HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 5 November 1996

The SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

FIREARMS

A petition signed by 27 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to legislate for stricter controls on firearms was presented by the Hon. Dean Brown.

Petition received.

MULTICULTURALISM

A petition signed by 1 150 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Federal Government to give a firm commitment to the principles of multiculturalism was presented by Mr Rossi.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. Dean Brown)—

South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs—Report, 1995-96

By the Minister for Information Technology (Hon. Dean Brown)—

Information Industries SA—Report, 1995-96
IT Workforce Strategy Office—Report 1995-96

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

Legal Practitioners Guarantee Fund, Claims Against the—Report, 1995-96
Regulations under the following Acts—
Community Titles—Principal
Security and Investigation Agents—Crowd Controller
Strata Titles—Authorised Trust Accounts

By the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

Adelaide Festival Centre—Report, 1995-96
Art Gallery of South Australia—Report, 1995-96
Carrick Hill Trust—Report, 1995-96
History Trust of South Australia—Report, 1995-96
Motor Vehicles Act—Regulations—Conditional Registration
State Theatre—Report, 1995-96

By the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources (Hon. D.C. Wotton)—

State Heritage Authority—Report, 1995-96

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (Hon. R.B. Such)—

Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act—Regulations—Units of Study Variation

By the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. R.G. Kerin)—

Australian Barley Board—Report, 1995-96
Dairy Authority of South Australia—Report, 1995-96
Fruit and Plant Protection Act—Regulations—Principal
Primary Industries South Australia—Report, 1995-96
South Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Board—Report, 1995-96

By the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations (Hon. E.S. Ashenden)—

Development Act—Regulations—Community Titles
District Council—By-Laws—Kapunda and Light
No. 1—Permits and Penalties
No. 2—Moveable Signs
No. 3—Council Land
No. 4—Fire Prevention.

PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: On 24 October 1996 the member for Napier asked me a question in respect of a public sector employee not being granted time off from work to perform duties as an elected member of a council. Despite my offer to investigate the details surrounding this matter, the honourable member has not provided me with any information on the matter she raised, and I therefore question the level of her alleged concern. As the honourable member has not provided me with details of the incident referred to in her question, I am not able to comment specifically on that case. However, I can advise the House that the Local Government Act recognises that many people have work or other commitments during the day, and section 58 stipulates that regular meetings of municipal councils are not to be held before 5 p.m., unless the members of the council agree unanimously to vary this provision.

The Government understands that elected members of councils, particularly, but by no means exclusively, those holding the office of mayor or deputy mayor, are sometimes called upon to attend meetings with various industry or community groups during normal business hours. The Government, therefore, does not wish to unduly restrict its employees from participation in their local council. Having said that, I add that the Government looks to its managers and employees to maintain high levels of service delivery to clients and the wider community throughout normal business hours, and outside these hours for various emergency and human services. The first duty of any employee is to his or her employer, and those working for the Government must ensure the wages paid by the taxpayers of this State are fairly earned.

I would also point out that care must be exercised when talking about 'Government employees' as though they were homogeneous in the duties they perform or in respect of the conditions under which they are employed. The onset of enterprise bargaining and other microeconomic reforms are rapidly leading to variations in hours of work or other conditions within agencies, as they strive to deliver services efficiently and effectively. The Chief Executive of each agency is responsible for ensuring that sufficient and adequately trained staff are available at all times to respond to approaches from the public.

I would expect CEOs to strike a sensible balance between their duty to ensure their agency provides quality public services, while meeting the reasonable requests of their staff for recreation and other types of leave. I would expect that requests for occasional use by staff of flexitime credits or accrued time off in lieu entitlements to discharge their duties as an elected member—which cannot be dealt with outside business hours—would be viewed sympathetically. However, the Government does not consider that its staff should be

treated differently from those employed elsewhere, and my remarks today should not be taken to imply that the Government is prepared for CEOs to grant, nor for employees to expect, unlimited time off to attend to duties of this kind.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that written answers to the following questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard:* Nos 1, 8, 18 and 19; and I direct that the following answers to questions asked during the examination of the Auditor-General's Report be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

EDS (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD

In reply to **Ms HURLEY (Napier)** 2 October.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: As at 14 October 1996, four matters remain outstanding in terms of the completion of statements and agreements associated with the transfer to EDS.

These are:

- the Service Level agreements—all agreed now with the exception of some minor matters which are estimated to be complete within a few days. Drafts of the agreements have already been forwarded to the Crown Solicitor's office for clarification.
- resolution of the remaining discrepancies in the FTE count between DENR's and EDS's estimates of the staff members involved in the transfer. These will be resolved in the next week. This will involve staff from DENR, EDS and the Department of Information Industries (DII).
- the accounting treatment of two leases previously entered into by DENR remains in the hands of DII for resolution.
- the value to be ascribed to Microsoft Office software included in the base costs—remains in the hands of DII for resolution.

Cost figures associated with the transfer to EDS have not been included. These are dependent on the resolution of the leases.

GAMBLERS REHABILITATION FUND

In reply to **Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth)** 2 October.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Auditor-General's figures reflect actual payments made, whereas the reconciliation figures provided include commitments as well as actual payments. Another factor in the 1995-96 variance relates to the fact that the previously advised reconciliation showed the position as at 31 May 1996, whereas the Auditor-General reported as at 30 June 1996.

$1.917 million was credited to the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund from Consolidated Account in 1994-95 and 1995-96 to cover estimated payments to be processed. The actual payments made amounted to $1.099 million. The $2.399 million amount advised for the two years in question included commitments as well as actual payments, with the balance to be carried over for payment in 1996-97, together with grants and other costs programed for 1996-97.

Statements of receipts and expenditure for 1994-95 and 1995-96 are attached.

Family and Community Services
Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund
for the Year Ended 30 June 1995

	$	$
Opening Balance 1/7/94		0.00
Income		
Treasury Funding	(517 500.00)	
Treasury Interest	(0.00)	
		(517 500.00)
		(517 500.00)
Expenses		
Grants		378 750.00
Closing Balance 30/6/95		(138 750.00)

Note: $25 000.00 paid direct to an external agency by Treasury

Family and Community Services
Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund
for the Year ended 30 June 1995

	$	$
Opening Balance 1/7/95		(138 750.00)
Income		
Treasury Funding	(1 374 000.00)	
Treasury Interest	(8 974.63)	
		(1 382 974.63)
		(1 521 724.63)
Expenses		
Air Fares	5 531.03	
Catering In-House	478.50	
Consultants	5 375.00	
Grants	628 125.00	
Hire of Venues	736.00	
Km Allowance—Other	2 116.50	
Parking	3.50	
Conference/Workshop Expenses	1 371.64	
Miscellaneous	94.30	
Printing	140.00	
Resource Materials	324.00	
Salaries and Wages	48 812.64	
Taxi Fares—Staff	144.00	
Travel Expenses—Staff	1 751.01	
		695 003.12
Closing Balance 30/6/96		(826 721.51)

HOUSING TRUST FINANCE

In reply to **Ms HURLEY (Napier)** 2 October.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN:

1. Unfortunately information covering the 1996 financial year for most of the major banks is not yet available. Two of the leading accounting firms produce comparative performance information for the banking sector. These reports, published earlier this year include information up to 1995.

In May 1996 Coopers and Lybrand produced the following write off data for the four major banks which are compared with HomeStart write offs.

Bad Debt Write offs as a % of Loan Assets	HomeStart	ANZ	CBA	NAB	Westpac
1994	0.04%	1.81%	0.38%	0.59%	1.22%
1995	0.07%	0.54%	0.52%	0.30%	0.85%
1996	0.28%	n/a	0.25%	n/a	n/a

Note: the HomeStart figures and the CBA figure for the 1995/96 year are not from the Coopers and Lybrand study but have been calculated by HomeStart.

While HomeStart's write offs, expressed as a proportion of loan assets, in the financial year 1995-96 rose significantly, it was from a small base and was below the write offs of the major banks in the 1994-95 financial year (ending June for the CBA, September for the other three) and similar to the CBA for 1995-96.

The following table shows data collected by KPMG on the performance of a wider range of financial institutions. In particular, these data show doubtful debts and write offs charged as an expense expressed as a proportion of loan outstanding for three years to 1995-96 which are compared with HomeStart ratios.

Doubtful Debts and Write Offs Expense (through Profit and Loss Account) as a % of average receivables (loans outstanding)	HomeStart	Average for Regional Banks	Average for Four Major Banks (ANZ, NAB, CBA, Westpac)
1993	0.33%	0.35%	1.16%
1994	0.32%	0.29%	0.62%
1995	0.43%	0.21%	0.30%
1996	0.51%	n/a	n/a
Provision for Doubtful Debts (on Balance Sheet) as a % of receivable (loans outstanding)			
1993	0.56%	0.91%	3.22%
1994	0.87%	0.91%	2.46%
1995	1.15%	0.79%	1.89%
1996	1.47%	n/a	n/a

Regional Bank average includes BankSA
n/a—not available
Years—financial years
Data for the Regional and Majors Banks covers all business and are not confined to home lending.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting these data. HomeStart, for example, has been advised that banks had adopted conservative provisioning in 1993 following significant losses in the period 1991 to 1993 and that this conservative provisioning has been unwound over the last 2 years thus reducing the level of provisioning as shown in the bottom section of the above table.

A further difficulty in comparing HomeStart's operations with those of the major banks is that the data in both Tables shown above covers the total operations of the banks and are not confined to home lending. Specific and detailed information on home lending is not readily available.

The lower overall levels of provisioning and write off of bad debts of the major banks in 1994-95 may mask more recent experience in the area of housing loans making comparison with HomeStart's numbers misleading. For example, the Commonwealth Bank notes that for 1995-96 that loans more than 90 days in arrears have increased by 20 per cent between 30 June, 1995 and 30 June, 1996. The housing loan component of these arrears increased by nearly 31 per cent.

An alternative comparison is that between HomeStart and the equivalent government lending program in Victoria as shown in the following table.

Write Offs as a Percent of Loan Assets	HomeStart	Victoria
1993-94	0.04%	0.59%
1994-95	0.07%	0.62%
1995-96	0.28%	0.76%

Studies by Bain & Co indicate that mortgage losses increase as a loan portfolio ages and peaks at around 4 years. The average age of loans in the HomeStart portfolio has not yet reached the 4 years and further increases may arise. Of particular significance to the level of HomeStart's write offs is the depressed residential housing market in South Australia which has resulted in declining property values.

Another factor relevant for the level of write offs by HomeStart in the 1995-96 year has been an earlier recognition of losses compared with the policy adopted in earlier years.

Broadly, given the nature of its business, the level of bad debts being experienced by HomeStart is manageable. In considering the level of bad debts written off by HomeStart it must be emphasised that HomeStart's primary role is to assist lower income borrowers gain access to home finance which may not be readily available from other private sector lenders. Other lenders also require a significant proportion of their borrowers to take out mortgage insurance which reduces their exposure to bad debts.

HomeStart gives considerable attention to controlling its level of bad debts. However, for HomeStart to achieve a significant reduction in its write offs would require lending constraints on lending to lower income households and/or for some or all borrowers to be required to take out mortgage insurance. These measures would make access to home ownership for lower income households more difficult and to some degree defeat the purpose of HomeStart's establishment.

If the honourable member would like additional information on this subject I would be willing to have my officers undertake further research.

2. The remuneration of the management of the LGFA is reviewed annually by the LGFA Board and a 4 per cent increase in the CEO's remuneration resulted in his package moving up into the $130 000-$140 000 band as shown in the Notes to the 1995-96 accounts.

While assets and liabilities of the LGFA have declined with the termination of certain non core financing transactions undertaken during the term of the previous Labor Government, the provision of core business services to Councils in South Australia has not diminished. I have been advised by the LGFA that deposit activity between the Councils and the LGFA reached record levels during the past financial year and the operating profit for 1995/96 was almost identical with the profit for 1994-95.

3. I am advised that the use of derivatives by the LGFA is well managed. As Note 19 (a) to the LGFA's Accounts states, all derivative transactions are to 'specifically match and hedge actual financial transactions'. That is they are used to reduce risk and are not used for speculative purposes. The Treasurer has approved the LGFA entering into these derivative transactions and he has an appointee from the Department of Treasury and Finance on the LGFA Board. The LGFA is required to submit regular (semi-annual) information to Treasury and Finance on derivative transactions.

Note 19 of the accounts also highlights that all internal control and hedge activities are conducted within Board approved policy with compliance monitored closely. If these policies were not adhered to I am sure the Auditor General would draw Parliament's attention to such deficiencies.

In the absence of a formal Australian Accounting Standard on the presentation and disclosure of financial instruments (an Exposure Draft for the proposed standard was issued for comment in June, 1995), the LGFA has, at the suggestion of the Department of Treasury and Finance, adopted as an interim measure the disclosure guidelines for derivatives issued by the Australian Society of Corporate Treasurers.

Should the honourable member require further information on the LGFA's use of derivatives a briefing by the CEO of the LGFA could be arranged.

HOUSING TRUST CONSULTANCIES

In reply to **Ms HURLEY (Napier)** 2 October.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN:

1. Following the Estimates Committee hearing on 21 June, 1996 I provided a detailed response to the honourable member on the estimated consultancy expenditure for 1995-96 within my portfolio. These details highlighted for estimated expenditures on consultancies in excess of $10 000 the name of the consultant, the broad purpose of the consultancy and the estimated cost. The majority of the consultants engaged operated from offices located in South Australia although that may not necessarily satisfy the Honourable Member's definition of a South Australian firm.

In respect of actual expenditures on consultants for 1995-96 I attach an extract from the Departmental annual report currently in preparation. This extract is a combination of expenditure on consultants by the Department (excluding Support Services Units) as disclosed on p 265 of the Auditor-General's Report and the expenditure on consultants by the Support Services Units of the Department as disclosed on p 267.

As the honourable member's question was in respect to the Department I have not provided further information on other parts of the portfolio but would be prepared to do so if the detail provided in response to the earlier Estimates Committee question on consultancies is not sufficient. I can inform the honourable member, that the interstate consultancy involving a survey of Housing Trust tenants to which she has referred is a current project and is part of a national initiative. Donovan Research, a Western Australian company has won a tender to conduct a national survey of public housing tenants. The satisfaction of public housing tenants is one of nine key performance indicators included in the current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement and to ensure both consistency across States and cost effectiveness it is appropriate that the survey be undertaken by the one consultant.

The increase in DHUD consultancy expenditure in 1995-96 compared to 1994-95 reflects principally the need to engage numerous consultants to assist in the Local Government reform process. Facilitators engaged to work with Councils on amalgamation proposals involved expenditure totalling just over $200 000 and just under $100 000 was incurred in the development of performance indicators for Local Government.

A further sizeable expenditure involved the engagement of the Key Centre at Adelaide University to work on the development of an electronic version of the Metropolitan Development Plan. Additional expenditure on consultants was incurred also to provide improved risk management in Internal Audit services.

These large consultancies cover areas where specialist expertise is required and or where the projects are of a once off nature where engagement of staff would not be appropriate.

While most consultants engaged were based in South Australia where national firms are engaged the individual persons involved could come from interstate. Three interstate engagements in the attached list are the CSIRO, DGR Consulting and Geosys GIS Consultants. However, the difficulty of precise definitions in this area is illustrated by the Kinhill Engineers consultancy on the SA Home Ownership Review. While Kinhill Engineers is a South Australian firm operating nationally, the particular consultant who undertook the work was from Sydney.

Amongst consultancies $10 000 and under I am advised that two were undertaken by interstate consultants. The first involved work on rent rebates undertaken by the University of Canberra and the other involved staff appraisal services undertaken by Team Management Services.

2. APPENDIX VIII (A)—List of Consultant Groupings—DHUD, excluding Business Services

$0-$10 000	
Number of Consultancies	46
Total	$218 896
$10 001-$50 000	
Consultant	Purpose
Human Resources	
Cullen Egan Dell Ltd	Enterprise bargaining
Speakman Stillwell	Enterprise bargaining
Facilitators engaged to work with Councils on amalgamation proposals	
Ethos Australia	Facilitator
Gael Fraser & Associates	Facilitator
Jill Gael & Associates	Facilitator
Phillip Hudson	Facilitator
John Morris	Facilitator
Denise Picton (Oz Train)	Facilitator
Jennifer Richardson	Facilitator
Ryan & Spargo Consulting	Facilitator
Sheppard Consulting Group	Facilitator
Local Government	
Janet Gould & Associates	Consultancy services re amalgamation process
Stephen Middleton & Assoc.	Communication support and public relations advice
Hassell Pty Ltd	Preparation of report looking at effects of local government size
Stephen Middleton & Assoc.	Communication support and public relations advice
Emcorp Pty Ltd	Consultancy and production of report for the Ministerial Advisory Group
Finlaysons	Research and advice on procedures for the review of council decisions and operations
Parks Community Centre	
Intek Design Group	Building signage advice
Planning Division	
John Collins	Planning division review
Shane Foley	Car park study—shopping centres
Di Willis Skills Development	Coordination of the staff development and customer satisfaction programs
Woodward Clyde	Advice on potential impacts of a liquid waste plant at Kilburn
Alistair Tutte & Hassell	Regional centre expansion scenarios
Rust PPK	Development of policies for small scale industries in the Mt Lofty Ranges
Hassell Planning	Development of policies for industrial development
Geosys GIS Consultants	Land monitoring and forecasting database
Peter Jensen & Stuart Main	Aided in adoption of model codes for residential development
Strategy and Budget	
Coopers & Lybrand	Report on management improvement
Commissioner for Public Employment	CEO recruitment
CSIRO	SA Integrated Housing Policy project
DGR Consulting	Performance indicators for HUD portfolio
Kinhill Engineers	SA Home Ownership review
Total	$711 665

2. APPENDIX VIII (A)—List of Consultant Groupings—DHUD, excluding Business Services

Over $50 000	
Local Government	
Coopers & Lybrand	Development of performance indicators
Planning Division	
Key Centre Adelaide Uni	Development of electronic version of Metropolitan Development Program/Plan
Total	$195 631

3. The Auditor-General's report found that in some instances, debts were written off by delegated officers who had exceeded their Level of Authority.

Within the Housing Trust, delegation is held at four different levels: Office Administrators have delegation to write off small debts of up to $1 000 and Regional Managers to $5 000. Write-offs up to $15 000, must be approved by the Directors, Regional Operations, and debts over $15 000 by the General Manager.

All Managers have been instructed to make their staff aware of the approved levels for writing off bad debts. The Trust is also investigating enhancements to systems to assist in monitoring the appropriate authorisation of debt write offs.

4. The findings are not specifically related to the separation of maintenance into the new Property Management section. The above comment was made in relation to an investigation undertaken as part of the internal audit program within the Housing Trust. The Trust has implemented initiatives to address the Internal Audit findings including implementing of Self-Audit procedures, which is already improving the consistency of clerical procedures.

5. The clerical procedures identified as requiring improvement included the use of incorrect cost categories and incorrect coding of the type of work undertaken. These deficiencies were not of a type which impacted on service delivery and customers have not been disadvantaged.

6. A key factor in the reduced expenditure on maintenance in 1995-96 was the significant savings made in the zone tender contracts. In addition, savings were achieved in respect of maintenance on vacant dwellings which were difficult to let in certain areas pending decisions on the future deployment or the sale of this stock.

For 1996-97 the responsive maintenance budget is planned to be slightly greater than last financial year.

I can assure the honourable member that an effective responsive maintenance program is a key objective of Housing Trust operations and any tenant concerns addressed to the honourable member should be forwarded to me for attention. However, as the Auditor General highlights in his Report, the management of maintenance activity is complex and involves a high volume of diverse, low value transactions and problems will arise from time to time.

SAMCOR AND FORWOOD PRODUCTS

In reply to **Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith)** 2 October.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The reply is as follows:

Samcor (page 128)

The investigations referred to by the Auditor-General related to the management of SAMCOR. I do not believe it is appropriate to table the Crown Solicitor's report in respect of the alleged conflicts of interest in the first SAMCOR sale process. The Government is bound, in my opinion, to maintain the confidentiality of bidder involvement, in any sale process. The Crown Solicitor's report refers to such bidder involvement and activities. Accordingly, I am unable to release a copy of the Crown Solicitor's report. In addition, the Crown Solicitor's report may have potential to damage the current tender process.

I would point out, nevertheless, that the investigations confirmed the probity of the sales process and the value of the safeguards which have been put in place by the Government for major assets sales.

Forwood Products (page 707 Part B, volume 11)

The press release announcing the sale of Forwood Products stated:

> Based in Auckland, New Zealand, Carter Holt Harvey is one of the largest forest products companies in the southern hemisphere and is New Zealand's second largest company by market capitalisation.

I am aware that International Paper Company, a United States paper and timber products based company, has a large shareholding in Carter Holt Harvey.

The exact ownership of Carter Holt Harvey by 'New Zealand' is a difficult question to answer as many shareholders in Carter Holt Harvey may be domiciled in New Zealand, but are themselves owned by overseas, including Australian, interests. At 21 June 1995, 96.4 per cent of Carter Holt Harvey's paid up capital holders had registered addresses in New Zealand. Such information is publicly available through the Carter Holt Harvey annual report.

Forwood Products (Part A of audit overview page 128)

The exit report for the sale of Forwood Products is currently being prepared. It is not the intention of the Government that exit reports be tabled in Parliament. Exit reports contain confidential information in respect of bids and bidder identity, which the Government is bound to maintain as confidential.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): I bring up the thirty-ninth report of the committee on the rehabilitation of the Mypolonga and Government highland irrigation district and the fortieth report of the committee on the Montacute Road upgrade, Chester Crescent/Ballalie Road section and move:

That the reports be received.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

WHYALLA STEELWORKS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier join the Whyalla City Council in a delegation to meet with BHP's Managing Director (John Prescott), following the decision to cut 250 jobs from the Whyalla steelworks, in a bipartisan effort to prevent further job losses? Last night, Whyalla City Council passed the following resolution:

That this council adopt a bipartisan approach and calls on the Premier of South Australia to participate in a delegation to Mr John Prescott, Mr Ron McNeilly and the Board of Directors of BHP to argue for the vital role of the Whyalla steel division in this region and in the State's economy. This delegation will consist of the Mayor of Whyalla, the Deputy Mayor of Whyalla, the City Manager, a representative from the union movement locally, the Leader of the Opposition in South Australia and the Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am willing to join with the City Council of Whyalla to make representations to Mr John Prescott and other senior managers of BHP. I had a number of discussions some months ago with senior people within BHP; and, in particular, I have been arguing the case to ensure that there is a re-lining of the blast furnace in Whyalla, which is absolutely crucial to the long-term future of the steelworks at Whyalla. The present lining on the blast furnace is the longest serving lining in operation around the world and is working very effectively.

I met with Mr John Prescott in July this year in Melbourne and had a detailed discussion with him on a whole range of issues, including the future of the operation in Whyalla. BHP indicated that, for a number of years, a program has been in place for improved efficiency at Whyalla. That was put in place under the previous Labor Government in South

Australia, and a significant reduction occurred in the Whyalla work force. We all know that BHP has had to benchmark that plant against the rest of the world, and I understand that the plant operates very effectively. However, in talks I had with them last year, BHP management indicated that there would have to be continued improvements in efficiencies to maintain the relative efficiency between that plant and other plants in Australia and overseas, because it competes against Newcastle and Wollongong and plants overseas.

I am delighted to have the support of the council in this matter. As I said, it is an issue that has concerned me for a long time. I am confident that we will get BHP to re-line the blast furnace and therefore give a guaranteed future to BHP in Whyalla. It is regarded as one of the best operating steel plants of that size in the world. Indeed, it is a benchmark plant, particularly the way the blast furnace operates and the longevity of the lining.

One of the key issues is to help BHP identify a sufficient reserve of iron ore to make sure that it has iron ore for the next 25 to 30 years, which is the period that it needs to operate. Through MESA, the Government is working with BHP to ensure that we can secure that long-term supply. I am confident about the long-term future of Whyalla and BHP. I am willing to lead a delegation from the council to talk with Mr John Prescott to make sure that there is a clear understanding by all parties involved—the city council, the union and the State Government—with BHP in terms of how the plant will operate in the future, what the key benchmark decision points are and how we help to secure that long-term future for BHP.

PREMIER, PORT AUGUSTA VISIT

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Premier advise the House of matters important to the Upper Spencer Gulf region which the Premier raised with local community representatives when he visited Port Augusta last week?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I met with union officials from Australian National at Port Augusta on Tuesday of last week and, in fact, Mr Speaker, you were present for those discussions. Indeed, the discussions were very constructive. I appreciate the stance and the support given by the union officials in working with our task force under the Minister for Transport's guidance. Those union officials have a clear understanding of what is needed to help secure their jobs and the future of the Australian National workshop; that is, to make sure that there is a transfer of ownership of those workshops across to private operators of the rail system in Australia in the future and, at the same time, to have an operator in the Port Augusta workshops who will not only service the railway network of Australia but, very importantly, do manufacturing work for the mining sector, especially Roxby Downs.

There is potential for the right company and the workshops at Port Augusta to do a significant amount of Olympic Dam's metal construction work at Port Augusta. Certainly, that is the Government's objective. The Minister for Transport has already held discussions with Western Mining Corporation in respect of that possibility, and the State Government has pledged its support to help bring that about. Two weeks ago I had discussions with Federal Cabinet when it was in Adelaide. I stressed the need for it to make decisions about the transfer as quickly as possible. I also had a meeting with the Minister for Transport and the Federal Minister for Transport, John Sharp, in which we again stressed the need for quick decisions so that the workshop is transferred before work is lost from Australian National. The other opportunity I had involved walking around the workshop at Port Augusta. Again, I appreciated the discussion I had with the workers involved.

The other matter that I was able to announce while in Port Augusta was that the State Government has now agreed to a social policy coordinator to work particularly with young people in the Port Augusta community. The Mayor was delighted with the support that she received from the State Government on that. Four ministries are involved: the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, the Minister for Community Welfare and the Minister for Police. Those four Government agencies have come together to support this program being put in place which will be now coordinated by the social policy coordinator.

GRIFFIN PRESS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Why did the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development fail to visit Griffin Press to discuss the company's difficulties and potential job losses because of the Howard Government's decision to remove the book bounty, and will he support the industry campaign to block this move in the Senate during the next week or two? Griffin Press wrote to the Minister in September following the removal of the book bounty in the 20 August budget. The Minister said that he would not be available for discussions until 1997. Last week, Griffin Press laid off 140 workers. In his letter of 26 September to the Minister, the Chief Executive of Griffin Press states that the Minister should 'check our address before making an appointment as, by the new year, we could well have relocated our business to Victoria'.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am delighted that the Leader of the Opposition has asked me this question, because we might be able to get some facts and truths on the record in relation to Griffin Press. Yes, I did receive a letter from Griffin Press—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —inviting me to a factory visit. That letter made no mention of difficulties at the prospect—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Would the Leader just like to listen to the answer, or does he not want to hear what I have to say?

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, he does not, because—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair wants to hear what the Minister has to say.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Put out to left field the basis of the question. There was no urgency to the matter, according to the letter I received from the Managing Director of Griffin Press. I indicated to him that, when the parliamentary session was complete, I would be more than happy and delighted to carry out a factory visit, and that that would likely be in January 1997.

Mr Atkinson: After Christmas.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, it was.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As he does, the Leader ignores the truth of his wanting to make a perception setting point. The truth is—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is out of order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —that I received an invitation for a factory visit. I said, 'Yes, I would be delighted to carry out a factory visit. As soon as the parliamentary sessions are out of the way, I would be more than delighted to undertake a factory visit.' Moreover, last week the Department of Manufacturing Industry, Small Business and Regional Development phoned the Managing Director and asked to have discussions with him in relation to the bounty.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Lo and behold, he was not available: the Managing Director was not available last week to discuss the matter with the Department of Manufacturing Industry. So much for the urgency of the matter. And the Leader knows full well, because he asked the question on the Wednesday when Parliament last sat, that the Premier took up the question of the bounty with the Commonwealth Government. He has written to the Prime Minister in relation to the Commonwealth Government. It is a financial matter contained within the budget of the Commonwealth Government. I have also taken up, at a Federal level, the matter of the bounty and its import.

The Federal member for Port Adelaide raised the matter with the Prime Minister yesterday in the Federal Parliament and the Prime Minister has responded to the query of Griffin Press. I do not mind being accountable for the policies of this Government; I do not mind standing up for every business in South Australia and protecting jobs in this State for South Australians; but I refuse to be held accountable at the end of the day for a decision of another Government that impacts against business in this State. Yes, we will take up the argument and, yes, we will press the pace—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: —and, yes, we will try to secure the positions of South Australian workers in South Australian industry, and the track record will demonstrate that we have done that. I noted in a newspaper article over the weekend that I was given a bit of a poke in the eye on this important—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: What was not included in the article, of course, was that the Managing Director had said that he was too busy to discuss this matter with the department the week before this article. It is interesting, and I wonder what games are being played. However, I put that to one side. The more important issue is—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Exactly, the jobs of the people in the industry.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: That is the far more important issue.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members are starting off the week in a very bad fashion. I do not want to keep calling people to order. I suggest to the Leader that he has had more than a fair go. He has been ably assisted by the Deputy Leader in transgressing Standing Orders, and he knows the consequences. The member for Hart has not been far behind.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The article also claimed that I am interested only in chasing the big companies into South Australia—interstate and overseas investment—and that we are not looking after South Australian based industry. The annual report, tabled by the Department of Manufacturing Industry, Small Business and Regional Development in this Parliament and reported in the media recently, indicated that, of 228 companies supported, 221 are existing South Australian based industry. We are looking after home base, and looking after it exceedingly well. We are supporting those industries in this State that want to expand employment, chase export markets and meet that criteria, and we are plugging in and assisting them.

Importantly, what we must do if we are to restructure, rebuild and refocus the economy of this State is to get more quantum into this State—more business activity—and not simply rely on that of the past. The reason we brought Westpac in is 1 200 jobs, and small to medium businesses in the western suburbs and other areas will benefit from 1 200 pay packets every week being spent in the economy of South Australia.

I have not heard the Leader of the Opposition back off the fact that Southcorp, Bonair or Vulcan are back from Victoria and consolidated in South Australia. What about acknowledging the activities of this Government in expanding and securing jobs in your electorate, Mr Speaker? In the electorate of almost every member opposite this Government has pursued policies to create greater economic activity by bringing in and consolidating existing operations and expanding further economic activity. We will rebuild this economy only if we get more investment in it. Simply having the same is marking time, and marking time is not good enough for South Australia. Thanks to the former Administration, we have gone past the capacity to influence through financial incentives as we would like to do. What we are trying to do is expand the economic activity and build more job prospects for South Australians in the future. Instead of damning those activities, the Leader of the Opposition should be supporting them.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will be more than touching. The member for Chaffey.

FIREARMS

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): Will the Minister for Police advise the House on the progress of the new licensing requirements for firearms owners in South Australia? I understand that all firearms owners must apply for their new photographic firearms licence by 8 November. I am also aware that some firearms owners, particularly those who are overseas or interstate, may have some difficulty in meeting this current deadline.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Yes, I would like to give a progress report to Parliament about the new photographic licence system. Everybody has been reminded that the applications for licence renewal and the exemptions under category (c) must be filed by 8 November. The issuing of the photographic licences has not been as speedy as we would

like. It is being done by a Victorian firm, and it is now back on track with new equipment to ensure that the plastic coated licences are made available. I have seen a sample, and they are more than adequate.

However, some of the delays are a matter of concern. The police have advised me that, where an application has been properly made and the 28 day interim firearms licence period has passed, applicants will still be deemed to be licensed by the Registrar of Firearms. So, if they have not received their licence, they will still be deemed to have done so. The point has been made a number of times that people have to apply for their licence by 8 November. Because of the large numbers involved, we warned everybody that they should start early. However, to date we have had only 42 931 applications. This is the last week, and people are now queuing up at Motor Vehicles and the post office and finding it very difficult to lodge their applications. So, we will have to allow some leeway in the system and, as long as people can say they have made an adequate attempt, even though they might not have filed their licence application by the due date, there will be some flexibility in the system. I would add that we warned everybody to get onto this earlier, but some people are queuing and finding they cannot get their applications through. There will be a bottleneck, simply because people have not heeded that warning, but the Government will be flexible.

Both Motor Vehicles and Australia Post have us given an undertaking that they will move as many applications as possible, and we will ensure that, if people have made a proper attempt and they can say that on a particular day they took an action to renew the licence but that they were unfortunately unable to do so, there will be some leeway. Hopefully, they will see to it as quickly as possible, because if they leave it too long they will be outside the law.

The police have produced and made available a photo kit which contains the application data card and information outlining the requirements for people out of the State. I know that there are a number of people with relatives overseas. We now have the new material that is available to them so they can make their application from overseas. There will be leeway in relation to that matter as well.

It is interesting to note that the Sporting Shooters Association issued an advertisement to remind people of their obligation to file a licence application by 8 November. Unfortunately, the Sporting Shooters Association obtained the wrong telephone number and, rather than reaching the hot line, callers finished up contacting the Flinders Medical Centre, whose staff, I understand, are not particularly amused by all the calls they are receiving. I appreciate the support provided by an increasing number of people for the firearms laws in South Australia. We will be as flexible as we can because of the bottlenecks being created, but everyone should be aware that they have an obligation. If they do not fulfil that obligation, the Act will prevail and there will be prosecutions.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Manufacturing, Industry, Small Business and Regional Development. In light of the Premier's comment on 28 October that 'regional South Australia is responding strongly to Government initiatives to encourage investment and help revitalise local economies', will the Minister detail the Government's program expenditure on the Upper Spencer Gulf over the past three years, the number of jobs retained or attracted to the Upper Spencer Gulf and the number of State Government jobs lost to the region over that same period?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I would be happy to ascertain the specific details requested by the Deputy Leader, but let me put it in this context—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I have spoken to the Deputy Leader already.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The Deputy Leader wants to ignore the fact that this Government, through its regional policy administered by the regional development boards, has assisted 154 firms in country regional areas of South Australia and has attracted $224 million of new investment over that period. In addition, it has created 1 978 jobs—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: You asked the question, and I will give you the answer: 1 978 jobs have been created and, importantly, something like 176 jobs have been retained in country areas of South Australia. I refer the Deputy Leader to an ABC program last Wednesday during which the Chair of the Port Pirie Regional Development Board clearly put in context what the Opposition had been saying and hit it for six. He said that this Government had increased the size of the regional development unit from a miserable paltry two employed under the former Administration—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader has had all the warnings he is going to get. He appears not to be interested in the answer to the question. He understands fully, having been here long enough, how the Standing Orders apply, and the matter is now entirely in his hands. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Mr Madigan hit the Opposition for six because he clearly indicated that we had increased the size of the unit from two to six, that we had allocated $2.8 million to fund the unit to assist regional development boards and that we had underpinned funding. I have acknowledged that the Labor Government of the past started regional development boards and it was a good policy. This Government has expanded on that. We have taken the few boards members opposite had and increased the number to 15 boards in South Australia. We have given core funding to those boards and extended it beyond three years to five years, so that they have some surety about planning and employment of staff.

We have taken it a step further: when the Commonwealth Government withdrew the business advisers from the regional development boards, we stepped in and plugged the gap to ensure that all regional development boards have a business adviser able to help small business in country regional areas of South Australia. That has been proactive in assisting local boards look at issues reported to local towns, cities and regional economies to help build up opportunities in those regional areas.

I put to the House that $224 million dollars worth of new investment is not a bad track record to date. Compare that with the situation obtaining a few years ago—and we have to compare like with like. I will give the Deputy Leader a good graph and examples of his Government's performance compared with this Government's performance, and we will see a true example. Look at what we have done in infrastructure. The Minister for Health reminds me that we are building a new hospital at Port Augusta. That is not a bad bit of new infrastructure for regional areas of South Australia.

The Premier has announced that Western Mining is undertaking a $1.2 billion expansion in South Australia. On the very day that the Opposition was pursuing this issue in the media, Western Mining was sitting down in Whyalla with the small business community there saying, '70 per cent of the $1.2 billion will be spent in South Australia; this is how you can get a slice of the action here in the regional community city of Whyalla.' So much for the Opposition! The emperor has no clothes. The Opposition has no basis upon which it can tackle this Government and the way in which proactively it has gone out to assist in rebuilding country areas of South Australia to make up for some of the damage left by the decade of the Bannon Government, which not only detracted from those country regional areas of South Australia but also left the State bankrupt, something with which we are still having to come to grips.

WORLD SOLAR CHALLENGE RACE

Ms GREIG (Reynell): Will the Premier advise the House whether the State Government will in future years be supporting the world solar challenge race from Darwin to Adelaide? I am advised that the 1996 world solar challenge currently being held from Darwin to Adelaide is the world premier solar car race and that moves have been made to relocate the race from Australia.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: At this stage last week, as the solar cars headed from Darwin to Adelaide, there was a great deal of discussion that the world solar challenge was likely to go either to the United States of America or to Europe. As this is the premier solar car challenge in the world, attracting a great deal of international recognition, the South Australian Government stepped in and bought the rights to the race not just for a five or 10 year period: we bought perpetual rights to the race, and henceforth it is now entirely in the hands of South Australia. It is a very important race, and clearly, over the past three years since the last race, world recognition of it has increased enormously. In fact 50 international journalists were following the cars from Darwin to Adelaide. It says something about this State and its positioning on high technology that we are in there as the owners of the best solar car challenge race in the world. We are in there making sure that we are part of the development of international conferences and other associated events that go with it.

Yesterday we had here some of the key international people interested in the transfer of solar power to electrical power and finally to motor power. In Australia we can be the world leader in terms of the design of the silicon chips that are important in terms of collecting power and transferring that power. They are manufactured at Sydney University, and the fact has been highlighted that, through bodies like the MFP—which is all about alternative energies—and through the effort the State Government is making in research and development, we should be in a position in coming years to attract a lot of international attention with what we are achieving. Importantly, the race will now be staged every two years rather than every three years, and we intend to hold major international conferences as part of this event, which will again highlight South Australia as being different from the rest of Australia.

STATE TAXATION

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): How does the Minister for Police reconcile the Premier's promise of no new tax increases and no increase beyond CPI of existing taxes and charges in light of current increases in firearms licences? With the additional cost of $10 for the photo licence, the additional increases are still well beyond CPI.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: That question is pathetic. The fact is that under the three-year licence people are paying close to $90 now and will continue to do so—there is a few dollars in it. In terms of the licence itself, the $10 charge is cost recovery. The honourable member would be aware of the amount of handling required to get that licence into a form where it is able to be slipped into a back pocket and held by firearms owners. The matter has been raised with me, and everyone is satisfied with the firearms licences, although over the longer term a net loss is associated with those licences. The Government is not making any money. The firearms owners are pretty happy about it once it has been explained to them. We are talking about a one year licence—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I am simply reporting to the member for Playford, who I am sure is well aware of the current charges, that there is a minor increase in the system. I am dumbfounded that the member for Playford has raised this question in Parliament. I am sure members opposite have better questions.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr BUCKBY (Light): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Development. Last week, the Opposition released a regional development policy which called for the establishment of enterprise zones to assist our rural areas. Can the Minister advise the House of the current support available for regional development in South Australia and those areas which would miss out under the Leader of the Opposition's scheme?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The Dorothy Dix question from members opposite answered part of the member for Light's question, but I will pick up one or two of the other points. Before the last election, the now Leader of the Opposition, the then Minister, introduced enterprise zones for regional cities. That was a well intentioned move to assist regional areas with some tax breaks to attract some growth. Recognising merit in that idea, when the Brown Government came to office we embraced enterprise zones. However, we found some shortcomings in Labor's scheme which we fixed. In particular, we spread the enterprise zones to the entire State so that all towns would benefit and all towns would be equal. However, instead of trying to better our scheme, the Leader of the Opposition has gone back to the past.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, you have. Instead of showing vision, the Leader has locked himself into the scheme which has those serious shortcomings.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: You've already announced your policy; you announced it following your exercise on Fleurieu Peninsula about a month or so ago.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Is that not your policy? Is the one you released not your policy now? I see: we have an Opposition that charges its policies monthly, depending upon the circumstances of the day. The message is that we should treat with caution any policy document it puts out as it is due to change. The Opposition's policy, which is now no longer a policy, was to put in place—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is now. In the past couple of minutes it has gone from not being a policy to now being the policy—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am glad that there is that much flexibility in the Opposition that it can make itself a moving target, change by the minute, not by the hour—

The Hon. H. Allison: The same old leadership.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, it is the same old leadership. In that last policy, the Leader of the Opposition wanted to establish enterprise zones at Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Mount Gambier. However, there is one thing wrong with that: what about the rest of country South Australia? If you happen to live in the Mid North, it is simply too bad. There is no enterprise zone for those who happen to live in the Mid North. If you live on Eyre Peninsula, it is simply too bad; there are no tax concessions there. If you live in the Murray-Mallee or the Riverland, there is no enterprise zone for you. There are no zones on the South Coast, the Barossa, the Upper South-East and the Adelaide Hills. They are all disfranchised under this policy.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: There are only a few cities left; that is it. The Opposition's policy will entice industries from the zones with tax concessions into the cities in those areas. In other words, the Opposition will allow the bigger cities to suck the best industries from the smaller towns in regional country areas of South Australia. Not long after that, retailers will close down, the population will decline, and the small towns will be unable to compete because the Opposition refuses to give them enterprise zone status.

The Leader of the Opposition says that he is for decentralisation. The scheme proposed by members opposite is centralisation within country areas of South Australia. More than 20 major towns in this State will miss out on enterprise zone status as a result of the Opposition's policy, this flexible policy that goes backwards and forwards, as we discovered today. What about Angaston, Balaklava, Berri, Bordertown, Burra, Ceduna, Clare, Hahndorf, Kadina, Kingscote, Kingston, Lobethal, Mannum, Millicent, Moonta, Mount Barker, Murray Bridge, Naracoorte, Nuriootpa, Peterborough, Renmark, Strathalbyn, Tailem Bend, Tanunda and Victor Harbor? What is wrong with those communities? Should they not have the same access to support for growth as other areas of South Australia? One thing we will provide is equality in country regional areas of South Australia. We will not disfranchise anybody; we will encourage people to go wherever they like in country regional areas of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure whether members really want to continue with Question Time. It would suit the Chair if we proceeded to the business of the day; it makes no difference whatsoever. Also, if members do not want to obey Standing Orders, the Chair can exercise its right to not call on grievances. I call on the Deputy Leader and point out that, when he asks his question, that does not give him a licence to continue to ask supplementary questions when he sits down.

STURT CREEK

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. Why did the Government agree to spend over $4 million to dredge the Patawalonga when it knew that the Patawalonga would again fill with pollution unless Sturt Creek was diverted into the Gulf St Vincent at West Beach? On Sunday, the Minister told a public meeting that no decision had been made on diverting Sturt Creek into the gulf at West Beach.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLARKE: The former Minister for Housing and Urban Development, the member for Morphett, has said:

> The whole project would be a waste of time and money, unless the Government diverted the stormwater.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: This is just a rehash of the pathetic efforts the Deputy Leader tried to put up on Sunday. Once again, here is a Government which is putting its money where its mouth is and cleaning up the waterways of the State, yet all the Opposition can do is step in and knock, knock, knock. That is all it is good for. While it was in power, it did absolutely nothing to clean up the Sturt Creek, the Patawalonga, the Torrens, and so on. In the short time it has been in power, this Government has undertaken a program whereby already upstream works are occurring which are cleaning the water flowing into the sea and, in the case of Sturt Creek, into the Patawalonga. As I said quite slowly on Sunday, in words that I thought the Deputy Leader could understand, the whole area is subject to a detailed environmental impact statement. As I explained—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Yes, they are big words. The point is that that process is under way and, as the Deputy Leader is only too well aware, we have made clear that this Government will make no decisions whatsoever on what will happen in terms of the flow of the streams and the water until completion of the EIS process. A lot of technical information is coming in—unlike that from the Deputy Leader—from experts. We are also getting information from local residents, and the whole thing is coming together. When all that information has been analysed, I can assure the honourable member that the decision this Government takes will be such that the solution will be very much environmentally sustainable.

In relation to the Patawalonga, I suggest that the Deputy Leader, along with other members opposite, go down and look at the way the work done there has been so successful. We now have white sand again at the bottom of the Patawalonga. That is something for which this Government can be very proud. Once again, I make the point that the Opposition, in all the years it was in power, did absolutely nothing to clean up the waterways or any other area, and now this Government is doing it. I repeat for the Deputy Leader's benefit—and I said it two or three times on Sunday—that no decision has yet been taken, and the final decision will be absolutely environmentally sustainable.

NATIONAL ACTION

Mr BECKER (Peake): Is the Deputy Premier aware of moves to invite the Federal member for Oxley, Pauline Hanson, to Adelaide to address a march by an anti-Asian group? It has been reported that the extremist group National

Action has invited Ms Hanson to a planned march and rally later this month at Glenelg.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the honourable member for his very important question. I understand from media reports that an invitation has been issued by National Action for Pauline Hanson to come to South Australia and address a rally. I also understand from media reports that she has not said 'Yes' and, of course, we are all hoping that she will say 'No'.

National Action has made application to Glenelg City Council to have a march on 30 November, and I assume that that is the date that relates to the invitation that has been sent to Pauline Hanson. Whilst that application has been refused, National Action can go through a determination under section 5 of the Public Assemblies Act should it so wish. If it is not granted, any assembly will be illegal, and the police have informed Mr Brander that, should the march proceed, the police will intervene to prevent the march because it will be illegal.

Every Government supports freedom of speech, as does this Government. My right to freedom of speech makes me suggest that I hope Pauline Hanson does not come to South Australia. If she should make that unwise decision, I hope that the people of South Australia repudiate her in large numbers and that she gets the reception that she deserves. We have seen Pauline Hanson fuel a debate that is about divisiveness and hatred. We have no place for that in South Australia.

STURT CREEK

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. Will the Government now rule out options 2 and 3 for diverting the Sturt Creek from the Patawalonga to the Gulf St Vincent at West Beach and transfer the $7 million that it had budgeted for this diversion to works recommended by the Patawalonga catchment management plan? On 23 June 1995, the member for Morphett, then the Minister for Housing and Urban Development, told the Estimates Committee that the overall budget for cleaning up the Patawalonga included an amount of $7 million for a flushing system and creek diversion. On 31 October, it was announced that works recommended in the Patawalonga catchment management plan would cost up to $45 million and would require the Government to double its present five-year budget.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I will speak more slowly this time than I did in the last answer because it is obvious that the Deputy Leader is having a lot of trouble understanding the situation. He asked me at the beginning of his question whether I would rule out options 2 and 3. I will say again, as I said three or four times on Sunday, that I will not rule out any option except for the open channel, which the Government said months ago will not occur. Apart from that, the Government has made it quite clear that it cannot give any indication as to what the preferred option is because there is no preferred option at this stage.

The EIS process is still under way. When that process is complete, the Government will be in a position to determine what is the most environmentally correct way of handling the problem. The problem existed all the time the previous Government was in power, yet it did not address the problem at any time, although it kept saying that it would do something. This Government has stepped in and spent $7 million putting in a safe, deepwater harbor for the fast ferry and other facilities, but all we hear from the Opposition is knock, knock, knock. We are spending money down there for the good of this State, and I will assure the Deputy Leader once more that, when the Government makes its decision as to what will occur at Glenelg, it will be environmentally sustainable and it will be best for the environment of the total littoral or shore zone of the metropolitan area of Adelaide.

FIREFIGHTING AIRCRAFT

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): Will the Minister for Emergency Services provide details of whether the Government intends utilising two CL 215 water bomber aircraft, which will be based in Adelaide during the 1996-97 bushfire season? If so, will there be a cost to taxpayers? I note media stories yesterday, which were generated by the Canadian manufacturer Canadair, that the company is 'trying to convince State Governments that the super scooper should be a permanent part of their firefighting arsenal'.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: As well as having a strong interest in and support for the Country Fire Service, in 1994 the member for Newland chaired the Parliament's Environment, Resources and Development Committee, and tabled its report in this Chamber on its examination of the benefits of the CL 415 aircraft and ways of financing that for South Australia. Canadair has formally approached me with a view to locating two CL 215, slightly smaller, aircraft at Adelaide Airport during the coming bushfire season. Canadair advises that it expects to position the aircraft at Adelaide Airport from 13 November and to make them available to Government, regardless of whether or not Government is prepared to enter into any contractual arrangement.

It is important that members are aware that these aircraft are not as large as the CL 415 that toured Australia last bushfire season to provide Australians with a demonstration of the capability of the Canadair fleet. Those two smaller aircraft will be in Adelaide. While I believe that Canadair's move is interesting, and I acknowledge the utility of the aircraft to South Australia during the coming bushfire season, regrettably the issue of cost represents a major hurdle for the South Australian taxpayer to be able to enter into a formal contractual arrangement with this company.

In addition, the Government already has a contract with an air service provider that has still one year to run and, in fairness, that contract has served the State well in past bushfire seasons. The Country Fire Service aerial budget for this financial year is $270 000, which provides coverage for three aircraft—two based in Adelaide and one based in the South-East. The minimum cost to Government of utilising the Canadair aircraft on standby and on an *ad hoc* basis would be $268 000 plus $650 per hour to cover fuel costs for each plane. As members can appreciate, that is a significantly higher cost for just two aircraft compared with the three that we have under existing contract.

Canadair's preferred option, and its formal offer to Government, was for a lease of $491 000 for one aircraft, plus $2 550 for flying order, for a period of 120 days, and to have the second aircraft available on an *ad hoc* basis for $15 000 a day, plus $3 800 for flying order. The CL 415 aircraft, on which the member for Newland's committee reported most favourably to Parliament, are most impressive aircraft, probably more so than the two smaller CL 215s that will be located in Adelaide. Regrettably, the costs associated with the aircraft are prohibitive at this time.

It is important to state that I am not ruling out the option of using the craft should the worst occur and should a serious fire situation occur in South Australia. If a serious bushfire developed in our State, absolutely every resource at the State's disposal would be utilised, and Canadair has been advised that, under such extreme circumstances, Government would be prepared to enter into an arrangement to take advantage of the aircraft if they are so located. In summary, I acknowledge Canadair's desire to enter the Australian market. I welcome the interest that the company is showing in South Australia, but at this time we are not in a position to enter formally into a contractual arrangement with the company.

STURT CREEK

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Why has the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources refused to attend all four public meetings called by the Henley and Grange council to discuss the clean-up of the Patawalonga and the local community's concerns that plans to divert stormwater from the Sturt Creek into Gulf St Vincent at West Beach will harm the environment? When will the Minister finally show some guts on this issue?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader has been given more latitude than anyone today. The last part of his question was out of order, and he was commenting quite blatantly. He has now transgressed more often than he should have, so he knows the consequences. If there is one more interjection I will have no hesitation.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: For the Deputy Leader's information, I have not been able to attend on either occasion I have been invited because I have had other functions that I have not been able to change. I have made that quite clear to the organisers of the meetings. It is a very important environmental issue, and the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations has answered quite adequately the questions that have been asked on this subject.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Mr BASS (Florey): With today being the day of the nation's biggest horse racing event, the Melbourne Cup—and I can tell members who won it but I have been threatened by the Minister if I do—will the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing tell the House what promotions the TAB undertook in South Australia when Saintly won the cup?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It was a very Saintly victory, with another South Australian, Sky Beau, coming third. It has also been a magnificent day on the TAB. To this stage, this is the biggest day the TAB has ever had in terms of holdings, and there is still another 2½ to 3 hours to go. Over the last four weeks we have had the Caulfield Cup and the Cox Plate, the two biggest days ever until today in terms of racing in South Australia. That was capped off today with the biggest day that the TAB has had. That has come about because over the last three or four months there has been a very significant change in policy in terms of promoting racing in South Australia. It has come about by the TAB board ensuring that we put money back into promotion instead of taking it off the top, putting it on the bottom line and benefiting the racing industry in a short-term way instead of looking at the long-term promotion of the industry.

Today is also the first time that we have had portable stations for the TAB in the major hotels in Adelaide. We have had portable stations at the Hyatt, the Hilton International, the Stamford Plaza, Stonyfell Winery and the Hindley Parkroyal. For the first time it means that nearly 2 500 people who were at these hotels were able to bet directly on the TAB at those facilities. It is a very innovative exercise that has occurred today. We have also spent a lot of time promoting the racing industry in Rundle Mall. Last Friday we showed 2 500 people who had never bet before how to bet on the TAB. The promotion has been very much short-term but with long-term benefits.

It is great to see another fantastic ex-South Australian trainer doing so well in the Melbourne Cup. I think it is his tenth victory. It was tremendous to see Lenny Smith with a horse in the Melbourne Cup for the second time which ran third in the event. I congratulate the owners of both houses but, more importantly, I congratulate the new board and the staff of the TAB on the significant changes. Count Chivas came second.

WATER RATES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. Why has the Government broken its election promise not to increase charges above inflation by increasing the cost of—

Mr Brindal: Get a haircut.

Mr FOLEY: At least I have hair to be cut. I do not think the member for Unley should talk about a haircut.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. Why has the Government broken its election promise not to increase charges above inflation by increasing the cost of 240 kilolitres of water by more than twice the level of inflation since 1994? Under rates set in 1993, the cost of 250 kilolitres of water was $220.32. Water rates announced for the 1997 year mean that the average consumer who uses 250 kilolitres of water per annum will pay $274.75. This is an increase of $54.43 or 24.7 per cent over the same volume of water set in 1993. The CPI for this period was only 9 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I do not know where the member for Hart has been for the last few days but there was a good deal of publicity about this last Thursday and Friday when these questions were put to me. For the information of the member for Hart, I will recap that which I commented on publicly today. There are 600 000 consumers in South Australia. With respect to water filtration plants exempted and the 1¢ a kilolitre exempted, the average increase for 600 000 consumers is 3.1 per cent, which is locked into the commitment that I have given in the past.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Just listen to what I said: the average of the 600 000 is the 3.1 per cent. There are five categories. I know that the Opposition well understands this fact, because when we were in opposition we would put the same questions to the then Government. So, members opposite understand this point. There are five categories: residential, pensioners, industrial, commercial and another. There are overs and unders in each of the categories. To ensure that pensioners were not severely disadvantaged, we increased their rebate by $5 up to $90. That is more than the Opposition did at any time when it was in government. It did not have any concern for pensioners in that category, but we

have done something in terms of recognising the pensioner category. The simple fact is that the average across the 600 000 consumers equals 3.1 per cent.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Do you want me to say it again a little more slowly?

Mr Foley: Tell my constituents.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I invite the honourable member's constituents not to listen to me, not to listen to you but to open the envelope and look at the bill. That will be the test—not what you say, not what I say but what is on the piece of paper. Regarding the average, the simple fact is that, given the basis on which we have determined this over a number of years, including the years when the Opposition was in government, we have kept our promise. Is the Opposition saying that the policy announcement of the Premier and the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources in January this year to do something constructive about the Murray-Darling Basin Commission ought to be ignored? Is the Opposition saying that we should not add 1¢ a kilolitre and that we should not set an example, as the Premier has, to other States of Australia to do something about the Murray-Darling Basin Commission? Is that what the Opposition is saying?

I have no difficulty in arguing anywhere, in any forum, that that 1¢ is protecting not only the environment but the future of South Australia, and also in economic terms. Is the Opposition saying that country areas, the Adelaide Hills and some 100 country townships, 100 000 South Australians, should not have access to filtered water, as metropolitan people have had for the past 20 years? Is that what the Opposition is saying? If that is what the Opposition is saying, I am more than happy to argue the case with the Opposition anywhere and at any time in terms of the track record of looking after water interests, and keeping to the fundamental commitment given. The mean and average across all consumer groups for water is 3.1 per cent equals inflation.

TOURISM AWARDS

Mrs HALL (Coles): Will the Minister for Tourism please inform the House how South Australia performed at the recently announced national tourism awards held in Perth last weekend, and what that all means for South Australia in terms of tourism nationally?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Last weekend was a fantastic time for South Australia from a tourism perspective. For the first time a wineries section was included in the national awards and it was won by the Thumm family, the Barossa Valley Chateau Tanunda group at Lyndoch. It is the first time that that category has been included and we won the best winery presentation in the new wineries section in the national tourism awards. That is a fantastic effort and I congratulate the Thumm family for its involvement. Secondly, we also won the best restaurant award. Adelaide has the best restaurant, nationally—the Red Ochre Grill. So South Australia won the best winery section and the best restaurant.

Thirdly, and probably most significantly, the education section was won by the Regency Hotel School and International College of Hotel Management for its excellence in training. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister for his excellent work in ensuring that the college continues to work as well as it has over the past five to 10 years. It is important that we recognise these awards because it is a tremendous effort that South Australians can win on the national stage. When one sees the presentations made by the other Governments on behalf of the entrants, the fact that South Australia was able to win three of those awards is a fantastic result for South Australia. I congratulate all three award winners and look forward to seeing and personally congratulating those participants over the next month.

WATER RATES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The members for Lee and Unley will come to order.

Mr FOLEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure.

An honourable member: You have already done that bit.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Sir, they have been a bit rattled, haven't they?

The SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable member want to ask a question?

Mr FOLEY: I do, Sir, but I could not get the attention of the Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! In normal circumstances the honourable member is rather forthcoming; I suggest that he now display that particular attribute.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Sir. I understand that opinion polls do that to you.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Does the Minister for Infrastructure deny that the cost of the old basic allowance of 136 kilolitres of water has risen at almost five times the rate of inflation since 1994? The cost of the old basic allowance of 136 kilolitres of water in 1994 cost $120: the cost of 136 kilolitres of water in 1997 will be $172.15, an increase of $52.15 or 43.45 per cent. This compares with the consumer price index increases for the same period of only 9 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Since 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1997-98, which was the last announcement made across all consumer groups, there has been an average sticking to the CPI increases.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know whether the honourable member wants to ask another question. The Chair has no problems if no further questions are asked. The member for Napier.

HOUSING TRUST RENTS

Ms HURLEY (Napier): My question is directed—

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Tourism.

Ms HURLEY: —to the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations. Is the Minister aware that rent review letters are being sent by the Housing Trust to subsidised tenants that are creating a false impression that rents are being decreased, and will he correct the use of terminology? A letter sent to a Housing Trust tenant states:

> The trust has reviewed your rent based on the September 1996 Department of Social Security changes to household incomes and determined that your rent will be $89.70 per week, as from Saturday, 2 November 1996. This is a reduced rent and will be subject to regular review.

The use of the words 'reduced rent' actually refers to a subsidised rent. The tenant in question believed, from the letter, that his rent was being reduced but he was actually being notified of a rent increase.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: I am glad that, at last, this matter has come before the House, because it will give me the opportunity to draw to the attention of all members the type of campaign that members opposite have been conducting in Housing Trust areas throughout South Australia. Let us look at some of the statements that candidates and members of the Labor Party have put out to Housing Trust tenants. First, tenants will be kicked out of their houses. That is one suggestion the Labor Party has been spreading. Secondly, it is said that rents will go up; and, thirdly that, because we are moving to market rents, rents will skyrocket. An abominable scare campaign has been conducted throughout this State by the Opposition. Let us just look—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: The honourable member says that she wants us to be honest. Let us be honest and talk about what is happening. Yes, we are moving to market rents, and why are we moving to market rents? It is because the previous Federal Labor Government—and I stress that—decided that it wanted to make changes and, under the housing agreement that it introduced, under that system, it said that all States must move to market rents. That is why South Australia is moving to market rents. Having got that issue out the way, let us make another point, because the Opposition is saying, 'Because you are going to market rents, rents will go up': 82 per cent of tenants in South Australia are receiving a subsidy, which means that there will be absolutely no impact or effect whatsoever on those tenants in relation to the change that has occurred.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Do you want me to say it slowly. Thank you. I am sorry if I was going too quickly.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin: Draw a picture.

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: Yes, that is a good idea; I will draw a picture. It adds up to the fact that not one of the 82 per cent of Housing Trust tenants who are on a subsidy will experience an adverse impact because the subsidy will ensure that they still pay no more than 25 per cent of the household income—just as it is now. Let us put that one to bed straight away. We can look at a range of other scare tactics that the Opposition has been putting out and deliberate untruths with not one skerrick of truth to them.

I am glad that the honourable member has raised this issue. Hopefully now the candidates and members opposite will not put absolutely unfounded fear into people, because people will not be losing their houses and they will not have their rents increased if they are receiving a subsidy. Also, the Opposition is not saying that the proposed change will mean a greater opportunity for people to be able to rent at the subsidised level, because no longer will they be constrained only to public housing: they will get the same deal in private housing. Therefore, waiting lists will come down: they will not increase. But the Opposition is saying, 'You will never get a home or, if you get one, you will be tossed out.' Let us get those facts squarely on the record. There will be no impact, and I only hope that the Opposition will lay right off, because—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN: That is interesting to hear. The answer is 'No.' In other words, they will continue to lie and put out false information; they know it is incorrect. At least it is now out in the open and we know that the Opposition and particularly the member for Hart are not interested in the truth. Again, I thank the honourable member for her question. We have now been able to get on the record that there will not be any disadvantage to the tenants, a point which the Prime Minister has put in writing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections coming from my right. A number of members are—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson interjected when I started to address the House. He appears not to want to stay in the House for the rest of the afternoon. The member for Giles.

WHYALLA STEELWORKS

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: In the *Advertiser* on Wednesday 30 October, in an article headed 'Steel works axes 250 in blow to town' by industrial reporter Michael Foster, an alleged statement from me is referred to as follows:

> The local State MP, Labor's Mr Frank Blevins, warned Whyalla could be turned into a ghost town. 'No BHP, effectively no town,' he said.

Whilst having no quarrel with the sentiments of the alleged quote, just to put the record straight, I have never even heard of Mr Foster, let alone spoken to him. In fact, no-one at all from the *Advertiser* has spoken to me on this issue.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: The question before the Chair is that the House note grievances. The honourable member for Florey.

Mr BASS (Florey): In a grievance debate in this place on Thursday 24 October, the Leader of the Opposition spoke about a meeting with AN workers who had lost their jobs and taken redundancy packages. He referred to 'a contract from the Federal Government—that if they took a redundancy package they would then have 52 weeks of training', and he then said that that had now been dishonoured by the Howard Government. A training program called the 'Australian National Labor Adjustment Program' was indeed funded by the Federal Government. Last year the Federal Labor Government decided to cut out the program completely but, after protests, it decided to grant a stay of its decision and allow the program to remain until 30 June this year. The new Federal Liberal Government honoured that decision, which remained in force until 30 June. In his speech the Leader of the Opposition also went on to say:

> I will go to Port Augusta next week with members of the shadow Cabinet, and I want to see those workers again.

I presume that the Leader of the Opposition stuck to what he said and spoke to the AN workers, but I wonder whether he sat down and told them exactly what the Labor Party has done in the past 10 years. It is absolute hypocrisy of Labor to tell the community that it is concerned about rail jobs in South Australia when in the 10 years of Labor from 1983 to

1993 the number of AN jobs fell from 10 500 to 2 500. Labor lost 8 000 Australian National jobs. The previous Labor Minister, Brereton, had approved plans for another thousand jobs to go if Federal Labor had won the election this year. Labor's own Federal Opposition spokesman, Lindsay Tanner, admitted as much in Adelaide on 12 December when he said:

> . . . clearly there is a connection with the establishment of National Rail in the early 1990s, and our Government knew that that was going to mean that Australian National would operate in deficit.

In other words, it was doomed to failure, and they knew about it. The then Minister, Brereton, allowed rail jobs to be exported out of South Australia to New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria, and contracts for 120 new locomotives went to those States—no business. In 1991 when National Rail was set up, the Bannon Government refused to be involved, freezing South Australia out of all decisions. I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition told the AN workers this. In October last year and January this year, Brereton came to South Australia and visited the railway workers, promising to support the AN work force. Six days later he sold out their jobs to three other States. I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition had the guts to tell the workers that this is what has happened.

The Brew report describes these decisions by Labor Governments as death by a thousand cuts for AN workers, making it impossible for AN to operate profitably. What a damning indictment on the so-called Labor Party that claims to be interested in blue collar workers! They have been stabbed in the back by Labor. The Leader of the Opposition was a Minister in the Bannon and Arnold Governments, which stood by and refused to be involved in National Rail and refused to criticise Brereton or the Keating Government for exporting South Australian jobs. The Leader of the Opposition is really showing Labor's financial naivety because, after the Brew report found that AN's operating loss would be up to $148 million in 1995-96 and would blow out to $1 billion over three years at that rate (AN has a debt of $864 million and an interest bill of $60 million, which it cannot service), the Leader of the Opposition put his name to an advertisement on 14 September claiming 'AN is not broke'. If AN is not broke with those debts, I will go 'He'. The sort of financial irresponsibility which led to AN's problems and which allowed the Leader of the Opposition to describe Marcus Clark's involvement in the State Bank as a 'major coup' and 'stunning', is finished.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Taylor.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Given all the industrial strife in the education system at the moment and everything negative that is being said of some educationalists in this State, I will give members an indication of some of the very positive things that are happening at one school in my electorate. Recently I was asked to speak to a student forum at the Paralowie R-12 school on leadership and related skills. This forum is being pioneered in the State at the moment, in which Paralowie school is taking part. It is about giving students life skills and opportunities to lead in various ways within their school communities. While I was at the school, a number of teachers told me about the recognition they had had recently both within the State and interstate for their expertise in the learning area.

For example, recently three teachers from the Paralowie R-12 school went to Geraldton in Western Australia to give teachers at two schools over there—the John Willcock Senior High and Geraldton District High—an insight into the success of their teaching methods here in South Australia. The amalgamation of the two schools mentioned will be the first in Western Australia, and will restructure the middle years of schooling. Some of the work at Paralowie has been done by teachers such as Phil Wilkins, the Principal, Gail Little and Rob Loielo, who all went to Western Australia recently to share their expertise.

Very positive feedback came from Western Australia on the work being done here at Paralowie R-12. Further, the Paralowie teachers have been involved in a rural education project in conjunction with the University of South Australia. That project, which is going on at Roxby Downs, Woomera and Andamooka, includes the participation of University of South Australia staff with two teachers from Paralowie: Julie O'Leary, an R-5 teacher, and Ian Corbet from the senior school R-12, involving student teachers as well. That was a week long project aimed at supporting the training and development needs of rural teachers in those isolated locations.

The teachers from Paralowie, along with university staff, met at Roxby Downs and were able to impart quite a productive amount of information on the teaching and collaborative learning systems taking place at Paralowie. Paralowie is certainly at the forefront of some of the work going on, involving supporting staff and students, with across-school literacy projects. They are also pursuing a number of initiatives in the arts area that will result in public performances between schools. Some positive and innovative programs are indeed happening in the northern suburbs, particularly at Paralowie High.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hartley.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): It is a pleasure to hear from the member for Taylor about the good things happening at Paralowie 12, which was my last school as a teacher. It is always good to hear that one's former place of employment is doing well, and I wish them well.

Today I refer to some advertising material that has been going around in one of the electorates. I congratulate the new candidate for Peake, Mr Tom Koutsantonis, on being preselected by the Labor Party, but if one looks at the material he is circulating one can see that he has a long way to go. His letter is scaremongering and not really what debate should be about. I thought it appropriate early in the piece to put right some of the things he has been saying. He asks whether you can afford to lose up to $50 000 off the value of your home, and he says that that is what will happen if the Liberals planned new prostitution laws come into effect. I did not know that the Government was proposing new prostitution laws.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order!

Mr SCALZI: The member for Spence interjects. He knows that the Social Development Committee—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SCALZI: The committee is not Party or Government based: its members are members of this House—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr SCALZI: The Social Development Committee's report on prostitution is an excellent report.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr SCALZI: The brothels will not go into Mile End. It is important to put in perspective that this is not a Government or Party document. Three members support the majority

report about which the candidate for Peake misleads the public. Those members are the Hon. Dr Pfitzner from the Liberal Party, the Hon. Terry Cameron (ALP) and the Hon. Sandra Kanck (Australian Democrats). How you can mislead the public and say that it is a Liberal or Government Bill is beyond me. For a petition to be sent to the Hon. Dr Pfitzner involving residents of the western suburbs is again misleading. According to the majority report, brothels will be restricted not only to industrial areas but also to commercial areas and can be in any suburb provided certain criteria—distance from schools, churches and children's services—are observed. There can be no red light district because a clause in the draft Bill says that the council or the Development Assessment Commission may only refuse to approve the use of premises as brothels or place of business of an escort agency—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley is starting to get into what I understand is the report currently being debated. I warn him that he is not supposed to refer to it—

Mr SCALZI: Thank you, Sir. I would like to say—

Mr Atkinson: What scant regard for the Chair!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I do not need help from the member for Spence. I believe that the member for Hartley should move away from that report, otherwise he will be out of order. The member for Hartley.

Mr SCALZI: The overall report is sound. Although I do not support the majority view and do not support decriminalisation or legalisation of prostitution, it is wrong to misquote a position and attack it publicly the way the candidate for Peake has done.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Goyder.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I was interested today to hear the questions from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to the Minister for Infrastructure in relation to enterprise zones. I have been very disturbed to hear over the past few months the Labor Opposition endeavouring to conjure up some concept that the Government is not doing what it can for rural areas. It is interesting to see that the Labor Party has apparently decided to go back to the concept of enterprise zones and limit the number operating in the State of South Australia. The Minister in his answer identified the fact that certainly the enterprise zones existed in some regional areas of the State, but they did not exist in many other areas.

The Brown Liberal Government has now extended the concept of enterprise zones through regional development boards to the whole of regional South Australia. I am delighted that that has occurred and I am very thankful for the contribution that regional development boards are making to my electorate, which involves the operations of two regional development boards, the key one being the Yorke Regional Development Board, seeing that most of my electorate consists of Yorke Peninsula. It grieves me no end to learn that, if—heaven help us—there was a change of Government and a Labor Government was in power, the whole of my electorate could no longer be assisted through enterprise zones. That is absolute discrimination.

For weeks and months the Labor Party has been criticising what the Government has been doing in rural areas, and when it releases its policy we find that huge areas of South Australia would have no help at all. Not only would they have no help but they would have no group to assist business to determine the best course of action. I suddenly realise that towns such as Balaklava, Kadina, Wallaroo, Moonta, Maitland, Ardrossan, Minlaton, Yorketown, Edithburgh and Warooka would all have no assistance under a Labor Government. Thank goodness we have had a change of Government and we now have regional development boards that are doing a great amount for our rural areas. I can talk best about the matter as it effects Goyder. I compliment the Yorke Regional Development Board on some of the projects with which it has been involved.

One of the highlights has been Australian Food and Flora—a concept where farmers are able to grow flowers, taken them to a central spot and have them processed. Those flowers are being exported interstate and overseas. Initially, some 60 farmers were interested in being involved in this Australian Food and Flora scheme, but now 100 farmers are involved. It is a magnificent project. We have also seen significant development in aquaculture, and again the Regional Development Board has assisted considerably there.

We have seen extensive discussions and research in the crab fishery area, and that is going well in the Port Broughton area. I hope that that develops significantly in coming years. We have seen development in the hay processing area, and that is an area that provides a major boost to our regional areas, particularly in respect of exports to Japan. Thankfully, regional development has helped in that area. An underground water survey was undertaken by the Yorke Regional Development Board about two years ago. Hopefully, we can capitalise on that underground water to introduce new initiatives into the Goyder region. What does the Labor Party want to do? It wants to limit these enterprise zones to certain areas. It could not care less about areas such as Goyder which produce much wealth for this State. Shame on Labor!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Elizabeth.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I will talk briefly about some of the achievements of students at one of my local primary schools—Elizabeth Grove Primary School. The students to which I am referring are in the year 6/7 classes. The Recorder Music Festival took place a few months ago. As part of the music section of the arts curriculum, all children at Elizabeth Grove Primary School must learn the recorder. Over the past three years, each of the year 6/7 classes has auditioned to participate in the Recorder Music Festival at Adelaide University. This is organised by the music branch. Each year, the school has been successful in gaining a part in the program of that festival, and this year it combined with a small group of Fremont-Elizabeth City High School students to produce two memorable performances.

Elizabeth Grove Primary School is the only Elizabeth primary school that has participated in the Recorder Music Festival, and it has now become a tradition of the school. Self-esteem, confidence and the desire to achieve are becoming increasingly evident in the students. I congratulate a talented bunch of young people for the work they have put into this and the success that has come from it.

Secondly, the year 6/7 girls' class has undertaken a number of initiatives, one of which was a manufacturing project. They formed a technology company and, as one of its projects, the company produced 600 fridge magnets on a production line at the school. The students were involved from go to whoa and, at the end of the process, they marketed their 600 fridge magnets at the local shopping centre. They sold 520 of them, which was a great achievement. It was a popular purchase for local people, and the students were able

to be part of the process from the product's design, through to making the magnets and marketing them and, finally, selling them. It was an excellent exercise in working together as a team and producing a saleable item. Again, I congratulate all the girls. There were 33 of them in the class at that time, and all were involved in the whole process.

I had great pleasure in being asked to speak with that class before it came to Parliament House to participate in a debate. Class members asked me to listen to the arguments they might use on that day. From memory, their debate was about whether the school day should be extended. I went there for an hour session prior to their visit, and we went through the arguments on their side of the case. A little later, I was privileged to be asked to listen to their speeches and to give them some feedback on how they might improve both their content and presentation. I was also able to be present on the day of the debate, and they did themselves proud in this House. It is great to see young students with the confidence to put together their ideas and deliver them in the way those students did. I congratulate them again, and I also congratulate their teacher, Mr Andy Fletcher, because he also played a large part in supporting them and encouraging them to take on these projects. I offer my congratulations to Elizabeth Grove Primary School.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): Last night I had the pleasure of attending a public consultation meeting at Port Noarlunga. The consultation was run by Rust PPK, the consultants appointed to run the consultancy to communicate with the people basically living around the Seaford/Port Noarlunga and Seaford Rise/Moana area about the proposed upgrade of Commercial Road and the Gray Street/Gawler Street realignment. I estimate the meeting was attended by about 100 people, and they were a fairly wide cross-section of the community living in Kaurna. That was reflected by the fact that the advertisement for the meeting went to every letter box in the local community. The response indicated that there is a desire in the community for more consultation about this process.

However, I was a little concerned about the outcomes from that meeting, particularly a motion from the floor, which was passed, which may put at risk the timing of the upgrading of those roads, because the meeting voted to oppose the plan to upgrade Commercial Road and Gray Street in favour of a plan to extend Dyson Road. I have some concerns about that because the upgrade of Commercial Road and Gray Street/Gawler Street, and another bridge across the Onkaparinga, are absolutely essential for our community, regardless of whether the bridge goes across at the Dyson Road extension. My concern about that is fairly strong. We have been consulting with the community for quite some time, and it would appear that there is some change in the community's attitude about the need for the Commercial Road and Gray Street upgrade. That worries me, because the upgrade of Commercial Road is absolutely essential for all the community in that southern area.

One of the issues that was raised last night concerned the Saltfleet Bridge, and I think that the community has forgotten the essential requirement to replace that bridge in the very near future because it has a very short lifespan. About seven years ago it was projected to have a 10-year lifespan, so it will not last much longer, and it needs to be replaced any way, regardless of other discussion. Mention was also made of the roundabouts that have been requested for some time on Britain Drive, Weatherald Terrace and Commercial Road. The unfortunate thing is that the constituent who raised the issue was not generous enough to say that it had been requested on about four occasions and that the DOT had responded on each occasion with very valid reasons why a roundabout would not suffice in that area, which is one of the reasons why we need to upgrade Commercial Road.

There is some confusion in the community's mind about the essentials for that area, and it is extremely important that the consultants, Rust PPK, get on top of the situation pretty quickly, because we do not want the past three years' work to get confused with some of the wrong attitudes that were put forward at that meeting.

The issue of speed was raised, and the comment was made that nothing much has been done on Commercial Road to overcome the problem. I should like to put on record some of the things that have been tried and have been successful. First, the speed limit on Commercial Road has been reduced from 100 km/h to 80 km/h in the section from Tatachilla Road to Moana Heights. It has been reduced from 80 km/h to 70 km/h for the remainder of that section of Commercial Road through to Tiller Drive. Traffic lights have been introduced at the intersection of Tiller Drive and Main Street to improve safety. In addition, around the Seaford Shopping Centre, major upgrades allow for better access for people from Beechwood Grove estate and from the shopping centre area. Several bus drop-off areas have been constructed along Commercial Road to aid traffic flow when buses pull in to put down passengers.

Although there seems to be a general feeling that not much has happened, quite a bit has happened, but the reality is that, with the growth of population in the area, a lot more needs to happen. I want to raise my concern that, if we do not get on top of this consultation process in a correct manner, we will delay development that is essential to the southern area.

MULTICULTURALISM AND ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's resolution.

IRRIGATION (CONVERSION TO PRIVATE IRRIGATION DISTRICT) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Infrastructure) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Irrigation Act 1994. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: 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.

This Bill makes minor amendments to the *Irrigation Act 1994.*

One of the major objectives of the *Irrigation Act 1994* was to facilitate the conversion of Government Irrigation Districts to Private Trusts. Irrigators in the Government Highland Irrigation Districts (eight in all) have grasped the nettle and applied for conversion to Private Trusts. The simultaneous conversion of the eight government districts to Trusts is being treated as a single exercise. It is intended that these Trusts commence full operations of the water supply and drainage functions from 1 July 1997.

Each of the districts will require a Board of Management to attend to a number of administrative issues before the Trusts

commence full operations. It is intended that the Trusts be formed on 1 January 1997 to allow sufficient time to establish themselves before they commence full operations. To expedite the appointment of the first Boards of Management, provision is being made for these appointments to be made ministerially.

Infrastructure, in some instances, must be shared between an Irrigation Trust and SA Water. This Bill provides for sharing arrangements with security of tenure to both parties. It achieves this by providing that the interest of SA Water can be secured by lease or licence which must be noted on the title to the land transferred to the Trust.

The current provision for a quorum to be constituted of one-third of the members of the Trust is impractical in a number of instances. This provision is being amended to provide some flexibility for each Trust to determine its own quorum.

The current Act provides that a number of forms be prescribed by regulations. This is administratively cumbersome. The requirement, wherever it occurs, is being removed and substituted with a provision for forms merely to be of an approved type.

The fine tuning of the *Irrigation Act 1994* that this Bill represents will further facilitate the conversion of the Highland Government Irrigation Districts to Private Trusts, and the general administration of the Act. I commend this Bill to the House.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation

Clause 3 makes a consequential amendment.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 10—Establishment of private irrigation district

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 13—Abolition of private irrigation district on landowners' application

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 16—Application for merger

Clauses 4, 5 and 6 provide that the relevant form is to be approved by the Minister.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 21—Procedure at meeting of trust

Clause 7 makes the quorum requirement for Irrigation Trusts more flexible.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 27—Application for conversion

Clause 8 provides that the relevant form is to be approved by the Minister.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 29—Conversion to private irrigation district

Clause 9 amends section 29 of the principal Act. The amendment provides for a transitional period on the conversion of a government irrigation district to a private district during which the district remains a government district. The clause provides for the transfer of land to a new trust with a lease or licence back to the Minister or SA Water. The clause also enables the Governor by proclamation to give to the Minister the power to appoint a board of management of a trust during the transitional period and to delegate powers of the trust to the board.

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 46—Notice of resolution

Clause 10 amends section 46 of the principal Act by requiring that 21 days notice must be given of a resolution of a trust to vary its quorum and by providing that only seven days notice of a resolution to establish a board of management or to delegate functions or powers is required during the transitional period preceding conversion to a private irrigation district.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

RACIAL VILIFICATION BILL

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendments:

No. 1. Page 1, line 7 (long title)—Insert 'the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and' after 'amend'.

No. 2. Page 1, line 22 (clause 3)—After 'associates;' insert 'and ''racial'' has a corresponding meaning;'.

No. 3. Page 2, line 24 (clause 6)—Leave out 'for the tort of racial victimisation[1]' and insert 'for racial vilification[1] or the tort of racial victimisation[2]'.

No. 4. Page 2, line 26 (clause 6)—Leave out the footnote and insert new footnotes as follow:

''[1]See section 86a of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.

[2]See section 37 of the Wrongs Act 1936.''

No. 5. Page 3—Before line 1 insert new clause as follows:

'Amendment of Equal Opportunity Act 1984

6A. The Equal Opportunity Act 1984 is amended—

(a) by inserting after the definition of ''near relative'' in section 5(1) the following definition:

''offence of serious racial vilification''—see section 4 of the Racial Vilification Act 1996;;

(b) by striking out the definition of ''race'' in section 5(1) and substituting the following definitions:

''race'' of a person means the nationality, country of origin, colour or ethnic origin of the person or of another person with whom the person resides or associates; and

''racial'' has a corresponding meaning;

''racial vilification''—see section 86a;;

(c) by inserting after the definition of ''the Registrar'' in section 5(1) the following definition:

''representative body'' means a body (whether or not incorporated) that—

(a) represents members of a particular racial group; and

(b) has as its primary object the promotion of the interests and welfare of the group;;

(d) by inserting after the definition of ''spouse'' in section 5(1) the following definition:

''tort of racial victimisation''—see section 37 of the Wrongs Act 1936;;

(e) by striking out from section 57(2) ''or ethnic'';

(f) by inserting the following section after section 86:

Racial vilification

86a. (1) A person who, by a public act, incites hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the ground of their race commits racial vilification.

(2) It is unlawful to commit racial vilification.

(3) However, this does not make unlawful

(a) publication of a fair report of the act of another person; or

(b) publication of material in circumstances in which the publication would be subject to a defence of absolute privilege in proceedings for defamation; or

(c) a reasonable act, done in good faith, for academic, artistic, scientific or research purposes or for other purposes in the public interest (including reasonable public discussion, debate or expositions).

(4) In this section—

''public act'' means—

(a) any form of communication with the public; or

(b) conduct in a public place.;

(g) by inserting after paragraph (b) of section 93(1) the following paragraph:

(ba) in the case of a complaint of racial vilification—by a representative body on behalf of a named member or members of the group of people represented by the body;;

(h) by inserting after section 93(1a) the following subsections:

(1ab) A complaint of racial vilification cannot be made if civil proceedings for the tort of racial victimisation have been commenced for the same act or series of acts.

(1ac) A representative body cannot make a complaint under subsection (1)(ba) unless—

(a) each named person on whose behalf the complaint is made consents in writing to the making of the complaint; and

(b) the representative body satisfies the Commissioner that acts of the kind alleged in the complaint affect adversely or have the potential to affect adversely the interests or welfare of the group it represents.;

(i) by inserting after section 94(1) the following subsection:

(1a) If racial vilification is alleged, the Commissioner must conduct an investigation.;

(j) by inserting the following section after section 94:
Referral of serious racial vilification to DPP

94a. (1) If in the course of investigating a complaint of racial vilification the Commissioner forms the opinion that an offence of serious racial vilification has been committed the Commissioner must refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions and must not proceed further to attempt to resolve the matter by conciliation.

(2) If possible the Commissioner must make a decision on whether a complaint of racial vilification should be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions within 28 days after receiving the complaint.

(3) On making the referral the Commissioner must by notice in writing addressed to the complainant advise the complainant of—

(a) the making of the referral; and

(b) the right of the complainant to require the Commissioner to refer the complaint to the Tribunal.

(4) If proceedings for an offence of serious racial vilification are commenced the Tribunal may stay proceedings under this Part until the conclusion of the proceedings for the offence.;

(k) by inserting after section 95(6) the following subsection:

(6a) The Commissioner may require a representative body that has made a complaint to nominate a person to appear for the representative body in conciliation proceedings concerning the complaint.;

(l) by striking out section 95(8) and substituting the following subsection:

(8) Where the Commissioner—

(a) is of the opinion that a matter cannot be resolved by conciliation; or

(b) has attempted to resolve the matter by conciliation but has not been successful in that attempt; or

(c) has declined to recognise a complaint as one upon which action should be taken under this section and the complainant has within three months of being notified of the Commissioner's decision by notice in writing required the Commissioner to refer the complaint to the Tribunal; or

(d) is asked by a complainant complaining of racial vilification to refer the complaint to the Tribunal even though the matter has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions,

the Commissioner must refer the matter to the Tribunal for hearing and determination.;

(m) by inserting after paragraph (c) of section 96(1) the following paragraph:

(d) in the case of racial vilification—an order requiring the respondent to publish an apology or retraction, or both, in respect of the matter the subject of the complaint and for that purpose, giving directions concerning the time, form, extent and manner of publication.;

(n) by inserting after section 96(1) the following subsections:

(1a) The total amount of the damages that may be awarded for the same act or series of acts of racial vilification cannot exceed $40 000.

(1b) In applying the limit fixed by subsection (1a), the Tribunal must take into account damages awarded by a court—

(a) in criminal proceedings on convicting the respondent in respect of the same act or series of acts; or

(b) in civil proceedings for the tort of racial victimisation in respect of the same act or series of acts.;

(o) by inserting after section 96(3) the following subsection:

(3a) If the complainant is a representative body, compensation may be awarded to the person or persons on whose behalf the complaint is lodged but not to the representative body.'

No. 6. Page 3 (clause 7)—After line 28 insert new subsection as follows:

''(2A) Proceedings for the tort of racial victimisation cannot be commenced if a complaint of racial vilification has been lodged under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 for the same act or series of acts.''

No. 7. Page 4, lines 1 to 5 (clause 7)—Leave out subsection (5) and the footnote below it and insert new subsection and footnotes as follow:

'(5) In applying the limit fixed by subsection (4), the court must take into account damages awarded—

(a) by a court in criminal proceedings on convicting the respondent in respect of the same act or series of acts;'[1] or

(b) by the Equal Opportunity Tribunal in proceedings for racial vilification.[2]

[1]See section 6 of the Racial Vilification Act 1996.

[2]See section 86a of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.'

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be disagreed to.

I highlight to the Committee that this issue was debated in this place before it went to the Upper House. This Government is firmly of the view that the appropriate action to stamp out racial vilification is that as outlined in the original Bill. The Bill provided specific provisions to ensure that a person who carried out acts of racial vilification could be penalised. It provided for a class action to be taken for loss of business and for action to be taken against someone who, in vilifying a person, damaged that person. There was a chance for a fine to be imposed and for damages to be awarded as well.

The Upper House's amendments seek to refer the whole issue to the Equal Opportunity Commission. The Government opposed that provision from the outset for a very good reason. The Federal legislation already provides for the Commissioner for Equal Community to consider racial vilification issues. What is the point of duplicating the power that exists under a Federal Act and, therefore, applies to everyone in South Australia? It is not as if we are dealing with a Federal industrial award, which applies only to certain workers. The legislation already applies to everyone in South Australia. What is the point of setting up a mirror or duplicate organisation that will carry out exactly the same function as the Federal Equal Community Commission and create a potential conflict as to which level, Federal or State, a dispute should be referred to?

I see no reason why this Committee should accept the amendments put forward by the other place. I do not believe they achieve anything. Importantly, this Bill was referred to a parliamentary committee, which reported with a majority decision that the Bill should stand as presented in this Chamber. It is not as if there has not been an opportunity for the Upper House to further consider this matter. Quite clearly, in considering all the evidence presented to it, the parliamentary committee recommended that the original Bill stand. That is the Government's intention.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We strongly support the amendments of the Upper House. It is interesting to note that, a few weeks ago, just after Pauline Hanson made her speech, the Premier moved a motion about multiculturalism in this place, which the Labor Party totally and unanimously endorsed. It is now time for the same kind of unanimity in supporting what the Upper House has come down with in these amendments. We are talking about amendments that take the best out of the Premier's Bill on racial vilification and the best out of the Labor Party's Bill. Here is an example

to the community that we as a Parliament are prepared to do other than say that, because the Opposition thought up some things, they must be inherently bad, or say that we cannot lose face by agreeing to anything that the Opposition has put forward. Here is a chance for me to say that there are parts of the Premier's Bill that were better than our Bill, but there were also things in our legislation and amendments that were far superior.

The Premier mentioned Federal legislation. I will quote from the submission by Mr Randolph Alwis, President of the Multicultural Communities Council, and I hope that the Premier has the same strong respect for Mr Alwis and his council as I do. The submission states:

> Council welcomes the intentions of the South Australian Government and all major Parties to introduce a racial vilification Bill for the purpose of dealing with the above problems. To be effective, such a Bill would need to deal not only with penalising the perpetrators of serious racial vilification but also with prevention and education measures. The Multicultural Communities Council has clearly articulated these points in all previous consultations with parliamentary representatives of the three main political Parties. The strong stand taken by the Government against extreme cases of vilification through the proposed Bill is endorsed and supported by the MCC but other aspects of the Bill require further attention.

It continues:

> Under current arrangements the Federal Racial Discrimination Commissioner holds jurisdiction on racial vilification matters, therefore complaints need to be lodged in Sydney. The South Australian EO Commissioner has neither delegated power nor resources to deal with such cases. The current Bill intends to deal only with the hard core, punishable aspects of racial vilification, relying on the Federal EO Commission to deal with the more subtle 'softer' cases. There is no perceived justification to single out racial vilification from other aspects of EO legislation and to deal with different aspects of racial vilification through separate systems.
>
> Accordingly, it is imperative that the South Australian racial vilification legislation should cover the full spectrum of such offences and not only those punishable through our courts system. As with other human rights legislation, the South Australian Government should show its commitment and maintain its jurisdiction over the entire range of human rights issues in accordance with the recommendations of Brian Martin QC, who was commissioned by the Government to advise on the topic.
>
> Accordingly, it is recommended that the Bill should empower the Equal Opportunities Commission of SA to be the first point of reference for all forms of racial vilification, deal directly with most cases through mediation and conciliation between the parties involved, and refer to the DPP only the more serious cases where mediation and conciliation cannot provide adequate remedies. Members of ethnic and Aboriginal communities are more likely to seek such 'softer' remedies through the Equal Opportunities Commissioner rather than the court system. Since most of the cases can be resolved on the personal rather than the public level, the effect of media sensationalism and public hostility could be minimised. Such action would also have direct educative role on the offender by being confronted directly with the effects and implications of his or her actions through the conciliation process.
>
> The long term success of any legislation hinges on its public acceptance. This requires public education with special attention to young people and the school system. The coordination role of such public education campaign is best handled through the Office of the Commissioner for Equal Opportunities. Resources invested in up-front education are likely to reduce long term reliance on legal remedies, and save considerable future legal costs.

This is the end of the submission, and I want the Premier to take note of what Mr Alwis and the Multicultural Communities Council say:

> Accordingly, it is recommended that the Bill should empower the Equal Opportunities Commission to conduct education and community development programs for the prevention of racial vilification and the development of good community relations between sections of our multicultural communities and indigenous South Australians, and that the Government allocate adequate resources to the commission to undertake such education and community development activities.

Here we have the Multicultural Communities Council strongly supporting what we have reached in the Upper House, which is an agreement with parts of the Bill put forward by the Premier, but incorporating the jurisdiction of the Equal Opportunities Commission of South Australia that was part of our original Bill. Here is the chance to show that the Premier and I are big enough as political leaders to say that these two Bills put together in this way, incorporating these amendments and what the Legislative Council has sent us today, would amount to the best and most effective racial vilification legislation in the world. That is why we support what the Upper House sent to us today.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: First, I point out that the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, which is the peak body in terms of representation and which was set up by the Government—

Mr Atkinson: It is not a peak body.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is a peak body. It is the statutory commission recognised by this Parliament as the body that speaks for the Government of South Australia in terms of multicultural and ethnic affairs. That body sent out a letter to all members of Parliament urging them to vote for the original legislation introduced by this Government. Frankly, this body represents all multicultural groups in South Australia. I also point out—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Bass): Order! The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Spence are out of order. The Premier has the call.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The body to carry out the educational role in terms of making sure we develop a multicultural community in this State is largely the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and the staff of the Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs. That is the body which has traditionally put out the material and which currently distributes the Declaration of Principles of Multiculturalism in South Australia. It is interesting that it has taken this Liberal Government to bring down that Declaration of Principles of Multiculturalism. This Government has gone out harder than any previous Government on the issues of access and equity, because as a Government we believe that it is the role of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission to carry out the educational role. I do not disagree with what Mr Randolph Alwis said in his submission in terms of the need for education. What I disagree with is which body should carry out the educational role. It should be the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission. In fact, Mr Alwis is a member of that commission.

I also point out that at present a major program is being undertaken by that commission on access and equity within our community. It is already out there actively pushing this issue and educating the community. It has put out the Declaration of Principles for Multiculturalism—the very principles that this Parliament recently maintained by the motion.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is in those principles, which are already going out to every school and ethnic community in the State for wide distribution, particularly among the younger members of the community. That

educational role has already been embarked upon by the State Government. I stand by the original proposal I put forward, that is, we will reject the amendments and support the original Bill.

Motion carried.

ROXBY DOWNS (INDENTURE RATIFICATION) (AMENDMENT OF INDENTURE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 October. Page 372.)

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): The Opposition supports the legislation. The Roxby Downs development that has taken place since the early 1980s has achieved a number of firsts. It is probably the most productive mine in the world. The current production of about 86 000 tonnes of copper and a number of other minerals is achieved by a daily shift of about 35 miners in what can only be described as a twenty-first century mine.

The township at Roxby Downs is a rather interesting phenomenon. It was set up initially as a result of the first indenture Bill that was passed in this place in 1982. The Roxby township is a country town like no other country town in South Australia. The interesting aspect of this township is that it has been built on an ore body that should last about 300 years, even at the increased rate of production foreshadowed under this Bill. The legislation is predicated on the fact that we will lift from 150 000 tonnes, or thereabouts, of ore, processed each year, to potentially 350 000 tonnes in the near future.

The Bill was determined to be a hybrid Bill and, as such, there was mandatory referral to a select committee to ascertain whether or not there were objections to the provisions of the legislation. The Opposition has considered that proposal and I point out to the House that we will be supporting a suspension of Standing Orders this afternoon to eliminate that delay. That commitment underscores the Opposition's support of Western Mining and, in fact, the whole Roxby venture. We take the view that Western Mining has made a public commitment.

There has been a hope and an expectation on both sides of politics that this day would come for, at least, the past three years. As a consequence, we believe that all the objections that could have been raised have been raised, and we see no reason why this legislation cannot be passed in this House and the other place with as much expedition as possible.

It would be fair to say that one issue about which the Opposition takes a great deal of interest is the provision of water for not only this venture but all mining ventures that require high volumes of water in the north of our State. As a consequence, the Opposition has spent some time considering the prospects of other potential mining ventures in this area and believes that it is imperative that there be a full appreciation of available water resources to the north of our State and, in particular, to any future mining ventures. Therefore, we intend asking the Environment, Resources and Development Committee to look closely at a number of suggestions for the provision of water in the north of our State. Obviously, other mining ventures may draw upon the aquifer to such a point that problems might occur in the future with the supply of artesian water to mining ventures. I do not know the answer to this, but I do know that it is of concern to some environmental groups. The Opposition believes that the issue really needs to be addressed by the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, which is the appropriate body as it will be able to bring in expertise to settle the water question, hopefully once and for all.

I am pleased that this legislation is before the House today and, although certainly a few members on this side will be contributing to the debate, I will not unduly take up the time of Parliament this afternoon except to reinforce the point that the Labor Party in South Australia is pleased with the amendments to the indenture and wishes Western Mining well with the extension of its Roxby venture.

Mr VENNING (Custance): As the Minister in his second reading explanation said, this Bill asks the House to agree to amendments to the Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) Act 1982, and to carry ratifying amendments to the Olympic Dam and the Stuart Shelf indenture. I remind the member for Giles that my interest is as the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Mines and Energy, and certainly I have been vitally involved in this process. I enjoy working with the Minister. I think that we make a pretty fine team working with the department. I note that Richard Yeeles is present in the gallery today, wearing his suit. Richard is a very valued employee of the Western Mining organisation. Certainly we miss him but, no doubt, he is of great value to the joint venturers, particularly Western Mining.

The amendments to this Bill are essential to facilitate Western Mining's proposed major expansion at Olympic Dam and the processing plant, which was announced in July this year. Over the next five years, the Western Mining Corporation intends to double production at the Olympic Dam mine which will increase production from the current 85 000 to 200 000 tonnes *per annum* and which will be made up of refined copper, uranium, gold and silver. The new investment will amount to approximately $1.25 billion.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: We know all this.

Mr VENNING: I know that we know all this. I am just reminding the member for Giles and history will show the part played in this by the honourable member. The new investment will amount to approximately $1.25 billion, which will bring Western Mining Corporation's total investment on the ground to over $2.3 billion. South Australia now has a world class mining and milling operation. The member for Giles said that we know all this, but this whole project is no thanks at all to the Australian Labor Party. The history books and *Hansard* show quite clearly the attitude taken by the Labor Party in 1986 when this was set up. It is no thanks to the Labor Party.

I wonder whether the Labor Party has changed its policy in relation to issues such as this. Has it reinstated the Hon. Norm Foster, who was the scapegoat? Norm Foster saw the value of this project and sacrificed his position in the Upper House to allow the first indenture to become law in this State. Many people have a very convenient memory. The Opposition mocked our colleague the Hon. Roger Goldsworthy when he talked of mirages in the desert. I know that members of the Opposition visit this area, and seeing is believing; touching is believing. It is there. So I do not want to hear any smart comments from the Opposition on issues such as this. The Opposition's record on this issue is absolutely bloody appalling—absolutely appalling. I wonder—

Mr QUIRKE: I rise on a point of order, Sir. That is definitely an example of unparliamentary language.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order! I need no help from the Deputy Leader.

Mr VENNING: I was carried away, Sir. I withdraw the comment. I still feel that the word was very appropriate at the time.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The honourable member has withdrawn the comment; there is no need for an explanation.

Mr VENNING: The Hon. Roger Goldsworthy, the then Minister, and the Hon. Norm Foster got together and made this deal happen and, as I said, it is no thanks to the Labor Party.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr VENNING: The mine has made a significant contribution to the State's economy since production began in 1988, and the expansion will provide even more benefits to our State. It is expected that the expansion will create another 200 permanent jobs, with 1 000 people being employed over four years during the construction period. That is why I bring up this matter. This is fantastic news, because we know how hard it is to create new jobs in our country regions. In fact, I heard again on a news bulletin today how difficult it is to maintain jobs in our regional areas.

This project has been fantastic for our country people. It has been of particular assistance to our young farmers, especially those who live and farm on the upper Eyre Peninsula, around Kimba, for instance. So many of these people have found full-time and part-time work at Roxby Downs and Olympic Dam. I know that the company has found these people very good to have in their employ because, being farmers, they put in a very good effort. It has worked very well, so much so that the company has almost explicitly asked for farming people to fill the gaps. Also, the many contractors involved up there employ part-time and full-time workers who do exactly the sort of work that young farmers can do. They know how to drive farming plant and can go up there and drive fork lifts, hoes and everything else. It has certainly been a great boon for regional employment in South Australia.

Export products from the Olympic Dam will also double, from the current level of $270 million to about $600 million. Olympic Dam's ore body is one of the world's largest and, even with this expansion, the mine's life will be at least 100 years—that is, with the ore body that we currently know is there. It may even extend all the way to Ceduna, for all we know. We know that the Yumbarra geological anomaly has been detected on our geographical surveys, so we must at least allow our mining industry to have a look. Just think what this could do for the economy of Ceduna.

The indenture ratification Bill sets out the rights and obligations of the joint venturers and the State, especially as it involves the Government, in providing various infrastructure measures for the mining operation and the town of Roxby Downs. The original indenture set electricity supply at a maximum of 150 megawatts. The proposed amendments will aim to raise that to 250 megawatts. The joint venturers and the State will enter into a commercial arm's-length agreement for the extra power. Also, the Roxby Downs joint venturers want access to electricity transmission lines because, if they generate electricity themselves—and they may—they will want the right to use the lines to sell their surplus power, and that is agreed to.

The Government will provide substantial health and medical facilities at Roxby Downs, with a focus on acute care and child care facilities. The company's investment is the single largest investment in South Australia for many years. We have had a substantial drought in investments in this State, and that is because we have had a very bad investment climate here in South Australia for a long time—approximately 15 years. That is all changing, and I thank our Government and the Western Mining Corporation for having confidence in South Australia.

There are many other important aspects of this indenture, which involves the Development Act 1993, dealing with a change in zoning and land use, etc.; the Water Resources Act 1990, giving rights to draw and take water (and I hope to visit bore field B shortly); and the Residential Tenancies Act 1995, dealing with the provision of residential accommodation for employees, contractors and agents. Western Mining Corporation may need a licence under the Petroleum Act 1940 to build and own a pipeline to meet its gas requirements, particularly if it wishes to generate electricity.

So, this is good news indeed for the Government and South Australia, with benefits that will be felt right across our State. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Mines and Energy, I congratulate him and his department on a job well done. It is certainly a very active department. We know that Resources Week is coming up in a couple of weeks. A very extensive education program is also currently in place at the Investigator Science Centre at Wayville. So much is happening in many aspects of this portfolio area. An oil rig will appear on the horizon within a couple of weeks, and that will certainly be tremendous for boosting people's confidence in our State. We have a huge interest in the Gawler Craton area, a program concerning which I saw on television the other night. I am sure that other great announcements will be made very shortly and that we will all be delighted with them.

If given its head, this portfolio almost on its own will get South Australia back to a sound economic level. I remind the House that everything we use is either grown or mined. The mining industry has a stigma at the moment, but I remind the House that new mining techniques are no longer environmentally bad. We are now aiming at educating people about modern mining processes and methods, and we have certainly come a long way. We need more young people to train as geologists and metallurgists. This is great news all over and, again, I congratulate the Minister and the department and commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): This is important legislation and has the total support of the South Australian Opposition. As articulated by the shadow Minister previously, I had hoped that we would be able to entertain this debate in a bipartisan way. We will certainly do so, for our part. The Roxby Stage 2 development had the strong support of the Bannon and Arnold Governments. That was quite well known in the community and certainly very well known to Western Mining. Roxby Stage 2 has the strong support of the South Australian Labor Party in Opposition. At the Federal Conference of the Australian Labor Party in late 1994 the shadow Minister and I had extensive discussions with Western Mining on a range of matters and were able to be most helpful in lobbying the former Keating Government on this score.

Indeed, one of the last acts of the Keating Government before it lost office, following extensive lobbying by the South Australian Opposition, was to sign off and support the second stage of this project. So, we are delighted to support it in this Parliament and will continue to be strong backers of Roxby Downs and Western Mining's activities there. The

No.1 game in South Australia is creating jobs. We are very concerned about a real crisis of confidence in Spencer Gulf, which crisis has been exacerbated in recent times with the threat to Australian National and ETSA jobs and the recent decision by BHP to lay off 250 workers in Whyalla. It is because of that crisis of confidence that we want to support jobs in the region and the reason that we support the Alice Springs to Darwin railway line and other initiatives. We have supported Roxby Stages 1 and 2 in Government, and this Bill has our strong support.

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): This Bill is of critical and fundamental importance to the future development of this State, and because of that I certainly add my comments in support of the member for Custance and the Minister in terms of its importance and the significant benefits it will bring to development in this State. The opportunity to support legislation such as this does not come along regularly, and in this instance it is designed fundamentally to enable the expansion of an operation that has already delivered substantial benefits to South Australia. Just as with the indenture ratification in 1982 and with Roxby Downs being essential for the resource development of Western Mining Corporation and its joint venture partners, it is imperative that this Parliament now continue to give its support to further investment in the operation of Roxby Downs.

In August 1992 the Premier announced that Western Mining Corporation was to undertake a $7 million feasibility study at Olympic Dam to determine whether a $1 billion expansion was warranted. The result of the feasibility study is that the plans before us, as are required to satisfy this legislation before us, identify the need for a further $1.25 billion expansion, which would bring total investment in the operations to more than $2.3 billion.

It is crucial that this Parliament continues to provide security and certainty to the mining and processing operations at Olympic Dam. As has already been put on the record, and I reiterate, estimates of the ore body are put in the order of 450 million tonnes, and projections are that production will continue for more than 100 years ahead. Assurances and protection provided by these amendments to the indenture will ensure that Western Mining Corporation will be able to proceed with its expansion in less than 12 months, which is not so much amazing but a credit to the company in terms of its projections, foresight and planning to proceed with stage 2 of the development.

The expectation is that it will be able to more than double production by the year 2001 and this in itself is a tremendous projection. It is estimated that refined copper output, which accounts for something like 75 per cent of the revenue, will rise from 84 000 tonnes to something like 200 000 tonnes, and similarly there will be an increase from the current production levels of 1 500 tonnes of uranium oxide, 850 kilograms of gold and 13 000 kilograms of silver. Present export income of $270 million is also likely to more than double.

In 1982 the indenture provided for processed mineral production up to 150 000 tonnes per annum and, while production of that scale is yet to be reached, the indenture amendment contained in this Bill has been drafted to allow output levels up to 350 000 tonnes per annum. Considering the scale of Western Mining Corporation's commitment to the operation and its $1.25 billion additional investment, there is considerable and absolute justification for this agreement between the State and miners to provide for a much expanded venture. An additional measure in the legislation is to provide for the treatment of ore not mined at Olympic Dam, which I also believe is a sound and logical move in light of the current optimistic mineral exploration going on at the moment in the Gawler Craton area.

Investment on this scale will have enormous benefits for South Australians. It is important to restate to this House the implications of Western Mining Corporation's expansion, particularly for employment in both the short term and long term, and particularly as to its potential increase in terms of jobs in regional and northern country regions of this State. We are advised that 1 000 jobs will be created during the construction phase, and these 1 000 jobs will undoubtedly have a tremendous flow-on effect in the wider community.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr ANDREW: Because it is important that this House continues to recognise the importance of this project to the State. As the honourable member would appreciate, not everyone reads press releases that come from certain members of this House. Rarely do we have the significance of a project like this to stand on the record in terms of a claim, support and benefit that it will bring to this State. It will provide 1 000 extra jobs in the construction phase and the benefits of that will flow around the State, particularly with respect to the hope, enthusiasm and viability that it will bring to the communities across the northern Spencer Gulf region.

Subsequently the prospect of 200 extra permanent positions will bring the total projected work force of Western Mining Corporation at Roxby Downs to something in the order of 1 200 jobs and provide a substantial base for regional development. The increasing servicing of Roxby Downs township represents a significant multiplier and will have a value added effect as it will improve the business opportunities for people in the area and for Roxby Downs as a town itself.

Through the original indenture, State laws have been modified significantly to provide for security of the venture. Expansion of the venture has necessitated some renegotiation of the agreement in areas such as social infrastructure requirements, water and energy supply, plus recognition of industry changes in environmental and industry codes. While that is significant, it is obvious that a balance has been established in maximising all the various factors involved.

For instance, with restructuring of the electricity supply and transmission across the State, the amendments take into account Western Mining Corporation's increased demands for power and also provide for its participation in the competitive electricity market once it is established. Resource development at Olympic Dam will achieve significant economic benefits to this State, in particular for employment opportunities and dollar growth in the order of $600 million in export income.

This legislation is a responsible and balanced approach in terms of provision of services, maximising the potential of the ore body, and responsibility for the protection and enhancement of the environmental factors that need to be considered in parallel with the development as it proceeds. The State Government's response in terms of its support for this injection of $1.25 billion worth of investment in South Australia will go on record as continuing to build upon the enhancement that was so strongly, aptly and appropriately initiated by the Tonkin Liberal Government back in its earlier term in this State.

I commend the Minister for his arrangements in producing this legislation to renegotiate the indenture. I commend the Opposition for its unqualified support for this Bill and congratulate Western Mining and wish it all the very best in terms of its progression of this development. We all look forward with great anticipation and optimism to the benefits it will bring to this State. I support the Bill.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): I also support the Bill. The expansion at Roxby Downs is very welcome, particularly for me and my successors who will eventually have a couple of hundred more constituents living in the area. The further development of the north of the State is extremely welcome and, whilst this expansion is not directly related to the exploration initiative commenced under the previous Government, it adds to the wealth producing nature of that area.

The Bill will be handled in a somewhat unusual way. Being a hybrid Bill one would expect the Bill to go to a select committee. My experience of select committees in areas such as this, where it is a specific and fairly narrow compass, is that this measure would take only a few days—maybe a week at the outside. The Government has requested that the Bill go straight through and not go to a select committee, and the Opposition is happy to facilitate that, although there is some considerable concern about the environmental consequences of the expansion, particularly in relation to the use of water. Neither the company nor I would hope anybody within or outside this Parliament would want to ignore those very real concerns. People who would have expected this Bill to go to a select committee will not have the opportunity to put their concerns about the expansion and the change to the indenture that they would have thought they were entitled to do. Given that we are denying them that opportunity, quite properly in my view, it is important that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee look at the whole question of water in the far north of the State.

Everyone on this side of the House as well as on the Government side is hoping that the exploration initiative started under the previous Government delivers a great deal of mining activity in the north of the State. The question of water use is not one that I hope will go away. I hope it will not go away, because there will be greater calls on water, as well as on power. Power is not a great problem but certainly water is seen as a problem and may well be a problem. If we are to add, as I hope, many more mines of the size and quality of the Olympic Dam operation, we will have to sort out the question of water on a much better basis than we have done at the moment.

Given the information I have read, I do not have any fears about the use of water by Western Mining in that area. Only a small proportion of the water used is for Western Mining's purposes, so I have no fears. However, a lot of people do and, if there are more mines the size of the Olympic Dam operation, the cry about the water in the north will really be on. It is not up to Western Mining to answer all those questions—it is up to the Government to conduct some proper surveys to come up with some proposals as to how it will supply water to these new mines which we all hope will be established. The Environment, Resources and Development Committee is ideally placed to do that work. If the Government wants it done in some other way, it ought to talk not just to the Opposition but to some of the conservation groups and others in the community who have genuine concerns. I am sure that Western Mining would have no objection to any of that.

I was disappointed when I woke up on the morning of Sunday 21 July to a *Sunday Mail* article with the headline '6 700 new jobs'. I thought, 'Well, that looks good on the surface'—until I read that it was a report that had been put together for the South Australian Development Commission by Mr Barry Burgan of Adelaide University's Commerce Department. If anyone took that report seriously, I would be surprised. I am not sure how much Mr Burgan was paid for that work, but to come up with an absurd figure of 6 700 new jobs indicates that he probably ripped off whoever paid him. Of course, Western Mining does not say that. I have spoken to a few people at Roxby Downs who found the article absolutely laughable. Western Mining says that up to 200 new jobs will be created when the plant is established. It does not even give a figure of 200—it says up to 200. Of course, there is always a multiplier to these things, and you can argue about the multiplier.

I think an awful lot of double counting is done when some of these characters argue about multipliers. Nevertheless, even if you had a multiplier of, say, five to one, to be on the generous side, if we finished up with 1 000 new permanent jobs out of this expansion, that would be as far as you could possibly stretch it. It has been said to people that out of this expansion in Whyalla almost 1 000 new jobs will be created; in Port Augusta, 590; Port Pirie, 70 (and I am not quite sure where they would be at Port Pirie; nobody seems to be able to tell me); and Adelaide, nearly 2 800. That really insults people. I am not bothered so much about the almost 3 000 job insult in Adelaide. It has been suggested that there will be 2 730 new jobs at Roxby Downs, 940 new jobs in Whyalla and 590 new jobs in Port Augusta. To suggest that that will happen is cruel; it is cruel to the people who live in those towns—not so much at Roxby Downs but in Whyalla and Port Augusta.

When the mine and smelter were built, over 20 companies—mainly small businesses—in Whyalla were engaged in the building of the mine and the smelter. It gave a significant boost to the economy of Whyalla and to other places around the gulf in a smaller way. Those jobs were most welcome. There is still a strong ongoing relationship between Whyalla and Western Mining Corporation and the Olympic Dam operation. That connection will grow and strengthen. It is really unfair to say that this expansion will create 940 new jobs in Whyalla—that is about half the employment in the BHP steel works. It is not fair to the people in those Spencer Gulf towns or to the company for Mr Burgan to put his name to that nonsense and for the Premier to put it out as an exclusive to the *Sunday Mail*. Whilst it is a good deal for South Australia, it is not that good. It is not 6 700 jobs good. It is a pity; I wish that were the case. Nevertheless, the jobs that will be created in Whyalla, in other Spencer Gulf cities, in Roxby Downs, Adelaide, and so on, will be welcome.

In conclusion, I want to talk about the environment in that area. I have said before in this House that Western Mining Corporation has improved that area enormously. I have been travelling to that area since before I came into Parliament with a good friend of mine, the late Laurie Wallis MHR, and there is absolutely no doubt that the property that is cared for by Western Mining has been improved enormously by its being there. Apart from the generation of wealth for the State, my hope is that, through the exploration initiative, we will get many more Roxby Downs type projects so that somebody is looking after the environment, because taxpayers in Adelaide

do not want to do it. They are not interested in paying taxes to look after these areas. Somebody has to look after them, as they will not look after themselves.

I am happy to have in this State Western Mining Corporation and any other mining company that works under the most stringent environmental laws and has a natural desire to be good citizens of the area. I am in no position to invite members to go there but, if any member has not been up to Roxby Downs and seen the environment and the works, it would take only a phone call to Western Mining Corporation to have an invitation issued to enable members of Parliament to see what happens on the ground.

Western Mining does not do enough to demonstrate to the South Australian people how it cares for that country. I have always found that the company is pretty defensive about it, and that is unfortunate. It has absolutely nothing whatsoever about which it ought to be defensive. With those few words, I support the Bill and the expansion of mining. I also support the suspension of Standing Orders to ensure that the Bill is not delayed by having to go to a select committee. I strongly support the Environment, Resources and Development Committee looking at the whole area of water resources in the northern area of the State. I wish all the explorers there a successful operation so that the area can be developed in a sensible and sustainable way.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): The Labor Party has made clear its position that it supports the expansion of Roxby Downs. Expansion of the mining industry in South Australia, by way of this Bill, which allows for the expansion of the Olympic Dam mine, the processing plant and further development of the Roxby Downs project, will provide significant investment and employment in the South Australian mining industry and its subsidiary industries. It will mean substantial revenue to the State and it will mean jobs.

I strongly support the Labor Party's policy to provide for the expansion of Roxby Downs. My Party reaffirmed that policy a couple of weeks ago at its platform convention, and the Federal Labor Leader (Kim Beazley) reaffirmed the policy on his most recent visit to South Australia. Indeed, despite the posturings of the member for Custance, most Australians know that Kim Beazley is very pro-mining, as am I, and the final act of the last Federal Labor Government was to make way for the expansion of Roxby Downs.

Last week, I spent a few days in the Iron Triangle—in Whyalla and Port Augusta—which is something that I do every now and again. I find that spending time in a region that is suffering from employment problems in the way that region is tends to focus the mind on the importance of job creation by sectors such as the mining industry. With the recent announcement in Port Augusta of jobs being withdrawn from the Australian National workshops, and last week's announcement by BHP about the loss of 250 jobs, which is over 10 per cent of the BHP work force in Whyalla, the region needs the jobs, the investment and the economic development that will occur from the expansion of the Roxby Downs development.

The Olympic Dam mine has contributed successfully to the State's economy so, to each South Australian, the additional economic activity in our northern region from this project will be a much-needed boost. It will be important for the whole State but particularly for the men, women and children in the north of our State who need jobs and economic development to be taken seriously by the Government and Parliament. I fully support the Labor Party's policy on this Bill to allow for the expansion and further development of Roxby Downs.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Minister for Mines and Energy): I thank all members for their contribution to the debate, and I again pay tribute to the member for Playford for his constructive assistance in these matters. When dealing with the member for Playford, on behalf of the Opposition, on important ventures for this State, there is a very constructive outlook on how the potential of the State can be realised, even though the hard questions are still asked. Members have canvassed all the issues that I think are important. They paid due credit to the management of Roxby Downs and Western Mining Corporation, and they canvassed the issues contained within the Bill.

I should like to reiterate my thanks to the teams that negotiated the variation to the indenture. It was an important task, it was done very professionally from both sides, and we have achieved a balance that acknowledges that some responsibilities pertain to the Government and some responsibilities pertain to Western Mining. None of those has been diluted in the process, but the State wants to give a level of comfort to Western Mining such that we are right behind it in order to see the benefits that can flow from this very large investment of $1.25 billion, and the extent to which the State can benefit from the investment, the jobs, the activity and actually give confidence to the mining industry in the State. I will not mention all the other areas across the State where some good prospects are emerging, if only we can sort out native title, but that is for another day. I am glad that Roxby Downs got going some time ago, because it would be impossible for it to develop in the current environment until some sanity prevails on the issue of native title.

One issue that has been highlighted in the debate is the matter of water. Western Mining is managing Roxby Downs and, with its very professional mining team and with monitoring that more than meets the requirements of the department, we know more about the Great Artesian Basin than ever before. We have seismological and water data that is probably some of the best in the country. Therefore, we have considerable confidence that the maximum 42 megalitre take from the Great Artesian Basin will not cause difficulty to that basin. I have said previously that the daily intake is some 430 megalitres a day, and a lot of that is lost through the pressure of the system and evaporation, and it is not utilised in any way.

The Government does not believe that there will be any impact on the Great Artesian Basin, but the issue must be monitored regularly because, if changes happen elsewhere, we need to know about them early. We can reflect on what happened when the tailings dam sprung a leak, the extent to which—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: No, I am simply saying that I was pleased with the way the matter was picked up and repaired. When there are minor aberrations, we have seen a professional response. Sometimes it is the crises or problems that are experienced that determine how well something is managed.

I note the comments made by members of the Opposition on the issue of water. Our ground water surveys are a very important part of the Department of Mines and Energy. I suspect that our detail on ground water will never be perfect, but it is certainly amongst the best in the country. Anyone who has had dealings with the Department of Mines and

Energy would find extensive data on water and water management, and that will be a great benefit to any other mining venture that springs up around the State.

I will not go through all the things I noted about the improvements to the environment when I opened borefield B, but I was impressed with the way in which Western Mining dealt sensitively with the environment. It has bypassed certain areas at extra cost, and there have been planting programs and rejuvenation of the countryside by Western Mining. It is a great tribute to the way in which it operates, and every South Australian should be very pleased that Western Mining is one of South Australia's great corporate citizens.

On the issue of ground water and the extent to which we have sufficient resources to sustain development, that will be an ongoing issue. I hope it is an ongoing issue because I expect that many of the finds that we are seeing in other parts of the State will reach a degree of fruition once we have sorted out the native title issue. Some of the experience that we have had through the department and through Western Mining's presence in the Far North will assist in getting timeline data and more accurate information on ground water supplies. It will be a very important issue for whatever happens in the north or west of the State.

The other areas are unexceptional. The Government fully supports the expansion, therefore the issues of infrastructure, gas, electricity or water will be facilitated under the arrangements that we have signed. So, they are not exceptional. In terms of where a select committee would take us—and remembering that an environmental study is taking place at the moment—the extent to which this Bill would have been visited in a select committee would be very limited, because it refers only to the provision of infrastructure. That does not bear on some of the questions that other members of the community may wish to ask. It may then disappoint people if they were not able to look at those other matters.

I assure members that, with the environmental assessments being guided by the Commonwealth Government, all matters which people may have an interest in or which may cause them some concern without absolute knowledge will be satisfied during the environmental assessment. It is important not only for Western Mining to proceed with this expansion but behind that environmental assessments of the highest order are being undertaken to ensure that all environmental issues are answered as they relate to the expansion.

With respect to water, the provision of bore field B was consistent with the existing indenture arrangement; therefore, that matter was previously satisfied. The issue of water is critical and will continue. I know that Western Mining will continue to meet its commitments under the monitoring system.

I thank all members for their support of the Bill. Roxby is important to South Australia. Over the next five to 10 years I hope that we will see other Roxbys arise from the dirt. Through the exploration initiative there is no doubt that the countryside which looked fairly flat and barren in many parts of the State may contain a large number of riches which can contribute to the wealth of the State, to the jobs of the State and to the well being of the State. As emphasised, it is an exciting time for the State, the mining industry and Roxby Downs. Western Mining is leading the band in terms of its commitment to this State. I expect that a large number of large mining companies will also have an interest in this State. I thank all members for their support of the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Minister for Mines and Energy): I move:

That Joint Standing Orders (Private Bills) be so far suspended as to enable the Bill to pass through the remaining stages without delay and without the necessity for reference to a select committee.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.

POLICE (CONTRACT APPOINTMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 16 October. Page 204.)

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): The Opposition will support the basic thrust of the Bill because, in essence, the Government is saying that, instead of appointing the Police Commissioner and his or her Deputy for an undefined period, we should establish a five year contract. Subject to a few conditions, we have no problem with that. We are aware that under the principal Act the Minister has the power of direction of the Police Commissioner, but under this Bill the Minister seeks powers to vary provisions within the contract. We have a few questions in that respect but, in essence, amendments to that effect have been proposed by the member for Florey and me. The basic content of the member for Florey's amendment and my first amendment is that, if we are to have this process, it should be transparent and clear to the public. We expect that a statement will be made to both Houses within six sitting days in this process. The member for Florey and the Opposition are in agreement on that point.

There are other issues upon which I hope the Government will look favourably. First, if for whatever reason the appointment of the Police Commissioner is terminated, we expect that that should have at least the same amount of public transparency as would variation of the commissioner's contract. If you are to vary the commissioner's contract, and if you accept the fact that within six days a report will be made in this House and in the other place, you would expect the same thing if the commissioner were sacked. We want that in the legislation as well. If our amendment is not successful here we will pursue it in the other place, because the Minister would be sensible to accept that. I think the Minister knows that he will not get away with sacking or not reappointing the Police Commissioner without telling Parliament why.

If I were the Minister, I would say that the Opposition was onto a good thing. The Opposition does not mind this going into legislation because we know it will happen and I suspect that, farther down the corridor, we will win it anyway. I do not want to take up the time of the House because it has other pieces of legislation to debate. The Opposition accepts the need for this legislation; it accepts the fact that the Commissioner and his deputy are retiring. The Deputy Commissioner is retiring on 6 December, so that is only 31 days from today. Commissioner Hunt will leave once the new Commissioner is appointed, and passing this legislation in this and the other place will sort out the process.

Mr BASS (Florey): I support this Bill although, as does the member for Playford, I had concerns about the wording of new section 7(2)(b) but after consultation I understand

that, with the Minister's agreement, the amendment I move will clarify and settle my concerns. Without a doubt, I believe that it is a move in the right direction to place senior bureaucrats on contracts and to define their length of tenure, their rights of renewal and remuneration. With respect to Commissioners of Police, Governments must be careful that they do not place themselves in such a position as to be seen or even be perceived to be seen as involving themselves with directing the actions that the Commissioner of Police might take in upholding laws and conducting investigations. It is most important that contracts for police officers be treated differently from those of normal senior bureaucrats.

I believe that five years is an ideal term for a Commissioner of Police, especially when there is provision for a right of renewal for a short period. However, I would not like to see a second term be more than two or, at the very most, three years. A police officer, promoted to the position of Commissioner, would no doubt have a good idea in what direction the Police Force should be going and what he wants to achieve as the chief law enforcement officer. There is no doubt that a five year term would be sufficient to first plan and implement the direction in which the Police Force should go, and then to oversee the full implementation of that plan.

If, after a five-year term, some slight reorganisation and alteration were required with respect to the direction of the Police Force to complete the Commissioner's strategy, two years, in my opinion, should be sufficient. To be quite honest, if a police officer, promoted to the position of Commissioner of Police, could not plan, consult and implement changes and see them come to fruition in five years, or at the most seven years, I believe the Government would have to concede that it had made a mistake in the selection of that officer. The Deputy Commissioner's contract, while not being as important as that of the Commissioner, should also have a set term.

In my opinion, it is unfortunate that both the present Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner are leaving within a short time of each other, but I have no doubt that, with the right selection for both positions, the South Australian Police Force will forge ahead into the future. While making no criticism of our present Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner, I believe that the roles taken by Commissioner Hunt and Deputy Commissioner Hurley should be reversed. Commissioner Hunt, when taking the position, declared that he would be the Chief Executive Officer and would leave the day-to-day running of the Police Force to the Deputy. I believe that the Commissioner should be the leader of the Police Force, have the support and confidence of the police, and be involved in the day-to-day investigational matters of his force.

In my opinion, the Deputy Commissioner needs to be the manager experienced in human relations and management, ensuring that the Police Department is structured in such a way that it delivers the strategy as implemented by the Commissioner. I also believe that assistant commissioners should be placed on contracts, but I have some concern that, if the contracts of assistant commissioners are not renewed, they can then drop back to the rank of chief superintendent and stay in the job. I also have concerns that, if the contracts of the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner were not renewed and they were under the age of 50 years, they would have nowhere to go.

I know that the Treasurer has indicated that an adjustment will need to be made to the Superannuation Act to cater for such a position. I do not believe this should be a problem in the future as it would be a brave Government that appointed a Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner aged in their late 30s or early 40s, as I believe that, at that age, one would not have the experience to take on such an important role as the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner of Police. I support this legislation and commend it to the House.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Minister for Police): I thank the members for Florey and Playford for their support for the Bill. It is an important step forward, bringing the South Australian force into line with other police forces. It also brings it into line with general Government management and the Government Management Act, and is consistent with modern management practice. This step has been some time coming, but it is now here and I thank members for their support.

Whatever field of endeavour we are involved in, it is important that the issues of governance are maintained to the strictest possible extent, and there is a responsibility on the incumbent leaders in their positions to provide the highest quality service. I believe that, without contracts and without a system of review in the system, we will not achieve the required level of performance. South Australia has had some excellent Police Commissioners, and certainly when we look at the interstate practices, as revealed by various royal commissions, we see that South Australia can feel quite proud of the efforts of its leaders. However, it is my view that, in whatever field of endeavour one is involved, there must be performance requirements that are clearly understood and encapsulated in management practices. On that basis, I appreciate the support for this Bill from both members.

In terms of the possible concerns of members, I simply say that the contract is with the Premier and lasts for the term of appointment. Therefore, it is not my contract: it is a contract applied to all chief executive officers in the State Government. The performance agreements made between the Chief Executive Officer and his or her Minister are quite unexceptional. If any person is provided with a copy of the performance agreements, they will find nothing, in a general sense, to which people would take great exception.

The performance agreements attempt to put in place principles of sound management practice, which has a number of elements. Secondly, the performance agreements seek to set levels of performance that involve continual improvement in performance as they translate to the operation of an agency, in this case the Police Force. Quite clearly, we are trying to get the best performance possible out of every member of the Police Force. That can happen only through leadership and leadership must set itself—as the Government has set itself—reasonable and responsible targets, yet lift the quality and the standard of service delivery.

I am not criticising the Police Force. I said on day one when I inherited the Police portfolio that South Australian police are the most highly regarded in Australia. My task as Minister for Police is to assist them to become the most effective police force in Australia. In some areas that is the case and in other areas we can always do better. I want to see the flavour of some of the modern practices I have seen adopted particularly in European jurisdictions implemented in our Police Force. We have an enormous amount of talent within the organisation and some highly educated people, and I believe that, if we can get that talent to rise above itself on a continuum, we will see South Australia leading the band in every area of policing and not just in some areas.

That is my task as Minister. It will be the task of the next Commissioner and the next Deputy Commissioner and the

Assistant Commissioners and all the management team to ensure that that occurs. I do set high standards. I believe that one can always do better; whether it be the Minister or the head of a department, I believe that one can always improve on one's performance. One of the ways we can do that to make sure that there are no misunderstandings is through performance agreements, which I would like to think have contributed to a better quality of management within the public sector, and it is now hoped that some of the best elements of those changes will translate themselves into the Police Force.

The performance agreements are not there to be used as a means of belting the Commissioner around the head. They are not there to create the situation that saw the dismissal of Commissioner Salisbury: they are there simply as management practice. I am more than happy to accommodate suggestions from the member for Florey, and the member for Playford has a similar idea on one aspect. I will address the other amendments when they are before the Committee. I believe that there are one or two technical problems with the proposition put forward by the member for Playford, but I am more than happy to address those when we get to that stage. I thank members for their support.

This is another step forward and is consistent with modern management practice. It allows us to choose the best candidate and ensure that the vigour and vitality accompanying the appointment in the first place remain within the system, with the clear understanding that, whilst there is a right of reappointment (and the member for Florey has mentioned two or three years), it depends on the age, character and sheer dedication of the individual concerned as to whether the reappointment is for five years, making a 10-year term, or for some lesser period. There is certainty for anyone taking on the task that they are there to do a job, they have a good time frame in which to do it, they will be rewarded for their efforts and the Police Force will be the better for that experience. I thank members for their contributions to the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—'Substitution of ss.6 to 9C.'

Mr BASS: I move:

Page 2, after line 23—Insert subclause as follows:

(5) On setting or varying the performance standards to be met by the Commissioner, the Minister must cause a statement of the standards or variation to be laid before each House of Parliament within six sitting days if Parliament is then in session, or if not, within six sitting days after the commencement of the next session of Parliament.

In my second reading contribution I said I had grave concerns about the conditions of the Commissioner's appointment and that clause 7(2)(b) provides that the Commissioner is to meet the performance standards as set from time to time by the Minister. As we are dealing with the Commissioner of Police, who is totally different from a chief executive officer of a Government department, I feel that not only must the Government and the Minister be seen not to be interfering with the Commissioner in areas where they have no right to be interfering but also it must not be perceived that they are interfering. The wording of my amendment leaves the Minister the right to set performance standards for the Commissioner, but it would be a brave Minister who would set performance standards that would interfere with the investigations of criminal offences.

My example was that, if the Police Department was getting $10 000 a month from the use of laser cameras for the purpose of reducing speeds, which I support, and the CPI went up by 3 per cent, the Minister could well set a performance standard and say to the Commissioner, 'I want you to increase your speed camera pinches by 3 per cent.' That is a performance standard that would interfere in an area in which the Government and the Minister have no right to interfere. That is a matter of upholding the laws and one for the Commissioner to decide. I understand what the Minister is trying to do, and in fact I agree with that. We do need to require the Commissioner to meet the performance standards as set by the Minister. By including my amendment we clearly indicate that any performance standard would have to apply in areas where it will not be perceived that we are interfering with the investigative arm of the Police Force. I commend the amendment to the Committee.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I am happy to accept the amendment. I appreciate that the member for Florey, who takes a considerable interest in these matters, was concerned that we may use the performance standards as a means of interfering with the operation of the police. Whilst I believe my assurances have been well received by the member for Florey, he may say that other Ministers may have a different point of view on how these performance standards should be used and that therefore a degree of caution is necessary. I acknowledge what the honourable member is saying and I am happy to accept his amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr QUIRKE: I move:

Page 2, after line 23—Insert new subclause as follows:

(6) The Minister must within six sitting days after the making and notification to the Commissioner of a decision not to reappoint the Commissioner at the end of a term of appointment, cause a statement of the reasons for that decision to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

I indicated in my second reading contribution that the member for Florey and I are in agreement on the point to which he was just referring. At the point of determination that the Commissioner is not to be reappointed and that the person concerned, for whatever reason the Government has determined, will not continue on with the job, we believe at the very least that this should cause a statement to be made in both Houses.

If the Government is unhappy with the performance of the Commissioner, having issued performance guidelines to the person concerned at the outset, and this matter is duly reported on in both Houses, as will be the effect of the amendment moved by the member for Florey, the decision not to reappoint the Commissioner should also cause a statement to be made in both Houses within six days. I will not take up any further time on the matter at this stage but simply add that if the decision is not made here it will be made by someone else further down the corridor.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: There are some deficiencies in what the member for Playford is suggesting. Is he suggesting that, once the terms have run through, if a person is not reappointed there will be a statement? If a person is of outstanding talent and calibre and is highly motivated, and that vigour has not been lost by five years at the top, another five years would be more than appropriate. The circumstances may change, but there is a certainty of five years and we are not denying that person's talent because of the five-year contract.

The way the amendment reads, almost for any situation the Minister is required to report to the Parliament. I ask the

honourable member to reflect on the contents of his amendment. It may not mean what he wants it to mean. If he is saying that that is inconsistent with the contract terms, I will take advice on that issue. However, if he is saying that we have a responsibility to report on every possible event, even if it is an event under the contract (which can be the interpretation placed on the amendment), everybody would have a difficulty. I also ask the honourable member to reflect on the extent to which any Government would say that, if a person's performance is not up to standard but is nevertheless still a good honest standard, that person should be reappointed for another five years or possibly for two or three years, as the member for Florey mentioned. There has to be a reasonable degree of flexibility.

I assure the member for Playford that after the events involving Commissioner Salisbury, on which everyone can reflect as possibly signalling the demise of the Dunstan Government, no Government in its right mind will breach the understandings reached unless there are some extraordinary circumstances. Commissioners can have physical or mental problems—they are human beings: in this case the Act provides for the separation of that person from the job. I assure the member for Playford that, given that it is a high profile position, if there are variations or changes to that appointment inconsistent with the original contract, the public of South Australia will visit this matter to the same degree as perhaps it visited the Salisbury sacking, and the Parliament would certainly seek its right to have the full details provided to the House.

That can sometimes be difficult if the Commissioner has suffered some mental or physical disability or reached a stage where the vigour that was evident at the beginning of the appointment is no longer apparent in the performance of those duties. The person concerned may still do a good, honest job but not of the high standard that we would expect. A number of issues need to be considered by the member for Playford. They are not appropriately dealt with in the amendment we see here, and I prefer not to accept it as it stands.

Mr QUIRKE: I do not want to delay the proceedings. Suffice to say that Mr Salisbury, who is no longer with us, in those events as I understand them historically had taken the view that we were not yet a republic, in fact not even yet a responsible governing colony, and as such he had a higher duty to the Crown. It was not the Crown that was paying him. In large part the Dunstan Government got what it deserved. It went out and shopped for this fellow and did not do it that well. When it brought him over here he was a constant thorn in its side. The message of the Salisbury affair is not only that it can bring down Governments but that one ought to make a proper appointment on day one and thoroughly investigate this issue, as I am sure this Minister is aware.

The Minister was speaking to both amendments, with which I am happy as we will have one vote and get on to the electricity legislation. The two issues are fairly simple. If the Commissioner is not reappointed, the wording of this amendment is quite adequate. If not, I will discuss it with Parliamentary Counsel. The amendment says that, if the person is not reappointed, we want a statement in this place and in the other place. We want to know why. It may we well be that the five years has run out and that the Government can do better with someone else or feels that there is a need for a new direction. Whatever the Government feels, we want a statement. That is what we want and what the amendment gives us.

If the Government, in the unlikely event that we have to deal with that matter, decides to terminate the Police Commissioner's appointment for whatever reason, we want a statement for that as well. This amendment achieves that extremely well. If it does not do that, I am happy to have the ambiguity explained to me, but we should get on with it here this afternoon. The Minister has indicated that he will not support it. We will deal with it in another place and get on with the other items.

Amendment negatived.

Mr QUIRKE: I move:

Page 4, after line 23—Insert subclause as follows:
(3) The Minister must, within six sitting days after termination of the appointment of the Commissioner, cause a statement of the reasons for the termination to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

We have canvassed the reasons for this amendment.

Amendment negatived; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (5 and 6) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ELECTRICITY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 October. Page 260.)

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): We want to discuss issues of a precise nature that will be best handled when we get into Committee. I will make a few remarks about the Bill. In essence, the Opposition sees this as a downstream Bill from already existing decisions about electrical generation and the way we are going forward in terms of electricity in South Australia for the foreseeable future. Until recently, ETSA has had a natural monopoly on the production of electricity, with very little change in that. Even with the co-generation projects around the place, 99 per cent of all the electricity in South Australia—at least until a few years ago when we interconnected with the other States—was totally home-grown in South Australia. In the near future, that will no longer be the case. We will have a number of suppliers feeding into a grid. That grid will no longer be entirely under the control of ETSA, because ETSA has been broken up into several divisions.

We understand a number of questions have followed the earlier decisions of this place. Of course, one of those is how we deal with technical issues such as the appropriateness of installation; and another is how we deal with the question of licensing contractors. These issues have been perplexing Governments at both State and Federal levels for a number of years. The Bill seeks to set in place a framework in which the Department of Mines and Energy will have a role to play. We will put in place the necessary legislative safeguards so that, when a person is having electrical work done, a certificate is issued to ensure that it is done in accordance with the regulations and that both the electrical entity, as it is described in the Bill, and the consumer at the other end have the necessary safeguards in place.

The Opposition is concerned about this, and questions will be asked about the technical issues. I understand that the member for Price has a couple of issues about which he is concerned. Electricity is a dangerous commodity, and it is something with which I do not play around. I was involved with a chap with whom I worked and who sadly some 14 years ago did not take my advice about bringing in an electrical contractor, and he is no longer with us. The reason

he is no longer with us is that he attempted to demolish the back part of his house. When he attempted to cut off the electricity, he did it inappropriately and, as a consequence, he died. It was several hours before a number of us found him. His wife and child were devastated by their loss. It was a great sadness that was visited on the school I worked in at that time. As a consequence of that, the principal asked me, because I had some interest in building, whether I would go around and pick up all the pieces and finish the household renovation. I did that. In fact, I organised it in 29 days, nearly killing myself in the process. That was very sad. Electricity is a professional business, and it is something we all expect to be handled correctly.

Since then, and since they have been commercially available, I have always had in my house a safety switch. I feel more than satisfied with the electrical wiring that was recently done in my new house. I also want to know that safety standards, and so on, are put in place in the new world where we will see as many as 18 or 19 suppliers into the electrical grid. The Bill covers most of those issues. I will discuss a few matters in Committee. I do not want to unduly hold up the House, but the Opposition would like some issues clarified. I make no bones about it: the Opposition supports this legislation, we understand the need for it, and we know where things are going. This is an opportunity for the shadow Minister for Mines and Energy to wish ETSA, in its various forms, all the best in the future.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Minister for Mines and Energy): I thank the honourable member for his support of the Bill. We are in a more modern age. The changes we are seeing today have been forced upon us by competition and the fact that the Electricity Trust, as we once knew it, is no longer the same entity. It is responsible for the generation and delivery of electricity. It is no longer responsible for the technical and auditing requirements that were previously placed upon it. It is incumbent on Government to make sure that the safety standards that prevailed due to the good services of the Electricity Trust of South Australia are maintained in another form. We have paid much attention to this matter. We have had briefings with the industry in terms of the standards we expect of companies and contractors in the dispensing of their duties. That does not mean to say that, if you have a certificate attached to a piece of work, that is the end. Audits will be done on a random basis.

Given the danger of electricity, if companies or contractors are seen not to fulfil their duties, they will no longer be able to operate in the marketplace. There are fines for transgressions. There will still be a full audit on some of the heavier installations for obvious reasons. However, many of the light installations will be subject to the codes of practice that will be required of the industry. These things have prevailed in Europe for 20 years, and it may be longer than that. It is about time we had the capacity to get the industry itself to provide the highest possible standard. If it is not capable of doing that, it should not be in the job.

The Government should not be required to go out and hold industry's hand on every occasion. Even then, we know that in the past mistakes were made. Through the measure we are introducing, we want the industry to lift those standards to the extent that everybody has confidence. The standards will be checked. As I said, if someone is not up to the mark, they can forget about remaining in the industry. The Bill takes us in a slightly different direction from the way the Electricity Trust operated previously. It reflects the need to meet our current needs but with a different set of requirements than we had in the past.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—'Commencement.'

Mr QUIRKE: My first question will be of interest to every politician in this place. The second reading explanation indicates that there is an inclination by the trust to not allow me to stick up my election signs on electricity poles and property.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is really addressing a question to a clause on which there can be no question other than what is the date of commencement. Clause 2 deals simply with commencement.

Mr QUIRKE: I selected this clause, Mr Chairman, because currently I can stick up my signs on electricity poles. It took me a lot of work through Mr Klunder, a previous Minister, to achieve that. I remember writing a letter about the Berlin Wall coming down but, during election times, ETSA still did not allow me to stick up my sign on electricity poles. When this measure comes into effect, I am very concerned that during election time my right to stick up signs, and the right of the other 46 members in this place to do likewise, will be in question.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I do not think it is affected by the Bill.

Clause passed.

Clauses 3 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—'Functions.'

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

Page 6, after line 25—Insert the following subclauses:

(2) The Technical Regulator must, in performing any functions of a discretionary nature, endeavour to act in a fair and even-handed manner taking proper account of the interests of participants in the electricity supply industry and the interests of consumers of electricity.

(3) Nothing in subsection (2) gives rise to, or can be taken into account in, any civil cause of action.

These subclauses are of a technical nature, basically to make them consistent with the changes that we made to the Gas Act.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 9 to 16 passed.

Clause 17—'Consideration of application.'

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

Page 9—

Line 27—Leave out 'or renewal'.

Line 28—Leave out 'or renew' (twice occurring).

Line 29—Leave out 'or renew'.

Page 10—

Line 26—Leave out 'or renewal'.

Line 28—Leave out 'or renewal'.

Line 31—Leave out 'or renew'.

Line 33—Leave out 'or renewal'.

The amendments all deal with terminology. There was some suggestion that, on reflection, from the way in which the Bill was worded it may have been construed that, particularly with supply licences, there could be some expectation of interference with the renewal of those licences. We are removing the expectation that the Government would interfere in the process, unless in some extraordinary event a new supplier had to be constructed. In the current environment, that is totally impractical. This rewording tidies it up so that there is no misunderstanding as to the intent of the Government to see the current suppliers continue in the marketplace, unless

there is some extraordinary event which suggests that they are not worthy.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 18 passed.

Clause 19—'Term of licence.'

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

Page 11, line 9—Leave out this line and insert—

(2) Subject to this Division and the conditions of the licence, the Technical Regulator must, on due application, renew a licence unless satisfied that the applicant—

(a) has been guilty of a contravention of a requirement imposed by or under this Act or any other Act in connection with the operations authorised by the licence such that the licence should not be renewed; or

(b) would no longer for any reason be entitled to the issue of such a licence.

Consistent with our constructive approach to the changes taking place, we believe that the clarity on the renewal issue had to be preserved, and this amendment is consistent with that aim.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 20 passed.

Clause 21—'Licence conditions.'

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

Page 12, after line 16—Insert the following subclause:

(2) Without limiting the effect of subsection (1), if a person holds a licence or licences authorising both—

(a) the operation of a transmission or distribution network; and

(b) the retailing of electricity,

the Technical Regulator may make the licence or licences subject to conditions requiring that the person's affairs in relation to the operation of the transmission or distribution network be kept separate from the person's affairs in relation to the retailing of electricity in the manner and the extent specified in the conditions.

In drafting the Gas Bill 1996, the concept of ring fencing, transmission or distribution from retailing has been made explicit in the statutory provisions. It is considered an improvement to the Electricity Bill to make a similar statutory provision rather than rely on licensing conditions. It has been understood in drafting the Bill that such ring fencing is addressed elsewhere through inter-Government agreements and otherwise, thus the statutory provision serves to confirm an existing understanding. This explicitly recognises the two segments—the operation of transmission or distribution network and the retailing of electricity. We are showing the different component parts rather than assuming that it is just an integrated entity. It is consistent with our treatment of the Gas Bill.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 22 to 30 passed.

Clause 31—'System controller.'

Mr QUIRKE: The Opposition is not sure what is going on in this clause, which deals with the system controller. My understanding of this provision is that, in future, a fair volume of traffic will move in the system itself and it may emanate from any one of a number of sources of generation. If there is a system controller, that means that someone or some entity will control this arrangement, but I am puzzled because subclause 2(c) provides that an electrical entity can be the system controller. My understanding is that the electrical entity, as described earlier, is principally a power generating company, but it could also be the distribution system. What is going on here?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The member for Playford is very astute. If certain matters are resolved with the other States, the full electricity market will start to develop from 1 July. Assuming that the national electricity market commences its operations on 1 July next year and gathers pace over the next two or three years, there will be a requirement for a separate systems controller. At this stage a systems controller has to be the electrical entity, because that is where it is at the moment. On reflection, the separation of these entities to make them transparent and to allow them not to then dictate the movement of electricity *per se* is a very expensive exercise. So, it costs a significant amount of money for ETSA to separate off the systems controller, but it is a requirement of the national electricity market. One cannot have a systems controller which is stuck inside the electrical entity, otherwise you are due for a lot of strife.

Clause passed.

Clauses 32 to 58 passed.

Clause 59—'Electrical installations to comply with technical requirements.'

Mr De LAINE: Under the new Act, who will inspect new installations?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The company itself will have to inspect its own work. The technical auditor will be the Department of Mines and Energy.

Mr De LAINE: Will the same inspection set-up be in place for checking existing installations? Will existing installations be checked on a random basis to ensure that they comply with safety standards and regulations?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: There is no provision that I am aware of to do random checks. I will take advice on that. I understand that we are dealing with new installations where there are changes to the wiring or to the installation of particular items in the house. That is the current law. If for some reason a difficulty is experienced by a household, the first point of call to fix that fault will be an electrical contractor or an electrical firm. Under this system we expect that that person will be capable of fixing the fault. A right to turn off power is still given to particular officers either by the supplier or by the technical auditor in the case of the Department of Mines and Energy. There is no intention that I am aware of on behalf of Government to check houses. New houses are different because you are dealing with new electrical installations. We do not have the time or energy to check wiring in existing houses.

Mr De LAINE: I understand that ETSA inspectors inspect new installations at present: they do a 20 per cent check on domestic installations, a 40 per cent check on commercial installations and a 100 per cent check on high voltage installations. I submit that this is not good enough and that all installations should be subject to the 100 per cent inspection provision. We know that most electricians and contractors are honest people who do the right thing, but there are always a few who do not. Electricity is too dangerous a medium not to be checked fully. I understand that with high voltage equipment you not only die but are cooked pretty well. You can also die from a domestic problem if there are installation deficiencies. The percentages of inspections are not good enough. With the changeover to the new regime, will these inspections be up to 100 per cent?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I take note of what the member for Price says. I make clear that I do not believe this is appropriate. For all high voltage installations there will be a 100 per cent check. The heavy duty installations will all be subject to the 100 per cent check. There will be a sample check on domestic and commercial installations, because that is an effective way of doing things. I note that the member for Price is shaking his head. If someone is to do the job and then

somebody is to hang around behind until they finish the job to say whether it is right or wrong, it takes away from the very changes we want to see in South Australia.

Mr De Laine: You are not concerned about safety.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: That is not the point. If the member for Price wishes to pay the bills and put his dollars into MESA's budget to make it possible—

Mr De Laine interjecting:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I am simply saying that the electricity industry, with all its component parts, including the electrical contractors, has to come of age. That means that the quality of work has to be of the highest standard. The capacity to check on that standard will be provided for under this Bill and under the arrangements being agreed between the Department of Mines and Energy and electrical contractors. We have now had these discussions over a number of months in terms of the transition and when we get on with the job. If there are electrical contractors not doing the right thing, they should not rewire and go onto the next job: they should be out of the industry. We can do that through the sample check. We are not there to hold hands, otherwise one might as well get them to do that in the first place. It is poor practice to do so in the first place.

I appreciate what the member for Price says. We all appreciate how dangerous electricity can be. Very few electrical installations cause the deaths that we have seen. People touch high powerlines when using farm machinery or they get a nail and belt it into the wall without understanding that there is a wire in the wall. If one looks at the deaths caused by electricity, one questions how many are due to faulty wiring and the age of the faulty wiring. From here on in we require the highest level of standards from our electrical contractors. We believe that we will get it under the Bill, because that is the requirement. If they are not good enough, they should not be in the industry. The standards that we will achieve as a result will be far higher than those we have today.

Mr QUIRKE: In respect of clause 59(1), let us imagine that I have just built a house and that the electrician has installed the wiring. As I understand it, the person from the electrical entity—we knew it as ETSA—connects the meter and hangs a wire from a pole or takes it underground to that system. This provision covers that person. I wonder how they feel about the fact that, if they do it incorrectly, they face a potential $10 000 fine which, in most instances, will be a major part of their wages. Am I reading the provision incorrectly?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The honourable member is reading it correctly. If there is no quality of performance, they will obviously suffer a penalty. If that involves stringing a wire from the pole to the house by the people who connect the electricity to the house, it must be to that standard. The maximum penalty is $10 000, and that penalty would obviously be applied, as is the case with all fines, for the worst practices and not those that might have occurred through some fault at the time. We are saying that it is quite serious. The industry has been informed about it. I think the industry is reasonably relaxed about it but recognises that we require it to reach that standard. If it all works according to Hoyle, as we expect it will, we will see very few people being fined in the process.

Clause passed.

Clause 60 passed.

Clause 61—'Notice and examination and testing of certain electrical installation work.'

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

Pages 28 and 29—Leave out this clause and insert—

Certain electrical work

61.(1) A person who carried out work on an electrical installation or proposed electrical installation must ensure that—

(a) the work is carried out as required under the regulations; and

(b) examinations and tests are carried out as required under the regulations; and

(c) the requirements of the regulations as to notification and certificates of compliance are complied with.

Maximum penalty: $5 000.

Expiation fee: $315.

(2) If a person has a licensed electrical contractor carry out the work, this section does not apply to the person but applies to the contractor.

(3) If a person (other than a licensed electrical contractor) has a registered electrical worker carry out the work, this section does not apply to the person but applies to the worker.

The amendment creates greater clarity in the obligations under the division. We have made some improvements to that provision. The next amendment deals with the duplication of clause 62.

Amendment carried.

Clause 62—'Certificates of compliance for certain electrical installation work.'

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: This clause is now superfluous.

Clause negatived.

Clause 63 passed.

Clause 64—'Reporting of accidents.'

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

Page 30, line 15—Leave out 'immediately'.

The time frame will be covered by regulations. 'Immediately' is indefinite. The regulations will cover the reporting times, so that will be fixed by the change.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 65 to 69 passed.

Clause 70—'General investigative powers of authorised officers.'

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

Page 32—

Line 11—

Leave out this line and insert—

(a) investigate whether the provisions of this Act are being or have been complied with;.

After line 18—Insert the following paragraph:

(ea) search for, examine and copy or take an extract from a document or record of any kind as reasonably required for the purposes of the enforcement of this Act;.

Both amendments provide a more simple description of what the Government is trying to achieve. They broaden the scope for searching and obtaining a copy. We believe that it is competent for this paragraph to be inserted rather than the limited reference that was in the Bill as it stood.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (71 to 99), schedules and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Gordon): I draw the attention of the House to comments and deeds over the past decade relating specifically to the railway system in South Australia. This grievance debate was triggered by remarks made the

week before last by the member for Giles who, during his address to the House, claimed a concern and an affection for rural areas of South Australia. I recall quite vividly what happened to South Australia generally, and to my electorate in particular, during the tenure in office both of the former Labor Government in South Australia over a period of a decade and of the Keating Government at Federal level for many years.

The great concerns they had for rural South Australia are reflected in the fact that the employment figures for Australian railway workers in South Australia declined during the Labor Governments' term of office from some 10 000 staff to as few as 2 000 staff, with the possibility, of course, that they will decline further. More particularly, the member for Giles might well have been crying crocodile tears when he expressed grave concern for the people of rural South Australia, because it was during his own term of office as Minister for Transport and during the tenure of office of the former Labor Government in South Australia that my own electorate in the South-East—the then electorate of Mount Gambier, now Gordon—was fighting to retain its passenger rail service, partly because it feared that if it lost the passenger rail service it would then proceed, at the hands of the Federal Labor Government and AN, to lose also the freight rail service. That has, in fact, come to pass.

However, under the terms of the 1975 Rail Transfer Agreement between the Federal Government and South Australia—enacted between the Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, and the Premier of South Australia, Don Dunstan—it was agreed (clause 9, I believe) that in the event of dispute, should it be suggested that the Federal Government or AN wished to reduce the quality of a service or, indeed, to close a rail service, there would be arbitration. After some persuasion—and I believe that I played some part in that in 1991—the then State Government with Minister Blevins, the then Minister for Transport, agreed that it would take the threatened closure, or the actual closure, of the Mount Gambier passenger rail service to arbitration. The arbitration was put in the hands of an independent arbiter, the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre Limited, based in Sydney, New South Wales.

Commissioner David Newton oversaw the arbitration. His determination was handed down on 5 July 1991, and it really does make for very interesting reading. I will take as many excerpts as I can in the short time that I have from the determination. On page 4 of 18 pages it states:

> On the basis of the evidence put before me I determine that the Commonwealth may not terminate the 'Blue Lake' passenger service between Adelaide and Mount Gambier.

Commissioner Newton points out (as I said):

> Clause 9 of the agreement is as follows:
> 9 (1) The Australian Minister will taken the prior agreement of the State Minister to—
> (a) any proposal for the closure of a railway line of the non-metropolitan railways; or
> (b) the reduction in the level of effectively demanded services on the non-metropolitan railways;
> and failing agreement on any of these matters the dispute shall be settled by arbitration.

At page 5 he stated (*inter alia*):

> The Arbitrator is to determine a dispute between the Commonwealth and the State of South Australia as to whether the Commonwealth may terminate the 'Blue Lake' passenger service between Adelaide and Mount Gambier.

At page 6, he stated:

> Two submissions were particularly detailed and deserve special acknowledgment, that of Australian National Railways Commission, the operator of the service for the Commonwealth, and that of the Hon. Harold Allison MP, Mount Gambier member of the South Australian Parliament.

His determination is even more interesting. He recommends:

> 1. That new rolling stock be purchased.
> 2. The rolling stock have buffet facilities and toilet facilities.
> 3. The service be operated on a two car basis for at least four return journeys each week.
> 4. Should coach services be discontinued at any time, the service be operated for at least six return journeys each week.
> 5. In re-establishing the service, full regard be had to the standards of the Prospector, Australind and Spirit of Capricorn services and new Explorer railcars being obtained for New South Wales.

I point out that they were of very high standard. He continues:

> 6. In determining schedules, full opportunity be given to the public at various points along the line to comment.
> 7. In determining points served by the service, regard be had to social and community factors and opportunity be given for public comment.
> 8. The service be designed in consultation with community groups, especially those representing the elderly and the disabled.
> 9. Expert advice be sought on train access for the elderly and the disabled.
> 10. The service should be promoted and marketed as is appropriate.
> 11. Adequate reservation facilities be arranged.
> 12. Consideration be given by the Commonwealth as to whether the service warrants designation as a community service obligation.
> 13. The Commonwealth give consideration to assistance for AN under sections 19(2) and 20(1) of the Australian National Railways Commission Act.
> 14. A committee of Commonwealth and State representatives be established to implement these recommendations with the assistance of an independent chairperson with power to report to both the Commonwealth and the State Ministers at intervals until successful implementation of all recommendations.
> David A Newton, Arbitrator, 5 July, 1991.

In other words, that was a 14 points to nil score against Australian National in favour of the people of South Australia and specifically those who wanted to retain the passenger rail freight service from Adelaide through Wolseley and down to Mount Gambier. The member for Giles appeared to be crying crocodile tears, because of the remarkable fact that he initiated an appeal at our request in the South-East against Australian National in accordance with the Railways Transfer Agreement of 1975 between South Australia and the Commonwealth. Along with Crown Solicitor representatives, he went to the hearing and actually won the appeal, and yet—wonder of wonders—the South Australian Government did not pick up the prize.

Not only did it not pick up the prize, it never attempted to do that. I think it is quite amazing that a Government should do precisely what its own and the Commonwealth Acts of Parliament stipulate in order to ensure a service and yet, having won the appeal in accordance with clause 9 of the Act of Parliament, it refused point blank to pick up the prize. Instead, a subsequent deal was done by the State Government to take $123 million to standardise the Melbourne to Adelaide to Port Adelaide line and to gain some reassurances for Port Augusta (and what have they been worth?) at the expense of the South-East of South Australia.

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

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I want to register my concern and that of my constituents at the continued reduc-

tion of services now being experienced in the Modbury Hospital. I preface my remarks by acknowledging the sterling work being done by the medical and support staff within the hospital. My criticisms relate to Government policy and management decisions at Modbury Hospital. In recent months I have received a number of inquiries from concerned citizens who desperately need access to speech therapy services. One of my constituents has a six-year-old child with the level of understanding of a four-year-old. The child has always suffered with speech difficulties. He now has to have his tonsils removed and it has been suggested that the condition of his tonsils may be contributing to his speech disability. The problem is that it could take months before the child undergoes the tonsillectomy. Meanwhile, without the speech therapy, the child will lose the progress he has made, and that will set him back considerably. The child's family were told that he had only a mild to moderate speech difficulty and that the speech therapy outservice provided at Modbury by the Women's and Children's Hospital will no longer be available to this child, or indeed others with similar needs.

I am extremely concerned about the reports that come into my office of a steady reduction of services and efficiencies at Modbury Hospital. When signing the contract with Healthscope for private management to take over the Modbury Hospital, the Minister for Health said, and has said on many occasions since, that both the quality and quantity of free services to public patients would be maintained. This simply is not the case. I must say that the Minister also knows it is not the case. The community in my electorate knows it is not the case, I know it is not the case and so do other members whose electorates are around the Modbury Hospital. Some Torrens constituents have a sneaking suspicion that Modbury Hospital medical services are now being streamlined from a generalist hospital provider to more of a specialist provider. It appears that Modbury Hospital has focused additional medical activity on ear, nose and throat operations. According to the Minister's figures, approximately 400 more ENT operations had been performed than in the previous year.

Some constituents are concerned that, when there is a mix of public and private sector health care, the private sector component will move towards the provision of services that generate profit. I think 'creaming off' is the term that is generally being used. Constituents can see the long term necessity of services, such as speech therapy, the burns unit, mental illness services and rehabilitation, and wonder whether ENT increases are at the expense of more long term generalist services such as I have mentioned. One cannot blame my Torrens constituents for raising these questions and for being a little cynical at the Minister's responses. A letter from the Minister that was sent to all local householders prior to the Healthscope takeover stated that a new private/public Modbury Hospital would improve services and would continue to supply at least the current range of admissions and outpatient services as it has always done. It was also stated that every citizen who required admission or outpatient services should get them and that the service to public patients would be expanded and improved.

He also said that a new building to house a 56-bed medical wing would be built, but that has not happened and instead a public ward has been used in its place. As early as 28 June 1995 the Australian Nursing Federation stated that 9 per cent or 20 bed places were cut from the hospital's orthopaedic, asthma, bone fractures and chest complaints facilities. Outpatient services were closed for three instead of two weeks over Christmas last year and again for four days in April 1996. This represents a 50 per cent increase in the Christmas closure of outpatient services under private management. Elective surgery services were closed on 8 July for two weeks to save on costs. Management tried to close the antenatal unit, but apparently paediatricians insisted on keeping the services available.

One consultant—a nurse to whom they spoke—said that nurses knew only the day before that the well baby clinic was still to be kept open. Constituents have told me that the attempted closure resulted in fewer staff working with nearly the same number of patients in cramped conditions. Staff were able to reduce some of the visits by seeing only women more than 36 weeks pregnant. If this is the case this is an appalling vista metered out to the community and medical staff.

Furthermore, the length of visiting lists is getting longer at Modbury. Between February 1995 and February 1996 Modbury Hospital waiting lists increased by 22 per cent. This is in a period when all other major public hospitals had their waiting lists fall, or so we hear. Healthscope has the management responsibilities for both private and public sector wards. There are clear differences in pay and conditions for workers in the private sector as opposed to the public sector. In some cases constituents have informed me that nurses in the public hospital section have complained to their union that they have been asked to be on call for the private section. The transfer of staff has not been documented and I am sure that members in this House as well as my constituents would like to know who is footing the Bill for this transfer of staff. I would like to know on how many other occasions nurses in the public section have actually undertaken duties in the private sector. What is the full cost involved? I would like documented evidence on what adverse effects on efficiencies this is having on public sector wards and what stresses this is placing on medical staff.

If significant transfers are occurring, this suggests that the private sector of Modbury Hospital is being subsidised by the taxpayers. It certainly appears that way to many Torrens constituents. It is difficult to get this type of data from Government, which heightens suspicions even further. On this side of the House we have become familiar with evasive answers from Ministers opposite. The Minister for Health on numerous occasions has failed to respond to requests for data on Modbury Hospital services and financial efficiencies. It is unacceptable for the Minister to evade questions from the community on operating costs and efficiencies by citing commercial confidentiality. The Minister for Health does not see an apparent conflict of interest involved in a private hospital operating within a public hospital and when questioned responded to this House, 'It is none of my business.' Perhaps he should consider the ramifications of the situation.

I see my responsibilities as being to the general public and to support the maintenance of medical services, and making information available about those services is a necessary prerequisite. The public elect us to office, and surely our responsibility is to be up front with it about costs and service efficiencies. Hiding beyond commercial confidentiality can only be seen as an excuse to the public and suggests that the Government is not on the level. The Minister should come clean about this because privatising the Modbury Hospital was a way of engineering a block on data output on Modbury Hospital cost efficiencies. Constituents are drawing on inconsistencies, such as the reported losses in share values, on reports on unsatisfactory profit margins on the one hand

and claims that all services will be maintained on the other hand. We all know that the economic engine is the tail that wags the dog, and economic rationalists in the Government behave like latter day Sweeney Todds. Modbury Hospital service cuts are testimony to this.

The Minister needs to come clean with the Opposition and the public and admit that his Government's strategy is to cut health funds and reduce services. He cannot have his cake and eat it too. Cuts mean service reductions. It has been seen by my constituents that this Government is treating them like lemmings. The Modbury Hospital cuts and services efficiencies have been impaired by its privatisation experiment and, sadly, more services will be reduced. Ultimately the medical staff will continue to bear the stress of these cuts, as will the frustrated and angry community. To boot, the community will continue to suffer emotional and physical pain due to ever growing hospital waiting lists. We ask the Minister to come clean and seriously consider what is happening with our hospitals. We fought long and hard for that hospital and we are asking that we be provided with proper and accessible services. We shall await his response.

Motion carried.

At 6.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 6 November at 2 p.m.