. This afternoon, I want to take a few minutes to congratulate Sola Optical Australia on the

completion of its research and development facility, which is to be officially opened by the Premier tomorrow. Members may be aware that last year $4 million was made available to Sola Optical Australia from this Government, and with this financial boost to the company Sola Optical Australia is committed not only to research but also to a long-term future in South Australia.

The Sola International Research Centre has been fitted out with the latest in laboratory and optical testing equipment. The facility, under Research Director Dr Matthew Cuthbertson, undertakes lens development for the group's worldwide operations. The new facility houses approximately 80 research staff who have moved in from over-crowded quarters which were made inadequate from years of rapid expansion. The new building incorporates a vision research centre, developed as a concept to see how people use lenses. The facility will test head and eye movements and the use of lenses in real life simulations. Already installed in the vision centre are a miniature putting green and a car mock-up, where subjects will use a putter or driving controls while wearing a headband fitted with measuring devices. I believe a cash register, work station, desk and television will be added, among other things, to study eye movement and lens usage.

The accuracy needed for lens design is incredibly detailed, and designs are evolving to even more specialised applications. In addition to vision science, the research centre's areas of expertise include lens design, manufacturing systems, optical coatings and polymer chemistry. Sola Optical Australia is a division of Sola International Holdings, a company founded in South Australia in 1960. Sola International is a leading manufacturer of lenses in plastic and glass for eyeglasses and sunglasses. The company has over 5 500 employees worldwide and operates 14 manufacturing facilities in 12 countries around the world.

In 1988, Sola moved its worldwide headquarters to Menlo Park, California. To support a commitment to developing innovative new products and improved process technology, the company operates two major research and development centres, one in Australia and the other in the United States. Every week, Sola customers around the world order over 1.5 million lenses through the company's sales and customer service operations. They choose from some 15 000 different lens types that are held in inventory in 35 distribution centres located in 16 countries. Sola customers are even more diverse, located in over 50 countries, from Argentina to Zimbabwe. Each day, over 100 million people around the world go about their lives wearing Sola lenses.

Sola has pioneered numerous advances in optics, among them the spectralite patented lens material. Development of spectralite has been a 10-year process. It is the only material for lenses that has been developed by a lens company. The spectralite lens is made from a unique thin plastic with enhanced optical performance. Sola is also developing a new lens manufacturing technology called Matrix, a laminating system whereby two super thin wafers are combined to make a lens. Just being launched on the Australian market is a near vision access lens, which allows the wearer to see near and intermediate distances; for instance, in an office situation with a desk and a computer, or in a boardroom for reading or looking across the table without having to take reading glasses on and off continually. Another new product is Sola's aspheric graduate gold lens, the latest model in its range of progressively graduated thin plastic lenses.

In Adelaide, the Sola Optical plant employs 700 people, most of whom I am pleased to say are local residents of Reynell, Mawson and Kaurna. Sixty thousand lenses a day are manufactured at Lonsdale, and half these are exported to Sola operations around the world. Sola Optical Australia is a major employer within my electorate, and I congratulate the company on the work it has been doing.

MEMBER'S REMARKS

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: During the grievance debate this afternoon, the member for Hart again made accusations that are totally incorrect: he accused me and many of my colleagues of running around the House last night having extraordinary meetings. I would like to place on the public record that nothing is further from the truth. I had a group of guests in here for dinner, and I was committed to making sure that they saw the proper business and workings of this House after we had finished dinner. Therefore, I spent much of the evening moving through the Parliament, and all I saw was normal work going on that we do all the time. I have had it up to here—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is proceeding well beyond a personal explanation.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I want it on the record that I was not running around anywhere—nor were any of my colleagues—having extraordinary meetings. We were getting on with our work, and I condemn the member for Hart for saying otherwise.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! That is adding comment, which is gratuitous and not permissible.

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. Baker, for the Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources), obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 and to make a consequential amendment to the Wilderness Protection Act 1992. Read a first time.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The *National Parks and Wildlife (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 1995* aims to substantially reform the administration of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* through the replacement of the Reserves Advisory Committee with a South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council, implementation of a mechanism to form Advisory Committees to assist the Council and the provision of statutory recognition for the Consultative Committees, sixteen of which currently exist throughout the State.

The Government made a pre-election commitment to reform administration of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

In April 1994 the recommendations of the Review into the Management of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* Reserves were released. This review recommended an expanded Advisory Body comprised of seven members.

Further consideration of the administration of the Act has led to the amendments currently before the House to replace the Reserves

Advisory Committee with a South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council with a wider range of functions.

It is proposed that the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council be comprised of seven members one of whom is the Director National Parks and Wildlife, who is an ex-officio member.

Four persons will be appointed on the basis of qualifications and experience in one of each of the following:

conservation of animals and plants
- management of reserve land
- management of natural resources
- organising community involvement

and two persons selected for qualifications or experience in one or more of:
- ecologically based tourism
- business management
- financial management and
- marketing

The South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council will be responsible for the following functions:
- planning in relation to reserves and wildlife
- funding, involving sponsorship and the development and marketing of commercial activities
- community consultation and participation
- public education and promotion for conservation
- advice on the development of policy
- performance review and reporting
- finding allocation advice from the Wildlife Conservation Fund, and
- any other matters referred by the Minister.

In order to support the role of the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council it is proposed that specialist Advisory Committees will be formed to advise the Council and the Minister.

Without limiting the matters on which an Advisory Committee may advise the Council, an Advisory Committee may provide advice on the management of wildlife including:
- the harvesting and farming of wildlife
- the culling of wildlife
- the reintroduction of particular species to parts of the State once inhabited by that species
- issuing of permits under the Act
- the plan of management for a particular reserve or plans of management generally
- the involvement of Aboriginal people in the management of land and wildlife.

In order to complete the process for public involvement in management of the State's reserve system and biological resources, the Bill provides for statutory recognition of the very successful Consultative Committees.

It is proposed that geographically based Consultative Committees will continue to provide a forum for consultation on reserve management and the conservation of plants, animals and ecosystems.

This Bill also contains important provisions for the management and sustainable use of native plants and animals. These amendments are addressed in three parts, trial farming of native animals, commercial harvesting of native animals and to allow the taking and selling of native plants for commercial purposes.

Amendment to the farming of protected animal provisions of the Act will enable permits to be issued to allow trial farming of a species for a maximum period of up to six years. This removes the necessity to amend the Act to place a species on the llth Schedule as a species which may be farmed, when it is uncertain if the animal has commercial potential.

These amendments and existing provisions of the Act will allow a trial farming permit to be subject to such restrictions, conditions or limitations as may be necessary to safeguard the conservation interests of a species and ensure accountability by the trial farmer.

If there is a need to extend a trial farming period beyond three years, then the amendments require that a Draft Code of Management be prepared prior to the extension of a permit for a further period of up to three years.

Commercial harvesting amendments recognise that species such as the Red and Western Grey Kangaroo and the Euro which have for many years been harvested under the auspices of pest fauna destruction permits plan will now be managed by specific commercial harvesting provisions of the Act.

The proposed amendments provide for commercial harvesting of native animals where a plan of management has been prepared and adopted within a framework which addresses:
- impact of harvesting on species and ecosystems
- factors likely to impact on species
- other factors affecting a species as a renewable resource
- protection of the environment crops, stock and property
- methods and procedures for capture or killing
- consultation with the community
- publication and distribution of the code
- issue of permits for harvesting
- royalties for animals harvested
- any other matters directed by the Minister.

The trial farming and commercial harvesting of native animals amendments provide the opportunity for new sustainable industries to develop in this State. Emu and Crocodile farming are valid examples of the potential which farming of native animals provides for sustainable farming of species and economic benefit.

The successful management of the Kangaroo Industry is graphic evidence that commercial harvesting which is carried out in an ecological sustainable manner under an approved plan of management can provide economic benefit to communities. It also guarantees a commitment to ongoing monitoring of populations and research into the biology of species.

The harvesting of native plants is another area which provides opportunity to recognise the value of our natural resources. Some species such as Melaleuca uncinata (Broombush) have already been recognised for their ability to be harvested as a renewable resource. Members will be aware of this plant's popularity for brush fencing.

The amendments recognise the potential for harvesting of native plants and establish a framework for the development and adoption of standards which take into account the;
- effect of taking plants on the ecosystem to which the species belongs
- need for research in relation to species taken
- identification of plants and plant products
- public comment on draft recommendations
- royalty payable on plants taken, and
- the ability to impose restrictions and conditions on permits.

This will remove the necessity of seeking clearance approval under the Native Vegetation Act for the harvesting of a renewable resource.

It is not intended that these provisions will relate to all native plants. Where a species is in demand to the degree that harvesting has the potential to have an adverse impact on the species or the ecosystem to which it belongs, then its management can be brought under the commercial taking provisions by notice in the *Gazette*.

The Government will ensure through the consultative and advisory mechanism established in this Bill that consultation will occur to identify and address issues relating to the use of individual native plant and animal species.

There are a number of other consequential and machinery amendments proposed which will improve the administration of the Act.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 5—Interpretation

Clause 3 amends section 5 of the principal Act.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 11—Wildlife Conservation Fund

Clause 4 makes consequential amendments to section 11 of the principal Act.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 12—Delegation

Clause 5 provides that the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Council or an advisory committee can act as a delegate under section 12.

Clause 6: Substitution of Part 2 Division 2

Clause 6 replaces Division 2 of Part 2 (which establishes the Reserves Advisory Committee) with Divisions that establish the Council, advisory committees and consultative committees. New sections 15 to 19B provide for the establishment of the Council, its procedures and related matters. Section 19C sets out the Council's functions. New Division 2A provides for the establishment by the Minister of advisory committees to advise the Minister or the Council. Division 2B provides for the establishment of consultative committees by the Minister to provide advice on local issues affected by the administration of the Act.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 22—Powers of wardens
Clause 7 amends section 22 of the principal Act by widening slightly the power to stop vehicles. The power can only be exercised if the warden believes on reasonable grounds that an offence has been committed.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 23—Forfeiture
Clause 8 amends section 23 of the principal Act. At the moment section 23(4) provides that if proceedings are not taken against the owner of an object seized within three months the object must be returned. It may be, however, that a seized object is not owned by the person who is prosecuted. These amendments address this problem. New subsection (5a) provides that where an animal, carcass, egg or plant is seized it may be sold and converted to money if it is likely to deteriorate and lose value.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 27—Constitution of national parks by statute

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 28—Constitution of national parks by proclamation

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 29—Constitution of conservation parks by statute

Clause 12: Amendment of s. 30—Constitution of conservation park by proclamation

Clause 13: Amendment of s. 31—Constitution of game reserves by statute

Clause 14: Amendment of s. 32—Constitution of game reserves by proclamation

Clause 15: Amendment of s. 33—Constitution of recreation parks by statutes

Clause 16: Amendment of s. 34—Constitution of recreation parks by proclamation

Clause 17: Amendment of s. 34a—Constitution of regional reserves by proclamation
Clauses 9 to 17 make similar amendments to sections 27 to 34a of the principal Act. The purpose of the amendments is to provide a simple method for changing a reserve from one kind to another—e.g., a conservation park to a national park. To achieve this at the moment the conservation park must be abolished (which requires the approval of both Houses of Parliament) and the land reconstituted as a national park. A national park is regarded as having a higher status than a conservation park and there is therefore no need for Parliamentary approval. The amendment removes the need for Parliamentary approval in this case—see clauses 11 and 12 which amend sections 29 and 30 of the principal Act (section 29 creates conservation parks named in schedule 4 of the Act and section 30 provides for the creation of conservation parks by proclamation). The amendments enable a reserve of any one of the five kinds to be changed to any of the other kinds by proclamation. If the reserve is one that requires Parliamentary approval for its abolition the amendment requires Parliamentary approval if its status is to be reduced. Reserves are ordered in status as follows:

national parks
conservation parks
recreation parks
game reserves
regional reserves.

Changing a national park to any other kind of reserve will require Parliamentary approval because all the other reserves have a lower status. Conversely changing a regional reserve to any other kind of reserve will not require Parliamentary approval.

Clause 18: Insertion of Division 4B of Part 3
Clause 18 inserts a new division that provides that the constitution of reserves after 1 January 1994 is subject to native title. If the Government wishes land that is subject to native title to be constituted as a reserve free of native title it can acquire the native title interest in the same way as any other interest in land can be acquired by the Crown. Full compensation is of course payable on acquisition.

Clause 19: Amendment of s. 38—Management Plans
Clause 19 makes consequential amendments to section 38 of the principal Act.

Clause 20: Insertion of s. 43C
Clause 20 provides for entrance, camping and other fees to be fixed by the Director.

Clause 21: Amendment of s. 44—Establishment of sanctuaries
Clause 21 makes an amendment to section 44 of the principal Act that takes account of the possibility of native title existing over land declared to be a sanctuary.

Clause 22: Amendment of s. 45f—Functions of a Trust
Clause 22 amends section 45F of the principal Act. Paragraph *(a)* expands the functions of a Trust to include the management of its reserve. New subsection (2a) enables a Trust to impose charges for facilities and services that it provides.

Clause 23: Insertion of s. 49A
Clause 23 inserts new section 49A which provides for the preparation of recommendations in relation to the taking of certain plants for commercial purposes. Members of the public must be given the chance to comment on the draft recommendations. The recommendations must be implemented by conditions imposed by regulation on permits for taking the plants concerned for commercial purposes.

Clause 24: Insertion of s. 51A
Clause 24 inserts a new section that allows the taking of protected animals of common species that are causing, or likely to cause, damage to crops or other property.

Clause 25: Amendment of s. 52—Open season
Clause 25 makes minor amendments to section 52 of the principal Act.

Clause 26: Amendment of s. 58—Keeping and sale of protected animals
Clause 26 makes an amendment to section 58 of the principal Act in consequence of a shift in the High Court's interpretation of section 92 of the Australian Constitution which deals with interstate trade.

Clause 27: Substitution of s. 59—Export and import of protected animals and native plants
Clause 27 replaces section 59 of the principal Act. The new section extends the operation of the section to plants of a species prescribed by regulation.

Clause 28: Repeal of s. 60A

Clause 29: Amendment of s. 60b

Clause 30: Insertion of s. 60BA

Clause 31: Amendment of s. 60c—Permit for farming protected animals
Clauses 28, 29, 30 and 31 amend provisions relating to farming of protected animals to allow for trial farming of animals. Clause 31 removes the requirement in section 60C(4) that a permit holder must be a member of an organisation to promote the interests of farmers.

Clause 32: Amendment of s. 60D—Code of management
Clause 32 amends section 60D of the principal Act to enable a code of management to be prepared in relation to animals subject to trial farming and to provide that if the species of animal concerned is subsequently named in schedule 11 the code of management will serve as the code to be prepared under section 60D(1).

Clause 33: Insertion of Division 4B in Part 5
Clause 33 inserts new Division 4B into Part 5 of the principal Act. The new Division deals with the harvesting of species of protected animals that have been declared by the Minister by notice in the *Gazette.* Harvesting cannot take place until a plan of management has been prepared and adopted by the Minister.

Clause 34: Amendment of s. 61—Royalty
Clause 34 amends section 61 of the principal Act. Paragraph *(a)* requires royalties to be paid to the Wildlife Conservation Fund. Paragraphs *(b)* and *(c)* provide that royalties can be declared on plants as well as animals.

Clause 35: Amendment of s. 62—Demand for royalty
Clause 35 makes a consequential amendment to section 62 of the principal Act.

Clause 36: Amendment of s. 69—Permits
Clause 36 adds subsection (2a) to section 69 of the principal Act to enable the Minister to refuse to grant a permit in the circumstances set out in that subsection.

Clause 37: Amendment of s. 72—False or misleading statement
Clause 37 makes a technical amendment to section 72 of the principal Act.

Clause 38: Amendment of s. 80—Regulations
Clause 38 replaces subsection (2a) of section 80. The new subsection gives the option of replacing schedule 7, 8, 9 or 10 instead of amending the schedule.

Clause 39: Amendment of Wilderness Protection Act 1992
Clause 39 makes a consequential amendment to the *Wilderness Protection Act 1992.*

Ms WHITE secured the adjournment of the debate.

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (MENTAL IMPAIRMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 21 November. Page 620.)

Ms WHITE (Taylor): This Bill deals with the issue of fitness to plead and the defence of insanity in criminal law cases. It arises out of some disquiet and concern within the community over the test for legal insanity and criminal responsibility. It deals with the court procedures surrounding those and looks at the outcomes of successful defences in those cases. The current law falls short in a couple of ways. Accused people are able to avoid the defence of insanity, except where it is for offences that are very serious. There is also the problem in the current legislation that mentally ill people under criminal law have very few effective rights.

There is also the concern, as expressed in the Deputy Premier's second reading explanation, that current legislation may well be contrary to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which is a concern that has to be addressed. The Bill aims to define what is meant by 'mental illness', to look at roles of the judge and jury, and to separate the question of whether the defendant is fit to plead or the question of whether a defendant was criminally ill at the time of the crime from other questions that may arise during a criminal case.

Further, it ensures that, if there is a plea of mental impairment or of unfitness to plead, the court must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to show that the accused actually committed the offence. The Bill introduces some flexibility to allow a court that has found an accused unfit to plead or not criminally responsible to make some appropriate disposition by way of detention or community-based treatment and so on.

The real problem is that an accused in a criminal trial at present may plead not guilty owing to insanity but, if that plea is accepted, the accused is detained at Her Majesty's pleasure; that is, he or she is locked up indefinitely at James Nash House. Owing to the long confinement at Her Majesty's pleasure, an accused is unlikely to plead insanity, except for the most serious of offences.

Most of those detained at Her Majesty's pleasure have been accused of horrific crimes, though there was a case in Victoria of an accused psychotic who was detained for five years after being charged with vandalising a police car. There is a risk that in a few cases an accused will be detained longer than the maximum sentence of imprisonment for the offence with which he or she is charged. The Bill eliminates that risk and sets out a procedure for reviewing detention.

If the accused is found not guilty by reason of insanity, the court can make a supervision order committing the accused to detention in an institution or releasing the accused on licence or even unconditionally. If the accused is committed to detention, there must be some limiting term equivalent to a sentence of imprisonment. Within 30 days after a court decides to detain the accused, the Minister for Health must submit to the court a report on the accused's mental health. The report should be a diagnosis and prognosis prepared by an expert, such as a psychiatrist. Such reports should be submitted annually during the accused's detention. Each six months during detention the accused, the Crown, the Parole Board or the Public Advocate, established under guardianship legislation, or another person with a proper interest may apply for review of the detention.

When the trial court is considering detention, it must acquire a report setting out the opinions of the accused's victim, the accused's next of kin and the victim's next of kin if the victim was killed by the crime. This will be like a victim impact statement, as in other criminal trials. If the accused is to be released from detention, the Minister for Health must ensure that the following people receive counselling: the victim, the accused's next of kin and the victim's next of kin if the victim was killed by the crime.

The Bill extends notification of proceedings to the victim, the accused's next of kin and the victim's next of kin if the victim was killed by the crime. The next of kin are defined as the spouse, parents and children. The Bill originally did not cover the victim's next of kin when the victim was killed. All these provisions were inserted by the Labor Opposition. Alas, we did not succeed in extending these provisions to the next of kin of victims of the legally sane, but we will try that again in a private member's Bill.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: I look forward to that.

Ms WHITE: Thank you, Deputy Premier. The legislation encourages the trial court not to detain, if that is possible. It sets out the matters that the trial court must consider on the question of detention. One is whether the accused would be likely to endanger another person if released. If the trial court decided to release the accused, it must do so on the authority of at least three experts' reports, and having notified the victim's next of kin of the proceedings.

It is worth noting that detention at Her Majesty's pleasure was rendered less discretionary in 1992 by a private member's Bill introduced by Dr Bob Ritson, of Brompton, which took away the decision to release from the Governor in Council and gave it to a court, provided for consultation and warning to victims and next of kin, and required the formulation of a treatment plan.

I turn now to the defence of insanity. To establish an insanity defence, it must be proved that at the time of committing the offence the accused was labouring under such a defect of reason from disease of the mind as not to know the nature and quality of the act that he or she was doing, or, if he or she did know the nature and quality of the act that he or she was doing, that he or she did not know that it was wrong.

This formula arose from an English case stated to the House of Lords in 1843, called McNaughten's case. The Bill changes the McNaughten rule slightly. The most significant change is how the trial proceeds if there is an insanity plea. Under the Bill, a person is mentally incompetent to commit an offence if that person was suffering from mental impairment and did not know the nature or quality of the conduct or did not know that the conduct was wrong or was unable to control the conduct.

The question of mental competence must be separated from the remainder of the trial. The court can decide whether to try the question of mental competence first and the objective elements of the offence second, or the other way around. The important aim is to keep them separate so that they do not get mixed up in the jury's mind. Another aim is to make sure that the court finds the accused guilty beyond reasonable doubt of the objective elements of the offence.

The Bill also changes the law of fitness to plead. An accused may be declared unfit to plead if he or she does not have the capacity to understand the proceedings to the point where he or she cannot answer the charges. Unfitness to plead has also been declared owing to language difficulties and physical illness. The Bill does not change the law on fitness to plead significantly, but it affects the consequences of unfitness to plead by changing the operation of Her Majesty's pleasure in the way that I outlined earlier. It also requires a trial of the objective elements of the offence in so far as they can be ascertained without an accused being fit to plead.

Two consequences of the Bill are that lawyers will use the defence of insanity much more than they use it now and that psychiatrists and psychologists will be paid far more than they are paid now. I think this is the price of a more just procedure. The Opposition supports the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for Taylor for her exposition on the Bill; it was a good summary. There has been a dilemma as to how we treat people with mental impairment, and this Bill seeks to address some of the problems.

The two issues, as the member for Taylor pointed out, are the state of a person's mind at the time of the offence and the capacity of that person to stand trial or to plead a case on their own behalf. The traditional law is that, if people are incapable of defending themselves due to circumstances perhaps beyond their own control—we are talking about mental impairment or deficiency—the trial cannot proceed. Therefore, we have had a number of people in limbo and there have been trials where people with mental problems have been confined at Her Majesty's pleasure.

It is useful to look at some of the legislation that is still in place. There is a place called the hospital for criminal mental defectives. Under the 1935 Act, that means a place declared by proclamation to be a hospital for criminal mental defectives. There is also a definition of 'mentally defective person', being a person who is mentally ill. Then there is a further clause under 'mentally defective person' covering an intellectually retarded person. There are people who have illnesses and others who, due to either congenital problems or an accident some time in their lives are incapable of exercising judgment.

As the honourable member pointed out, the law has been very inadequate in addressing this issue. The Attorney has put in place a set of procedures under which these difficult situations can be handled so that the rights of those who have deficiencies or difficulties are not affected to the extent they have been in the past. In the dim, dark past people who committed serious offences and were unable to plead their case adequately due to their deficiencies were confined to mental institutions for life or at the Governor's pleasure, and that would normally be until they died, but that is a while ago. We have experienced difficulties handling these situations within the framework of the law as it stands today.

I thank the member for Taylor for her support of the Bill, and for taking the time to understand and display her knowledge of it. We would welcome the amendment that the honourable member wishes to pursue in a private member's Bill. We may not agree with it because, whilst it touches on the Bill, it is not germane to the Bill, and I believe that was pointed out in another place. We appreciate the support of the member for Taylor and the Labor Opposition for this piece of legislation.

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

SECURITY AND INVESTIGATION AGENTS BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 21 November. Page 624.)

Ms WHITE (Taylor): The Opposition has pondered this Bill at length. We sought feedback on the Bill from the community and debated it in the Party room. We shall support the Bill resisting, as best we are able, a Liberal amendment deleting the requirement for crowd controllers to wear uniforms. The Bill follows the pattern of consumer law changes under this Government. Licensing is to be transferred from the soon to be defunct Commercial Tribunal to the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, and from one licence with eight endorsements the Bill takes us to three licences: investigation agent, security agent and restricted licence.

Training requirements for new applicants will be introduced by regulation. The commission may refuse a licence for insolvency, disqualification from another vocation or relevant criminal conviction. No appeal will be entertained on the ground that the reasons for ineligibility were attended by mitigating circumstances. Disciplinary matters will be heard in the Administrative and Disciplinary Division of the District Court. The court may decide whether to sit with assessors. There will be no provision for advertising a licence application and inviting objections.

An unlicensed agent cannot recover wages or commission. A person who collects debts only by telephone for a licensed agent need not himself or herself be licensed. Restrictions that can be placed on a licence include confining the licensee to being an employee of another licensed agent, or confining the licensee to particular functions. The process service will no longer be licensed, but persons will commit an offence if they practise without the necessary qualifications, or practise having obtained relevant criminal convictions. This is a practice the Government calls 'negative licensing', and it is now common in consumer Bills.

The maximum fine under the Bill is increased from $5 000 to $8 000. Prosecutions should be brought within two years of the alleged offence, and that may be extended to five years with the Minister's consent. The limitation is now 12 months. Clause 20 requires the licensee to carry his or her licence or identification. As with other consumer Bills in the past 18 months, this Bill allows the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs to delegate administration to a trade organisation, although discipline or prosecution cannot be included in the delegation. Such delegations must be notified to Parliament. On all these points the Opposition must concede that they are within the Government's mandate. We disagree—

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

Ms WHITE: —with the Government's amendment that relates to crowd controllers, or bouncers. We are informed that, when police have been called to brawls between bouncers and customers, they have not always been able to tell who is fighting on what side.

Mr Kerin: Who started it.

Ms WHITE: Or who started it. Labor believes not only that bouncers should wear identification, enabling those who have a grievance against them to take up the matter with the proper authority, but that they should be required to wear a uniform that puts their authority to act on behalf of the house beyond doubt. We believe that is only reasonable. Labor understands how difficult a bouncer's job can be and believes that the status of the vocation would be improved by a house uniform. The Liberal Party's suggestion that Labor wants a bouncer's home address, or other private information, displayed on the identification is simply wrong. We do not. We have never asked for that and neither would we.

The Liberal Government disagrees with our suggestion that bouncers should wear uniforms. Labor thinks the requirement of a uniform ought to be confined to crowd controllers or bouncers. We do not propose that other security agents or investigation agents be in uniform. That clearly would not be the right thing to do. The Government says we

should not persist with our uniform proposal because the requirement of identification is sufficient. Our message to the Government is: put crowd controllers in uniform, the minimum features of which would be defined by regulation, or lose the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for Taylor. She has never had any legal training but she has grasped the nettle very quickly, I presume, at the instigation of the member for Spence. That assumption is probably correct. The Government is being threatened with losing the Bill over what would seem to be a very small element of difference. When the Opposition says we do not want any controls, when it does not want any controls at all, otherwise we lose the Bill, it is drawing a long bow. The member for Taylor clearly recognises that some thugs have been working in the industry. Some unqualified and unhealthy people actually enjoy their job of breaking arms and legs.

We do not believe that is appropriate. In fact, we abhor the behaviour of these people. Their only qualification is whether they grew up on the streets of certain suburbs of Adelaide, or whether they received some of their training in the boxing ring. We have seen—and publicity has been given to it on a number of occasions—that people have been mistreated and manhandled resulting in injury. While crowd controllers do not have an easy job, we recognise that many situations get out of hand, in nightclubs in particular and at various venues where, for example, rock concerts take place, or even at the soccer on occasions.

We believe that crowd controllers or bouncers should be properly controlled in their own operating right but there is inflexibility in the Labor proposition. The Bill takes us a long way. The member for Taylor should recognise that with this Bill we are making advancements and that the Government wants to see some repairs made to this industry, some standards put in place, and certain individuals put under the microscope if they take a great liking for their profession at the expense of others. The Government wants to see the proper control of crowds and not the starting of riots because someone has acted inappropriately.

These people face many situations—and this Bill has a bit more to it than just crowd control, but that is probably the most interesting part—that are an essential part of everyday practice, particularly in the entertainment industry. They are very important for the smooth running of nightclub venues and certain types of sporting events, so we need to ensure that the quality of those people is consistent with our belief that they must operate effectively without detriment to the people whom they are employed to look after. Various cases have been brought to my attention about the behaviour of some of these people, and I think the Attorney-General is spot on in bringing forward this Bill to deal with those situations.

The other areas that are canvassed are really saying in this area of security investigation that we need to have some protocols in place, but we do not wish to regulate to the extent that these people are encumbered by administrative requirements of the Government. We are simply saying that if they wish to follow this profession the Government expects them to have some training and to operate within the law and not exceed their authority.

The issue of whether security and investigation agents should wear a uniform is a vexed one. Some people believe that people in uniform are essential. Therefore, we see, for example, the police or Metropolitan Security Service officers in full uniform. At other venues where there is a choice between the types of people who perform the crowd control function, it may be believed that it is more appropriate to have a non-uniformed person. Quite often young people resent uniforms. Therefore, the effectiveness of a person in uniform may be dissipated by that person's appearance in one, whereas if they are not uniformed they may blend into the crowd, be part of the scene and effectively prevent trouble before it starts.

There is no clear-cut answer to this question, as the member for Taylor would admit. Persons who run these venues should be able to choose whether to have someone in a uniform or someone who is a little less conspicuous. I do not believe that it is appropriate for this Parliament to make that determination. If it does not work, obviously a uniform can be used. The particular venue can provide a uniform if it is believed that it is more effective to have someone in a uniform. There is no given answer to this question. It is quite unusual overseas to have crowd controllers, or bouncers as they are commonly called, in uniform. It is quite uncommon in many jurisdictions, including America, France and Germany, to have people in uniform at venues where there could be trouble. Perhaps those countries have got it right and made a wise choice.

I do not want the House to gain the impression that I have visited all these places of ill fame to test whether the bouncers are any good, but I simply say that my observation of overseas practice suggests that, in particular circumstances, non-uniformed people provide a far more effective element of control than those in uniform. Like everything else, if we go down the path of trying to make sure that people have proper training and identification, that may well meet the need. If the member for Taylor is right and if the rest of the world is wrong, the Parliament can review that matter at a future date and say, 'We need to upgrade this measure and make it a requirement by regulation that a person wear a uniform.' I am not sure whether we would have to do that by legislation or regulation; I presume that we can prescribe requirements for the hire of these people. As the member for Taylor has pointed out, this area has been out of control, and it is now being brought back under control.

There are some very healthy provisions within this Bill. It does what I think most people wish of the Government, but it does not take the extra step that the member for Taylor and the Opposition want. However, we are content with the provision. If we are wrong and if it seems to be ineffective or deficient, we can go further down the track. I believe that we should do things according to what we believe is best practice. That is what this Bill represents. I appreciate the support of the member for Taylor for elements of the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 19 passed.

Clause 20—'Licence or identification to be carried or displayed.'

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 11, lines 17 to 27—Leave out subclause (2).

This issue was mentioned during the second reading debate. A new subclause has been inserted by the Hon. Ron Roberts in another place. Most of the terms of that subclause will be embraced in the regulations in terms of identification, so there is no difference of opinion between the Government and the Opposition on that matter. It is inappropriate to try to prescribe in regulation what is displayed on a tag that is worn, because that can change and we do not want to have to come

back and change the legislation. So, in principle, the Government does not accept the amendment, because it believes that the regulation process should define how these things should be displayed and what sort of prominence they should have in order to be effective.

What we have here is a check list, and that check list can change in certain circumstances. Therefore, it is inappropriate to enshrine in legislation those exact requirements. I assure the honourable member that sufficient detail will be provided on the identification to satisfy her and her colleague in another place. The issue that is important is whether a uniform should be worn (subclause (2)(b)). The Government has some difference of opinion regarding that provision. However, if the Government and others are wrong about this issue, I assure the honourable member that it will be revisited.

Ms WHITE: The Opposition accepts what the Deputy Premier says about identification being included in the regulations. However, I stand by my earlier comments regarding uniform. I, therefore, oppose the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (21 to 48), schedules 1 and 2 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BUILDING WORK CONTRACTORS BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 21 November. Page 629.)

Ms WHITE (Taylor): The Opposition supports the Bill without amendment. The Bill has been thoroughly canvassed in another place. It is in the pattern of other consumer legislation considered in this and the last session. The Minister says that the aim of the Bill is to minimise the number of building disputes going to court. No longer will disputes go to the now defunct Commercial Tribunal; instead, they will be heard in the Consumer and Business Division of the Magistrates Court. Assessors may be appointed by the magistrate. If the amount of money in dispute is greater than the Magistrate's Court limit the District Court will become a forum. The Bill introduces a competency based system for licensing and registration while streamlining both processes in what has become the usual way. For the benefit of consumers, a photograph and an expiry date will now become part of the building licence. It is believed that a photograph requirement and updating of the licence card may deter some shonky operators.

A director of a building company who is involved in that company within 12 months of its going into liquidation will not be eligible for a building licence for 10 years. This clause is designed to stop the fly-by-night operator whose company closes its doors or goes into liquidation and is found running a new company six months later. Partnerships have complained that the paperwork and double fees are burdensome. So, the fees have been reduced at the cost of increasing slightly the fees for other builders. The Government assures us that this is revenue neutral. I must say that the Opposition has found the Attorney-General's word to be his bond in the past. Owner-builders are not required to be licensed under the current law. To obtain this exemption an owner-builder must not build more than one house a year. Owing to the number of complaints about owner-builders, the limit will be one house every five years. The Government wants a disclosure statement when an owner-builder house is sold within five years of its construction. Explaining the statutory warranty does not apply. The Opposition supports this Bill without amendment.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I appreciate the support of the Opposition. This is an area that has interested and aggravated me for a number of years, before and after I entered this Parliament. Quite frankly, there have been a number of shonky builders who have taken the unsuspecting public for a ride. I have had recent cases, which I found quite appalling, where mainly young people who went into building their own houses or contracted someone to build their houses were treated in a way that was nothing short of disgraceful. There have been instances of fraud and of second-rate workmanship, yet the law seems to have been very slow in reacting and picking up the ball to make sure that there is greater accountability within this industry.

Within about two months of my being elected as the member for Mitcham in 1982, a house in the suburb of Westbourne Park had not been built to the right standard. The doors were not closing properly, cracks appeared virtually within months of its construction and the builder refused to come back and make repairs; yet this person dissolved his company, formed another company and came back within about two months and was out and at it again. I was told at the time that was bad luck because the authorities could pursue this person only if he or his company still held a licence; but it was more than difficult than that. It seemed to me that there was a complete unwillingness by the Builders Licensing Board to take up complaints on behalf of consumers.

However, it is not quite so clear cut as we would all think, because there are certain circumstances where people, who require good, reputable and solid builders to build their houses, change their mind. The builder is then left in a lamentable position and cannot fulfil the new requirements of those people; yet the owner says, 'It's part of the contract.' Certainly, contracts and the requirements have been more complex; therefore, it would seem possible to pursue that matter in the courts.

Invariably, young people spend all the money they have on building their house. They do not have thousands of dollars for litigation and, therefore, it is normal that these young people (and older people are also involved) simply do not have the means, wherewithal or even the inclination to fight a dirty battle through the courts. In such cases they would find that they have no assets to pursue in the process because they have a contract with a company which has no assets and no personal guarantees attached to it. So, the situation has been unsatisfactory.

There is a current case that I hope will be pursued vigorously involving one builder who has come to my attention and whose workmanship is shoddy; he fulfilled none of the requirements—whether it be time, quality of building or even the dimensions of the task—that were agreed to at the time the contract was signed. It is absolutely infuriating that these people can walk in and out of the industry as they have done in the past. We have had a Builders Licensing Board, but there always seems to be some loophole through which someone can escape.

We do not necessarily believe that the level of regulation that has been imposed in the past has actually worked. We believe that the industry has a much more active role to play in terms of its own industry. The Bill is a greater reflection of the wishes of those people who are decent, law abiding citizens and who have building licences to actually operate

in an industry. The Bill will provide a great deal of comfort to consumers, in that the construction provided for them will actually be one they ordered and not some poor standard of construction that the builder has decided to provide instead.

The Bill is a step forward, and this system should work better. It is a matter that I have actively pursued over a long period. A member in another place would also reflect on matters that I raised in terms of his performance as a builder during the 1980s. The Bill has solid support from those who wish to see positive change. It does not over-regulate the industry but provides a practical way of dealing with problems. If consumers are disaffected with a builder's actions they can pursue the matter in a way which is cost-effective and through which they can obtain more justice than they would have obtained in the past.

Of course, the problem will never be solved and there will always be shonky practices in the industry. It is unfortunate that many of the fine builders who take pride in their work are categorised with those few who would be classed as rip off merchants. I have had an extension built on my house and I can only praise the workmanship and quality of the finish provided by my builder, who has a tremendous eye and reputation for detail. However, there are people who, for whatever reason, will place builders at risk. So, it is not just a one-sided coin we are dealing with. In fact, builders have come to me and said, 'I have a problem because I have been paid only a certain percentage of the contract and the owner is using a technicality to get out of the rest of the contract.'

In some cases I have known the builder to be honest and hardworking, and people have had houses and units erected but for a variety of technical reasons have said, 'I will not pay the bill because I am not happy with this or that aspect.' There has not been sufficient definition in the legislation to have matters such as that adjudicated in the way we would have hoped, and the cost of litigation has been too expensive considering the amount of money involved. So, there are builders who are placed in a difficult situation by consumers.

As I said, it is not a one-way street and there are cases on both sides of the fence where both builders and consumers feel aggrieved at the outcome of a contract. I welcome the measure and congratulate the Attorney on his initiative. With a little legal muscle in the system, we will get a far better result than we have had in the past. It is surprising to me that the previous Government did not take up the challenge, but I am delighted that the Attorney has.

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

OPAL MINING BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council with the following amendments:

No. 1. Page 11 (clause 13)—After line 24 insert new subclauses as follow:-

'(la) A major working area identified under subsection (1) must include a buffer zone around all extensively worked areas within the major working area (as determined according to circumstances in existence at the time that the regulation establishing the major working area is made).

(lb) The buffer zone under subsection (la) must (at the time that the buffer zone is established) be at least 500 metres wide at any particular point.'

No. 2. Page 11, line 35 (clause 13)—Leave out 'precious stones claim' and insert 'tenement'.

No. 3. Page 21, line 24 (clause 29)—Leave out '14 days' and insert '28 days'.

No. 4. Page 21, line 27 (clause 29)—Leave out '14 days' and insert '28 days'.

No. 5. Page 21, line 30 (clause 29)—Leave out '14 days' and insert '28 days'.

No. 6. Page 21, lines 31 and 32 (clause 29)—Leave out all words in these lines after 'goods' in line 31.

No. 7. Page 21 (clause 29)—After line 32 insert new subclauses as follow:-

'(3a) The Chief Inspector must, within seven days after taking possession of machinery or goods under this section—

(a) give notice of his or her actions to any person who has, to the knowledge of the Chief Inspector, an interest in the machinery or goods and whose address is known to the Chief Inspector; and

(b) publish notice of the taking of possession of the machinery or goods in a newspaper circulating within the local area.

(3b) A notice must be in a form approved by the Director for the purposes of this section.

(3c) A person who is entitled to possession of the machinery or goods may reclaim them by paying to the Chief Inspector the reasonable costs associated with the Chief Inspector taking possession of the machinery or goods and storing them.

(3d) If the machinery or goods are not reclaimed under subsection (3c) within 28 days after publication of the notice under subsection (3a)(b), the Chief Inspector may sell or dispose of them as the Chief Inspector thinks fit.'

No. 8. Page 21, line 35 (clause 29)—After 'possession' insert ', storing'.

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Mr QUIRKE: There is no need to take up the time of the Committee. The amendments that have come from the other place are eminently sensible and seek to sort out a number of basic principles. The legislation passed by this House has been strengthened by the amendments in another place. They have the concurrence of the Government and the Opposition. In particular, I draw the attention of members to the strengthened provisions for the protection of the basic character of Coober Pedy and its opal mining fields. The Government and the Opposition have got together on this proposal and support the amendments. Some of the other amendments increase from 14 to 28 days the time in which seized property on certain opal fields under various conditions can be reclaimed and payment made for storage costs etc. associated with that.

The reform package is historic. The new opal mining arrangements which will affect all of the other areas outside the existing working areas of Coober Pedy will soon be covered under the new Act. The legislation has the support of many opal miners outside the Coober Pedy region and it will lead to a greater amount of opal product being made available. In this Chamber and in the other place the commitment was made—and I make it again—that, within three years, a select committee will look at the new legislation and see how it is progressing. Whilst there is still some angst in Coober Pedy, there are other people in Coober Pedy who, having won the day, decided that they would tell the rest of the world how they ought to mine opals, and we have struck a balance where Coober Pedy will keep its own characteristics (I will not go into what they are), and the rest of the world can get on with its business. We support the amendments.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the member for Playford and the Opposition for their support of the Bill's passage and their contribution to the further amendments to strengthen some of the Bill's provisions. As the member for Playford pointed out, there is no doubt that there was opposition from particular areas where people virtually had a closed shop arrangement. We do not believe that that is appropriate for the future development of the State, and that has been made clear. We now have a reasonable proposal before us.

My only reflection on opal mining relates to something I was told when I was 20 years of age, that is, that the amount of opal declared as having been mined at the two major sites and elsewhere is but a small proportion of the opal actually mined. From a revenue, taxation and compliance point of view, I guess we would suggest that there may be opportunities that have somehow escaped both the State and Federal Governments. Having said that, it is a matter of ensuring compliance. I know that some people have lost—

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The member for Playford is accurate in his assessment of who goes opal mining. Perhaps we can all go gold mining when we retire from Parliament. The legislation makes sense and expands the range of opportunities. Obviously, it is good for South Australia and we are pleased with the support given to this measure by the member for Playford and the Opposition.

Motion carried.

SUPERANNUATION (CONTRACTING OUT) AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council with the following amendment:

Page 5, lines 1 to 7 (clause 9)—Leave out subsection (4) and insert the following subsections:

'(4) Where a contributor has made, or is taken to have made, an election under subsection (l)(a), section 39 applies to, and in relation to, the contributor except that (subject to subsection (4a))—

(a) section 39(5) (instead of section 39(2)) applies to, and in relation to, a contributor whose contribution period is less than 120 months; and

(b) the contributor is not entitled to require the Board to commence paying a retirement pension under section 39(5)(a), and the Board must not commence paying such a pension under that provision, until the contributor has reached the age of 55 years and has ceased employment with the private sector employer.

(4a) A contributor who has made, or is taken to have made, an election under subsection (l)(a) and whose contribution period is less than 120 months may inform the Board in writing within one month after resigning that section 39(2) and not section 39(5) is to apply to, and in relation to, the contributor and in that case—

(a) section 39(2) applies to, and in relation to, the contributor; but

(b) the contributor is not entitled to require the Board to make a superannuation payment under section 39(2)(a) and the Board must not make a superannuation payment under that provision until the contributor has reached the age of 55 years and has ceased employment with the private sector employer.

(4b) If the Board is of the opinion that the limitation period referred to in subsection (4a) would unfairly prejudice a contributor, the Board may extend the period as it applies to the contributor.'

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

Mr QUIRKE: We support the amendment, and we are quite happy to see the legislation before us today.

Motion carried.

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES (HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 28 November at 2 p.m.