HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 4 June 1998

The SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald) took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MOUNT GAMBIER POLICE COMPLEX

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the sixty-eighth report of the committee on the Mount Gambier Police Complex be noted.

As with other projects that the Public Works Committee has had put before it and upon which it has been deliberating, this project is commended by the committee, but as yet the committee has not received the acquittals which we know we will receive in the very near future with respect to those matters that are of concern to the Auditor-General—a concern which is shared by a majority of the committee.

The Mount Gambier Police Complex redevelopment is well and truly overdue. In many respects it is similar to the inconvenient and inappropriate arrangements that we found explained to us on the Adelaide Youth Court redevelopment where officers in the police facilities were not safely and appropriately segregated when dealing with alleged offenders who came before them for interview so that they could discover the view being taken by the offender and, at the same time, interview other people formally who were assisting police with their inquiries to discover whether a serious crime had or had not been committed. That put both the people assisting the police with their inquiries and people who were believed to have been responsible for some violent crimes in direct physical contact with one another unless the police were capable and careful to keep them separated and segregated. In this day and age that is unacceptable. The temptation to resort to abuse and violence was far too great.

Moreover, it should be possible for duty sergeants to be able to work from a desk which is theirs and theirs alone and not one which they have to clear out at the end of their shift and place their papers and possessions in a locker to allow the duty sergeant on the next shift to have control and access of the desk space for the duration of that shift. That is wasteful of police resources. It is primitive and, as an administrative expedient, it is anything but. It results in police losing track of the essential evidence required and the convenience with which they can then prepare the information needed by their colleagues in the fight against crime.

The existing Mount Gambier police complex was first constructed over 100 years ago—that is how primitive it is. Further construction followed in 1955, along with some extensions in 1972. The development of modern policing methods and an increase in policing requirements within the area as a result of the expansion in population means that there has been this need to redesign the facility to ensure appropriate service delivery. The committee was impressed with the responsible and, if you like, frugal way in which the department prepared and put its propositions before us for the expenditure of public money. The department proposes to construct a purpose-built police complex at Mount Gambier to replace those unsatisfactory facilities. The estimated cost is $5.75 million, with a completion date believed to be September 1999.

More specifically, the proposed capital works will provide a modern purpose-built police complex. It will be frugal. It will be a facility more suited to dealing with the sensitive issues to which I have already referred. It will also be a secure and safe place, and it will provide safe accommodation for police, prisoners and members of the general public. There will be special child interview facilities for child abuse victims which do not exist at present. There will be adequate general and video facilities. There will be facilities for the technical services and the forensic services which the police must have but do not have appropriately at present.

Equally, there will be stores facilities that are properly secure and properly organised in the way in which those stores are catalogued relevant to the matters to which they relate. There will be a much more efficient general office and public reception area than there is at present. Moreover, car parking will be secure and adequate. At present, neither of those things can be said to be true. Specific information technology requirements will also be provided, along with appropriate conference, training and emergency operations facilities which do not exist at present. This proposed facility has been designed to include flexible cell units consisting of nine single cells, three double cells with related exercise yards, one padded cell and one observation cell.

On 13 February last, all members of the Public Works Committee, accompanied by the local member for Gordon, conducted an inspection of the complex and its surroundings. During that inspection, members noted how modern policing practices, coupled with an increase in police activities in the South-East region, have rendered a large portion of the complex redundant and contributed enormously to costly inefficiencies arising from overcrowding and/or the lack of security, the inadequate provision for privacy, and the obvious embarrassment to some people who are either assisting police with their inquiries or who are accused of having committed offences.

We noted also that the existing buildings fail to meet current occupational health and safety standards. Working space allocation within the complex is not conducive to promoting teamwork and, more recently, these buildings have become a barrier to effective communication and the use of modern technology which will be incorporated in the new complex. We were pleased to note that every care has been taken to ensure that the new complex will blend in with the existing heritage-listed courthouse. The committee considers that the continuous strain of policing and the increased high workload, together with that overcrowding, dysfunctional and dislocated office space and accommodation, provides us with more than adequate justification for the provision of the new and consolidated accommodation at Mount Gambier.

The committee noted that the existing buildings are old, have high maintenance costs and are not capable of adapting to the necessary and increased use of modern technology. That means that they must go. This is reflected by the department's difficulty in adhering to its legal obligations to which I have referred under the occupational health and safety legislation, and being unable to conform in those facilities to the prisoner management obligations under, for instance, the Aboriginal deaths in custody principles. All members consider that the construction of the police complex at Mount Gambier will provide the department with modern purpose-built facilities to overcome those problems.

The committee recognises that the police function at Mount Gambier is an essential service to the public within the city of Mount Gambier and, more generally, to that region of

the State. In particular, the staff will be able to deal more effectively and sensitively with clients in the full range of police business than is possible in any sense at present. However, we regret that we have not yet achieved the acquittal processes, which we believe we need from agencies and the Government and which were outlined by the Auditor-General.

We need to be told by Treasury and Finance, Premier and Cabinet and the Attorney-General that the works and procedures to be followed have been checked and are lawful. When that information is provided to the committee, it will have no hesitation in unanimously recommending the work.

Ms STEVENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

OMBUDSMAN (PRIVATE OR CORPORATISED COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 28 May. Page 955.)

Ms WHITE (Taylor): This is a worthy Bill for the consideration of this House and I support it. This Bill, which amends the Ombudsman Act, is aimed at ensuring that the Ombudsman has continued powers to investigate complaints against those agencies currently in public hands that are to be privatised, corporatised or have sections of their services outsourced. Increasingly the State Government is conducting its business and delivering the services that it has a responsibility to provide for South Australians by way of the private sector under contract. A by-product of that within our current legal framework is that once an agency, or service, is privatised it is removed from the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman who no longer is able to investigate effectively consumer complaints involving that privatised or outsourced agency.

This Bill redresses that problem by enshrining in law the right of all South Australians to have their complaint against a privatised or outsourced agency heard and investigated by the Ombudsman. My colleague the member for Kaurna has already alerted this House to the example of the massive increases in complaints to the Victorian electricity industry Ombudsman following the privatisation of that State's electricity system. From a pre-privatisation volume of electricity complaints in Victoria of less than 300 in 1996-97, which is about the same volume of complaints as in South Australia, post-privatisation there were some 9 869 telephone complaints leading to 5 166 cases being investigated by that State's electricity industry Ombudsman. We can expect more complaints in South Australia under a privatised electricity operation and it will be imperative that we set in place an effective avenue for hearing those consumer complaints.

This matter will be explored further in debate on the ETSA privatisation legislation currently before the House. However, the need to enable continuance of the Ombudsman's powers to investigate complaints against agencies which provide public services under contract to the Government is broader than the ETSA debate, so I commend this Bill to the House.

The Bill addresses an issue that is to the core of the responsibility of Government to the public of South Australia, that is, accountability. For the last three years, the South Australian Auditor-General has been drawing the attention of this Parliament to his concern relating to the stripping away of the mechanisms that act to ensure that, as public services are privatised, Government is accountable to the public. Indeed, in his own annual report, the South Australian Ombudsman referred to the need for him to retain jurisdiction over agencies or instrumentalities of the Crown that have been either wholly or partially privatised, corporatised or commercialised.

Having dealt with the Ombudsman of late in relation to appeals that I have lodged with his office over the Government's refusal to grant me access to documents that I have requested under the Freedom of Information Act, I know how the Government can hide from the people of South Australia information regarding publicly controlled agencies—let alone those agencies which are no longer in public hands. The fact that all the FOI appeals that I have been forced to lodge with the Ombudsman have concerned the Deputy Premier's portfolios is not surprising, because transparency and being open with the people of South Australia is not one of the Deputy Premier's strong points. I am not surprised that he has undermined access to that information.

Members interjecting:

Ms WHITE: As my colleague the member for Kaurna hints, he does not know what is going on and he does not want me too, either. Once services are privatised, ministerial responsibility is not as obvious or provable. In such situations, it is imperative that individuals who feel that they have been unjustly treated in the provision of a public service have access to an effective complaints procedure, which includes an independent mechanism of last resort to address unresolved complaints. Without such a mechanism outside the agency or service provider, a basic tenet of our democracy is denied, and that goes against something that most South Australians still hold important, that is, the concept of a fair go for all. I urge all members to support this Bill and I challenge any of those who intend not to support it to explain their opposition to their constituents, the people of South Australia.

Mr MEIER secured the adjournment of the debate.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HINDMARSH SOCCER STADIUM

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Lewis:

That the sixty-seventh report of the committee on the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium upgrade—stage 2 be noted.

(Continued from 28 May. Page 968.)

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): During the course of the remarks I made to the Chamber last week, I drew attention to the fact that the proposal was for $18.5 million which is now about $19.5 million, that it covered factors such as the proposal to add an additional 9 700 permanent seats to the facility, and that it was supposed to have been in consequence of a requirement imposed on Soccer SA or the Government by SOCOG, evidence of which, however, we have seen none. In other words, as I understand it personally, they are FIFA's standards and not SOCOG's, and it does not matter to SOCOG either way.

Whilst it is acknowledged that wiring for a big screen is in place as part of the stage 1 works, and whilst there are informal discussions around the place about the need for a big screen, there is some dispute as to whether or not that is a requirement. I referred to the difficult circumstances of the Belarusian Church and further drew attention to the fact that the report on stage 1 contained strong recommendations to

the Government—and you were a part of that, Sir—as to what ought to be done, but to date has not been done, and was not taken up by the Government during the course of its execution of stage 1 and dealt with prior to stage 2 coming before the committee.

The committee has evidence presented to it which does not make it clear as to who exactly is responsible for determining the scope of the project or the preparation of the brief. The committee is particularly concerned by the conflicting evidence it has received and the non-provision of crucial information for the committee's deliberation. There is no business plan. The committee's concerns relate to the inadequacy of the initial stage 1 proposal and the conflicting evidence provided in relation to the core reasons for the further development of the stadium in stage 2.

In the absence of material evidence to clarify this matter, the committee questions the reasons it has been given for the necessity to spend the extra money. The financial analysis provided to the committee is a simple statement of the bottom line of someone else's work with no statement whatever of the underlying assumptions or the arithmetic underlying that calculation. Without a business plan, therefore, the committee is not able to decide whether or not it is in the public interest according to mechanisms available to it to do that. We are alarmed at the lack of written documentation indicating that proper prudential processes have been followed. We have drawn attention in the stage 1 report to the fact that car parking was inadequate, and to date the committee has not been advised whether any action has been taken to rectify that problem.

Attendances at soccer and other utilisations of the venue were not put before the committee. Of its own volition and through its own curiosity, the committee set out to discover who might use the stadium and what the attendance figures might be. Attendance figures at soccer for those paying patrons—not those who attend on free tickets—do not justify even the level of accommodation currently provided and would be unlikely to overload that and fill it.

Ownership of the facility is still in the unfettered hands, without encumbrance, of the city of Charles Sturt, which means it is exposed in the same way as the athletics facilities were exposed at Kensington.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. Is the motion seconded?

An honourable member: Yes, Sir.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Reynell.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I was clearly on my feet before the member for Reynell rose to adjourn the debate, and I wish to speak on this matter.

The SPEAKER: I cannot uphold the point of order. We take speakers alternating from one side of the Chamber to the other. The honourable member will have an opportunity to speak when next the motion comes before the House.

Members interjecting:

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

Debate adjourned.

EDUCATION (GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CLOSURES AND AMALGAMATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 26 March. Page 805.)

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I wish to make a brief contribution to the debate on this Bill before us today. Members would know that I have spoken often on the issue of school closures: I have given two second reading speeches to various Bills on this topic and the consultation processes or lack thereof that have occurred with the current Liberal Government, and I have given other speeches at various times on this very important topic. It is one that gains even more significance, given that we were told in last Thursday budget that there are to be, over the term of this current Government, an additional 30 school closures.

In the past four years we have seen 39 schools closed, and they have not been replaced, I can guarantee members, by 39 new schools. So, we have seen 39 schools closed in this State and, in coming years, according to the budget papers, we are to see another 30 schools closed in South Australia.

The Bill skirts around this issue of school closures and the lack of consultation that takes place before those closures occur. On behalf of the Opposition, I support the second reading of this Bill, but have placed on file (and members have had distributed to them last week) amendments that would also insert an appeal process so that, when schools are determined by the Minister to be closed, those schools will be able to appeal in order to ensure that the best educational outcomes will be guaranteed, rather than what seems to happen now—just the economic savings desired by the Government. So, those amendments are before this House and I will go through them in detail a little later.

To summarise, and referring to the second reading contribution of the member for Chaffey, the purpose of this Bill is 'to commit to legislation the review process that must be undertaken before Government schools or amalgamations can occur'. The effect of this legislation is to change very little about what happens before a school closure is announced, and it changes even less what happens after a school closure has been announced because this Bill does not allow for any appeal process by the community.

This Bill would not have saved Croydon Primary School, Croydon Park Primary School or McRitchie school—three school closures that most concerned the Opposition at the end of last year. It would not have saved those schools; it would not have relooked at the closures of those schools; and it will not prevent those same set of circumstances occurring again.

The Government has indicated that 30 more schools will close. It has proved that its consultation process with the community is flawed. That is not only my opinion and the community's opinion but it is also the Ombudsman's opinion. In fact, when the Croydon school closure process occurred last year, the school community appealed to the Ombudsman because it desperately wanted to keep the school open and the educational opportunities available at that school. The Ombudsman ruled that there were problems with the consultation process that the Government undertook. The Ombudsman was quite critical and ruled that the Minister and the department should apologise to that school community because the process of consultation had not been adequate or just.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair is trying to hear the contribution by the member for Taylor.

Ms WHITE: In fact, to be specific, some of the Ombudsman's criticisms about that consultation process included the following: that the final report to the Minister on

the Upper West School Cluster Review, that is, the cluster in which that school was situated, did not reflect dissenting views; that the documents presented to the Minister contained inaccuracies; that the co-chairs of the Croydon Primary School signed the final report on misleading advice; and that grave doubt existed as to the extent of consideration given to the Croydon minority report.

We know that advice was given within the Education Department that an alternative to closure be considered. The Minister decided not to take that advice but to close the school. I might add that it is always the right of Ministers to close schools. However, that Minister must be made accountable for that decision, and the reasons for the closure should be put before Parliament. The Government's past record from as recently as six months ago shows that it does not conduct a satisfactory consultation process when it comes to the closure of schools.

Basically, this Bill essentially puts into legislation what happens now. I call on members to agree to my amendments to this Bill which insert an appeals process into that consultation process so that, once the Minister has made a decision to close a school, the community can appeal that decision. Currently, there is no appeal process; there was no appeal process in the case of Croydon. Given the fact that there will be 30 more school closures, it is more necessary than ever to ensure that the Government is responsive to the needs of the community and not just to the needs of its budget.

Essentially, one of the reasons given by the member for Chaffey for not having an appeal process was to save money. Under the member for Chaffey's Bill, the review committee, which is to look at a cluster of schools which have been identified for review, does not contain representation from each of the school communities involved. Under the amendments that I put before the House, once a school has been nominated for closure representation by that school will become part of the appeals process. I point out that nothing would have changed the outcome of the closure of the Croydon Primary School last year if the Bill were allowed to pass in its present form.

On behalf of the Opposition I support the second reading of this Bill. However, I urge members to consider the amendments that I have put forward which seek to include in the Bill an appeal process for school communities should a Minister close a school against the advice of the school community, which is concerned with the educational outcomes for their children rather than economic savings or the bottom line of the Minister's budget.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training): I support this Bill. The member for Taylor intimates that the consultation process did not take place in respect of other school closures or amalgamations. No different consultation process was undertaken in respect of the Croydon Primary School, to which the honourable member refers. It is interesting that the Opposition never talks about the Croydon Park Primary School, but that is one school that was closed—

Ms White: I did.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I apologise if the honourable member did mention that school, but that happens very rarely. The consultation process that has been undertaken until now has been no different under the Liberal Government from what it was under the previous Labor Government. The District Superintendent has always been the Chair of the review committee. In only about three of approximately 46 closures under the Labor Party and 39 under the previous Minister some concern has been expressed. This Bill sets in place within the Act a process to ensure that proper consultation is provided for and must be followed—and I agree with that. I have no problems with those provisions being included in the legislation, because what is provided was already being done.

Under this Bill, schools cannot be closed or amalgamated until a review has been conducted. The principal of the schools listed in the cluster for review must be consulted and given notice of the review as must the presiding member of each school council. That has already been done, but this Bill sets that requirement in print and ensures that it must be undertaken. Within 21 days of giving notice, the Minister must appoint a committee to conduct the review—and I have no problem whatsoever with that provision. The structure of the review committee ensures that the local community is represented. If a local community is significantly affected, due notice is provided by the committee, and the department and the parents involved are also given representation.

Proposed new section 14D ('Conduct of review') provides that submissions relating to the present and future use of Government schools in the area must be called for. Under this provision, the committee must invite submissions from the school council, teachers and parents so that we can be sure that the entire school community has been informed. Under paragraph (b)(ii), submissions must be invited from local communities likely to be affected by a decision to close a school or to amalgamate it with another school.

So, under this Bill we are doing everything possible to ensure, first, that we have good local community, parent and school representation on that committee and, secondly, that a consultation process must be followed which is set within the Act. That is all good work; it is no different from what has already occurred, but what does happen is then set down within the legislation. The committee must report by the date specified by the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training and falling not less than three months after the date that the committee was appointed. That keeps the review under a fairly tight time frame, enough to be able to consult the community, consider all the issues and provide me with a report. The difference between this and the current situation is that, if the Minister of the day decides not to agree with the review outcomes but to go ahead and close the school, then he or she must ensure that they give their reasons in Parliament as to why they are going against the recommendations of the committee.

This is a worthy addition to the Act. The member for Chaffey has worked extremely well to come up with the sensible outcome of ensuring that a process is set down whereby any review that is undertaken on a cluster of schools must be followed. Then, should the Minister decide to disagree with that outcome and still close or amalgamate a school, he or she is required to give to the Parliament the reasons for that decision. I support the Bill and commend it to the House.

Question—'That the debate be adjourned'—declared carried.

Mrs MAYWALD: Divide!

While the division was being held:

The SPEAKER: Order! There being only one member for the Ayes, the question is negatived.

Motion negatived.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I support the Bill. Over the past six or eight months much has been made about school closures and much misinformation or twisted information has been put before both this House and the people of this State. In the budget papers presented in this House last week the Minister for Education indicated that probably 30 schools will be closed in the next four year period. The Opposition has made much of that figure. The Minister for Education, when answering a question in the House, suggested that he already had one school community in mind, which is Kybybolite, in my electorate. He has decided that the children of that community would be better served by attending a larger and better resourced school. Due to shifting demographics, this happens all over the State all the time. The Opposition has highlighted that 39 schools were closed in South Australia in the past four years.

It should be on the record once again that, in the seven years prior to that, 71 schools were closed in South Australia. The trend over the past 11 years has been that approximately 10 schools in South Australia have closed per year. Opposition members would have us believe that this is some plot by the Minister and by the Government to do something evil to the education system in this State. In fact, they suggest that the Government is trying to close schools in Labor-held seats: goodness me! The Bill before the House, as stated by the member for Chaffey when she introduced it, is to put into legislation the processes which are already undertaken by the department and which, as the Minister just pointed out, were undertaken by the previous Labor administration when it closed those 70-odd schools in the seven years during which members opposite were in Government.

To introduce an appeal process would merely draw out the processes which already take place and which will be enshrined in legislation by this Bill. My information is that the amendments foreshadowed by the shadow Minister are in use in New South Wales, and since they have been in that State's legislation virtually no schools have been closed in that State, in spite of the fact that in New South Wales we have the same shifting of demographics and the same problems with providing adequate and up-to-date, well-resourced education to communities whose demographics have changed into communities whose children would be much better off if they were to attend a larger, better-resourced school.

The discussion on education and school closures that has been taking place in this State since prior to the last election is more about politics than about education. It is more about misinforming the public than about informing it. My information is that in the case of the Croydon and Croydon Park schools and the school hub, there were five schools in that area and some discussion was held among those school groups indicating that the education system within that district should be rationalised; that a better standard of education could be given to the children in that area by rationalising and amalgamating schools, by closing some schools and pooling resources.

I believe that the five schools involved in that hub formed a community committee to examine the issue, which committee recommended to the Minister that several schools be closed. Another recommendation of the committee was that the Minister should decide which should be closed. Although the community decided that education resources would be better passed on to the children of that area if some schools were amalgamated and several closed, they could not come to a conclusion as to which of those schools would close. They handballed that decision to the Minister, and I believe that everyone in that region was quite happy with that decision—apart from the people at Croydon. They were happy to handball the decision to the Minister, feeling that they had a fairly good chance that their school would not be closed.

The Department of Education, which has been educating children in South Australia for a very long time and which knows a little about providing education services, in its wisdom looked at the facts, studied the question with its head and not with its heart, and came up with a decision to provide the best education that could possibly be provided within that area. Unfortunately, some of the parents—and I only say some—at Croydon could not accept that decision. So the whole thing became political. We have a raft of Bills—

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Members opposite interject and make all sorts of noises, but it certainly did become political, because we were running up to an election—and I congratulate those opposite, because they ran a brilliant political campaign. In concert with the people from Croydon Primary School they possibly had quite an effect on the electorate of South Australia in the lead-up to the last election. I congratulate them for their campaign, but I wish that they would recognise that that is what it was: a political campaign. It had nothing to do with education. It had a hell of a lot to do with politics. I congratulate them on their politics and on their ability to sway public opinion, but I do not congratulate them on their ability to provide decent, good education services to the people of South Australia.

I commend this Bill to the House. I believe that it is in the best interests of education in South Australia and in the best interests of the children of South Australia. It is time to start to think about the children and the people for whom we want a decent education, with the best resources that the Government of South Australia can provide, and to forget about the politics of the situation. Members opposite might remember that the next election is possibly almost four years away and, in the meantime, we might be able to do something about providing the best education service possible to the children of South Australia.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): I want to respond to the member for MacKillop's suggestion that Labor electorates have not suffered disproportionately from school closures. During Question Time this week, the Minister adduced statistics to show that most of the school closures during the previous four years had been in Government electorates—that is, electorates represented by the Liberal Party. The reason that was so, obviously, is that in the previous Parliament the Liberal Party held the vast majority of seats; it had a record majority. So the proper measure would, of course, be a proportional measure.

The State district of Spence did suffer disproportionately with regard to school closures. Under the Labor Government, the Hindmarsh Primary School was closed down in 1989. I do not think there is much doubt that that was justified, as it had only 27 pupils at the time of its closure. In a 12-month period under the previous State Liberal Government, Findon Primary School was closed, followed by Croydon Primary School and Croydon Park Primary School. So that is three primary schools in one State district. There is no doubt that the Minister for Education informally indicated that the reason those schools were chosen is because they were in a Labor electorate. Had they been in a marginal or Liberal

electorate, perhaps only one or two would have been closed. But because it was a Labor electorate the Minister went the whole hog.

The member for MacKillop says that there is no wicked strategy underlying these school closures, that they are closures driven by efficiency and commonsense. Let me tell the House what the strategy underlying the previous Minister's school closures was—and I presume it continues with the current Minister: it was to get State school pupils and their families off budget. The idea is to get them off the State budget and onto the Commonwealth budget by getting them into Catholic or other private schools.

As we well know, the historic settlement in Australia in the 1960s was that State Governments would maintain funding responsibility for State schools and that the Commonwealth would pick up responsibility for funding Catholic and other private schools. Sometimes now Commonwealth funding of Catholic schools can be up to 95 per cent of that school's budget. So, there is a long-term trend here of the State Government trying to close State schools in the hope that a proportion of those pupils will go on to the Catholic system and therefore on to the Commonwealth budget. The reason the Commonwealth picked up responsibility—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: That is a good interjection. Two of my children go to St Joseph's School run by the Josephite nuns at Hindmarsh. It is of course a Catholic school and is therefore funded by the Commonwealth and my oldest son goes to Blackfriars, at Prospect, run by the Dominican Fathers, also a Catholic school and also funded principally by the Commonwealth. That is a decision I take for the same reasons as the previous Minister for Education took the decision to send his children to Catholic schools, that is, I want them brought up as Catholics. That is a decision I take and my decision to do that is most generously subsidised by the Commonwealth. That was not always the case. For many years Catholics had to pay the full cost of their children's education and, because it was very difficult to meet that cost without a taxpayer contribution, the standard of education in Catholic schools was not what it might have been if it had received a Commonwealth subsidy but, owing to the efforts of the Democratic Labor Party and its brokering position in the Senate during the 1960s—

Mr Hill interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: —yes—and the support eventually of Gough Whitlam, whom the Left tried to expel from the Parliamentary Labor Party and voted to do so because of his support for Catholic schools—the Commonwealth came in—

Members interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: There are interjections here but it is a matter of historical record that the Left of the Labor Party expelled Gough Whitlam when he was Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party for his support for State aid to Catholic schools and, fortunately, commonsense prevailed and he was allowed to continue in his role and become Prime Minister of Australia. I just explain that the people of South Australia voted in a referendum in the 1890s to prohibit State aid to church schools and most of the States had a similar policy. That is why Government funding of Catholic schools had to come from the Commonwealth level, because there was an established State policy against State aid to church schools.

There is a strategy in the State Government's closure of State schools to try to move some of the pupils from closed schools on to the Commonwealth budget by getting them into Catholic schools. I can watch that process happening in my own electorate as children I know who went to State schools such as Findon, Croydon and Croydon Park move into Corpus Christi and St Margaret Mary's School at Woodville Gardens and Croydon Park respectively and to St Joseph's at Hindmarsh.

Members interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: They exercise choice, as the Minister says, but it is a guided choice. I just mention that to respond to the member for MacKillop. It seems to me that many of these cluster reviews by the State Government have been highly irregular. They have not fulfilled the requirements of natural justice and, in the case of the one conducted by Mr Craig Cameron at Findon Primary School, it was a deception. The impression was given to the public that there was a cluster review ongoing, that parties were appropriately represented and that natural justice was being followed when, in fact, a decision had been taken by Mr Cameron, together with the then Minister (Hon. R.I. Lucas), to close Findon Primary School and the cluster review was merely to give the appearance that due process was being followed.

Of course, it was an attempt to manufacture parent and public consent for the closure of those primary schools when there was no public and parent consent. With any State school that is faced with closure by the State Government, of course the parents and the pupils will rise in rebellion and try to maintain their school; it is human nature. In my view, these cluster reviews are a complete waste of time. Instead, when the Minister decides to close certain schools on stated grounds, he should go ahead and close them and take political responsibility for it. What disgusts me most about the Hon. R.I. Lucas is his refusal to take political responsibility for what was his political decision, namely the political decision to close Findon, Croydon and Croydon Park Primary Schools—

Mr De Laine interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON:—and, as the member for Price mentioned, the Parks. He just would not accept political responsibility. He tried to palm it off to a cluster review group consisting of hapless parents, teachers and Education Department officials. The other thing about the closures in my electorate is that we went through this whole process in 1991 under the Labor Government, as part of the Western Suburbs Primary School Review. It was a much broader and more thorough review which made certain recommendations which, for political reasons, were not accepted by the Minister of the day (Hon. Greg Crafter). It seems to me that the Government could have simply gone back to the Western Suburbs Primary School Review, accepted its recommendations and achieved its objectives. But, no, it had to try to manufacture this phoney consent through fraudulent cluster reviews. I mention those matters in response to the member for MacKillop.

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I wish to speak only briefly on this matter. In fact, I have been forced to speak only in response to the member for MacKillop's comments. The member for Spence has, in part, covered some of the ground I wish to cover. The closure of any school will always be an emotive issue and, generally speaking, it will always cause a great amount of angst in the community. Given the way it is being handled and has been handled in previous years—and you could say this not only for the previous Liberal Government but also for the previous Labor Government—has not brought great credit upon us. However, for the member for MacKillop

to get up and criticise the role that the parents, the school council and the broad community of the Croydon Primary School played in the closure of the Croydon Primary School is a bit rich.

How does one divorce the closure of a school from a political exercise? How does one totally separate the two? I would suggest that that is not possible. Furthermore, I suggest that a lot of what happened as a result of the discussions and the subsequent closure of the Croydon Primary School was brought about by the incorrect policy of this Government and the lack of this Government's being prepared to sit down and discuss the issues with the Croydon school community. No-one was done any great justice when the Premier and the Minister continually ducked this issue and slunk away from the community, the school council and the broader community; they simply wanted to sit down and discuss these issues with the Premier of the day.

Leadership is all about taking a position and discussing these issues with the local community. This was a very sensitive issue in the local community. In the lead up to the closure of Croydon Primary School, despite what had been said by the Government with regard to reviews that were taking place, it just was not handled appropriately. Not only was it not handled appropriately but the Government did not follow through and do what it said it was going to do. The way the Government handled that situation was quite disgusting and immoral. Is it any wonder that the local school community took the stand it did in order to keep open that school? It is a shame that the local school community had to get involved in the debate and defend that local school community and the rights of its students.

'What a disgrace', the member for MacKillop said, 'What a disgrace that the local school community gets involved in that debate.' In fact, it is quite the opposite. I would expect any local school community, based on good educational grounds, to take a stand on a particular issue. There are times when, for good educational reasons, it may be essential for two schools to amalgamate, or for a particular school to close. There have been times in the past—and there may be times in the future—when a school's numbers are so small that, for good educational reasons to ensure that students receive the best possible education curriculum, it must be closed.

Over the past one or two days, the Minister for Education has given the House a couple of examples where schools located in remote country areas have been closed because student numbers were so small. However, most members would agree that, in the metropolitan area, student numbers are maintained. The Croydon Primary School was not in a situation where it had fallen below the base that most people in the education area would say was a reasonable number to provide a quality education system. So, Croydon Primary School got over that hurdle. It also got over the review process hurdle, but still the Government charged on.

For whatever reasons, the Government charged on with its position in respect of Croydon Primary School. Quite correctly, people within that school community took a strong position and expressed themselves. The member for MacKillop has the audacity to say today that the local school community took a political position. Well, shame on them! How dare that local school community express its democratic right to look after its kids and to try to encourage the Government to change its mind on a dumb decision! The decision was immoral, it went against the review process, and it did not follow procedures as set down by the Government.

What happened when these people used their democratic right to try to express their rights to the Government of the day? The Government slunk away. It ran away and hid. It would not front up. The Premier of the day, the man who is charged with the responsibility of running this State, would not front up and discuss this issue with the people from the local community. What an absolute disgrace! He displays no leadership skills. No Leader would take that position. The Premier remains condemned for his stance. He slunk out of back doors to get onto aeroplanes and hid from the local community. He would not front up to discuss the issue.

I will bet that the former Premier would not have done that. He should be brought back. I reckon that the member for Mawson is thinking about changing his vote for a third time. The former Premier, despite some of his policies, would have fronted up to the kids and the parents and he would have discussed the issue. But not this Premier. He ran away and, even worse, he got the Deputy Premier to skulk around with him with a big umbrella in an attempt to take a bit of evasive action. This Government remains condemned for what it did.

This Bill does not go far enough. I understand that the shadow Minister for Education—she is a very good shadow Minister who will be the Minister before long—has already flagged an amendment to the appeals process. I will support that amendment because it does go far enough. This Bill does not go far enough. We will find ourselves in similar situations with this Bill, and that is why the shadow Minister for Education has flagged an amendment which will overcome the situation that occurred with Croydon Primary School arising in the future.

This is a smelly Government. This is a Government that has already condemned at least 30 schools to hit the fence. Imagine the process that the Government will go through. It will go through the same process that it went through previously. It will follow the same procedures that it followed before, and the member for MacKillop will again stand up and say that the parents have taken a political stand. What a disgrace! How dare the parents do that! How dare the parents go to their elected members, the elected Premier of the day, to try to put forward their point of view! I do not think that anyone on that side of the House, except the Premier, would support that position. They would front up, they would want to discuss it, outline the reasons and go through the procedures, as any good Government would do. That is the way the process needs to be followed.

Closing schools is an emotive enough issue and it is a highly volatile issue. There are times in the community when the Government has to take a position, show leadership and discuss issues with the local community. Because of the shrinkage of numbers, at times the student numbers drop to a level where the Government cannot provide the broad curriculum that is in the best interests of the school community. That did not exist with Croydon. We need to take out of the system what happened in that situation. We need to avoid situations like that, and that is why this Bill does not go far enough.

What will happen is that we will go down the same track. I cannot comment on the new Minister, and perhaps he will not, but the former Minister and the Premier ran away and hid when they needed to front up and show some leadership. We as a Parliament need to show some leadership. We need to send a loud and clear message to the people of South Australia that we are going to put in place a proper process so, if schools are to close, there will be a proper debate and we will go through the correct procedure.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government): This Parliament should deal not only in fact but also in truth, and I have come down from my office this morning because of some of the lies that I have heard.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to rephrase that. That is an unparliamentary remark.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: If it is unparliamentary, I will say 'untruths'. People can look up the dictionary. In parliamentary terms they may be untruths but the people of South Australia can make up their mind about what they are. First, the member for Wright talked about the former Minister running away. It is on public record the number of times—

Mr Atkinson: Lee.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Sorry, the member for Lee, and I thank the member for Spence for getting the record exactly right as to which fool said what. The facts are that the last Minister had a consultation process and fronted up to that consultation process and to the parents not once but on a number of occasions.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: No, he went down to those communities and spoke in those communities to those communities. That is what he did, as a matter of fact and of public record.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Kaurna asks whether he listened to them. I ask the member for Kaurna to listen to his own colleagues. On the one hand, the member for Lee is saying that sometimes we need good, strong leadership in this State, that sometimes we need a Government that will lead and will put in train what is needed for the good of South Australia. On the other hand, the Opposition seems to be saying that good, strong leadership extends to taking absolutely as gospel whatever a local community tells that Government. In other words, the Government is less important and the good of the people of South Australia is less important than is the wish of a local community.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Ross Smith asks, quite rightly, what were my thoughts on Goodwood Orphanage. That is something on which the member for Lee and every member of this House and I will not disagree. It is our job to get into the consultation process, argue fiercely and advocate for what we see as the best interests of our electorate. That is without doubt—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I will come to Port Adelaide. That is without doubt. It is also without doubt that the Government has a right to make decisions not in what a local community sees solely as its interests but in the wider interests of the people of South Australia. The voting interests of the Government are not the prime concern. The interest of the Government is good governance in South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Kaurna might think that the only thing that matters is retaining his seat. The Government believes that what matters is good governance.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence will come to order.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I would like to address the preposterous suggestion of the member for Spence that this Government by some conspiracy was trying to drive people out of the public system and into the private system. That is arrant nonsense and the member for Spence knows it. It is a palpable stupidity, and the member for Spence knows it. I give him credit for having a modicum of intelligence. He demonstrated today that he is a total fool. The member for Lee—

Mr ATKINSON: On a point of order, Sir, the member for Unley has referred to me as a total fool—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ATKINSON: I ask that he withdraw it.

The SPEAKER: If the honourable member feels offended by that, and whilst the Chair believes it is not totally unparliamentary, it does not add to the tenor of the debate. Perhaps the honourable Minister may wish to rephrase that.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Neither does the member for Spence, Sir. As I was saying, the consultation process was followed through. I know that the member for Lee believes that you cannot trust the Government, and I do not blame him. I can actually remember in my first term in this House being thrown out of this House for suggesting a deal was done between the then member for Hart and the Premier of South Australia.

Mr Foley: Me?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The then member for Hart. The member for Hart thinks he has been here for a long time, but there were people before him. I am talking about the Hon. Mr Peterson, the then Speaker of the House. I was actually rightfully thrown out on a point of parliamentary procedure: if I had wanted to accuse the Speaker of doing a deal with the then Premier, I should have done it by way of a substantive motion in the House. The Hon. Mr Peterson never denied that he told the Premier that, if a school closed in his electorate, the Government of South Australia would fall. So the member for Lee wants to remember about sleazy little deals when he was part—

Mr FOLEY: On a point of order, Sir, the member for Unley has now made a gross reflection on the former Speaker of this Parliament, Mr Norm Peterson, the then member for Semaphore. He has accused Mr Peterson of participating in a sleazy deal. I think the character and reputation of Speakers of this Parliament need protection. I ask that the member withdraw and apologise.

The SPEAKER: From the Chair's reading of the various manuals, you cannot reflect upon a Speaker if he is still a member of the Chamber—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If a reflection on a Speaker in his role as Speaker is brought up in the Chamber, it is not in the tenor of the way we would conduct the Parliament of South Australia. I ask the Minister to withdraw on that basis.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: With your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I did not reflect on the Hon. Mr Peterson in his role as Speaker of the House. Nor did I reflect on the Hon. Mr Peterson in terms of the deal. What I think of the deal is a reflection on the Government of South Australia at the time—

Mr FOLEY: On a point of order, Sir, the member for Unley is defying your request. He cannot give explanations. He can simply follow your request and withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair has made the request of the honourable Minister that, in this Parliament, he not reflect on former Speakers in any way. I do not think it is desirable that former Speakers and their actions as Speaker be reflected on. The honourable Minister did refer to him as

the Speaker. It is not desirable that it be brought into the Parliament of South Australia.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I, of course, will abide by your ruling, Sir. Nevertheless—

Mr FOLEY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the member for Unley on the third occasion has defied your request that he withdraw. I ask for the third time that he be made to withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Would the honourable Minister please withdraw the reference to the Speaker and proceed with his speech.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I thought I made clear that I would but, in deference to the member for Hart, I withdraw any comments in regard to Mr Peterson.

Debate adjourned.

CHILD CARE

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I move:

That this House—

(a) condemns the Federal Government for cutting nearly $1 billion from child care after three budgets;

(b) notes that this has forced an increase in fees for child care, closure of 14 South Australian child care centres, the loss of an estimated 200 child care workers and has threatened the viability of many other child care services;

(c) expresses concern that as a result of the cuts child care is no longer affordable for many families, that working parents have been disadvantaged and in some cases have had to forgo employment and study;

(d) calls on the Federal Government to reinstate adequate funding to child care in South Australia.

Members would notice that I moved my motion in an amended form. My motion previously had sat on the Notice Paper for quite some months, and during that time we had a Federal budget, which has revealed a further underspend in the promised spending budgeted for child care, bringing the amount of money cut out of child care to nearly $1 billion.

In those several months, additional child-care centres have had to shut their doors, and there have been quite a number of other job losses in that time. I understand that an estimated 200 child-care workers now have been displaced because of the Federal Government's changes to child care.

To give members an indication of the impost on families and the impact that these cuts to child care have been having on families, I will go through some of the changes that the Federal Liberal Government has instituted. In 1996 it instituted a two year freeze on child-care assistance payments. In 1997 it put a cap on the child-care assistance scheme to 50 hours per week; and it lowered the cut-off point for child-care assistance for families with two or more children so that families earning over $91 416 per year were then ineligible.

In that same year the Federal Liberal Government abolished the additional income levels allowed for each dependent child; reduced the child-care cash rebate for families earning more than $70 000 a year from 30 per cent to 20 per cent of the cost of care; and it abolished the operational subsidy to community owned day care centres. In 1998 it abolished the operational subsidy for out of school hours care, resulting in free increases across the board, and restricted access to child-care assistance for non-work related care. In all, the first two budgets cut out of child care a total of $820 million.

In the 1998-99 budget the forward estimate for child-care assistance was $108.7 million, but this year's estimate is $703.6 million—a total cut for three years (1998-99 to 2000-01) of $293 million. So, they are some of the cuts that we have seen to child care thus far. In addition, there was an underspend in this year's budget. The impact on child care in this State has been harsh, and that has been acknowledged by this State Government. In fact, at the moment the Federal Minister, Warwick Smith, and the Premier, John Olsen, are arguing about what actually is the State's contribution to child care.

Members would have seen in today's *Advertiser* a report of that disagreement between the Federal and State Liberal Governments over the amount of money that the State is actually putting into child care. In fact, Warwick Smith is reported as saying that Mr Olsen is trying to mislead families into thinking that his announcement represents extra money to help child-care services in South Australia. Obviously, this is something that needs to be clarified.

The overriding principle is that, finally, it is being acknowledged by the State Government that the Federal Government's cuts to child care have been enormous. Over the last three budgets these cuts have amounted to almost $1 billion and have resulted in 14 child-care centres in this State closing, over 200 workers in the industry being displaced and in people having to drop out of child care because they cannot afford it. There must be some question over the effect and impact that these cuts will have on the quality of child-care centres.

I might add that I have had lots of telephone calls today about the Premier's announcement that State Government child-care funds will be redirected into the community sector. I have also had quite a few telephone calls from those in private sector child-care centres who are not very happy with that announcement. The cuts have been cruel. In 1997, on a national basis, the budget cuts over four years meant that $77 million was cut from child-care assistance capping; $79.4 million was cut from grants to new centres; $108.8 million was cut from operational subsidies; and $34.7 million was cut from child-care rebates—and that is in addition to the child-care assistance capping, income testing and reductions of the previous financial year.

There has been a lot of focus on child care. This is not the first time in recent months I have spoken on the subject in this House. In South Australia in particular, where the impacts have been felt harshly, a number of unions have conducted surveys. The Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union conducted a quite extensive survey. The Working Women's Centre, under a coalition of unions, child-care workers and a number of others, has also conducted similar surveys—and they all point to the same thing. Those surveys indicate that the level of affordability of child care in this State has plummeted dramatically. People are opting out and seeking informal, backyard child care because they cannot afford formal child care. Those centres which have remained open are under pressure and the number of vacancies is increasing. Over a period of six months, more than 500 South Australian families withdrew their children from child care. That figure is some months old, so the current figure is probably higher.

What is required of the Federal Liberal Government is acknowledgment of the fact that people are hurting and that these cuts are impacting unfairly on many women who have had to drop out of the work force because they cannot afford child care fees which in South Australia are creeping up towards $200, in some instances, for a single child in care. That is an enormous impost if you have several children for whom you have to fork out those sorts of fees. It comes down

to a question of affordability and also a question of equity, because if you cannot afford to put your child into child care you must make some tough decisions with your budget. People are voting with their feet. They are giving up work and study to care for children at home, because they cannot afford to place them into child care. These cuts are having not only an economic impact on families; they are having a strident impact on the activities of those families and a marked social impact on the community of South Australia.

I move this motion today to highlight the extent of the pain that is being felt across the State by South Australian families. I note that on Tuesday the Premier made a statement acknowledging the effect that these continual cuts by the Federal Liberal Government over a period of three years have had on South Australian families, but that is the first time I have heard him do that. My concerns are not only for families that can no longer afford child care but also for the children, because child care centres will be pressured into offering a poorer quality service as a result of having to cut corners to meet their costs.

I am concerned about that. We have all heard horror stories about what happens when children are not given the standard of child care that they need. Child care centres are being pressured to cut their costs and to reduce the number of staff and perhaps the services that they offer. Of course, in those sorts of situations safety concerns come to the fore. Quality child care in South Australia is of paramount importance, and the way in which to address it is for the Federal Liberal Government and the State Liberal Government to return to child care in South Australia some of that funding that has been withdrawn.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH secured the adjournment of the debate.

NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That this House calls upon the Government to appoint industry representatives to all reviews of statutory marketing authorities, or other reviews where such representation is appropriate, that are conducted by the Government under the national competition policy.

This motion was initially triggered by the recent consideration of the Barley Marketing Act. Under the national competition policy the barley legislation was reviewed and an industry review was conducted. This review was conducted by the Centre for International Economics. I am sure that the members of that review were skilled economists, that they assembled all the information about the barley industry and barley marketing that they could gather and that they consulted with the industry. However, they reached a decision that the single desk marketing of barley should be dismantled, and that was followed through by legislation in South Australia and Victoria. The member for Schubert, who as he says is a barley grower himself, said that it was widely deemed by the industry to be an inaccurate report.

I think that many members on both sides share some concern about the implementation of national competition policy. It is unelected bureaucrats dictating policy that must then be followed by Government under the national competition policy agreements. It is time that Governments in all the States started to hit back and take some positive steps to address the concerns that have been raised about national competition policy. Indeed, in New South Wales there does seem to have been some attempt to fight back. For example, a review of the dairy industry in New South Wales had equal representation of public servants and industry representation, so that the dairy industry was well represented right through from the producers to the marketing people. I understand that they had similar arrangements for the review of the rice industry.

That is what I am calling on the current South Australian Government to implement. In fact, the current South Australian Government made very good use of an industry representative who was on the vehicle tariffs inquiry. The former head of Mitsubishi produced a minority report following that industry inquiry, and he pointed out a number of problems with the parameters with which that review was working. He was able to give an industry point of view and no doubt also inform other members of the committee about aspects of the industry. That minority report and the comments that he made were able to be used by the South Australian Government and Opposition in opposing the recommendation of that review. As a result, we have a much slower environment for the decrease in vehicle tariffs.

As the Premier has said many times, that is very important for our automotive industry in South Australia. Certainly, our car industry is very important, and as someone who has GMH very close to my electorate I recognise that, but the barley and agricultural industries are also very important to this State. They are important indeed; they are still the backbone of our economy and very important to the continued well-being of our State. It is therefore extremely important that the State Government support this industry and not go quietly with whatever reviews are conducted by economists and accountants. It is vital that industry representatives participate in any reviews undertaken of our statutory marketing authorities or agricultural industries, because we need the industry's point of view and input and an informed industry representative who will then be able to apprise his own industry and the public of any results of the review and certainly of any change to legislation or marketing arrangement.

I hope the Government will support my motion. I look forward to the support of some Government rural members. I do not see this as a partisan political issue. Members on both sides of this House recognise the importance of primary industries to South Australia and the importance of ensuring that, in a fiercely competitive international market, we do not have our supports ripped from under us, and that in this relatively small country with its small domestic markets we have the ability to compete in international markets.

There is no doubt that many other countries in the world still artificially protect and support their agricultural industries to the detriment of our agricultural industries. Certainly, Federal Governments have been lobbying about having a level playing field on this issue but it has not happened. I believe that we need to think very carefully before we remove what few supports our farmers have in South Australia in competing on the international market. One of the ways of doing that is through the arrangement of marketing. Whereas I certainly agree that we do not want to have anti-competitive behaviour—which, after all, affects consumers and some growers—we need informed industry representation when we are considering whether or not this behaviour is anti-competitive. I look forward to the time when the South Australian Government (as with the New South Wales Government) ensures that there is equal industry representation on any of these reviews.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH secured the adjournment of the debate.

MOUNT LOFTY CATCHMENT

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I move:

That this House calls on the Government to give urgent consideration to the need for incentives to be provided which will encourage the retention of land for primary production in the Mount Lofty catchment recognising the importance and the fragility of the catchment in providing an essential source of water for metropolitan Adelaide and in particular calls on the Government to introduce as policy the waiving of costs associated with the amalgamation of titles within the catchment as one such important incentive.

I feel very strongly about this issue and I do so as a fourth generation person who has lived in the Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges. The motion makes specific reference to the retention of land for primary production. I also include native vegetation in the need for the retention of open space. This motion is all about the protection of the Mount Lofty catchment and, in turn, the protection of the water supply for the metropolitan area. I do not think I need spend any time informing the House of the importance of the Hills catchment and the support that it provides, along with the Murray River, in terms of the water supply for the metropolitan area and other parts of the State.

It is also about the need to provide incentives to landowners to achieve these goals. I want to express my support for many of the initiatives that have been introduced under the Mount Lofty Ranges Catchment Program, which is an excellent program that was established in 1993 to implement the natural resource management recommendations of the regional strategy plan. The aims of the strategy plan are: to protect and enhance the natural and cultural characteristics of the region; to protect and conserve the water resources of the region to ensure their sustainable development; and to protect and enhance sustainable, commercial, primary production land uses and the rural character of the region.

The Mount Lofty Ranges Catchment Program 1993-1997 was funded through the national Landcare program as a national model for implementation of natural resource management on a regional scale. I am pleased to say that the program is now recognised nationally as a leader in integrated natural resource management. The program has taken an innovative approach to resolving significant environmental issues with a strong emphasis on encouraging community ownership of problems and a commitment to collaborative action from all levels of the Government and the community, and it is a program that I support strongly. Members may be aware that there is a move to extend the boundaries of the area coming under the responsibility associated with the Mount Lofty catchment, to include the Willunga and Barossa areas. I support that move and will take the opportunity on another occasion to spend more time speaking about it.

This motion is all about total catchment management and, if we do not get it right, future generations will suffer the consequences. I am one of a growing number of people who are becoming more and more concerned about the state of the water stored in our reservoirs in the Adelaide Hills. We have already seen the problems that have come out of Millbrook, and I believe that there are significant problems associated with Mount Bold. I am concerned about that and think that action needs to be taken to rectify those problems. Again, this is an area in which I have had a very long interest. There have been times when I have referred in this House to the matter of water catchment and the quality of the water, recognising the importance of the catchment. I also must recognise the responsible attitude adopted by many of the landowners themselves, who are significantly improving land management practices and the management of land, in particular that adjacent to our waterways.

If we look at some of the improvements that have resulted from the setting up of the Torrens catchment management program, and the work that is now being carried out adjacent to the Onkaparinga and other catchments, some fantastic things are happening. I am delighted with the commitment being shown by many landowners who, with some encouragement, have taken it upon themselves to improve their own management practices. Those people are to be commended. All landowners in the Mount Lofty catchment need all the help and incentives they can get, and that is what this motion is about.

Regarding the other incentives that need to be introduced, I will make special reference to those on future occasions in this place. One of those is an initiative relating to the transfer of titles and, if time permits, I will say more about that later this morning. We must recognise that the best way to protect our waterways and our biodiversity is to retain as much open space as we can in the Hills and through the Mount Lofty catchment area. Over the years, understandably, land owners have, for various reasons, divided up their holdings. Many have done so because they have needed to do that as far as superannuation is concerned, and many have done so because properties have become non-viable, particularly in regard to market gardening and fruit growing. I am pleased that there is now such an extension in the planting of vines through the Hills, which I believe is one of the best things that we have seen in the Hills, and it will do a great deal to assist with the consolidation of titles, rather than the creating of more titles, for the reasons that I have already suggested.

I suggest to the Minister responsible and to the Government generally that the costs involved in this initiative and the waiving of costs associated with the amalgamation of titles will not be significant: it would not be a great burden on the Government. It is not often that land owners, in a voluntary capacity, move to amalgamate titles but my aim is to encourage more to do so and, if and when they do that, to ensure that they are not financially disadvantaged, because in doing so it will improve the environment and the catchment area overall—and that is vitally important.

I refer to the need to retain vegetation as well as just retaining open space for primary production. I believe most people would realise that the retention of native vegetation in the Hills is a significant issue: it has been for some time, and will continue to be. There are a number of examples to which I could refer, one of which relates to a piece of land known as Camp Gooden, which is adjacent to the Mylor township. It is a seven hectare area of bushland on six particular titles, owned by the Anglican Church. It is no longer needed by the church, and the church is keen to sell. A lot of concern has been created in the local community, and we are currently working with local government to determine ways in which this situation can be sorted out so that the church gains a suitable return, but the vegetation is retained in its natural form.

I am also very pleased with the work that the Department of Primary Industries and Natural Resources has been doing in determining the more important areas of bushland. It is vitally important that that should happen; it is vitally important that bushland in these areas be categorised. It is not possible for every piece of bush to be retained—and I do not

believe that anyone would want that—but it is vitally important that the more significant areas of native bushland be retained.

The Hon. R.B. Such: There's not much left.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: As the member for Fisher says, there is not a lot of vegetation left throughout the Hills and it is important that that should happen. I could spend much time talking about this piece of land which is a vital valley in the very limited high rainfall metropolitan catchment in an area whose management is crucial to the future water supply of Adelaide. It is part of the last few per cent of remnant natural stable forest in that high rainfall area in what is a very dry State. It is important that significant vegetation be retained to assist in the goal that comes with this motion as well. I reiterate on the need for an appropriate survey to be carried out of high quality vegetation throughout the Hills so that that vegetation in turn can be retained.

I hope the House will support my motion and, more importantly, that my colleagues in Government will recognise the importance of this initiative and will support it and introduce it as policy. As I said earlier, it is not going to be of great cost to the Government but it is sending an important signal to landowners in the Mount Lofty Ranges—

Mr Brokenshire: And the Fleurieu Peninsula.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: If the member had been listening, I suggested there is a strong move to include sections of the Fleurieu Peninsula in the Mount Lofty Ranges management area. That would include many areas of the Fleurieu Peninsula and areas that the member represents. In conclusion, I want to say that I am very supportive of an initiative to provide for the transfer of titles and I will be speaking in more detail on that subject on another occasion. I can assure the House that I will be doing everything possible to introduce such an initiative. I know that the Government has already said it has tried it and it has failed. The reason it failed is that it made it too difficult and I believe strongly that a program can be introduced which is simple but which will achieve much in regards to what I have already suggested in the motion. I hope the House will support the motion.

Mr HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

ABC DIGITAL TRANSMISSION

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I move:

That this House calls on the Federal Government to provide the necessary resources to enable the ABC to adequately prepare for and introduce digital transmission of services to both city and country areas.

This motion relates to the ABC and the necessity for the Federal Government to provide the necessary resources so that the ABC can move quickly to digital technology. As members would realise, the current arrangements are based on an analogue system that has been used since the 1930s, and even slightly before then, and it is time to move to a digital-based system, which is the sort of technology we have in mobile phones, computers and so on. What is necessary from the Federal Government, and this motion is particularly aimed at encouraging the Federal Government, is to provide the resources necessary for the conversion process. At a minimum cost we are looking at about $180 million and in the most recent budget the Federal Government provided only about $30 million, which is totally inadequate.

I am the first to acknowledge that the ABC is not perfect and there would be something amiss if a politician was totally happy with any media organisation, but the ABC is fundamental to our democratic system, I believe, in conjunction with privately owned media. They bounce off each other—and that is not meant as a pun—and they draw from each other. Our democracy and our cultural system is better as a result of having a dual system, and that means having a strong public telecaster, as well as privately-owned media. I subscribe to both Mr Murdoch's and the Fairfax organisations, and I also support the ABC.

Often we hear from some Federal members accusations that the ABC is biased. We will always get elements of bias because, to some extent, individuals will always reflect their own values. Members should take on board the fact that the incoming Director of the Liberal Party is a former journalist with the ABC—Mr Jim Bonner. He is a nice bloke and a competent journalist, as well. One of the Coalition candidates in the Queensland election is a former prominent member of the ABC. People should be wary of the generalisation that the ABC is biased one way or another in terms of politics. As I said, it would be a sad commentary if politicians were happy with any media outlet, because it would suggest that they are not doing their job. That is a side issue in respect of the digital technology move which needs to happen and which needs to happen very quickly.

It will ensure that there is a better ABC service not only in rural areas but also in the metropolitan area, and it will be able to provide a greater range of services, programs and more local programs. Members might have seen the program *Race Around the World* on ABC Television. Such programs are made with small digital cameras, and the quality of that sort of inexpensive production can be replicated in local areas. So, members living in the South-East or elsewhere, with a digitised network available, would be able to get the benefit of more local programming. Journalists would have greater versatility in the programs they generate. That could mean that a journalist who is traditionally involved in radio could also produce television programs using a small digital camera.

People will be able to have dual pictures on their screens. All sorts of innovative developments will be possible as a result of the introduction of the digital network. However, at the end of the day, it comes back to adequate resourcing. Members would be aware that recently the Federal Government made provision for the private networks to move into the digital area. As the Government is responsible for the ABC, it is appropriate that it provide adequate funding so that the ABC can be properly equipped to carry out its functions. There are moves afoot within the ABC to sell real estate, including its Gore Hill studios. Whilst I do not object to making any organisation more efficient and effective, there is a limit to what can be sold off within the ABC in order to self-fund the digitisation project.

This motion is self-explanatory. I ask members to support it, because at the end of the day we will all benefit if we have a healthy, lively democracy in which there are alternative media outlets where people can express a range of views, where we have healthy public and private networks, where a range of views and interpretations are expressed, and where we have a media that is not in the hands of one group or one organisation. I commend the motion to the House and ask members to support it for the reasons I have outlined.

Mr BROKENSHIRE secured the adjournment of the debate.

OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Adjourned debate on motion of Ms Stevens:

That this House condemns the Federal Government for its harsh and unconscionable treatment of older Australians through:

(a) changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme that will make vital medicines more expensive;
(b) changes to aged care arrangements resulting in a $12 fee per day for accommodation and increased daily fees for nursing home residents and an increase of $5.50 per week in fees for hostel residents;
(c) scrapping the Commonwealth dental scheme;
(d) introduction of a user pays component for recipients of services from the home and community care program.

(Continued from 26 March. Page 816.)

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): In supporting this motion I point out to the House that this is an issue of particular concern to my electorate. The electorate of Mitchell has a high proportion of elderly citizens, and the suburb of Warradale is known to comprise one of the highest proportions of older people in the State. The member for Elizabeth is right when she describes the Federal Liberal Government's actions as 'harsh and unconscionable' in its treatment of older Australians, because these changes have been implemented without any regard to the people affected by them. Howard and Costello had only one thing in mind: how to slash health care expenditure.

What can possibly justify the Federal Liberal Government's increasing the burdens already carried by the old and the sick? At a time when older Australians in general should be appreciated and recognised for the lifetime of contribution that they have made to the community, instead they are now being told to pay up for good health care or suffer the consequences, and the consequences can be quite severe. Many older people in my electorate tell me that they cannot understand why they have been targeted to pay more and wait longer. 'Why doesn't the Government care about older people?' they ask.

After many years of serving the community and paying their taxes I believe that older Australians have a right to receive affordable and accessible health care, especially for those who are on the pension or in the final months of life. Most people go into a nursing home after a medical crisis, often directly from a hospital. Surely at such a time the last thing elderly people and their families need to be worried about is how to pay an entry fee or what happens if they cannot afford to pay. It is very sad that elderly people are being asked to cough up just at a time when they need the blessing and support of the community at large.

A recent item on the *7.30 Report* of 31 March 1998 demonstrated the point graphically. An older gentleman was seeking to have his dentures replaced and had to wait more than two years. Even though he could not eat or speak properly, he was still left waiting for treatment. I note that the average waiting time in New South Wales is up to 58 months. This is obviously what South Australia has to look forward to, as our average waiting time is now 22 months and growing by 25 000 people per year. But these are not isolated statistics dragged out for sensationalism.

I have received dozens of letters from people in my electorate affected by the slashing of the Commonwealth dental scheme. One constituent complained that she had been in pain since June 1997 as a result of worn dentures. She said:

> I went back to Bells Road Clinic and Dr Stevens adjusted my old dentures and said I was on the waiting list. I still have a lump on my lower jaw and put up with it as I'm just sick of the running around as I'm 75 years old.

Another constituent came to my office to report that she was greatly concerned that she would shortly be unable to chew food as a result of worn dentures. However, she was told at the Adelaide Dental Hospital that she would have to wait for another six to 12 months for replacement dentures. This is despite having already waited two years to receive replacement dentures. According to the South Australian Dental Service she would still have to wait six to eight weeks, even if she had no dentures at all. Yet another constituent wrote to me in despair and said:

> My teeth will just have to rot.

Still another constituent is in 'constant pain every day and takes regular high doses of aspirin' while he waits three years to be treated. It is interesting to see the current tide turning against the Prime Minister on the issue of health care. It seems that every State Leader or Health Minister is now willing to campaign against the Federal Liberal Government on this important issue. When our own Minister for Human Services is critical of his Federal colleagues, it says something about the uncaring nature of the Federal Government.

Surely it is time for all Governments to recognise that dental health is an integral part of general health and, as such, is an issue of importance to the nation generally, and older people in particular. The Commonwealth should re-enter the public health dentistry area in partnership with the South Australian Government to develop and implement a national oral health policy which includes the special needs of the elderly.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH secured the adjournment of the debate.

WASTE RECYCLING FACILITY

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Wright:

That this House calls on the Government to oppose the application by a private company to establish a waste transfer and recycling facility on the corner of Old Port Road and Tapleys Hill Road, Royal Park, because:

(a) the development would be inappropriately located in close proximity to a large number of homes;
(b) the proposed development would have a huge negative and undesirable impact on the quality of life of the residents who live in this area;
(c) the development would cause a drastic reduction to the value of people's homes; and
(d) an industry of this type would cause significant problems for other nearby commercial operations.

(Continued from 26 March. Page 821.)

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I should like to continue my remarks on this motion. I have brought this matter before the House because it has been an ongoing issue for people in the western suburbs. Unfortunately, it dates back to about 1992 when a previous, different application by the same company for a waste transfer and recycling facility on the corner of Old Port Road and Tapleys Hill Road came before the Development Assessment Commission. My concerns with respect to this particular application are many. In particular, I am extremely concerned that a facility of this nature would be located in an area where there is dense housing.

The original application was refused by the Development Assessment Commission. That decision was appealed by the applicant. The matter went to the Environment, Resources and Development Court, where it was defeated. The decision was appealed by the applicant and the matter was taken to the Supreme Court, where it was defeated again. This has been a lengthy and messy process. Unfortunately, the people who live at Royal Park, Hendon, Albert Park and Queenstown, which is in electorate of the member for Price, would be significantly affected by a proposal of this nature.

About 50 000 tonnes of waste would go through this facility per annum, which is approximately 1 000 tonnes per week. As members can imagine, a project of such magnitude would have major significance in an area with dense housing and schools, particularly the Alberton Primary School, which is in the electorate of the member for Price. A retirement home which is situated on Port Road has expressed its grave concerns, and a primary school in my electorate, namely, Hendon Primary School, which is a little further away, has also expressed grave concerns about a project of this nature. There are many reasons why a project of this type should not go ahead in a dense housing area.

My major concern is that this is an ongoing saga. The people in these suburbs have already gone through a process which dragged on for a considerable time and now, although it is a slightly different project, another application by the same applicant for a very similar project on the same site has been lodged, so the people are being dragged through this very messy situation again. When this application was knocked on the head by the agencies and then by the courts, the local council should have stepped in and closed off the possibility of a proposal of this type at this site. In addition, this Parliament could have taken some action with regard to this matter.

I have written to the Minister asking her to use her ministerial powers to declare this a major project, and that would give her the potential to knock this project on the head. This is an ongoing saga. It is something that the people of the western suburbs, in particular the people of Royal Park, Hendon and Albert Park, have had to endure on a second occasion. In addition to affecting those local residents, which is my major concern, it will also affect local business.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH secured the adjournment of the debate.

CITIZENSHIP FEE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Scalzi:

That this House urge the Federal Government to waive the citizenship fee, as an act of goodwill, for people who have resided in Australia for twenty or more years in order that they may fully participate as Australians in the Centenary of Federation celebration in 2001.

(Continued from 19 March. Page 707.)

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I move:

Leave out all words after the word 'fee' and insert in lieu thereof the words 'in order that all eligible residents may fully participate as Australian citizens'.

I congratulate the member for Hartley for bringing this matter to the attention of the House, but I suggest that he has not gone far enough. I moved the amendment because I would like to see the fee disappear altogether. I think that would be a more appropriate signal to send to all our friends who choose to take citizenship. It would be a much more appropriate action to take.

I congratulate the member for Hartley for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. Items of this nature need to be brought to the attention of the House. However, I think we can strengthen it somewhat, thus I have moved my amendment. I know that some people will ask where the money will come from. That can always be asked about any particular issue. We have a Prime Minister who is currently running around with slush funds, such as his Federation Fund, dishing out money to his Party's local members of Parliament to try to get them re-elected at the next Federal election. So surely we can suggest to all our ethnic friends who choose to come to this country and make this country their home that they take the next step, to take out Australian citizenship, and fully participate in Australia as a democracy. We would be sending a very positive signal to the broad community that we will waive the citizenship charge.

I know it has ebbed and flowed a little over the past 20 or 30 years, and I know that both major political Parties have been a part of that. I acknowledge that it was a Labor Federal Government that reintroduced these fees, and at the time I was critical of that decision—and I still am critical of it. When the Party to which you belong makes an incorrect decision, there are times when you have to stand up and be counted and actually acknowledge that your Party has made a mistake. I well remember back in 1986 arguing within the forums of the Labor Party that this was a bad decision, that this would cause problems within the ethnic community and that it would lead to some people who in good faith wanted to go ahead and take out citizenship not doing so because they could not afford it. Unfortunately, that has been a trend.

I think the fee started at about $35, and people said, 'They will be able to afford $35', but, as is often the case, fees rise each year, and it is now approximately $120. From August 1986 when it was reintroduced at $35 it has risen to $120, which in some cases is a very serious impost upon people in the community. If we are serious about encouraging people to take out citizenship, we can send a very positive signal to the community. What better time to do it than when we have racist people such as Pauline Hanson running around Australia with the agenda she has.

I commend very strongly the members for Elder and Colton for their outstanding contributions in the House yesterday. Is it not significant and wonderful to see contributions of that type from opposite sides of the House on the same issue and their taking the same position? I commend both members for that.

Debate adjourned.

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

SAGRIC INTERNATIONAL

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As part of a broad program of asset ownership reviews, the Government intends to undertake a detailed scoping study of Sagric International Pty Ltd. The purpose of the study is to identify and measure

those financial and commercial risks which accrue to the Government as a consequence of its ownership of Sagric and to assess those risks against the benefits provided. The activities in which Sagric is primarily involved are subject to increasing competition, and to maintain or even to improve its position Sagric must balance significant business risks.

Sagric requires access to additional investment funds to expand its business to meet the competition, and in these circumstances it is appropriate for the Government to take stock of the position and to view those risks against the demands on the financial resources of Sagric. The Government obviously must ensure that further risks are within acceptable limits. Sagric has been a valuable contributor to the South Australian economy. It has raised the profile of the State in international quarters and opened the doors to opportunities which may otherwise have gone unnoticed.

An important aspect of the scoping study will be the identification of arrangements which can build on and improve the achievements to date and which can establish a sound basis for expansion of the services of the kind undertaken by Sagric. It would be irresponsible of the Government not to review the position. The Government must take the decision to assess the options in the context of the financial risks involved and the possible impact on future budgets. The scoping study is the first step towards establishing arrangements which will maximise the value of Sagric to South Australia.

PAPER TABLED

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the Minister for Environment and Heritage (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—

Water Management Board—River Murray Catchment—Initial Water Management Catchment Plan.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I rise on a matter privilege. Having considered the Premier's answers to questions in this House concerning his knowledge and involvement prior to the last election of a Cabinet subcommittee's and the Government's considerations of proposals to privatise parts of ETSA, I now believe that, following information that has come to light this morning, the Premier may have misled the House.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has the call.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Sir, I think this a serious matter that deserves serious consideration. Consequently, I ask that the Speaker consider whether the Premier misled this House on 29 May 1996, 18 February 1998 and 26 February 1998 concerning his own and the Government's involvement, through the Cabinet subcommittee, in proposals to privatise parts of ETSA before the last State election. Through release under Freedom of Information some weeks ago, the Opposition obtained a document dated 16 February 1996 from the ETSA Corporation Managing Director to the ETSA Board Chairman headed 'Managing Director's Report'. The relevant section of that report reads as follows:

2. Outsourcing transmission

In parallel with the preparation for the IC submission a team under the guidance of ESRU Director Graeme Longbottom, prepared a submission to the Cabinet subcommittee which developed the concept outlined by Minister Olsen in December involving outsourcing ETSA transmission and selling off 50 per cent of the transmission assets as part of the process. EDA and Terry Kallis worked with Mr Longbottom in developing this concept and submitting a paper to the Cabinet subcommittee which met early in February. I understand the paper was received favourably but the matter is on for consideration with the IC recommendations.

Terry Kallis will continue to be ETSA's liaison person in developing this concept. Naturally the matter is confidential at this point.

In Parliament on 29 May 1996, during a debate on the Electricity Corporations (Generation Corporation) Amendment Bill, the Opposition made reference to a leaked document dated 25 January 1996 which revealed Government plans to outsource ETSA transmission and sell off 50 per cent of its assets. The document had been worked on by ETSA with significant Crown Law input. The then Infrastructure Minister, now Premier, during that debate stated:

We said it from the start, because it is not the Government's intention to privatise ETSA; full stop and no qualifications in relation to that statement. The Government has no such intention.

During the same debate on 29 May 1996, the Infrastructure Minister also said:

. . . the Leader of the Opposition said: 'A transmission docket was worked on and developed in my office.' It was not. If I do not correct that, subsequent to tonight's debate, the Leader of the Opposition will go somewhere and say, 'I made this claim in the House and it was never denied, so it must be fact', when it is not. The whole contribution ought to be disseminated as not having any factual basis, substance or meaning.

On 18 February 1998, I asked the Premier:

Did the Premier, as Minister for Infrastructure in the Brown Government, raise, discuss and seek support with ministerial colleagues for a proposal to sell all or part of ETSA?

He replied:

The simple fact is that the Government did not consider the sale of ETSA or any part of it.

On 26 February 1998, I asked the Premier:

Was it the present Premier or the former Premier who told South Australians the correct information in respect of when the Government first considered privatising ETSA?

He replied:

I invite the Leader of the Opposition to obtain the transcript of the press conference I did with the Treasurer (Hon. Rob Lucas) and the Minister for Government Enterprises last Wednesday. If he compares it with the transcript of the Minister for Human Services yesterday, he will see that the transcript and the replies are exactly the same.

The press conference referred to by the Premier was held on 18 February 1998 which, in part, reads as follows:

Journalist: . . . can we clear up whether, three years or roughly two years ago, just before becoming Premier, as Infrastructure Minister, you put a proposal on ETSA and Optima.

John Olsen: To a Cabinet subcommittee?

Journalist: To a Cabinet subcommittee?

Olsen: No, I did not.

Journalist: Did you ever have discussions with Dean Brown outside of Cabinet. . . as the then Premier, saying, 'Look, I really think it'd be a good idea to sell Optima and ETSA?' Did you ever raise that in that way?

Olsen: We would have had discussions from time to time, but, I mean, as you do a whole range of things but, as for Mr Rann said that I took a submission to a Cabinet subcommittee, that is just arrant nonsense.

That is the answer that the Premier was asking to be placed on the record in this House when he invited me to obtain and read this press conference transcript. Yesterday in Parliament, in response to Opposition questions from the Deputy Leader about the proposed partial privatisation of ETSA referred to in the 16 February 1996 minute, the Premier stated that the concept had been referred to the Cabinet subcommittee. He said:

> On page 13, or whatever the page was, it was said that the proposal was put to the Cabinet subcommittee, which said that no further action on this proposal is warranted or required.

Later in Question Time the Premier said:

> . . . when this concept was referred to the Cabinet subcommittee, that subcommittee said, 'This will not be progressed. No further work is warranted on this matter.'

I remind the House that the concept referred to by the Premier yesterday, which was leaked to the Opposition in April 1996, was dated 25 January 1996. The Premier told the House yesterday that the subcommittee decided that no further work was warranted on this matter. However, the FOI document referred to at the beginning of this motion reveals that work on this concept was continuing beyond 25 January 1996. It states:

> Terry Kallis will continue to be ETSA's liaison person in developing this concept. Naturally, the matter is confidential at this point.

I again ask you, Mr Speaker, to note that in his answer to the House on 26 February 1998 the Premier referred me and the House to the transcript of a press conference he gave on 18 February, in which he denied that a proposal for privatisation of ETSA in whole or in part was ever taken to a Cabinet subcommittee before the last State election. I further remind you, Mr Speaker, that the Premier told this House on 18 February:

> The simple fact is that the Government did not consider the sale of ETSA or any part of it.

It is a fundamental tenet of the Westminster system that Ministers must not mislead the House. I therefore ask you, Sir, to rule *prima facie* that a case for the Premier's having misled the House has been made, and I ask you to give precedence to a motion to establish a privileges committee to establish whether the Premier misled the House on 29 May 1996, on 18 February 1998 and on 26 February 1998. The Opposition has a range of documents that it is prepared to make available to you, Mr Speaker, in making your deliberation on this matter.

The Hon. J.W. Olsen: They're already released.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: No, they're not, actually. In addition, I ask you, Mr Speaker, in deliberating on this issue to consider the contents of the 1 200 documents held by the Government and not released under the Opposition's FOI request. The suppressed documents relate to ETSA outsourcing and privatisation proposals by this Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have listened carefully to the allegations put forward by the honourable Leader. Clearly, it is a very lengthy statement, and it will require a considerable amount of time to go through and consider the detail contained therein. With the concurrence of the House I will do that and report back at the earliest opportunity, but I cannot guarantee that it will be today.

QUESTION TIME

CHILD CARE

Ms WHITE (Taylor): When the Premier made his sandpit announcement regarding child-care funding, did he mislead the public, as claimed by the Federal Minister for Family Services, and was his Federal colleague correct when he said that the additional money announced by the Premier was 'nothing more than a political stunt coming instead from existing outside school hours care funding'?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: One thing that is quite clear is that this Government has a very strong commitment to children's services and has supported the innovation to maintain the infrastructure for child care here in South Australia. It might be interesting for members to note that, in terms of children under five years of age, funding for child-care services in this State is some 26 per cent below the national average. That is one of the reasons why the Government has responded positively in this situation; and the services have responded positively to the Premier's announcement of the allocation of $2 million.

This funding has not come out of the budget; it is new money. The sum of $1 million is to go into child care, and a further $1 million is to go into other areas—$1 million coming into my department. This is new money; it is not already in an appropriation line within the budget. It is money that has been allocated from the Premier, recognising the need to support child-care services in South Australia.

The Commonwealth made a decision to withdraw operational subsidies without consultation with the State, in terms of operational funding for community-based and outside school hours care. It cut the block grant to the State for vacation care by some $500 000 without any consultation, and it disregarded any agreements made between the State and the Commonwealth regarding child-care funding. The State Government supports the extension of child-care assistance to outside school hours care users. We agree that this is providing more equitable assistance for those places. Services lost some 70 per cent of Commonwealth funding as a result of the withdrawal of the operational subsidy for outside school hours care users, so by us providing this $1 million it will provide those places with more equitable assistance.

Ministerial staff held discussions with Commonwealth ministerial staff about strategies to support services in South Australia, but no additional money has been available from the Commonwealth. I have been lobbying the Commonwealth Minister (Hon. Warwick Smith), and he has advised me that they were not prepared to put any additional funds into South Australia.

We applaud the extra $20 million in funding, and our money is a complement to that. We are responding to the needs that have been identified in the community. Of the 26 new centres in South Australia, only six are community based. The State Government has provided a capital subsidy of $10 000 per place, whereas the Commonwealth Government supplies only $5 000 per place in community-based centres under national child-care agreements. Part of the problem is that private providers do not appear to be going into low socioeconomic areas, particularly in areas such as the western suburbs, so this will support our approach of assisting centres in those areas.

An additional factor is that, as a result of the cut in Commonwealth Government funding to child-care places, many women have had to reassess their position in the work force. Figures show that the participation rate has dropped from 52.5 per cent in July 1997 to 50.8 per cent in April 1998, which further indicates the need for this Government to step in and assist our lower socioeconomic and regional families by supporting child care in this State.

ELECTRICITY, PRIVATISATION

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Is the Premier aware of any further moves by the New South Wales Labor Government to privatise the electricity industry, despite opposition from the union-dominated Party conference; and, if these moves are successful, will the Premier confirm that they will have a negative impact on the benefits that South Australia will receive from reforming and restructuring its own industry? Is the Premier able to advise the House of any steps that he will take to ensure that the people of South Australia understand that we are in competition with the largest State in the Commonwealth?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: There is no doubt that, despite statements from New South Wales Labor Party officials, privatisation of electricity assets is not on the agenda, and, despite the motions of the recent country conference of the ALP, there is no doubt that the New South Wales Government is determined to press ahead with its plans to privatise the electricity assets of New South Wales. This was made absolutely clear by the New South Wales Treasurer, Michael Egan, when he delivered his budget on Tuesday. An article appearing in the *Australian* states:

> Mr Egan also flagged his intention to push before October's ALP State conference for the privatisation of the $25 billion power industry.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is. He is seeing reality, and it is not surprising given the situation with which New South Wales is faced. The New South Wales budget was described by respected economic commentator Alan Wood as confirming the position of New South Wales as the highest taxing State in Australia. I know that that is not a position that Premier Bob Carr enjoys, but he must keep his taxes and revenue high to meet his commitments to lower the State debt of New South Wales. He does, of course, have another strategy, which is to realise the benefits of privatising the State's $25 billion electricity industry—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:—which is why his Treasurer is determined to push ahead, despite ideology and self-interest within some sections of the Labor Party. The member for Hart interjects that it was not in the speech, but what Michael Egan did was to go straight out, as a key focus of the Labor Party's strategy, and say, 'We will push on with the privatisation of these assets.' There is no doubt that, if he is successful and New South Wales is able to move before South Australia can, there will be an impact on the benefits to South Australia. The Opposition, as we saw on Tuesday, may quibble about the amount, but all the advice to the Government of South Australia indicates that the impact of New South Wales' entering the market before South Australia would be significant and would significantly reduce the value that we, the South Australian taxpayers, can gain for that asset.

The Labor Party seems keen on sponsoring rallies to create some emotional atmosphere about this important issue. Obviously, a key speaker was missing from last night's candlelight rally. Bob Carr should have been invited last night and he could have explained to the rally why a Labor Government in New South Wales is absolutely committed to private sector involvement in its electricity industry. But our Labor Opposition is totally opposed. Obviously, the only way one can explain it is to expose the base politicking, personality politics and scorched-earth strategy of the Leader of the Opposition.

I have taken the liberty today of writing to the Leader of the Opposition in an effort to move this debate beyond emotion and simply point scoring. I have suggested to the Leader of the Opposition that he invite his Labor colleague Bob Carr, Premier of New South Wales, to address a public meeting in Adelaide to put the case for privatisation. This could be a joint invitation or, alternatively, perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might like to invite Premier Carr to address a special conference of the Labor Party in South Australia simply to highlight the circumstances and the need for change which both South Australia and New South Wales face, and why a Labor Government and a Labor Premier have taken their particular course of action.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

CHILD CARE

Mr De LAINE (Price): My question is directed to the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. Given the Premier's statement on Tuesday that $600 000 will be reallocated to assist up to 30 community based child-care centres, will the Minister take urgent action and instruct his officers to contact the Pennington Community Child-care Centre today to ensure that the centre is not forced to close? Fifty families in the north-west suburbs have been stunned by the news that the Pennington Community Child-care Centre is to close after 10 years of service. Parents who have contacted me are angry and upset that more than 50 children who attend the centre will be forced to find other child care away from their local district.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I thank the honourable member for his question. Regarding the $1 million that the Premier announced and the $600 000 to be allocated towards child-care centres, it is to be directed towards those centres that are either in danger of closing or have already closed. As the honourable member has identified the child-care centre at Pennington, I will ensure that we immediately look at that centre to see whether we can help it. One thing that we want to ensure is that, with this one-off funding, we fund viable centres. Given the numbers that the honourable member has just mentioned, it sounds as though that should be an ongoing, viable centre. We must make sure that we spend that money in the best possible way and to ensure the viability of these centres at the same time. I will immediately take up the issue for the honourable member and investigate it.

ALP PRIVATISATION POLICY

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Premier inform the House why the Government is having such difficulty reconciling the public face of Labor's opposition to the sale of South Australia's power utilities with the more private reality?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am pleased to respond to the honourable member's question, because what we can clearly see is the hypocrisy of the Labor Party.

Ms HURLEY: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I wonder what responsibility the Premier has for the South Australian Labor Party's policies.

The SPEAKER: Order! Clearly, the Premier does not have a responsibility for ALP policies but he can answer the question if any part of it refers to his responsibility as Premier.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What this question and the debate before Parliament is about is the hypocrisy of the Labor Party, which has taken a position opposed to privatisation of Government instrumentalities. A number of members of the Labor Party will say in different forums and to private industry people privately that they support privatisation, that it is the right way to go and that it is the only thing in the long-term interests of South Australia, but they will not front up publicly and say so. That is the position, and a number of people can attest to it. In addition, Democrat members consider that the Labor Party is trying to pressure them to put the sale through so that they do not have to be accountable and can hold their position.

What is the track record of members of the Labor Party in relation to ownership of shares in Government instrumentalities? This is an important question. The future Labor Leader, the one in waiting, the member for Kaurna (John Hill), has shares in Telstra. I do not have any difficulty with ownership of shares. Indeed, I commend members of the Labor Party for taking out shareholdings. But the point is that it is absolutely hypocritical to oppose publicly privatisation of Government assets and then line up with the prospectus and take out shares.

Not only the member for Kaurna but no less a figure than the Opposition Whip is also a Telstra shareholder. A former member of the Legislative Council, the Hon. Anne Levy, publicly a left wing, fervent anti-privatisation campaigner, also applied for the prospectus to take up shares. Last but not least is the Hon. Carolyn Pickles, the left wing Labor Leader in the Upper House. She is also a Telstra shareholder.

These are people who have publicly condemned Liberal Governments nationally and statewise for their policy on privatisation. They do so publicly on the one hand, but on the other hand they submit their application for a shareholding and become shareholders in Government instrumentalities that have been privatised. Let us put the hypocrisy of the Labor Party to one side and get a debate in this Parliament on the substance of this issue.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. Given the Minister's evidence to the Senate inquiry about the crisis caused in South Australia's hospitals by 80 000 people dropping out of private health cover, does the Minister support the introduction of a GST on health insurance premiums and gap payments which would further increase the cost of both to consumers?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That is a hypothetical question. To start with, as this Government has absolutely no power to introduce a GST, the question is entirely irrelevant to any power this Government has. I therefore cannot answer it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RATES

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Local Government inform the House of how many council applications for exemption from rate capping have been approved and, from the information received from councils, can the Minister provide details of the estimated economic growth and employment opportunities that will occur as a result of the Government's policy?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am delighted—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That is one position the member for Ross Smith may never aspire to.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will respond to the question.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am delighted to inform the House that this morning His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council granted approval for the lifting of the rate cap on 17 councils which have applied under the special arrangements set out by the Government aimed at stimulating employment, economic development and support for small business. I note that some Opposition members appear to think that their electors' rates are a matter for some levity.

It is important to note that Cabinet has set out five categories of project which the Government was keen to encourage. They are employment generation initiatives, projects or programs that will assist small business, capital works and infrastructure projects that will create employment opportunities and economic activity, infrastructure or other support projects for significant economic development or tourism projects or programs, and initiatives of environmental improvement/protection objectives for which there was community support.

The councils which will be gazetted as having gained an exemption are the City of Adelaide, the Alexandrina Council, the City of Burnside, the District Council of Ceduna, the City of Charles Sturt, the Clare and Gilbert Valley Council, the District Council of Cleve, the District Council of Kapunda and Light, the District Council of Le Hunte, the City of Marion, the City of Mitcham, the City of Prospect, the Tatiara District Council, the City of Unley, the Victor Harbor District Council, the City of West Torrens and the District Council of Yankalilla.

The exemptions were granted by the Governor as a result of a ministerial advisory committee comprising members of the Department of Industry and Trade, Employment SA and local government, who provided advice to me on submissions received and liaised with councils to ensure that worthwhile projects were submitted. The projects submitted on the basis of the removal of the rate cap for 1998-99 should result in an increase in expenditure across the State in excess of $10 million, the vast majority of which was approved for infrastructure, employment generation, economic development, tourism and assistance to small business.

Of particular note—and something the House will be most pleased about—the District Council of Le Hunte, based at Wudinna on the Eyre Peninsula, plans to assist in the construction of a granite processing factory and associated housing project estimated to require 40 jobs in the construc-

tion phase and up to 150 jobs by year 3. That is employment generation for young South Australians.

The City of Marion has indicated that it will accelerate the development of The Domain precinct adjacent to the Marion regional centre, including the development of digital technology, resulting in a total investment of $3.9 million. I know that Telstra is pursuing an active interest in that project. The District Council of Ceduna will make major investments in the upgrade of the Ceduna airport, construction of the new boat ramp at Smoky Bay, tourism, aquaculture and the development of exports. Both projects involve an investment of $1.4 million with a council contribution of $500 000, which amount the council will have the capacity to borrow if the rate cap is lifted.

It is important to realise that the generation of funds not solely from rates but from the lifting of the rate cap will allow, and provide the capacity to pay for, further borrowings. So, it is an indicator of further growth. I know that the member for Schubert will be interested that the District Councils of Alexandrina and Kapunda Light have indicated that the removal of the rate cap will enable them to upgrade road infrastructure necessary to support the massive vineyard developments in the area.

I emphasise that the granting of an exemption from the rate cap does not constitute an approval by the Governor of a particular level of rate increase. In the removal of this rate cap we have told these councils that we want them to drive this process forward but that they are answerable to their ratepayers by the level at which they raise the rate cap and that it is a matter between them and their ratepayers as to the exact level at which the rate is lifted—and so it should be. In the past we have heard a lot in this Chamber about partnerships between local government and State Government. This Government, unlike previous Governments, does not flap its gums and do nothing. This Government—

Mr Foley: That's a reflection on the Chair.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: It is a reflection on the member for Hart, Sir: I assure you that it is not a reflection on the Chair. This Government is absolutely committed to making local government an integral and important part of the process of driving this State forward in economic development, tourism and, most importantly, job creation by both levels of government not petty point scoring off one another but, in fact, by working together. This is an important initiative. It is the first round, and there is a subsequent round. I am sure a lot of other councils will be submitting, because I do note that some councils, having complained most vocally—

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I draw your attention to the fact that Ministers have the opportunity by way of ministerial statement to present information such as this.

The SPEAKER: Standing Order 98 prevents me from drawing Ministers' statements to a close in the event that they continue to add to the substance of the question but do not debate the matter. The honourable member is right, and I would point out that yesterday a limited number of questions were asked because of lengthy replies. There is an appropriate time to make ministerial statements. I would ask Ministers to keep their replies short and to the point so that the maximum number of questions can be asked.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Sir, I will, of course, be guided by your ruling. The expected rate increases, which will be of interest to most South Australians, are likely to be in the range of 2 to 5 per cent, although at the top end an increase of 5.9 per cent was suggested by one council, which is on average $31 per residential rate per year. The average is likely to be about 3.7 per cent. In conclusion, some councils have not submitted for an exemption from the rate levy because, as part of the amalgamation process, they went to their electors on the platform of no further rate increases. They have acknowledged and kept their promises to their electors and are to be commended for that initiative.

MINISTERS, EXPENDITURE

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Given the Premier's threat to cut up to 20 000 teachers, nurses, police and other public servants, will he tell the House what is the total cost to taxpayers of providing accommodation and staff for the five junior Ministers appointed by the Premier late last year? Last year the Government said that the appointment of junior Ministers would save taxpayers $8 million. However, I have been handed a copy of a leaked minute to the Minister for Administrative Services which details the costs of providing office and meeting facilities for the junior Minister for Disability Services and Minister for the Ageing, Hon. Robert Lawson, MLC. The minute states:

The estimated cost to achieve this is $354 000.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: First, if there is one thing I have learnt it is to take with a grain of salt anything the Opposition says is a leaked document. Secondly, you need to ensure that you test the veracity of the statements referred to by those opposite. Thirdly, you need to make sure that the statement in question is not taken in isolation from a minute that details certain facts. Therefore, based on those three premises, I will have a look at this matter. I simply point out to the House that, when we introduced legislation in this House for passage of the 10 Cabinet and five junior Ministers structure, we in fact divided the salary cost of the three Cabinet Ministers who were replaced by five junior Ministers—and that is the position that has been established.

With the restructuring we have been able to put in place as it relates to Government agencies and departments, we have seen a number of contracts with senior chief executive officers concluded or terminated. In that regard, there are some, representing in the order of a couple of hundred thousand dollars, who are no longer on the public payroll. There have been substantial savings in the order of about $1 million annually at the senior executive level. They are the sorts of savings that have been put in place as a result of the change to the 10 Cabinet Ministers structure.

EMPLOYMENT, REGIONAL

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Regional Development advise the House of the success of job initiatives in country areas and provide a breakdown of the current employment situation in regional South Australia?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I thank the honourable member for her question and for her interest in this matter. As mentioned in questions asked earlier this week, I have spoken about some of the initiatives in regional South Australia which are providing jobs.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: You certainly are. The industries include: exploration, mining and mineral processing, viticulture, horticulture, seafood and various other pursuits. The job-creating effects of this increased activity are starting to have an impact on unemployment figures in those regions.

For some years we have heard constantly the examples quoted of regional unemployment figures being well above the national average. I would like to take a little time here to balance the negative picture that is so often painted with some positive examples indicating figures well below the national average.

These figures are from December 1997. I want to mention some of those figures to address that wrong perception of the real situation in regional South Australia. Earlier in the week I spoke of how a change of enterprise from livestock and cereals to viticulture or horticulture creates jobs in local areas. Testimony to that effect are some of the following figures: Naracoorte—Municipal and District Council, 3.9 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively; Penola, 5.8 per cent; the Barossa, 5.4 per cent; Angaston, 4.8 per cent; Tanunda, 3.2 per cent; and Clare, 3.5 per cent.

Other areas which are also changing their enterprise mix include: Pinnaroo, 4.1 per cent; Lameroo, 4.2 per cent; Robe, 3.9 per cent; District Council of Grant (in which the member for Gordon would be interested, having once been Chair), coming in at less than 4 per cent; Strathalbyn, 6 per cent; and Lucindale, .5 per cent (with 737 out of 741 employed). Other figures of interest are: Kimba, 1.8; Hawker, 2.7; Tatiara, 2 2—

Mr FOLEY: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I seek your ruling on the ability for Ministers to provide such information as now being provided by this Minister through ministerial statements and not during Question Time. Question Time is for asking questions.

The SPEAKER: Order! As I pointed out in the last ruling, the Chair does not have the power to draw the Minister to a close under Standing Order 98. However, I pointed out that there is opportunity to use ministerial statements. Certainly, the provision of statistical material could be included in a ministerial statement. However, in fairness to the Minister, he has been speaking for only two minutes.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to have regard to some of the directions coming from the Chair; that is, some of this material could be incorporated in a ministerial statement.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I do not think members opposite like hearing some of these figures. Unfortunately, while there are many other lower figures across the State—which I will not read out—there are also areas of ongoing concern and, in particular, we acknowledge that our larger regional centres continue to have figures which we would all rather see reduced. The employment statement announced by the Premier last week provides some welcome priority to regional employment, and that point has been picked up in today's *Stock Journal*.

Whilst regional areas were normally given a token percentage of new programs, this Government is certainly increasing the effort in regional South Australia. The allocation of 500 of the last 1 000 public sector traineeships under the State Government Youth Training Scheme was a very welcome initiative and it has created a terrific opportunity for many young South Australians in regional areas.

It is also worth noting in last week's statement the emphasis on the upper Spencer Gulf area, for example, the DOME (Don't Overlook Mature Expertise) program, and once again Kickstart will be a major program through the regional development boards. Again the regional labour exchange is being funded to help with addressing seasonal labour shortages in the regions. Whilst there is still much to do to create more jobs in regional areas, in many areas we are at least seeing some very positive signs, and this Government will continue to work hard with industry and the community to create new jobs in regional South Australia.

COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE

Mr CONLON (Elder): My question is directed to the Minister for Emergency Services. Was the Treasurer accurate in his statement that over the next year the $13 million CFS debt will be repaid, or is it not the case that the Government has written off half of that debt by way of a compensatory increase in appropriation?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Government is committed to repaying the CFS debt of some $13.1 million. Members are well aware that this is a hangover from Labor days. This is as a result of the 1983 Ash Wednesday fire. A coroner's report in 1983 recommended the upgrading of CFS equipment, including equipment and radios, to the tune of $15 million. The Labor Party was in Government for 10 years and did not put a debt reduction strategy in place. This Government came to power in 1993 and put a debt replacement strategy in place. We have reduced it to $13 million and we have indicated that at last the CFS debt will be taken out so that it is not paying $1 million in interest. Currently the Government and the CFS combined are paying about $1.65 million in interest. The first item for the new emergency services funding arrangements will simply not be a 15 year old $13 million Labor debt.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has asked his question.

YOUTH MEDIA AWARDS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Youth inform the House how the Government is promoting positive and accurate reporting of young people in the media?

The Hon. J. HALL: I thank the member for his question and particularly for his ongoing support in matters involving young South Australians. What we read in the newspapers, see on television and hear on the radio has an enormous influence on the perceptions that people have in forming their opinions about young people. There is no doubt—and every member of this House would agree—that the media significantly influence community perceptions of young South Australians. Frequently, in my view, too much emphasis—and, some would say, a disproportionate emphasis—is placed on negative images of young people. Therefore, I am very pleased to inform the House that next Wednesday I will announce the 1998 Youth Media Awards for South Australia. Through these awards the Government is promoting a greater understanding of young people, encouraging the accurate portrayal of young people and seeking to increase the community's awareness and support of young South Australians. The awards recognise balanced, accurate and objective reporting—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence.

The Hon. J. HALL:—and, in addition, they also recognise the high standards of photography. The entrants can be of any age and in almost any category, and the topic of their work must simply be to have focused on the work and activities of young people. The ETSA Corporation Young

Journalist of the Year is a special category dedicated to young journalists under the age of 26. This category offers young journalists the opportunity to be judged on their professional abilities as well as their understanding and accuracy in the reporting of their peers and youth issues. Last year's young journalist of the year was Sally Sara of the ABC. Just prior to the announcement of her success, Sally was promoted and transferred to Melbourne where her talents can be heard regularly on ABC National.

The awards, which are now in their third year, involve young people throughout their organisation and operation. In the beginning, Ben Pankhurst of the Charles Cannon Design Centre created the impressive brochures and posters that we now have; there are the young members on the judging panel; and there are the entrants for the young journalist of the year award. I place on record the Government's appreciation for the generous support of the award by its sponsors—ETSA and Shell Australia—the prize donors—Malaysian Airlines, Ansett Australia, Executive Choice at the Hyatt and the Federal Airports Corporation, Adelaide International Airport—and the supporters of the Charles Cannon Design Centre, Warburton Media and Five Star Press. I also acknowledge the many South Australian media outlets that consistently promote the awards to their staff across the various strands of the media in this State.

NATIONAL WAGE CASE

Ms KEY (Hanson): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises. The national wage case was handed down on 29 April 1998 making modest wage increases available to workers employed under awards who have not received wage increases through enterprise bargaining and for workers who earn less than $400 per week. Why then is the State Government deliberately delaying this national wage case flow on of wages to an estimated 60 000 low paid South Australian workers?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member does herself a disservice by saying so vehemently, 'Why is the Government deliberately delaying', because factually it is not. However, it indicates that nothing has changed from the time when a former candidate for one of the Labor Party seats—who was thrown out, and I forget exactly what seat it was—said that the Labor Party in North Terrace was run by South Terrace.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, not John Trainer.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No. The question was eminently predictable. What did I receive today but a letter from Mr Chris White from the UTLC taking issue with me in respect of just this matter. My staff and I thought to ourselves: let us look at what happens today, because someone on the Opposition side will get a call from Chris White and will be told, 'Get up and ask this question.' And all the chickens have come home to roost. I spoke with Chris White this afternoon, and he acknowledges that we are not deliberately delaying the issue. What is happening is that we are going down the path of conciliation as opposed to arbitration, as was suggested by the Commissioner. We are following the timetable set by the Commissioner, not by the Government. If the honourable member has a beef, let her write to the Commissioner and express her displeasure.

We are quite within the timetable that the Commissioner set—independently. We are undergoing discussions with the union and with the employers. I note the member for Elder rolling his eyes. It does not matter: he can roll his eyes all he likes.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: A long time ago.

Mr CONLON: I have a point of order on relevance, Mr Speaker. I do not know what my ocular activity has to do with the answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member for Elder was rolling his eyes, which appeared to indicate that the facts were not correct. These are the facts. We are within the time frame that the independent Commissioner has set. We are having discussions and there will be a resolution of this issue completely within the legitimate time frame. That is not the issue. The issue is that Opposition members sitting on the green benches opposite take all their instructions from the nameless people on South Terrace.

DISABILITY SERVICES MINISTER

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): Has the Premier any additional information following allegations made earlier today by the member for Wright concerning office accommodation for the Hon. Rob Lawson?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am pleased to have the opportunity to refute the allegations and accusations contained in the question from the member for Wright. I said in my opening remarks, 'Beware of the questions and accusations made by the Opposition.' The member for Wright does herself a great disservice today, because she has made allegations that are simply not true. In her question the member for Wright suggested that the cost of Minister Lawson's office was $354 000. The Minister for Human Services has been able very quickly to get a minute that he signed off, an authorisation that he approved post 29 May: in the past few days. What is the cost of Minister Lawson's office? It is $34 134, plus a notional allocation of professional fees—just a notional allocation. If you include the notional allocation of professional fees, the total is $43 579—a difference of only $310 000 between the actual figure and the figure mentioned by the member for Wright!

So, let the House beware of accusations made by the Opposition. Let the media and the general public understand that the Labor Party and the Opposition in this House will say anything, and will put together an amalgam of pieces of paper to try to create a perception and a position that simply is not right. In her allegation to the Parliament today, the member for Wright is absolutely wrong.

HINDMARSH POLICE STATION

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. What was the price received for the sale of the Hindmarsh Police Station? Was the property valued prior to sale and, if so, what was that valuation and who undertook it?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I am not aware of any of the relationships of cost etc. to do with that property, but I am quite prepared to obtain the information and bring it back for the honourable member.

TRADE, ASIA

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Will the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism detail to this House what trade initiatives the South Australian Tourism Commission has embarked on for the purpose of increasing Asian visitation to South Australia?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: One of the most important issues for us in tourism over the next four or five years will be to ensure that the developments we have put in place over the past four or five years continue as the Asian crisis worsens. Back in April 1997 the commission, along with the South Australian Tourism Exchange, set in place a major proposal to get the Asian travel industry, particularly the travel agents of very significant large groups of companies in Singapore, to come here to Adelaide and be introduced to a whole range of retail travel organisations. From 30 April to 3 May this year, that exercise was repeated with some 50 representatives from the Asian region, who spent the bulk of their time in four regions: Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, the Adelaide Hills and Barossa, and Fleurieu Peninsula.

They chose those four areas as their first step in developing their familiarisation program in this State. On their next visit (which will become an annual event) we will move into the Riverland, to Eyre Peninsula and also into the Adelaide Hills and beyond, so that we make sure that we have a regional approach to this group. They are very significant travel agents and a very important group of people, because many Asians are still travelling the world. We need to make sure that Australia and South Australia, in particular, remain a major destination for these people. This trade opportunity is one that we need to make sure continues because, even though there are some difficulties with the Asian economy at the moment, those who stay in there will benefit in the long run.

BOWKER STREET RESERVE

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Natural Heritage. What are the details of the transfer of Bowker Street Reserve to the Holdfast Bay council? Why has it taken nearly a year for the transfer to take place, and why was Marion council not involved in the handover discussions? Bowker Street Reserve is a popular reserve used as open space and as a sporting facility by a wide range of residents and sports groups in the south-western suburbs. Prior to the last election, local Liberal members of Parliament announced that the Government would be transferring the land to the local council, but this has not occurred, according to my latest information. Although many Bowker Street Reserve users are Marion council residents, that council was not brought into the transfer discussions.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: The question was somewhat convoluted, and perhaps contained just a little bit of misinformation in the terms in which the honourable member phrased it. The fact is that on many occasions this Government has successfully looked at council areas across the State and supported open space. This is just another matter in which the Government has looked at protecting the reserves and conservation parks across this State, and increasing those areas. In the case of the Bowker Street Reserve that the honourable member asks about, this was another case of Government responsibility taken with council to negotiate another area of open space.

The Government has taken a very responsible stance in making sure that all the processes necessary to transfer this piece of property to council to remain open space are undertaken. I am advised that it is not a matter of the State Government's holding up any transactions whatever from the last round of negotiations: it appears that we are still awaiting confirmation from council solicitors.

SKIN CANCER

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): Now that Living Health has been disbanded, will the Minister for Human Services inform the House what are the plans for and what funds can be made available to help in a public education and awareness program targeted at people who work outdoors—particularly those in rural occupations—to reduce the very high level of skin cancers which occur in those occupational groups?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The member for Hammond raised this issue with me in the House last year. He was very concerned about the level of skin cancer, particularly amongst farmers. I promised on that occasion to follow it up, and I took it up with Living Health. Living Health, in conjunction with the Anti-Cancer Foundation, has allocated $45 000 a year for 1997-98 and 1998-99. So, a total of $90 000 has been allocated particularly to tackle skin cancer in farmers and fishermen—or fishers, fisher people.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The people who go fishing. This program is already well and truly under way. It tackles two particular areas, one of which is the family. It encourages all members of the family, including the spouse, to be aware of the risk of sun cancer in particular and to apply sunblock every day, whether it is summer, spring, winter or autumn—and I stress that, because anyone who consults a skin specialist now will be told to apply appropriate sunblock literally 365 days a year, regardless of whether or not it is raining. It is good advice to apply it each morning, almost as if it is a part of getting dressed.

The other initiative that has been taken up is to encourage the farmers and the people who go fishing to erect suitable physical structures to help protect them from the direct rays of the sun and to give far greater protection in a broader sense from UV radiation. This is already under way. For example, it is easy now to install some sort of roof structure in a fishing boat, which will protect people from the sun.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Some members probably even need it on their head, as well as their face. We need to be aware that the risk of skin cancer in our community is increasing, because all the evidence is that UV radiation levels are increasing and, if they are increasing, we need to be very careful that those who already have skin damage are taking appropriate action: in particular, they should see a skin specialist every six to 12 months. The Government, through this program, is taking action. I can give an assurance to the member for Hammond, who first raised this matter last year, that this will be an ongoing program, not just for these two years: under the future role of better health protection of the Department for Human Services we will continue this program into the future.

REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Mr SNELLING (Playford): Will the Minister for Human Services explain how a couple in their 50s, and with four

children, were able to access artificial reproduction technology services in this State, in the light of clause 13 of the Reproductive Technology Act 1988, which limits the application of such procedures to couples who appear to be infertile, and what limits are meant to apply in the provision of artificial reproductive technology services in the light of the just allocation of limited health care resources?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The honourable member raises what I believe is a very delicate issue. The first thing I would ask him and other members of the public to understand is that this woman and her family have the right to privacy under medical ethics. That needs to be respected by all people involved and, as the appropriate Minister, I have respected that. I have not asked for specific information from the doctor involved in terms of this particular patient, and that also needs to be understood by other people.

From the notice that appeared in the newspaper and from the information that has been provided to me, the woman concerned went into a private hospital as a private patient and, therefore, was not part of the publicly funded hospital IVF program. I understand that, to a certain extent, the honourable member's question reflects some of the ill-informed comment that is being made within the community at present, where there has been a natural assumption that this person might have been involved in the publicly funded IVF program through public hospitals. That is not the case at all.

There are a couple of issues that arise in this case and I want them clearly understood. I do not believe that it should be up to the politicians to set medical ethics: it should be up to the profession itself to do so. We have the South Australian Council on Reproductive Technology, and the Chairman has assured me that there has been no breach of guidelines in the case to which the honourable member has referred. However, the Chairman has also told me that new technology is now being used in new ways and, as a result of that, and as a result of this particular case in terms of highlighting that new technology, there is a need for the council to look at certain circumstances and certain definitions under the Act. It has promised to do that and report back to me. I believe that that is an area appropriately left to the South Australian Council on Reproductive Technology. Its members are the specialists, appointed under statute by the South Australian Government, in an appropriate way to report back.

The other issue that I have taken up with the South Australian Health Commission—and I believe that in this morning's paper someone suggested that it was the Health Insurance Commission but it was not—is that it should establish—again, as professionals within the health sector—appropriate priorities to ensure that, if there is a limit of funds within the public hospital system for the IVF program, they go to those with the greatest need. Again, I do not believe that it is appropriate for me to pass judgment on that. I believe that it is appropriate for the professionals to report back to me in terms of what are those needs. I expect both of those bodies to report back on their ultimate findings, but I urge people to stop looking at a particular case and passing judgment when invariably the facts surrounding that particular case and the knowledge are totally inadequate.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Will the Minister for Environment and Heritage inform the House of the significant environmental outcomes being delivered within South Australia by the Environment Protection Authority, particularly as a result of its working cooperatively with industry?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I appreciate the question from the honourable member, because it is an important one. There has been a degree of unjustified criticism recently—mainly through, I suspect, a deal of media hype. The EPA objectives are clearly and positively to effect environmental change. While court action—which has been the source of recent criticism—is an option, it is often not the ideal solution for creating a long-term process for change. It is a misconception that industry does not wish to become environmentally responsible. The industry sector has made significant environmental improvements in South Australia over recent years and, from a regulatory perspective, the EPA uses a wide range of mechanisms to effect that change in behaviour.

The environmental protection policy sets down standards and practices for noise control, air quality protection, water quality protection and waste regulation. Environment protection policies are important legal instruments as they apply to all premises, including those that are not otherwise specially licensed by the EPA. Under authorisations, the EPA has issued some 2 000 licences to South Australian businesses, and these provide strict conditions for environmental protection related to any emissions. Licences are one of a number of powerful compliance management instruments that are used by the EPA.

A good example is the EPA's negotiating strict licence conditions with the Adelaide Brighton Cement Company. That company invested approximately $11 million in electrostatic precipitators to remove dust particles. The emissions are now less than half the limit applied in other countries, such as Japan and the United States, which all members will agree is an excellent outcome. Thirdly, we have environment improvement programs. These are used when businesses are below compliance and require significant capital upgrading to meet new standards. The time frame of three to five years for an EIP is common, and, since commencement of the EPA in 1995, approximately 200 improvement programs have been negotiated resulting in environmental upgrading by industry to the value of approximately $500 million, which will carry through until the year 2001.

Finally, there are conditions of development approval through referral under the Development Act. The EPA attaches conditions to development applications submitted to councils and the Development Assessment Commission. In the last financial year the EPA dealt with 543 referrals, and 718 in the previous year. A very high percentage of these referrals have actually resulted in direct or recommended improvements to the conditions. The EPA is not to be measured by how many businesses it can put down or bankrupt. The EPA must be measured by the positive environmental outcomes it achieves. All members would agree that a healthy industry base and a decent environment are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but we can achieve and we can have both. The EPA has a major role to play, and I believe it is doing it most efficiently.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Today I refer to child care, a sector which at this time is under some pressure in this State. I asked the Premier a question today which was answered by the Minister for Education, Children's Services and Training. The Minister in his reply said, regarding the $1 million allocated and announced by the Premier on Tuesday, 'This is new money.' The Minister also referred to a total of $2 million but, by the end of the question, he had got the figure right: $1 million has been allocated to children's services, with $600 000 being allocated to the community sector and $400 000 to after hours school care. It is interesting to note that that is not what the Federal Minister for Family Services believes.

Members would have read an article in today's *Advertiser* in which Minister Warwick Smith had a go at Premier Olsen. He said that the Premier's announcement was 'nothing more than a political stunt'. He said that the State Government was not spending new money but that it had come out of existing out of school hours care funding. Minister Warwick Smith further stated that Mr Olsen was 'trying to mislead families into thinking this is extra money to help child-care services in South Australia'. I have Minister Warwick Smith's press release and I put on record that, regarding the Premier's announcement, it states:

> The announcement by the Premier of South Australia to provide a $1 million 'rescue package' for child care is nothing more than a political stunt as this money is already currently funding outside school hours care services in South Australia. . .

The Minister further says that the Premier's claims were wrong on all fronts and gives a number of reasons. Some of the very interesting reasons Minister Warwick Smith gives include:

- The South Australian and Federal Governments have jointly funded services in South Australia which care for school age children before and after school and during holidays. . .
- the Federal Government has pushed the South Australian Government for many months to get them to commit, quite rightly, to keeping this money in child care;
- The Premier is trying to mislead families into thinking this is extra money to help child care services in South Australia. His Government is already spending this on child care.

Quite clearly, there is some hostility between the Hon. Warwick Smith in the Federal Liberal Party and the Premier and the Minister for Children's Services in this House. Today the Children's Services Minister decided to have a bit of a go back at the Commonwealth Government, pointing out that the Commonwealth had made the decision to withdraw operational subsidies without consultation with this State in terms of operational funding for community based and out of school hours care, had cut the block grant to the State for vacation care by approximately $500 000 without any consultation, and had disregarded any agreements made between the State and Commonwealth regarding child care funding. The Minister had a bit of a go back at the Federal Government.

All this to-ing and fro-ing within the Liberal Party—the Federal Government having a go at the Premier, the Premier having a go at the Federal Government, the Federal Government saying that it is not new money, and the Education Minister saying that it is new money—will make for a very interesting Estimates Committee hearing as we sort all this out. I would like to make one other point.

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

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I refer to the Queensland State election and the contributions made by the members for Elder and Colton yesterday with regard to the Queensland Coalition's directing preferences to One Nation before the Labor Party. I see it as my duty as a member of Parliament to comment on this issue, as I have in the past. As a Liberal I am appalled at the decision, and I am not frightened to say so. As a member of Parliament in the most marginal seat in South Australia, I have had my share of tough elections. I faced one of the toughest election campaigns by my opponent, Quentin Black.

If one reads the profile of candidates appearing in the *Advertiser*, one reads that Mr Black's family has lived in the area for six generations. Also, one of Quentin Black's publications states that he is a 'local through and through', which, no doubt, are substitute words for 'Aussie through and through'. Regarding travel expense documents, the misinformation mentioned Italy twice—a reference, I suppose, to going back to the old country. No mention was made of the university agreement in Naples or my representing the then Premier in China.

However, despite that, I say that, if the Liberal Party had asked me to put preferences for Quentin Black behind the One Nation Party candidate, or a Party against further immigration, I would refuse: I would have refused then, I would refuse now and I would refuse in the future, because our democratic principles come first. I would not be afraid to do that because, although the campaign was tough, they always are. I know that members on both sides of this Chamber would not use such tactics. However, it is always better to support a candidate from one of the major Parties, such as the Australian Labor Party, the Australian Democrats or the Liberal Party, than it is to support a minority Party. The ALP has a sound record on multiculturalism, and I am not ashamed to say that, in my youth, I voted for the ALP on occasions because of that record.

The Labor Party has a safety net for extreme views. For example, while Graeme Campbell was a member of the Labor Party, his actions could be curtailed and he could be brought to order because of the Party's clear parameters. Once Graeme Campbell left the Labor Party he became a problem. A similar thing can be said about Pauline Hanson. Once she left the Liberal Party she was given a platform far beyond her representation, because in a democratic Party the voices of such people do not get the disproportionate amplification that they get as individuals.

I condemn members of the One Nation Party who have divided this country, and I agree with the member for Elder and the member for Colton that we must do everything in our power to ensure that individuals who promote only one issue, which has the ability to disrupt the harmony that exists in this country, are not elected. Whether we belong to the Liberal Party or the Labor Party, it is our duty to stand up against these people. In Queensland I would hand out voting cards for the Labor Party ahead of the National Party—sorry, One Nation Party. I would hand them out, and I have a track record.

Mr Atkinson: National Party or One Nation Party?

Mr SCALZI: No, One Nation Party. I stand on my record on this issue. I trust that the people of Queensland will do the right thing on 13 June. I hope they are aware how disunited this country will become if any members of the One Nation Party are elected to the Lower House of the Queensland Parliament. We must do our best to show up the One Nation Party for what it is. I agree with the member for Elder that we should put the member for Oxley back in the bottle so that she does not make anybody sick.

Mr CONLON (Elder): I wish to raise three matters of significance to my electorate. The first concerns a set of traffic lights on the corner of Cliff Street and Morphett Road, which have been sought by one of my very able constituents, Mrs Gloria Brackenridge, since 1987. She has been asking—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr CONLON: Gloria Brackenridge is her name, for the information of the member for Spence. She has been seeking these traffic lights since 1987. She has been through Chris Gallus, and the member for Hawker before her.

Members interjecting:

Mr CONLON: Will you please behave! This is a serious matter. She has worked assiduously since that time but she has had knock back after knock back. She has been asking for traffic lights but has never got them. After many years of asking, she saw a glimmer of hope from the Hon. Diana Laidlaw, who in 1996 indicated that there would be preliminary investigations into the installation of sections of raised median at strategic locations—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr CONLON: I said median. A preferred turn-right junction would also be investigated. That occurred in 1996. The former member for Elder, David Wade, took it up again with Diana Laidlaw, who told him that Mrs Brackenridge and Morphettville Neighbourhood Watch would finally get something, and that the department was investigating the options. When I was elected I found that Diana Laidlaw had not delivered on this matter. I point out that during that period the other end of Cliff Street, which is in your electorate, Mr Speaker, was upgraded with traffic lights, but for some reason we were not quite as fortunate.

I took up the cudgels for Mrs Brackenridge. After many years of writing to her, Diana Laidlaw has failed to get Mrs Brackenridge's name right and refers to her as Mrs Brackenbridge. It is a small indication of the competency of her office that she has not been able do that. Finally we got an undertaking to start work. I wrote to Diana Laidlaw and she wrote back, referring to my letter and advising me that the investigations had been completed after 11 years and that preliminary work would take place in February or March 1998, including the relocation of bus stops and shelters as well as Telstra underground cables, and that signs would be erected to indicate that work was commencing.

Mrs Brackenridge, quite rightly with some scepticism, waited and watched. February ran into March, and March ran into April, and nothing happened. I wrote to Diana Laidlaw again and I received an answer on Friday 3 April 1998, 11 years later, which stated, 'The matters you have raised are currently being examined.' We do not need them examined. They have had the daylights examined out of them! What we need is some action. If Diana Laidlaw is incompetent at doing her job, she should step aside and let someone else do it. I give credit to Mrs Brackenridge and the people in Morphettville Neighbourhood Watch who have worked tirelessly for 11 years to attempt to improve safety in their area, so far fruitlessly.

The second matter to which I refer is an absolute disgrace, and concerns a hire company in my electorate: Redihire. That is a business name of Thorn Australia Pty Ltd. It has pursued one of my constituents, whom I will not name, for a debt of $127, which is rent overdue on some goods that he rented from the company. My constituent was left this note by Redihire:

> You have had more than enough chances to pay this account. We must now have our goods back. Phone today with a collection time or we may report the goods stolen by you to the police and pursue legal action. If you go to gaol for theft, you will lose your son to the foster child system. It is not a difficult choice.

That is absolutely disgraceful. I say to Redihire that, if it wants to kick one of my constituents when he is down, I will come into this place and kick back. I will be speaking further with my constituent to see whether he wants me to make inquiries with the police or the Attorney-General to determine whether this company, in making demands of this nature and threatening criminal prosecution on a civil matter, has breached the Criminal Law Consolidation Act or some other Act. I will follow that up.

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

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I want to raise a matter that is of great concern to the people in my region, particularly in the Barossa Valley. Many members would understand and appreciate that concern. In recent weeks four people have been killed on the main road entering the Barossa Valley (the Barossa Valley Way) between Gawler, Lyndoch and Tanunda. Members would know the road, which is a lovely scenic route lined by trees that are very close to the roadside. In fact, many of the trees are inside the road delineating posts. This is a serious matter which I have raised with the Minister, and I feel that, alongside health issues, it is my highest priority in my region of the Barossa Valley at the moment.

The solution is the upgrading of the road which passes through Gomersal. To go to the Barossa that way, one drives up the highway to Gawler, veers to the right at Sheoak Log and then goes through Gomersal and on to the Barossa Valley Way just south of Tanunda at the Bethany turnoff. That country is flat and the existing road is straight. That road should be sealed and some of the bends taken out to assist heavy vehicles.

Mr Atkinson: Not another road sealed in your electorate?

Mr VENNING: Four people have been killed in recent days. The honourable member should drive on that road. That is a very sad statistic. This road needs to be upgraded, and all those people involved agree. The Minister recently set up a strategy committee which made recommendations, one of the key recommendations being that this additional road should be sealed so that heavy traffic, the B-doubles, can travel on this road, rather than using the tourist routes. Tourists who travel along quietly should not be mixing with this heavy traffic. It is a united approach, but the problem we have is that this road is in the council area of Kapunda Light, which I share with the member for Light, and it extends to Tanunda, which is in the Barossa council area. So, it is difficult for the ratepayers of Kapunda Light to justify the cost for a road which goes almost exclusively to a town in another region, and that is Tanunda.

I will be very appreciative of a united approach by both councils, including their Mayors and CEOs. I have called a joint meeting for next week, 9 June, and I will also lead a delegation to the Minister. This issue is now serious, and four deaths attest to that. I get very cross when I see the trucks coming in on these tourist routes. Some of the heavy trucks are banned from going to some of the wineries. We know how successful companies in this area have been. They are doing fantastic business, but some of the B-doubles must be separated because they cannot get access to some of the wineries. It is not only a tourism problem but also an industry problem. We have probably the greatest growth industry in

this State but they are handicapped with this road access problem.

I treat this matter as a high priority. I do not believe it will need a massive amount of money, probably between $3 million and $5 million, depending on the grade up to which the road is taken, bearing in mind that it must cope with B-double standards. I understand that the councils are prepared to do their bit towards this issue, realising the extent of the problem. I also commend the Kapunda Light council, because it will be spending the money really for access to another council area. I certainly support that. This matter is a priority, and I hope it is able to be remedied within the next 12 months or so, because with four deaths occurring in the last four or five weeks, I do not want to see any more. When members are next driving from Gawler, I suggest they travel through Lyndoch and look at the large trees on the side of the road—massive trees that are actually inside the road clearance posts. That is the problem. We could remove the trees but, of course, that is a no-no. We must provide another route. Leave that route for the tourists and provide another access road for the heavy duty transport vehicles required to access the Barossa Valley.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I draw the attention of the House to the difficulties faced by small business when they come up against the bullying—sometimes described as market power—of large business that comes from large international capital. In the south we have recently had the experience of a Woolworths store opening a supermarket and at the same time opening a convenience store in the same shopping centre. Because that convenience store was found to breach existing shop trading regulations, it was rightly closed. However, the response of Woolworths to this action has been, in the view of at least two of the local traders, to intimidate and bully them in a way that they consider to be most unfair, and to also indicate what can happen when small business people trying to make a go of it and providing a service to our community come up against the might of international capital.

As I said, Woolworths opened a convenience store on the same site as the supermarket. It was originally intended to be a liquor store but when they were unsuccessful in getting a licence for the liquor store they looked to how they might utilise those premises. The store was closed down because it was considered to be part of the larger supermarket and therefore exceeding the 400 square metres for an exempt shop. The response of Woolworths was to put up a huge notice in the convenience store window saying, 'We regret that we have been ordered to close this store by the Department of Industrial Affairs'—members will note that this is wrong on two counts: there never was a Department of Industrial Affairs and there certainly is not one now—and they included an extract from the letter written by the Manager, Retail, Wholesale Storage and Transport, citing the Act in that it is evident that this total area is greater than the maximum permitted area of 400 square metres for an exempt shop, and then saying, 'This order prevents you from buying your needs outside of normal trading hours at supermarket prices. That is why Woolworths supports deregulation of trading hours.'

This notice was accompanied by a photograph of one of the traders who had spoken with me and *Advertiser* articles which the traders consider to be totally inaccurate and which they were unsuccessful in getting changed or corrected, despite contacting the *Advertiser*. The traders consider the notice constitutes an attempt to get customers to go and complain to them and try to intimidate them into withdrawing their legitimate objections to Woolworths acting outside the law.

The traders were very much affected during the period that Woolworths was open and lost about 30 per cent of their business. The way Woolworths were trading was scarcely something we could expect to continue on a long-term basis. The convenience store was not open from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m., as are the two deli's nearby, but only open from whatever time they felt convenient, sometimes from 10 a.m., during the week, sometimes from 1 p.m., and also during the week at times from 6 p.m. How can a small business possibly compete with a store that can open only during those hours when it finds it convenient and most profitable? They are not providing a service to the community all those hours seven days a week.

The other area of gross unfair trading involved access to stock. Obviously a small deli can only maintain emergency-type home stock, not regular bulk packages of all sorts of goods. So, if somebody went into the Woolworths convenience store and asked for a 10kg bag of rice, something not normally held in a small deli, the convenience store would telephone the shelf stackers at Woolworths 50 metres away and down would come the 10kg bag of rice at supermarket prices.

The customers in that area did get some temporary benefit from the reduced prices. However, what they have been saying now is, 'How long would that benefit have lasted if our convenience stores had had to close?' When there are only three major supermarket stores, will the service that we get be any better than we get now from banks?

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I wish to highlight to the House some concerns I have over certain matters that are currently before the House and, indeed, before the Public Works Committee. I am extremely disappointed that this morning and in previous recent attempts I have not had a chance to highlight these matters. I am sick and tired of seeing the Opposition's double standards and the pedantic way in which members opposite are currently holding back economic opportunity for South Australians when it comes to public works. They continually refer to the Auditor-General's Report with respect to public works reporting.

Mr ATKINSON: On a point of order, Sir, the member for Mawson appears to be indicating that he will anticipate debate on a matter before the House on motion, namely, that we note the Public Works Committee report on the Hindmarsh stadium redevelopment. If he were to do that, my understanding is that he would be out of order.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would be of a similar understanding. The Chair was waiting to see whether the honourable member, in actual fact, raised the subject.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: It is the general principles that I want to talk about with respect to the Public Works Committee. The Auditor-General highlighted that better mechanisms need to be put in place with respect to reporting by agencies, particularly with respect to acquittals when it comes to the Public Works Committee. I congratulate the current presiding member on making attempts to do that. But there is a difference between making an effort to obtain indicators from Premier and Cabinet that it is prepared to put forward better reporting mechanisms to the Public Works Committee from agencies when they put up public works and actually seeing works held up. There are a lot of people who want to see real

jobs for South Australians. On a daily basis in this Chamber we hear the Leader of the Opposition talk about slippage of public works. I believe that behind the scenes the Leader of the Opposition is doing everything he can to ensure that there is a continuing and ongoing slippage of public works in this State.

It is interesting that the Opposition goes to the nth degree with respect to the Auditor-General's Report on public works but that it will not listen to the Auditor-General with respect to matters such as the sale of ETSA. It is an absolute double standard. I know for a fact that the Leader of the Opposition is directing from within what the Labor Party should be doing in relation to public works. Frankly, the Opposition is playing political games that are costing this community a lot. I intend to let everyone in South Australia know that the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party are playing games that are holding back the progress of this State.

Clearly, it was very important that the Public Works Committee did improve information regarding acquittals; but at the end of the day the Public Works Committee's job is to use its very best endeavours to come up with information, acquittals and other oral and written evidence to give it an opportunity to make a decision on whether or not it should put forward a recommendation of approval in terms of a particular project. The fact is that, if as a Public Works Committee you have done your best but you do not feel that there is enough evidence, you should submit a final report to the Parliament, slam the Government if it has made a mistake and not hold back the opportunities for economic development. This has happened with the West Beach development, and it is now happening with others. The fact is that the Labor Party is anti-soccer. It wants to hold back Olympic Games opportunities for soccer in South Australia.

Ms THOMPSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Mawson has just asserted that the Labor Party is opposed to soccer. I object to that point: he has no evidence of that. On a personal basis, I am a major fan of soccer.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. That is a matter for debate. The honourable member can always respond as the next contributor.

Mr ATKINSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Mawson has now referred to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, which is anticipating—

The SPEAKER: Order! That is quite a different point of order from the one raised by the member for Reynell. I ask the member for Mawson to avoid that particular subject matter during his contribution.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I will not talk about the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, but I will talk about soccer generally. In this State—

Mr WRIGHT: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Mawson has incorrectly made inferences against the Labor Party, and I think you should rule on that.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The honourable member has an opportunity in grievance debate to respond to that issue. The honourable member's time has now expired.

Members interjecting:

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

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. Section 6 of the Members of Parliament (Register of Interests) Act 1983 restricts publication within Parliament of information from the Register of Members' Pecuniary Interests. Section 6(1) of the Act provides:

> A person shall not publish whether in Parliament or outside Parliament—
>
> (a) any information derived from the Register. . . unless that information constitutes a fair and accurate summary of the information contained in the Register or statement and is published in the public interest; or—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to interrupt the honourable member on an important subject, but a matter of privilege is of vital importance to the House, including the Chair, who must hear every word put to him. I ask members to respect the Chair and be totally silent while this matter is dealt with.

Mr ATKINSON: It continues:

> (b) any comment on the facts set forth in the Register or statement unless that comment is fair and published in the public interest and without malice.

Subsection (2) of that section provides:

> Where a person publishes within Parliament any information or comment in contravention of subsection (1), the person shall be guilty of a contempt of Parliament.

In the House on 3 April 1991 Speaker Petersen ruled that the Hon. M.D. Rann's mention in the House of Mr D.S. Baker's interest in the Elgin Trust was a *prima facie* breach of the Act and a contempt of Parliament. I refer to page 3 970 of Volume 4 of the 1990-91 *Hansard*. I ask you, Sir, to rule on how the Premier's use of the register to canvass the share holdings of two Opposition members of the House differed from the Hon. M.D. Rann's mention of Mr D.S. Baker's interest in the Elgin Trust. In short, Mr Speaker, can you distinguish Speaker Petersen's ruling on the Hon. M.D. Rann's case from the Premier's case?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair is of the view that the honourable member has raised a point of order rather than a matter of privilege. There is also another question in that the Chair is being asked to carry out an investigation as to whether in fact the Premier went to the register and got that information. Of course, that is not the role of the Chair: it is the role of others to attempt to advise the Chair that that is the case. On the basis of what has been presented thus far, the Chair does not uphold nor will it give precedence to a motion before it.

Mr ATKINSON: I am not seeking precedence for a motion, Sir: I am asking you to rule. I raised the point in exactly the same form as did the Leader of the Opposition in 1991. On that occasion the Speaker called Mr Rann into his office to discuss whether Mr Rann had got the information from the register, and he concluded that he had. I ask you, Sir, to do the same with the Premier.

The SPEAKER: The situation is that if the honourable member is alleging that there has been a contempt he has to do that. But, at this stage, I cannot carry out an investigation on it. I do not believe that there is anything before the Chair that I can react to.

Mr ATKINSON: Sir, for the sake of form, I allege a contempt.

The SPEAKER: I accept what the honourable member is saying, but there is nothing yet in the honourable member's submission to the Chair that gives me any knowledge that the Premier went to the register. Until such time as the honourable member can prove his allegation to the Chair, there is no matter before the Chair.

EMERGENCY SERVICES FUNDING BILL

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to impose a levy for the provision of emergency services to establish the Community Emergency Services Fund; to amend the Country Fires Act 1989, the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service Act 1936 and the Valuation of Land Act 1971; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

In introducing the Bill I point out that it sets out some major reforms for emergency services funding. The introduction of the Bill will continue to move major reform forward. I take the opportunity to indicate that in introducing the Bill the Government will continue to have consultations with key stakeholders. I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This Bill establishes a framework for levies on fixed and mobile property in South Australia, an hypothecated fund ('Community Emergency Services Fund'), and for the collection, management and disbursement of monies to meet the ongoing costs of emergency services in South Australia. It is in direct response to demands from the community for a fairer funding system.

This Bill is long overdue. Over the past 20 years five reports have recommended major reform to the existing arrangements for funding emergency services, but the hard decision to make the necessary changes has not been taken until now.

The current arrangements for funding emergency services in South Australia are complex, inequitable, unsustainable, inefficient, and lacking in transparency and accountability.

The Bill will replace the current funding arrangements with a fairer system where all property holders will make a comparatively equitable contribution towards the cost of emergency services on the basis of potential to benefit and the services available to them. This Government accepts that everyone has a right to expect access to emergency services for the protection of life, property and the environment, and everyone has a responsibility to make a fair contribution towards the cost of those emergency services.

Implementation of the new arrangements will enable the current fire service levy contribution included in insurance premiums for homes, businesses and contents to be eliminated, providing a major direct set-off to those who insure.

The 'Community Emergency Services Fund' will be subject to the control and management of the Minister, and will be applied by the Minister to fund the ongoing cost of services provided by the CFS, MFS, SES, Volunteer Marine Rescue organisations and agreed rescue and prevention services provided by the Surf Life Saving Association, SAPOL and other community based providers of emergency services.

The fund will be exclusively applied for the purposes of emergency services and subject to comprehensive accountability through the Parliamentary process and the audit requirements of Section 31 of the Public Finance and Audit Act. There will be a substantial improvement in transparency and accountability compared with the existing complex arrangements. Under the new arrangements, services delivered to protect the community will be specifically funded on the basis of genuine need and risk based strategies with full accountability.

Under the current system, customers of insurance companies contribute approximately 70 per cent of the combined operating budget of the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (SAMFS) and the Country Fire Services (CFS) through a fire services levy included in insurance premiums.

The contribution from the Insurance Industry is paid direct to those agencies according to formulae contained in the *Country Fires Act 1989* and the *South Australian Metropolitan Fire Services Act 1936*. The balance of the CFS, MFS and SES operating budgets is contributed by State, Local and Commonwealth Governments, which is ultimately paid by taxpayers or the ratepayers of Councils.

Estimates based on insurance industry figures and data available after a number of natural disasters indicate that approximately 31 per cent of households and 20 per cent of small businesses do not insure and that another 29 per cent of households and 24 per cent of small businesses are underinsured.

The Government is concerned that under the current arrangements, those who do not insure, are underinsured, or insure offshore, do not make a fair contribution to the cost of protecting their lives, property and the environment.

In addition, the lack of transparency and accountability in the current funding system impedes effective strategic management and risk based service delivery to protect the community.

The current system provides little correlation between the contributions made by different service sectors in terms of their potential to benefit, the services required and used by those service sectors, the underlying cost profile of the services available, and longer term risk management based strategies to allocate resources to manage threats the community faces.

This Bill will establish a system focused on comparative equity in contribution which can be linked to a risk management based framework to deliver services to protect the community over a 20 year planning horizon.

In relation to mobile property, it is accepted by this Government that owners of motor vehicles, trailers, caravans and boats all benefit from the range of emergency services available and therefore should make a fair contribution to the cost of those services. Motor vehicle related incidents alone now account for at least 15 per cent of emergency service callouts.

The Bill provides for the assessment of an annual levy in respect of all land in South Australia, all motor vehicles registered under the *Motor Vehicles Act 1959*, and all vessels registered under the *Harbors and Navigation Act 1993*.

With respect to fixed property, it is intended that contributions to the fund be based on the Capital Value of the property adjusted by an area factor and a land use factor to facilitate comparative equity in contribution i.e., a property owner will make a reasonable and comparatively equitable contribution on the basis of their potential to benefit and the cost profile of services available.

The Bill allows for the levy on fixed property to be a two part levy—a fixed charge component regarded as a 'universal access fee', and an amount payable in respect of the value of the land.

Emergency Services Areas are established for the purpose of determining area factors, where the Emergency Service Area reflects a grouping of areas on the basis of service profiles and communities of interest. The capacity to revoke or reconstitute areas or vary the boundaries of areas has been included, in recognition of the need for flexibility in the system to enable long term equity and stability in an environment of changing demographics and social and economic circumstances.

The land use factors to be applied to the Capital Value of the property are provided for, where the land use factor reflects the profile of services that may be required by properties of that land use.

There is provision for the property owner to raise an objection with the Minister with regard to the attribution of a particular land use to the property. A property owner will also have the right to raise an objection, request a review, or initiate an objection in respect of a valuation under the *Valuation of Land Act 1971*.

The declaration and adjustment of the levy and area and land use factors for a particular financial year will be fixed by way of notice published in the *Gazette*. The capacity to adjust the levy and area and land use factors in this manner will be critical to maintaining a system that is equitable, effective, transparent and accountable.

As social and economic factors change and risk based service delivery takes effect, there will be an ongoing need to change adjustment factors and emergency service areas. The Bill has included the flexibility and accountability necessary to ensure the system remains strategically focussed, sustainable and responsive to the changing nature and needs of the community. Adjustment through proclamation will ensure this critical flexibility and accountability is achieved and maintained.

The Bill provides for the management of an 'assessment book'. The information to be contained in the assessment book is critical to the ongoing management and accountability of the levy and fund.

These clauses provide for the book to be maintained and kept in a form necessary to enable effective and efficient management of data while being accessible to property holders.

The Bill provides for the collection of the fixed property levy but does not specify the collecting agent. This will enable arrangements that best meet the needs of the community and the fund to be negotiated and maintained on an ongoing basis.

This Bill is a major reform and long overdue. It will address the major inequities and flaws in the current arrangements for funding the delivery of emergency services in South Australia. It seeks to implement arrangements which are fair and will fund and underpin the delivery of emergency services to meet the needs of the community over a 20 year planning horizon, well into the next century.

I commend this Bill to honourable members.

Explanation of Clauses

Clauses 1 and 2:

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Interpretation

This clause provides definitions of terms used in the Bill.

Clause 4: Land that is subject to the levy

This clause explains what land is subject to the levy. Each piece or section or aggregation of contiguous land that is separately owned or occupied is liable to separate assessment. Subsections (3) and (4) allow for more than one assessment in respect of separately owned or occupied land where the land straddles the boundary between two emergency services areas or separate parts of the land are used for different purposes referred to in section 7. Subsections (5), (6), (7) and (8) provide for assessment of land in strata and community schemes.

Clause 5: Basis of levy

This clause provides for the basis on which the levy will be assessed.

Clause 6: Emergency services areas

This clause establishes the emergency services areas and provides for their replacement or modification by proclamation.

Clause 7: Land uses

This clause sets out the uses into which land is to be divided for the purposes of the land use factor declared under section 9.

Clause 8: Objection to attribution of use to land

This clause provides landowners with a right of objection to the land use attributed to their land. If a landowner is dissatisfied with the Minister's decision on an objection he or she may appeal to the Land and Valuation Court.

Clause 9: Declaring the levy and the area and land use factors

This clause provides that the Governor may declare the levy and the area and land use factors for a financial year specified in the notice. The clause requires the Minister to determine the amount that needs to be raised by the levy for emergency services in the relevant financial year. This amount must be published in the Governor's notice.

Clause 10: Liability of the Crown

This clause provides that the Crown is exempt from paying the levy is respect of land set out in subclause (2) if the Crown has paid into the Community Emergency Services Fund 10 per cent of the amount determined by the Minister under clause 9(4) as the amount required to be raised by the levy.

Clause 11: Minister to keep assessment book

This clause provides for the keeping of an assessment book. Subclause (4) provides for flexibility in keeping the assessment book.

Clause 12: Alterations to assessment book

This clause allows an owner of land to seek rectification of the assessment book from the Minister or from the Supreme Court if he or she is dissatisfied with the Minister's response.

Clause 13: Inspection of assessment book

This clause gives members of the public the right to inspect the assessment book and to copy entries in the book.

Clause 14: Liability for the levy

This clause provides that the person who owns land on 1 July in the financial year to which a levy relates is primarily liable for the levy. Succeeding owners are also liable but are entitled to recover any amount paid from the previous owner who is primarily liable.

Clause 15: Notice of levy

This clause requires the Minister to serve a notice of the amount of the levy payable on the person primarily liable. The notice must include the information required by subclause (2).

Clause 16: Interest

This clause provides for the payment of interest.

Clause 17: Levy first charge on land

This clause provides that an unpaid levy and interest are a first charge on the land concerned.

Clause 18: Rent, etc., payable by lessee or licensee

This clause enables the Minister by notice served on a lessee or licensee of land to require the lessee or licensee to pay the rent or other consideration due under the lease or licence to the Minister in complete or partial satisfaction of the owner's liability for the levy in respect of the land.

Clause 19: Sale of land for non-payment of a levy

This clause provides for sale of land by the Minister on failure to pay a levy for more than one year.

Clause 20: Recovery of levy not affected by an objection, review or appeal

This clause ensures that the Minister retains the right to recover a levy even though it is subject to challenge. If the challenge is successful any amount overpaid must be refunded by the Minister.

Clause 21: Payment of the levy into the Fund

This clause requires the levy to be paid into the Community Emergency Services Fund.

Clause 22: Liability for the levy

This clause imposes a levy on the registration, and reregistration of motor vehicles and vessels.

Clause 23: Declaring the amount of the levy

This clause provides that the levy may be declared by the Governor by notice published in the *Gazette*. The clause provides for a proportion of the levy to be paid when the period of registration does not coincide exactly with the financial year.

Clause 24: Objection to classification of vehicle

This clause provides for the right to object against the classification of a particular vehicle for levy purposes.

Clause 25: Payment of the levy into the Fund

This clause requires the levy to be paid into the Community Emergency Services Fund.

Clause 26: The Community Emergency Services Fund

This clause establishes the Community Emergency Services Fund. Subclause (4) sets out the purposes for which the Fund can be applied.

Clause 27: Investment of the Fund

This clause provides for investment of the Fund.

Clause 28: Accounts

This clause requires the Minister to keep proper accounts of receipts and payments in relation to the Fund. Section 31 of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987* requires the Auditor-General to audit the accounts to be kept under this clause.

Clause 29: Minister may delegate

This clause enables the Minister to delegate any of his or her functions, powers or duties under the Act (except the power to delegate).

Clause 30: Service of notices

This clause provides for the service of notices.

Clause 31: Regulations

This clause provides that the Governor may make regulations for the purposes of the Act.

Mr CONLON secured the adjournment of the debate.

MURRAY RIVER CATCHMENT WATER MANAGEMENT BOARD

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That the levy proposal forming part of the Murray River Catchment Water Management Board, initial Catchment Water Management Plan 1998 laid on the table of this House on 4 June 1998, be disallowed.

I indicate to the House that my purpose in moving the disallowance is to initiate debate so that the matter can be decided in this place today. In doing so, I hope that the motion to disallow will be rejected as it is a consequence of a decision by the Economic and Finance Committee to object to the plan put to it by the Minister. By deciding the matter today, the House has an opportunity to unblock the blockage so that the plan may proceed.

The Act requires that only the levy proposal be voted on, not the plan itself. If the levy proposal is rejected, this will mean that the plan cannot be implemented. Without a levy in

place there is no operational structure to ensure that this catchment board can prepare a catchment plan in conjunction with the community which will define the priorities and special needs of the Murray River catchment area. Without the levy the appointed catchment board, which has been funded by taxpayers up until this point, will also become insolvent and inoperable. Taxpayers' funds applied as an investment in this catchment board and the catchment plan may be lost. However, the real losers will be the people of the Murray River catchment area whose environment and water so vitally depend on the activities of the catchment board. Before any enterprise can be commenced, funds must be raised and plans approved. We now have an opportunity to debate and decide the matter in this place.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): It is becoming very predictable that whenever the Minister for Environment sends the Economic and Finance Committee one of these water catchment boards we have a point of dispute—and this is certainly one of those cases. The issue with the Murray River Catchment Water Management Board is one which I do not believe and one which the majority of members of the Economic and Finance Committee simply could not support. This is a fundamental problem for the Government and I hope that, if this Minister is incapable of administering her portfolio, someone from within Government takes control of this issue or we will be dealing with such matters time and again.

The fact is that it is a very simple equation. The plan put to the Economic and Finance Committee for support has, on the very best analysis of the cost of administration versus the delivery of service, about a 33 per cent cost of administration. On my reading of the document the more likely scenario—and this was certainly the view of many on the committee—is that 50¢ out of every $1 is spent by the board to administer this fund. We need to look very closely at this because, at the end of the day, it affects the people living in the electorates of Murray Mallee, Finniss and Chaffey (the National Party seat) and, if it is up to the Labor Party to defend these people, defend them we will.

Let us look at this equation. This board will carry over about $2.5 million of revenue this financial year. From the communities which I have just mentioned, it will collect about $3 or $4 million this forthcoming financial year and will certainly carry over a substantial surplus. When it is broken down, it is administering about $4.2 million, give or take a few hundred thousand dollars. Of that $4.2 million, $3 million is paid to the Commonwealth for the Murray-Darling Basin Commission to administer. I acknowledge it provides some input to the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, but no control or major operational assistance—just some advice. So, $3 million is taken off the ledger. That leaves about $1 to $1.2 million—depending at which numbers you look—and it costs anywhere between $500 000 and $800 000 to administer.

The Chief Executive Officer is on a salary of $90 000, cars are provided and at least four staff members are based in the Riverland to administer a little over $1 million for the next financial year. That is hands on administration. I am not critical of the officers involved—no doubt they are very capable and will do a good job—but, at the end of the day, some very pertinent questions need to be asked. For instance, why are we allowing this situation to develop? I ask the member for Chaffey to bear this in mind: how many people in the township of Berri earn $90 000 administering a budget of about $1 million and are responsible for four staff?

The Minister has allowed costs to blow-out across these schemes. Why do we have a Department of Environment and Natural Resources when we have these boards with very high administration costs and salaries all over the State? Although the work was useful, the committee was certainly not convinced that that work could not have been undertaken by existing structures, for example, by Commonwealth structures, some community input or the agency.

The Minister shakes her head but, if I were a ratepayer in the electorates of Finniss, Murray Mallee, Chaffey or any other city and regional centre, I would be pretty damn angry that my levies—anywhere upwards of 50¢ out of every $1—were going towards supporting and underpinning a bureaucracy that, quite honestly, could be replicated or the work performed by a number of other agencies. The Minister can shake her head but, at the end of the day, she is losing control of her portfolio. The Minister is not able to convince the Economic and Finance Committee of what should be a fairly simple process.

If the Minister's agency wants to keep putting up incomplete, inadequate and, in some regards, totally inappropriate business plans, budgets and documentation, good luck to it. But we will keep coming back and back until the Minister gets it right.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: She's accusing me of being incompetent.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Absolutely!

Mr FOLEY: So, members of the Economic and Finance Committee are incompetent? Is that what the Minister is saying?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: You are incompetent.

Mr FOLEY: Why just me?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I apologise: the Minister calls me incompetent for being very concerned about the electors of Chaffey, Finniss and Murray Mallee because 50¢ in every dollar of their tax is being spent—

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The Minister says I am wrong. Let us go through a few of these things. I am glad that the Minister has provoked me into this. Let us look at this document. It lists salary and on-costs, $280 000. We then look at staff travel and accommodation expenses, $10 000; training conferences and seminar fees, $10 000; and members' session fees for board members, $28 750. If you did not think that was enough, we also give them a little bit of money if they come along for a subcommittee meeting. Not only do we pay them for board meetings but we pay the board members for board subcommittee meetings, and we have allowed $26 000.

But it gets better. Members' vehicle reimbursement expenses, $24 500; members' accommodation expenses, $5 400; and training, conference and seminar fees, $3 000—this is for the board, the other $10 000 is for the staff. As for venue hire, equipment and so on, that is part of that $3 000. Then we have the Angas Bremer Management Committee. If we did not have enough committees, there is another one stuck in there, and for their efforts the members get $13 850. We must advertise our board meetings: it is a legislative requirement. I do not know how many newspapers are in the various electorates, but they have allocated $8 000 for advertising in members' electorates.

Ms White interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: That is just to advertise the fact that they are having a board meeting, not to say what they are doing. This is the budget that this Minister is expecting us to agree to.

This is a nice line: outsourcing. They love that word 'outsourcing'. We have outsourcing, research and investigation, it is called. We are not told what it is, because they have not actually worked out what they will be researching and investigating, but $300 000 has been put aside. If the Minister still thinks that I am incompetent, I will keep going. You have to have public relations: if we are raising millions and millions of dollars from the poor old punter in Berri, Renmark, Strathalbyn and who knows wherever else, we have to have a bit of PR, so let us have a newsletter. What do you reckon for a newsletter: a fair cop? Let us put $8 000 aside for the newsletter. That is pretty handy, bearing in mind that we have just spent $8 000 on advertising, but we had best follow that up with a newsletter.

But if that is not enough, we had better get community minded: let us have some sponsorships and provide some money for some events—$10 000 in the ledger seems a reasonable figure for that. We will just whack in $1 000 for library development and resources. But we also need to take photographs: let us have $1 500 for photography. If they still have not worked out how they can spend the ratepayers' money—

Mr Hill: You haven't mentioned the web page.

Mr FOLEY: That is still coming, because this is just to administer; we have not got onto the budget. I will get to that bit, after the Minister provoked me by calling me incompetent. I will get to the project side in a moment. Let us look at administration: that is shown as $21 500. Services, just for the power and water, are shown at $3 250; computer leases, $10 000; vehicle leases, $6 000; telephones $7 000; and then there is insurance, photocopiers, stationery, postage, audit fees and office cleaning. That is good but, as I said, for all that it is $814 300, I point out to the member for Chaffey, of his constituents' dollars being spent just to administer this. Then we ask, 'What do they do?'

We look at the side of the ledger that tells us what they do and, first, of the $3.9 million that they will be managing this year, straight away they give a cheque to the Natural Heritage Trust, the Murray Darling Basin Commission, for $3 036 000. Of the $3.9 million they have to manage, $3 million gets managed by someone else. There is now $900 000 of work to do but it will cost us $814 000 to do it. The member for Chaffey shakes her head in disagreement. I look forward to her contribution, because I am reading the document. We will put aside a bit of money for a few plans, but then we have other projects. We have the SA Country Arts Trust water installation project and support for community consultation development: we might as well slip $10 000 in there. They have a world wide web page, as my colleague the shadow Minister said. For development and update we had better whack in $1 500.

I thought this was good: we have to have communications and behavioural change projects, which will cost $20 000—and it goes on. If the Minister reckons I am incompetent for having some concerns about what I can only consider to be way over the top expenditure, I stand charged and guilty of incompetence. But if I were the Minister I would not be letting something as poorly prepared as this get past my office, let alone get to the Economic and Finance Committee. If the Minister reckons I am incompetent and off track, she should have a close look at what every member of the Economic and Finance Committee has had to say about this. The Minister should look at the transcript. Perhaps the Minister could even do us the courtesy one day of coming to a meeting.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Invite me.

Mr FOLEY: I cannot, but I am sure that my colleague the Chairman (the member for Stuart) would be more than happy to extend an invitation to the Minister to come along and undertake some cross-examination on this matter. I think that the Minister has had four of these matters come before the committee. All four have in some way, shape or form been criticised or rejected. I reckon that the Minister should start listening to the noise emanating from the committee, that we are not happy with it. I look forward to the member for Chaffey's contribution: perhaps she is not as concerned as I am about her electors. That is her judgment; she is the local member.

At the end of the day the average cost of the Onkaparinga board, just to administer the board, was about $50 000; and the northern region was about $34 000. This board—just for the board alone—is in excess of $112 000. These are the sorts of numbers we are dealing with. The administration costs for those other boards were, I think, benchmarked at between 7 per cent and 9 per cent. These administration costs fluctuate anywhere between 33 per cent and 50 per cent. I simply say, 'As a Parliament, think long and hard.' We are showing some concern about rural constituents who do not deserve to be unfairly taxed by a Government. Certainly, if they are to be taxed, the Government should spend the money as efficiently and properly as it can and not soak it up in as much as 50¢ in every dollar in bureaucratic double-take, in bureaucratic mismanagement and, indeed, in ways that do not serve the public of the Riverland and the Murray Mallee as it should be served.

Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey): I would like to thank the member for Hart for his comments and his concern for my constituents. I am also very concerned for them, but I would like to raise a few points, particularly in relation to the $3.036 million to the Murray Darling Basin Commission. That money is actually contributed to the Murray Darling Basin Commission and the NHT funding on a dollar for dollar return basis. So, the return for that $3 million to my area is $6 million. That $6 million is used for on-ground works through the local action planning groups, and the catchment board in the Riverland manages the finances for those local action planning groups. So, they do actually manage that money. However, it is not indicated in that initial plan and I agree with the honourable member that there is—

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mrs MAYWALD: They don't; the board has entered into an agreement to manage those finances for the local action planning groups. However, I share the member for Hart's concerns in relation to the administration costs of this board.

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mrs MAYWALD: I am sorry, I will not be able to support you on the vote, because I cannot jeopardise the $6 million. I have major concerns about the structure of the board, the employees and the administration as a whole. The general manager receives $90 000; the project officer receives $60 000; the accounting manager receives $50 000; and the administration manager receives $40 000. Even to the most untrained eye in this House, that would seem excessive, given the size of the business.

Another aspect that concerns me is the lack of choice given to this board in relation to certain issues raised by the member for Hart. I cite cars as an example. Treasury and the Auditor-General have directed the board that it must lease only from State Fleet. This incurs almost double the cost of

leasing cars privately. But it is a direction from the Treasurer and the Auditor-General, about which it has no choice. In relation to the accounting package, the cost is $10 000 plus $3 000 per annum for support services. The board has no choice: it is directed that that is the accounting system it has to use. That is a concern.

In relation to the SA Water levy—which is not the levy that we are discussing today—SA Water has reallocated the water allocation, which has resulted in a drop of over $700 000 in levies from SA Water to this catchment area, with no reference to the catchment board or the former River Murray Water Resources Committee. That is another concern. A workshop is to be held in June—which is terrific. However, it should have been held back in September, in relation to the consultation on this initial plan. This workshop is being held over a period of two days, at a cost of $10 000.

I appreciate the Economic and Finance Committee's raising these issues and bringing them to my attention in relation to the administrative costs of this board and the processes that have enabled it to get to this stage. One thing, though, is for certain: this is an initial plan and not the final plan. Now that these issues have been brought to my attention, I will certainly go back to my electorate and make sure that my electorate makes this board accountable for the dollars that it is spending, and that it does not allow this board to spend its money on the establishment of its own mini-bureaucracy within my electorate.

Ms White interjecting:

Mrs MAYWALD: I can appreciate the comments from the member on my right. However, there is a much bigger issue at stake here. The local action planning groups in the Riverland have works under way and, if we hold up the funding from the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, we will vandalise those projects.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

Mrs MAYWALD: It cannot be introduced prior to 30 June, if that is the case. Therefore, that levy cannot be collected within the next 12 months. That is $1.6 million of the irrigators' contribution, and that is an important contribution.

The member for Hart also referred to the $2.7 million that has been brought forward and the surplus of just under $1.5 million. What he did not refer to was the Murray River water resources document which outlines the projects that are likely to be undertaken by the board over the next five years and which was provided with this plan to the Economic and Finance Committee. Those projects amount to $150 million to $200 million worth of on ground works. When those works start is not the time to start collecting an enormous levy to pay for them: we need to be able to stage those projects over the five years and spread the cost to the irrigators over the period, not impose it in one hit. That is another important issue.

There is a very serious flaw in the process. The initial plan does not contain enough information for the Economic and Finance Committee to make an adequate assessment. I appreciate that there are process problems, and I believe that we will be able to address them. But I will not jeopardise the finances of this board in my region and those local action planning groups that have done so much work to get on ground works happening in an area that desperately needs them, because it would be environmental and economic vandalism.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I want to make a brief contribution on this very important water management plan, and I want to correct a few misnomers that have been propagated today. The member for Waite said that the board cannot go ahead if we do not approve this plan—that we have to give it some start-up funds and that it will not have the funds to proceed. That is clearly wrong, and I refer members to page 14 of the initial catchment water management plan before this House today, where it is clearly shown in the income and expenditure statements for 1998-99 that in this coming year the board will be carrying over an accumulated surplus for 1997-98 of $2 743 320. That is getting towards $3 million that the board has in the kitty, carried over from last year. So, the proposition put by the member for Waite, that the board has to have a bit of start-up capital, is a bit of a joke. That is taken care of: the board can operate.

I also have a concern about how this motion has been put before us in urgency today. My colleague the member for Hart has already mentioned the processes of the Economic and Finance Committee, of which I am a member, and the incompetence of the Minister in dealing with this process and in dealing with that committee.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms WHITE: And, as the shadow Minister points out, with most of her portfolio—particularly when it comes to water. This motion is being rushed through today, and we have been told that it has to be done today. However, we were told that last week. We were told that the water catchment plans had to be approved last week and that the matter could not be adjourned to this week to give all members time to properly consider the facts—members who are not on the Economic and Finance Committee and who are not familiar with the catchment plan. We were told that it had to be done last week. We now find that that was not true, because we are dealing with one this week—same time line, same deadlines. The Minister could not cope last week and she cannot cope this week.

What annoyed me particularly about the situation last week is that this week, when we approve this plan—and it is really the plan to which we on this side of the House object rather than the quantum of levy—we will be approving collection of a .3¢ per kilolitre water tax. Last week, in regard to my constituents in the northern Adelaide plains area, this House—not the Labor Party but the Liberal Party and the Independents—approved—

Mr Williams interjecting:

Ms WHITE: I apologise to the member for MacKillop. One of the Independents, the National Party member and the Liberal Party members approved not a .3¢ a kilolitre impost on the constituents of the Murray district but a 1¢ per kilolitre tax on top of the cost of their water with these Division 1 levies in the northern Adelaide plains. But that vote was lost, my vote was not successful last week, and we are now debating this issue. But it is with this plan that we take issue. My colleague the member for Hart has pointed out how nebulous and insulting is the budget under the plan for this board.

With the waste and excesses that are occurring, the Minister obviously is not in control of the process, having signed off on this outrageous budget before us today. I want to take up a couple of points raised by the member for Chaffey. I do not doubt that the honourable member has some concern about the implications for her constituents. The member for Chaffey implied that if we do not approve this plan today we would be jeopardising Federal funds.

Federal funds were attracted in the last financial year by the department. No board was involved: the same scheme was involved, but the department did it all by itself. It is not an absolute necessity even to have a board to attract those funds. I also draw attention to the member for Gordon's brief contribution last night when he condemned this plan and the process by which the Minister delivered it to this House. The member for Gordon said:

> To support this catchment water plan board is simply to support what could only be described as a bloated bureaucracy.

Members listening to the members for Hart and Chaffey outlining some of the absolute waste and bureaucracy gone mad in this plan would have to agree with the member for Gordon that to support this plan would be to set in place an absolute bloated bureaucracy and a waste of taxpayers' money. I will be watching to see how the member for Gordon votes.

Mr McEwen: Read *Hansard* and you'll know.

Ms WHITE: I hope that I did not read *Hansard* correctly, because the member for Gordon seems to be indicating that he will vote to 'support this catchment water management board and set up a bloated bureaucracy'. I hope that he has time to reflect and change his mind. The Minister has obviously told the member for Chaffey—because it is always a good tactic to do this, particularly with a new member—that if she does not support this motion she will be holding up the development of projects in her electorate. It is a common tactic and, I guess, one might believe it if one does not look closely enough.

The implication was that the $3 million this board contributes to the Natural Heritage Trust and the Murray-Darling Basin committee, and the funds that are attracted in kind from the Commonwealth projects in that area, would be jeopardised if this plan did not go ahead. Rubbish! That is absolute rubbish and not true. In fact, the board is virtually one vote in a vote of many that decide what the allocations will be from the collected funds that go to the Commonwealth committee, and, indeed, that contribution could be made from the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs.

My colleague the member for Hart asked earlier what the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs is doing in all of this, and why do we need such a fat bureaucracy. The department did it last year when the board had not been established. Why do we need this fat bureaucracy? My colleague and others have already cited outrageous amounts in administration costs, board and committee fees and costs of outsourcing and communications amounting to approximately $500 000 to administer the funds of this board—funds that should be going towards environmental projects.

Last week this House approved a very large impost on my water-using constituents: 1¢ per kilolitre on top of the amount they already pay for water. The tax on these Murray River people will be a third of that, but the problem is what it will be spent on, and the huge bureaucracy that this Minister for Environment and Heritage is asking us to approve and set in place. The member for Chaffey seemed to be indicating that she would approve of this plan and then look at it 12 months down the track. We are being asked to set in place a fat bureaucracy—and we have five staff members on very large salaries, board members being paid quite a lot of money, and quite high administration costs—and the implication from the member for Chaffey is that she would look at it in 12 months and then consider changing things.

I believe that most members in this Chamber know that that will not be the case. Once a bureaucracy is set in place it is very hard to change—it should never be established in the first place. I ask all members to take the member for Gordon's advice that if we support this catchment water management plan we will be setting in place an unacceptable bureaucracy. I ask members to vote for this motion to disallow this plan.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Like other speakers, I, too, have concerns for my constituents. In fact, I have many concerns for my constituents because they are next in line for review in terms of the Water Resources Act 1997, the water boards and the taxing which has been happening and which we have been talking about over the past couple of weeks. At the outset I declare my interest in this matter. I am a farmer by trade and an irrigator. I have an interest in this matter and in the tax that will be imposed on me, my family and my business. I am one out of many thousands of South Australians being taxed in this manner, I believe unfairly.

I told the House last week about my concerns with the Water Resources Act 1997 and how I believe that this Act will raise somewhere between $20 million and $30 million from land owners in South Australia in a full financial year, supposedly to be spent on the environment—lofty thoughts. No-one will argue against that. There has been a bit of a falling out on the cross-benches today. I think that in quiet times the member for Gordon and the member for Chaffey might have been sneaking over to the other place and listening to the Democrats perform. The Democrats' dilemma: the privilege of espousing lofty ideals in the knowledge that they will never be answerable; they will never have to put them into practice. That is what is happening on the cross-benches.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: What I am trying to say to the member for Peake is that both members with whom I sit on the cross-benches have said that they feel an abominable outrage at this piece of legislation, the way that it has been used and the processes that are affecting the people of South Australia, yet they have both indicated that they are willing to vote for this measure we are debating today. That has been their indication, but I am hoping that I might be able to convince them otherwise.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Give me a chance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: I understand that they have serious doubts about the ramifications if they support this motion. The seed of doubt was sown over funding from the Natural Heritage Trust. They are convinced that, if they vote for this proposal, there will be some danger to that funding. It appears that, through this levy, the State will tax the citizens of the Riverland and along the Murray River and then it will use $3 million of that levy as a lure to get money from the Commonwealth through the Natural Heritage Trust. I have always been a believer that it is quite in order to use a sprat to catch a mackerel: I do not have a problem with that. However, I do have a problem with using a mackerel to catch a mackerel.

Mr Koutsantonis: You can't do it.

Mr WILLIAMS: You can do it but it is a waste of resources, it is a waste of time and it is a waste of energy.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: It is possible for some people but I do not think it is practically possible at Port Giles. Some people believe that it is possible in this case to use a mackerel to catch a sprat, but I do not think that even the member for Spence would be able to do that. Parliament has a proposal before it to tax the people of the Riverland and to use some $500 000 on an annual basis to administer a plan to catch $3 million of Natural Heritage Trust funding.

This is an ongoing administration. I do not see us putting it in place today and dismantling it next week. Given the industrial laws under which this country operates, it will be particularly hard to hire a general manager, a project manager, a finance manager and an administration officer—the member for Chaffey missed out the administrative system—and set up the bureaucracy, at a cost of $280 000 a year just in salaries, with $500 000 for administration, and dismantle that system within a few years. The member for Hart clearly pointed out all the other costs associated with this board. I suggest that the people in the Riverland and those who live along the Murray River who will be taxed to fund this board in order to catch the sprat would be better off using their own mackerel to solve their problems.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: That is what I am trying to convince my colleagues on the cross-benches to do.

An honourable member: It's a fishy business.

Mr WILLIAMS: It is a fishy business. That is not the biggest problem, and the member for Taylor made some pertinent points about the timing and whether we have to carry this business today. I do not believe it is too late to change this between now and 30 June. I believe that other things could be done, and I believe that this board should be reworked and rejigged.

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: Exactly, and I thank the member for Hart for raising that point, which I am just coming to. This levy will raise some $1.6 million in the next financial year. It is expected that, in the next financial year, this board will have a surplus of $1.496 million. That shows a shortfall of about $120 000 in round figures. Apart from $120 000, the money is already there. I am absolutely certain that a blind man with one leg and with both arms tied behind his back could get $120 000 out of that administration budget. What I would say to my colleagues on the cross-benches is that the money is already in the kitty, if that is what is needed. The money is already in the kitty to assure Natural Heritage Trust funding.

I believe that this is an absolutely profligate waste of the State's resources. We have just been through the budget process and we have heard a lot of platitudes about open and accountable government, and this smacks in the face of all of that. I do not believe that what we are debating today has anything to do with open and accountable government. I do not think that it has anything to do with worthwhile or prudent use of the State's resources. We are continuing to debate what we should do with the assets of the people of South Australia. The Government feels that those assets should be capitalised because we need cash funds to sort out our debt problems. When we do this sort of thing, I can understand how the State has developed massive debt problems. Parliament has an opportunity to do something about it.

Recently five of these catchment water management boards have been set up, and I want to quote a few figures. The Torrens catchment board has a budget of $2.28 million. The administrative figure in that budget is $230 000, which is about 10 per cent. The Patawalonga catchment board has a budget of $2.988 million and an administrative budget of about $200 000, which is considerably below 10 per cent. The Onkaparinga catchment board has a budget of almost $2.1 million and administration costs of $264 000, which is a little over 10 per cent. The Northern Adelaide and Barossa catchment board, which we debated last week, has a budget of $2.318 million, with an administrative budget of $250 000, which is just over 10 per cent.

The Murray River catchment board has an administrative budget of $514 000, not including the $300 000 that the member for Hart alluded to under the heading of outsourcing. From my reading of what I consider to be an excuse for a budget document, it has a program of works of $864 000. As the member for Gordon pointed out last night, from the best reading of those figures, a bit over 30 per cent of the total budget is to be spent on administration; on the worst reading of the figures, it is approximately 50 per cent, and I suggest that the truth lies somewhere within those figures.

The member for Hart made the point that the people of the Riverland and the people along the Murray River are paying this tax—and I explained to the House last week that it is not a levy but a tax—to fund this nonsense. It is a considerable sum of money, $1.6 million. The citrus growers of the Riverland have their backs against the wall, yet these are the very people who will be taxed $1.6 million. It is easy for us to say that, in the context of the State budget, it is not very much money. Members should go into one of the Riverland towns—Berri, Loxton, Renmark, Barmera or Waikerie—walk down the street and say to each grower, 'We just want another $1 000.'

It does not matter that the citrus industry is on its knees. Are we going to say, 'Go and pull out your citrus trees and put in some chardonnay grapes'? I spoke about that last week when we addressed the matter of the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Valley catchment board. It is not the job of this or any other Government to try to pick winners, certainly not in a rural industry—I do not believe in any industry—because the history of every rural industry in this country shows a cyclical nature of economic return. One of the arguments that I have against the whole tenor of this legislation is that it allows the Minister of the day to pick winners in rural South Australia, and that is very dangerous.

I commend the member for Waite for introducing this matter, but I certainly do not commend him for his suggestion that the House vote against his motion. I certainly commend the motion to the House. There is an opportunity for the House today, and particularly my colleagues on the cross-benches, to stand up and be counted, and to tell the people of South Australia that we want good government. We do not want profligate waste of taxpayers' money.

Mr HILL (Kaurna): I am very pleased to follow the contribution made by the member for McKillop. I think it was a principled and very sensible contribution. I must say that, when he first came in here, I did not know the honourable member, but I had heard his comments on the radio about wanting to rejoin the Liberal Party within 24 hours or so after being elected as an Independent. I thought, 'This is a person who is not really an Independent but a quasi Liberal.' However, I must say that his stand on this issue over this

week and last week has put him in the true category of an Independent because, on this issue, he is prepared to stick with his principles and vote with his principles, unlike his colleagues on the crossbenches who are happy to come in here, criticise the Government and vote against it on the committees yet, when it comes to the real matter of making this Parliament work, they fall over and vote with the Government.

The interesting thing about Independents is that whenever they run, whenever they stand and whenever they are successful, one of the issues on which they always campaign is the idea that, 'We are Independent. We will make the Parliament work. Forget one Party government. We will make the Parliament work.' The members for Gordon and Chaffey have an opportunity to make this Parliament work. This matter before us today is about the proper processes of Parliament and democracy.

I will make a brief comment on the contribution of the member for Waite. This is the fourth time in just over a week that the member for Waite has done the dirty work for the Minister. Each time he has come in here with a prepared script, written by the Minister or her office, and has read it out and done the absolute dirty work—

Mr Foley: He will vote with us!

Mr HILL: Well, he should vote with us, because he moved that way. He should have the sincerity of voting with the position he put in the House, but we know he will not do that. The member for Waite for the fourth time in a week has done the dirty work of the Minister. Somebody has to do the dirty work of the Minister because, on each of the occasions that we have had this before us—this is the third time in the past week—a mistake has been made. The mistake has been made by the Minister and her office, because they have allowed inadequate plans to go before the Economic and Finance Committee.

I hope the Minister will speak on this debate, but one can never tell. However, if she does, I would like to know whether she read this submission before it was presented to the committee. Does she agree with the items in that budget? Does she agree with the bloated bureaucracy that is being proposed here or, like the rest of us, does she question it? If she does question it, why did she not do so before it was put before the Economic and Finance Committee?

Last week the House took up two hours of private members' time in considering two of the catchment boards. We were told that that had to be done as a matter of urgency. There was no opportunity to delay it for a week. We had to have them considered on the Thursday of last week because a process had to be gone through in order for these things to be put into place, the levies to be struck, the money gathered, and so on. It had to be done last Thursday, and we could not delay the debate on those two matters until today.

I am absolutely surprised that this matter comes before us today, one week later. If the two other matters could not be considered today, why is it that this one can be considered today? Why does it have to be considered within one day? Why could this not be allowed to lay on the table and have some amendments considered? This is another example of the Minister's trying to use this Parliament to push through corrections to mistakes that she and her office have made.

This is a weighty document, some 23 pages long. The Minister did not provide me with a courtesy copy. I had to ask one of the clerks to get one off file this afternoon just before the debate. I have had no opportunity to study it in the same way as members of the Economic and Finance Committee. Even having a cursory look through it, one can see there are many bits of padding trying to provide reasons why the budget is the size that it is. We know that this is another mistake by the Minister. We know that this is another example of a Minister who is not really in control of her department. She has put proposals to the Economic and Finance Committee which, for the third time, have been knocked back. I look forward to her explanations and answers to the questions when we as a group in the Parliament start questioning her.

However, when the Independents and the National member for Chaffey start asking questions, they are told, 'You cannot vote against it. If you vote against it, you are voting against the environment.' They are saying, 'You cannot have democracy; you cannot have proper process; you cannot consider good management, good government, the good working of Parliament. You cannot have any of those things because the environment will suffer.' Well, none of us wants to see the environment suffer, but that is absolute blackmail.

For the third time in a week, members on the crossbenches have been put under pressure by the Minister and told, 'Unless you go ahead and support what I am doing in subverting the proper processes of the Parliament, the environment will suffer and the people in your district will suffer.' Well, that is nothing but blackmail. It is absolutely atrocious that a Government Minister should come in here and exert pressure on Independent members of Parliament who in their heart and mind believe and know that this is a bad process and that the contents of this plan are wrong and should be revised. But, if they go ahead and vote for it, this is what will happen: there will be a bloated bureaucracy with somebody on $90 000 a year and a number of others under that person also on high incomes administering a budget of just on $1 million.

I will finish on this one point. I will not go through all the figures because they have been discussed before. I point out to the members on the crossbenches that they were elected to this place as Independents. This is your opportunity to stick to your convictions, show your independence, make the Parliament work and vote against this piece of nonsense.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Environment and Heritage): The Economic and Finance Committee, as we all know by now at the end of this day, by a majority of four votes to three, chose to reject this levy proposal that we have before us today. That means that it has put in jeopardy millions of dollars of Commonwealth money provided as matching grants under the Natural Heritage Trust.

In exercising its duties under the Act, the committee found itself pretty well immersed in exaggerated expectation of detail within an initial plan, while the big picture of managing the State's key water resources seems to have been totally ignored. Perhaps some members of the committee were confused, and perhaps some members felt that there was not enough detail in the plan before them, or that there had not been enough consultation in the process. However, the initial water catchment management plan for the Murray River is just that. It is the first plan prepared by the new board. There has been no opportunity for the Murray River board to prepare a full comprehensive plan in time to capitalise on the funds available through the Commonwealth Government.

The Water Resources Act 1997 provides for a minimal detail initial plan. Less than one year ago this Parliament recognised that as new boards were established—and we now

have six—we would need to allow a certain amount of time for those boards to find their feet, and that is why section 98(2) of the Act provides:

> If, in the opinion of the Minister, the scope of an initial plan is so limited that no useful purpose will be served by the preparation of a proposal statement, or by the public and other consultation required by this Act, the Minister may dispense with the requirements for the proposal statement and the consultation in relation to the preparation and adoption of the plan.

That is what the Act provides. The Act is the law. It is the current law. The views of the committee are provided by the Act and, initial or comprehensive, they are as important as any plan prepared by the board. But when searching for detail, when detail is not and cannot be made available, and when complaining about the lack of public consultation, it is absolutely necessary that we ensure that we understand the legislation, whether we agree with it or not.

I understand that the committee was also concerned that the State Government was shifting the financial burden from managing the Murray River onto the community through the imposition of this levy. Nothing could be further from the truth. The revenue raised by this levy is new money for new works, and it will raise more new money from other sources, particularly through the Natural Heritage Fund. NHT funds will match levy funds and contributions from the State to undertake new works and measures developed and prioritised by the community. This is not cost shifting—it is fund gearing. The committee—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Perhaps you should listen for a change. The committee was greatly concerned about the cost of administering the board, about growing bureaucracies and duplication of effort. Yes, board members will be renumerated for the responsibilities that they take on, and we have some of the best people in this State doing these jobs. The levy will create a handful of desperately-needed jobs in the Riverland and in the Murraylands region, because the board will need some excellent staff to carry the load of work in which they will engage. As has been mentioned, this board will have a staff of five, all of whom will be on contract. That is not a lot of people when one considers that they will manage an $8 million program in what effectively will be their first year of operation.

I point out to all boards that I do not want to see the costs of administration exceed 10 per cent of revenue raised. I think that is a good target to aim for and to improve upon. I will make allowance for the start-up years where initial costs of opening up an office and buying equipment can be expensive, but this needs to be written down over a number of years. I am pleased to say that at this stage the Patawalonga and the Torrens boards have dropped their administration costs to 9 per cent. Their target is to reduce that to 7.5 per cent, and that is excellent. I remind the House that these two boards have been operating for over three years. The Murray River board has some initial administration expenses of about $500 000, which is 15 per cent of its direct revenue raising. I would impress upon the House that it is only 6 per cent of the overall $8 million that they will inherit to manage. It is a significant amount, and it can be directly attributed to projects.

In an accounting sense, this should not be counted as an overhead. As this is an initial plan and not a comprehensive plan, there certainly has been no time to determine the level of detail. Once again, the Act enables this to happen. Whilst the Murray River Catchment Water Management Board—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Perhaps you should read the Act. The board is established and operates under the same legislative base as other water catchment boards in South Australia, but this board is distinguishable from most of the others in one important aspect. It also operates within the framework of the Murray-Darling Basin initiative, and it is under that framework that the investments in natural resources management throughout the Murray-Darling Basin are made. This is the imperative for this particular board and management being established.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Perhaps you have overlooked it. Perhaps you should listen, because you might learn.

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I draw your attention to Standing Order 119 'Reflections upon votes of the House', which provides:

> A Member may not reflect upon a vote of the House except for the purpose of moving that the vote be rescinded.

Throughout this contribution the Minister has reflected upon a vote of the House, that is, a vote taken by the Economic and Finance Committee when sitting as a committee of the House. I ask you, Sir, to require the Minister not to reflect on a vote of a committee of this House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: We were just getting to the imperative point that the honourable member should very sincerely think about listening to, namely, that Commonwealth funds under the Murray-Darling 2001 program, which is a component program under the Natural Heritage Trust, must be matched by State funding. Not only must our projects meet very stringent criteria established by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission before they can be considered for funding support under the Murray-Darling 2001 program but we also must commit matching State funds—or we will lose the opportunity to access Commonwealth funds.

I am sure that I have no need to remind members that water resources are, indeed, the lifeline of South Australia, and that is why this board has an extremely important role to play in the determination of projects operated through the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. Murray River board funding is essential in this regard, because it provides new funding to match an increased level of expenditure. The State Government continues to maintain—and perhaps the honourable member would like to hear this as well—the same level of base-line funding to support on-ground works as it did before the Natural Heritage Trust work came along. When matched with Commonwealth funding, this continued commitment of $1 million per annum supports $2 million worth of projects.

However, with the additional commitment of Murray River board funding of $3 million as provided in the board's plan, there is an additional $6 million. I emphasise that because these figures have been bandied around in this place without any accuracy being applied to them. Some $3 million has been provided in this plan. I repeat: an additional $6 million worth of projects can be funded because of our ability to be able to use this to gain Commonwealth funds. Quite simply, within the catchment board funds we would be able to support only $2 million worth of projects. With catchment funding provided within the board's initial plan, this escalates to $8 million.

When the member for Chaffey stood here and told the honourable member this he apparently disagreed with her; but when she spoke to the honourable member about the amount of money to be utilised throughout that area the amounts to which she referred were quite correct. If we object to this levy proposal we will put all this at risk. Let us make no mistake about the level of funding that is necessary to manage properly the natural resources of the basin and, indeed, to improve the health of the Murray River, because this is what it is about.

The vision put forward by this State Government called for an increase of $300 million throughout the basin over five years. South Australia needs to play its part in this partnership, because it will also benefit from any improvements in catchment management activities by the upstream States. This partnership approach is essential. It is an essential feature of the Murray-Darling Basin initiative.

What are the projects we are talking about that do not seem to be so important to members of the Opposition? We are talking about significant wetland and riverine management projects, projects to sustain horticultural productivity such as the Qualco Sunlands Drainage Project in the Waikerie area, projects to improve efficient water use, and, importantly, projects to reduce salinity in the river. In total—as we heard the member for Chaffey advise the House—there are some 180 projects in 11 local action planning areas that would be placed at risk if this proposal were not agreed to.

We cannot implore our upstream partners to put more effort into managing the resources in their parts of the basin whilst we are putting in only a minimal effort. That is exactly what we would be in danger of doing if, in fact, we reject the Murray River Catchment Water Management Board's plan. We would be the only State not to support the increased level of expenditure that we initiated. Can we in all conscience expect our partners in this initiative to have regard for our interests in the Murray-Darling Basin when by rejecting the plan we would effectively be saying that South Australia is not prepared to put in the necessary effort? What message would South Australia send to its interstate partners in the Murray-Darling Basin by rejecting this partnership in which we require their goodwill to deliver water resources to this State?

Some members of the committee may have felt comfortable in rejecting the levy for 1998-99 because the board is carrying a surplus of $2.7 million for 1997-98. The reason for the surplus is that the board has been operational for only a few months, but it would indeed be short-sighted to relax the quite modest levy of .3¢ per kilo simply because there are accumulated funds.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the member for Hart.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: It is these very funds that will keep the levy down in future years. So the Water Resources Act 1997 provides for community based catchment boards and the right of those boards to develop plans and to implement them. It would be helpful if this microphone was turned up a bit more so that I did not have to yell over the noise of members in the Chamber. There is an opportunity for boards to recommend levies—a fact that seems to have frightened the life out of some of the members of the Economic and Finance Committee. The levies signed off by the respective Minister and by the Government are hardly a means of giving community boards the power to tax, as has been incorrectly stated by some members in this House.

All these provisions reside within the new legislation. It has become the model for other States. It is tailor made for NHT funding, which depends on community involvement in planning and implementation and community contributions towards the funds. I will conclude, but it is important to understand that this Government will not take responsibility away from the community just because it is the time of the year when a levy is struck—and, I might add, a levy which in this instance is for this board, for this area, which has not been changed from last year and upon which so much is at stake.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): My views are virtually identical to the remarks which I made about a similar proposition which came before the House a week ago. Quite simply the point is this: on this occasion my vote will be against the recommendation. The levy will stand, but I will personally campaign to have the levy disallowed next year unless the board sets about and establishes a plan for the metering of all the diversions from the river so that we know exactly what quantities of water are being used by which irrigators and, accordingly, charges relevant to the quantities being used are made—and so that accordingly, further trading between users can occur in the water which they are otherwise using on crops and which is likely to be inefficient. As it stands at present, people simply divert the water from the river through sluice gates onto the swamp areas and flood them. That is a very primitive, unsustainable practice and it is a complete waste of money to say that you can improve that practice to the point where it will become sustainable: it is not and will not be.

Moreover, people who use open sluice notches through channels onto flood irrigation bays do not meter and have not metered their supply, and therefore cannot sell that supply to someone else who may wish to buy it to use for either the same crop or for another crop in that general locality or elsewhere in the river system. We need accuracy and transparency in the amount of water that is being diverted. We need to know the purpose for which the water is being used and we need to be able to trade in that water, right throughout the system, so that we get the best and the highest gross domestic product return from it, the best dollar values and the greatest number of jobs from its use and diversion. I guess, as much as anything else, that is the basis of the concern of the Economic and Finance Committee and other people who have spoken about the levy as it stands.

We are continuing to give *carte blanche* to irrigation practices, which, currently, are being accepted by the board, at least tacitly, without doing anything about it as a Parliament, even though we know it is wrong to allow it to continue. The board is on notice: fix it up or you will be able to forget it in 12 months. Anyone involved in the board might do well to start looking for a job in 11 months' time if they do not have it straightened out.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): In closing the debate, I remind the House that my object in proposing the disallowance was to cause this debate so that the matter could be resolved. I have listened with incredible interest to my colleagues, particularly those opposite, and I must say I am quite startled. In particular, the member for Kaurna clearly does not understand how the committee process works or does not work, as the case may be. As an aside, I remind him that I prepare my own speeches, and that may startle some members opposite.

The role of the committee is not to govern: it is quite different. If the member for Hart wants to be the Minister, I suggest that the Opposition should set about winning the next election, because you certainly did not win the last election. In fact, you got your lowest primary vote since the Second World War and got in on Democrat preferences.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Waite has now twice referred to the Opposition as 'you'. I ask you to instruct him on the correct forms of address.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Hart, the member for Taylor and the member for Elder have had a great deal of fun in the Economic and Finance Committee, misusing the committee for the benefit of the Labor Party, and this is an example. Members know—

Mr FOLEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The honourable member has impugned an improper motive on me as a member of the Economic and Finance Committee. The honourable member referred to my 'misusing the committee'. I request that you ask him to withdraw those remarks. I would never do such a thing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. I hasten to add that the three members of the Opposition on the committee make an excellent contribution to the committee and, in many ways, the committee works very well. However, they know that the role of the committee is not to object to this plan. They know that they could make their points in other ways. They know that the plan should not have been objected to. They are misleading the member for Gordon,who is objecting to plans and going along with the Opposition, for the purpose of causing maximum mayhem. All they are interested in is scoring points for the Labor Party. Let the Government govern. If they do not let it do that, what will we have? Will the Economic and Finance Committee be running the entire portfolio, running the Government? Let the Government govern. The Labor Party knows that. It has obstructed and objected to this plan for that reason and for that reason alone.

Having said that, I think that the member for Hart has made some very important observations about the plan. The Economic and Finance Committee could indeed make a constructive contribution by providing advice to the Government and making some helpful suggestions on how things could be improved. I agree with a number of the points raised by the member for Hart. In my view, the way to go about it is not to object to the plans and obstruct the process of Government: it is to work cooperatively with the Government in the interests of the people of South Australia.

The committee has been misused. In my view, the committee in objecting to these plans has gone beyond its role. The plan should not have been objected to. I now leave it to the House to determine the outcome in respect of the plan.

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (19)

Atkinson, M. J.	Breuer, L. R.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
De Laine, M. R.	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K.	Hanna, K.
Hill, J. D. (teller)	Hurley, A. K.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.

AYES (cont.)

Rankine, J. M.	Rann, M. D.
Stevens, L.	Thompson, M. G.
White, P. L.	Williams, M. R.
Wright, M. J.	

NOES (21)

Brindal, M. K.	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Gunn, G. M.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L.	Ingerson, G. A.
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C. (teller)
Lewis, I. P.	Matthew, W. A.
Maywald, K. A.	McEwen, R. J.
Meier, E. J.	Olsen, J. W.
Penfold, E. M.	Scalzi, G.
Such, R. B.	Venning, I. H.
Wotton, D. C.	

PAIR(S)

Bedford, F. E.	Armitage, M. H.
Ciccarello, V.	Brown, D. C.
Snelling, J. J.	Hall, J. L.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HINDMARSH SOCCER STADIUM

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier): I move:

That this House remits the interim report of the Public Works Committee on the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium Upgrade-Stage 2 to the committee and instructs it to present a final report to the Speaker by 16 June 1998.

I would like to make a few brief comments. As many people would know, this project requires a completion date. The Government has entered into a contract with SOCOG and the Olympic Games and the time frame for getting out to tender and beginning that process is shortening. The Government wishes to request this Parliament to instruct the committee to report within a couple of weeks.

A range of issues has been put to the committee, on which the committee will need to comment, and I look forward to those comments being put before the House. The Government has supplied all information requested by the committee other than Cabinet submissions, and it has been made very clear to the committee that the process of Government, which we will not walk away from, is that Cabinet documents are, in essence, confidential to the Cabinet of the day.

In this motion—if it is passed—there is a request to report within 12 days. That would then allow the Government to consider the comments in the report and ensure that those comments are acted on. There is an urgency to this motion, and I would not have brought it into the House if I had not, over a period of some six weeks, pointed that out to the committee. This is in no way an attempt to request the committee to make any decision in terms of how it reports: it is purely and simply a request that a report be made to this Parliament on the instructions of this House.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

To amend the motion by adding the following words: and this House directs the Government to not proceed with any further development of the Hindmarsh Stadium site on land belonging to the City of Charles Sturt and leased from that council by Soccer SA, until and unless:

1. A business plan shows it will be financially viable, with the majority of the income from the hire of the stadium and the sale of tickets remaining in South Australia;
2. All the land is either owned by, or secured by a caveat in favour of, the State of South Australia;
3. Adequate off-street parking is provided separate from and in addition to existing car parking for the Entertainment Centre.
4. The Belarusian Church is relocated at no cost to itself to an equivalent consecrated site;
5. A trust be established of representatives of all the major South Australian users of the stadium facility, and chaired by a representative of the South Australian Government, to manage its use until it has generated a gross revenue in excess of $60 million; and that the Auditor-General be invited to advise the Public Works Committee on this project given the findings of his most recent report.

I would like to speak—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member may speak to the amendment.

Mr LEWIS: The points made by the Minister are that it is a requirement of the Sydney Olympic Committee that the stadium be built or we will miss out on the Olympic Games activities. No evidence of that has been provided to the committee. Indeed, it is a requirement of Soccer Australia, and for no better reason than that the bulk of the revenue to be derived from the sale of seats or from the hire of the stadium for soccer matches goes to Soccer Australia. Those matches can be between teams which are in the national league or which are playing against international teams—whether they are Australian teams playing against each other or a national league team playing against an international team or, indeed, two international teams from overseas playing against each other.

The bulk of that revenue would go to Soccer Australia, with only a meagre capitation fee of $3 on seats in the existing grandstand, and $2 in the uncovered outer ground. That means altogether, on the most generous calculations, that the most money, for instance, that could come from the seven proposed matches (by the way) as the preliminary rounds and one quarter final—if you fill the stadium every time—would be about 20 000 times something less than $3. That is less than $60 000 for each of those seven matches, and 60 000 times seven is less than $420 000—as a return on $19 million? I wonder!

Notwithstanding that, there could be other uses. But even if there were, the capitation fee we would get on those uses which would be likely to attract high attendances is still a meagre $3 a seat in the western grandstand, and $2 for the outer. At present, no viable business plan exists. The committee asked for a business plan and was told that it would receive it but has not given one. Therefore, the committee cannot judge the veracity of any assessment of the net present value of future cash flows or gauge what the yield will be on the capital invested. We do not know how unprofitable it will be.

Indeed, the Treasurer admitted, in a letter that he graciously wrote to the committee, that it is to be negative in cash flow; that there will be a negative net present value. On calculations that we have not seen—so they have to be the most optimistic imaginable—there will be a negative net present value of over $20 million after investing $19 million; that is down the tubes for over $39 million. It seems to me that there needs to be a better arrangement for the manner in which the stadium is to be used before we can commit taxpayers' dollars—for which we are told this State is desperately strapped at present.

All the land is not owned by any agency other than— wait for it—the City of Charles Sturt. This is a situation similar to that involving the Olympic athletics field in Kensington: it belonged to local government and, when it suited them, even though taxpayers' money—millions of dollars in current day dollar terms—had been invested in improving the facilities on that reserve for athletics, it was sold over our heads by the local government body that owned it.

Currently there is no caveat on the title of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium: it is not secured in any way. The committee's stage 1 report made to this House strongly recommended that the Government secure the site at least by a caveat. That has not been done. So, go ahead and spend the money there, and tomorrow, next year or in a decade's time, the City of Charles Sturt could receive an offer from someone like Rupert Murdoch to play his rugby and/or soccer matches there. They would be quite happy, I am sure, to retire $30 million of debt, if they have that much; I doubt that they have, but they would certainly be able to sandbag their rates pretty low after they paid off all their debt and invested the residual sum to get an income annually from it at the expense of the taxpayers of South Australia.

We, the taxpayers of South Australia, have provided the facility and then it is sold off to some private investor and there is no impediment to that happening, which is exactly what is happening in Kensington. Clearly, in my judgment there needs to be a caveat on that title (at least a caveat if not a mortgage document) or that the Government should own it: I do not mind. A caveat securing it in favour of the State of South Australia until such time as the liability to the State at least has been met is just fundamental. Not even you or I, Mr Deputy Speaker, would dream of building a house on a block of land that belonged to someone else, yet we are being asked as a committee to agree to that.

Also, I believe there needs to be, as there has not yet been provided, an assurance that there is adequate offstreet car parking in addition to the amount currently provided around the Entertainment Centre on the centre's site. Clearly, if that centre is to remain viable and in profit, it will no doubt continue to have at least as many functions as there are at present and the soccer stadium, as proposed, will have to have a large number of events. Those functions, when they clash, will mean that it is impossible to find a park there and, by inference, it will obviously destroy the viability of either or both because people simply will go to neither venue if there is a date clash. If they do go, it will be in insufficient numbers to make it a reasonable thing.

My fourth point is that the church immediately adjacent to the southern wall needs to be relocated at no cost to itself on a site that is consecrated for their purposes. They should not have to meet that expense. Furthermore, to ensure that there is a marketing plan that goes with a business plan and that marketing plan is responsibly developed, a trust needs to be established. I commend the Minister in conversation with me for having pointed out that it is his intention to establish such a trust. But, for God's sake, why was that not provided to the Public Works Committee as a written commitment? For the taxpayers' sake, why was it not provided as a written commitment? For the committee's sake, in being able to do its duty responsibly, why has it not been provided as a written commitment?

Why it was not thought through after the stage 1 report and provided as part of the commitments and undertakings in the stage 2 submission to the committee is beyond me. I believe it ought to be in excess of $60 million, because elsewhere it has been said that 50 per cent of the revenue coming in needs to stay in South Australia. For the sale of the

tickets or hire of the stadium we need to get back the $30 million, albeit without interest, that we currently have spent or are thinking of spending on the stadium.

Finally, the amendment provides the committee with the authority of this House to expressly and specifically request the assistance of the Auditor-General in determining whether or not the proposed contracting procedures and other matters referred to in his report are properly followed. The Auditor-General made explicit and direct reference on more than one occasion to the soccer stadium stage 1 in his report, I am sure members will recall, and I do not wish to read out those explicit parts of his report: they are there for members themselves to read and it was not a complementary report.

All in all, if the Government requires the committee to report by 16 June, then I believe it is fair and reasonable for the House to also instruct the Government not to proceed until it has done these things the committee was otherwise seeking assurances about and to have included in the proposal before it reported. I will tell the House now that senior public servants, such as the head of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the departmental Director, Mr Ian Dixon, who has been made responsible for this proposal, are to come before the Public Works Committee next week to provide further information about these very matters, and some others, in order that we can make up our minds whether or not to support the proposal.

This pre-emptive strike by the Deputy Premier today is not based on fact. The remarks he has made to the Chamber that we have asked for a Cabinet submission is not factual. We did not. We simply sought information but were told that, because it formed part of what was given to Cabinet, we could not have that information. Mr Deputy Speaker, again, for the sake of all believers, and for the sake of all members of this House, and for the sake of all South Australians, I say that all those projects which come before the Public Works Committee have first gone to Cabinet. So, by definition, his proposition means that none of the information which Cabinet gets can ever be given to the Public Works Committee on any project.

Whatever information Cabinet uses therefore cannot be provided to support a proposed public work when a submission is made to the Public Works Committee—if the defence of the Deputy Premier is to be taken as a legitimate statement of what ought to be. I do not accept that. I think that it is a sorry day that the committee's processes have been interfered with in this way when we knew that this had to happen. The committee was not told of any penalties in the MOU until, on a motion of the member for Mawson, the taking of evidence was terminated. No information whatever was given to the committee about penalty. The regrettable aspect of that is that the $3 000 to $4 000 a day will be a cost on the taxpayers of South Australia simply because—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

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

Mr LEWIS: —the proposition was not put before the committee until such a late hour, and the submission was a grossly inadequate submission in that it did not contain the usual information which such submissions must contain. More particularly, it is not the committee's will, wish, desire or anything else to frustrate the Government's process. The Government has only itself to thank in that regard.

Why was it, when evidence was first given to the committee by the proponents of the submission who came before the committee that they gave commitments to provide further information in support of that proposal, but were then directed not to supply the information, and that subsequently, when I discussed the matter with the Deputy Premier and other Ministers, information has begun to come? Altogether it seems to me a pretty serious thing to tell the committee, and this is the burden of the Deputy Premier's proposition. 'We know that it is a bodgie proposition,' he is saying, 'and we know you will bring down a recommendation against proceeding, but we will proceed, anyway, because the Act allows us to proceed once you have brought in a report, whether it is for it or against. It does not matter a tinker's cuss what you think as a committee, we will proceed.'

I say that, if that is the case, this House has a responsibility to every taxpayer in South Australia; each one of the 47 members in this place has a responsibility to ensure that it is not done in a fashion which means that it is inadvisable; that it is done through the framework of the amendment that I have put before this House this afternoon; and that it is done in a way which shows that there is a measure of responsibility involved in the way we disburse taxpayers' funds, especially as we are told at the very same time that this State's budget is in crisis and that further levies are needed to finance the essential services.

Yet we have $19 million to spend on something for which there is no business plan, on which we cannot get prudential assurances about contracting, on land that we do not own, without adequate off-street parking to secure its viability in future, and with no trust in place to manage the way in which it is hired out and the funds derived from that hiring to meet the costs involved. What sort of a proposition is it that a Government can say on one hand, 'Pay these extra levies' and, on the other hand, 'But, we have enough money to build you a white elephant for the fun of it'?

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the sitting of the House be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): When the Public Works Committee began its task in this new Parliament, it was confronted with a report done by the Auditor-General—his most recent report—which was critical of the previous Public Works Committee in a number of areas. Interestingly, one of those was Stage 1 of the Hindmarsh stadium. The Auditor-General's Report was critical of the committee's investigations, particularly in relation to financials, but there were other issues as well. As a result of that, the committee began its whole task by inviting the Auditor-General to give evidence. The Auditor-General spent two sessions with us carefully going through the extent of our role and the importance of it, assuring us that the financials were correct, that the projects were legal and that they had gone through proper prudential management. The committee took its job very seriously, bearing in mind that concerns had been expressed by the independent Auditor-General very recently.

Being on the committee and having to deal with this project has been extraordinarily frustrating. It has been like extracting teeth in terms of getting adequate information to do our job, as we are required to do under the Parliamentary Committees Act. I hope that members have been able to read the interim report of the Public Works Committee. We decided, four to one—the one, of course, being the member for Mawson—that it was important that the Parliament and

the public get some impression of and some information about what was going on with this project.

I will mention the areas that were referred to in our interim report about which we had concerns. First, the evidence received by the committee was conflicting on a number of occasions. If members have not read this report, I suggest they do; it is very illuminating. Secondly, we were concerned about the scope of the initial works and the need for Stage 2 to proceed at all. Members should remember that just over $9 million has been spent on Stage 1, and Stage 2 requires a further $18.5 million of taxpayers' money. We honestly could not see that it was needed, and we were not able to be convinced by the evidence presented to us that it was needed.

There was a separate range of issues in relation to the Belarusian Church. There were issues in relation to the financial analysis and the fact that we did not have one, and that is a disgrace. We are talking about spending $18.5 million without any cogent economic analysis or justification as to why it should be spent. We had concerns about the prudential process and acquittals. We were assured when Stage 1 came before the Public Works Committee that it would be sufficient to enable us to hold Olympic trials in South Australia. However, we were then confronted with the fact that that was no longer the case, and statements were made about goalposts being shifted.

When we asked for evidence of this—that is, written communication between the Government and SOCOG, evidence that would have shown that the goalposts were being shifted, evidence that established that what we were going to do was correct—we could not have any, we could not see it. My question has always been: why does the Government not want us to see it? Surely it is in the Government's interests to show us. It left us with the feeling that perhaps it did not exist. I fail to understand why it was not produced. After all, this is what I thought good government was about. I thought that one had to justify it, that one had to work through a process of negotiation, and one would have that in writing. However, we cannot see that.

The issues about car parking are outlined in detail in that report. The issue about attendances has also been raised. There has been confusion about whether we are redeveloping the stadium for the Olympic trials or for the benefit of soccer. One of the things that the committee was most keen to find out was the current attendance figures for Hindmarsh Stadium. I do not go often to Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium but I was shocked to learn that the average attendance is 4 800, and that Stage 1 would barely have been filled, let alone Stage 2. In other words, it seems to the committee that spending $18.5 million for six or seven Olympic trials raises the question whether that is the best way to spend money. Perhaps we could have provided temporary seating or done something else to get those trials rather than outlay $18.5 million.

There were issues about the stadium seating and about future ownership, but I will not discuss that because that was done by the member for Hammond. There were issues about equity between sports and whether this was fair. The question was raised as to what other sporting codes would think of this expenditure when the next highest amount of State Government money expended on any stadium was $15 million for the velodrome, which was part of the Commonwealth Games bid a few years ago. We are talking here about a total of $28 million.

There is also the issue of penalty clauses. When the member for Hammond said that we did not know about the existence of the penalty clauses until 1 April, I heard the Deputy Premier say informally across the floor of this Chamber that it was not true. It is true. We did not know about this until 1 April. That is just typical of the dribs and drabs of information that we have had to extract. It is representative of the way the Deputy Premier runs his show, but perhaps some of those chickens are coming home to roost for him, and not before time. So, as I said before, the process has been frustrating beyond belief. It has been a constant battle, a feeling that, no matter what we asked for, we were not getting the truth. When we had witnesses, they gave conflicting evidence and it could not be backed up in writing at all.

The sum of $18.5 million is a lot of money. There are many little organisations in my electorate—and I am sure that this also applies in the electorates of many other members—that, when they apply to the Government for grants, have to meticulously go through paperwork, proving this and that, proving their *bona fides*, and taking up huge amounts of time just to get $1 000. What we have here is a Government spending $18.5 million, and I believe that those processes have not been followed at all. I reckon that is fairly poor. I reckon that Governments have a responsibility to lead by example, and the example that this Government has given to the community of South Australia is one of supreme arrogance coupled with sloppiness.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: The member for Hartley should read the report. It speaks for itself. I agree with the comments of the member for Hammond. Informally we have heard all the while that the Government just wants us to report so it can ignore it and get on with the job. That goes along with the arrogance displayed by the Government towards the Parliament. This is a committee of the Parliament doing its job according to an Act of Parliament. We have tried to do that, and we have tried hard to get the information that we require.

In our final conclusion and recommendation, we listed a number of documents and sets of information that we require in order to complete a final report. We agreed at our meeting yesterday to meet again next Wednesday, and that we would be calling to that meeting Mr Ian Kowalick, Mr Ian Dixon, and a few other people in an attempt to deal with those issues that are outstanding. Earlier today we all saw the histrionics and the temper tantrums of the member for Mawson—and that type of childish behaviour from the member for Mawson is a fairly common occurrence in the Public Works Committee. In spite of him and his behaviour, we had planned to start on this job, to do it carefully and conscientiously and do it next week.

I support the amendment moved by the member for Hammond. We understand that the Deputy Premier has the numbers in terms of his motion, but I think it is really important for the people of South Australia that, if it passes the first one, the House should also pass these six points. The six points are the least that we as a Parliament should guarantee to the taxpayers of South Australia, the people who will have to fork out many more taxes as a result of the budget and other measures. The least we can guarantee for them is that this Government is doing something reasonable and according to some sort of probity.

I particularly draw attention to the fact that these six points ask that the Auditor-General be invited to advise the Public Works Committee. I wish to hear his views on this, as I am very interested in what he has to say. After all, it was as a

response to his report last year that the committee has tried to do its job more diligently.

I am interested in the way in which the Government, particularly the Deputy Premier and his little acolyte the member for Mawson, approaches things like this. It seems that there is no interest in really enabling the committee to do its job properly. There is only interest in putting down the committee, suggesting that the committee is deliberately holding up things. I find that really offensive when we have had the Deputy Premier, as the lead person in relation to this project, frustrating us every inch of the way and then telling us on 1 April that there are penalty clauses and, after all that, trying to say that it is we who have caused this problem. If the Deputy Premier had his act together in the first place we would not be in this position now. It is about time he took some responsibility. It is the same stuff that we see over and over again from the Deputy Premier. He is sloppy; he is continually sloppy and, when things get tough and the time lines get tight, he wants to shift the blame onto other people.

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson: I just asked for the report.

Ms STEVENS: You will get your report, but we are saying to the Deputy Premier that he should do the honourable thing and provide the sort of information that he expects from other people in the community and the same as he expects from other people who want money. He delights in highlighting groups or people who waste money because they do not get their act together. The Deputy Premier ought to show a lead on that and do it himself in his own procedures. However, it has not been done in this case.

I support the amendment and ask other members to do likewise. If members have not read the interim report of the Public Works Committee in relation to this matter, I urge members to do so. They will then understand why we have not been prepared just to bow down to the Deputy Premier who says, 'We just want you to report,' with the implication that, when we do, he will ignore it. It is supreme arrogance, covering up his sloppy administration.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I have a lot of questions, many of which have been outlined in the interim report of the committee and for which I have as yet no answers. Some of these questions have been indicated by the members for Hammond and Elizabeth. However, I do not wish to traverse ground that has already been covered. Rather, I want to raise other issues which have caused me to ask some of the questions in three hearings before the Public Works Committee and on which I am not yet satisfied with any answer. Unfortunately, there has been no attempt to treat the questions asked by the committee with any form of respect, meaning that the Parliament is also not being respected by those with responsibility for assisting it to do its job.

The proposal that came before us caused me, as a new member of the committee who had not been involved in the stage 1 development, to ask a lot of questions right from the outset. There was simply no evidence as to why we were seeking to spend $18.5 million on a stadium when work was only just completed to upgrade the stadium at a cost of approximately $9 million.

Other questions that occurred to me related to the fact that some of the matters that had been discussed as being required in stage 1 were still not being addressed in this $18.5 million development in stage 2, one being the issue of a scoreboard. We were aware of a lot of debate about a $3 million scoreboard for Football Park. I thought that soccer, being a world-class event and one which has the potential for an international television audience, would require a scoreboard that would enable people to participate through television, so that they would be able to enjoy well and truly the benefit of the matches. We were told, 'No, there was not any need for a scoreboard.' However, there are now new rumours saying that a scoreboard will be provided. I have a little evidence that, despite not receiving any answers, the questions I asked back in March were extremely relevant.

It is important for this House to understand how seriously most members of the Public Works Committee have taken this matter. We were told very early on that the State's status in hosting an Olympic event depended on Hindmarsh's being upgraded in order to host soccer. One of the problems I had was that I could not understand why we would want to host Olympic soccer, an important and exciting event, at a venue that would allow for only 20 000 spectators. Having seen international soccer played at Football Park, which is able to accommodate about 43 000 people, I acknowledge that it is not the best venue for viewing soccer. It is not quite close enough; however, you can always hire out opera glasses. This would have afforded the opportunity for at least 40 000 soccer fans to attend each match instead of only 20 000.

I asked questions about international soccer matches in Australia and about our track record. I was told that the largest attendance at any international match in Australia was the 87 000 fans who saw Australia play Iran at the MCG, a rather large football oval. I wondered why 40 000 soccer fans could not see Olympic soccer at Football Park. However, we were told that it was important that a legacy be left for soccer after the Olympics. I consider that also to be a commendable aim. Soccer is an important sport in our community. I can well understand the need for a venue which is able to host major soccer matches at local, national and, occasionally, international levels. So, we asked more questions about that.

As the member for Elizabeth has indicated, we found that the currently upgraded venue has a playing surface that the committee at time of considering stage was assured met FIFA standards. However, now we are told that it does not meet FIFA standards, but we have not been told when FIFA standards changed. This all gets very difficult. The attendances at that venue for national matches as well as local matches are well below its current capacity. I ask: what will be the benefit of having 20 000 colour-matching seats? I am a bit a worried that we will spend all this money on 20 000 colour-matching seats which will be exposed to the elements and deteriorate so that the venue is no longer a prized venue.

Ms Rankine: It will be a white elephant.

Ms THOMPSON: It will be a coloured elephant—not a white elephant. I am not interested in having white elephants, coloured elephants or any other sort of elephant as our principal soccer stadium: I am interested in having a venue which meets the current needs and the projected future needs. So, projected future needs is something about which I asked questions. What sort of answers did I get?

Ms Rankine interjecting:

Ms THOMPSON: I thank the member for Wright. Yes, I was being quite logical and reasonable. What was happening in terms of the projected and future needs of soccer? Well, despite my having asked those questions on 18 March, I have not been able to get any answers. All I have heard in evidence is that, if we have a venue of the right size, with the right lighting, with these beautiful colour matched seats on the same terraced levels, and meet some of FIFA's requirements, we will attract international matches. That sounded exciting to me, so I inquired as to which

international matches. I was told that they were not sure but that it would be very nice to get teams such as Chile, Italy and Germany playing in Adelaide. I agreed that it would be nice to have those teams playing in Adelaide, but I wondered whether only 20 000 would be able to attend those matches.

I asked questions about other venues in Australia and whether, if a major rugby team came to Australia, it would be able to play at Hindmarsh. I discovered that that question would have to be considered in comparison with the return from venues of 60 000 in Brisbane and Sydney. If a major international team were to play at Hindmarsh, it would have to be demonstrated that it would return more money not to the South Australian Soccer Federation but to the Australian body. There would need to be a greater return in South Australia than if an equivalent match were played at the MCG, where we have seen a not very highly ranked team such as Iran attract 87 000, or at one of the rugby stadia in Brisbane or Sydney that have a capacity of 60 000.

I felt that it would be difficult to fill these wonderful seats at our prime soccer venue, so I asked the witnesses for what other purpose this venue could be used. I was told that we could hold major concerts there. As most members know, I support venues for youth entertainment, in particular. I thought to myself that we could use that almost $19 million to build an entertainment venue in the south. Therefore, I had to think carefully about using the soccer stadium as an entertainment venue. I thought of the entertainment venues that we already have, such as Memorial Drive, which I hope is about to be upgraded and which will have about the same capacity as an upgraded soccer stadium; Football Park; and the Entertainment Centre.

I could not identify what sort of crowd is not being catered for at those venues, and the witnesses could not supply me with that information. There has been no evidence to the effect that Adelaide is missing out. However, I thought that perhaps there were some events on which we were missing out. I do not want youth or any age group in our community to miss out on events if we can afford a suitable venue. I asked the witnesses whether there would be any impact on the residents of the area, who might be prepared for a major soccer match and the filling up of their residential area every now and then: I wondered whether there had been any consultation with residents about the possible staging of, for instance, a Michael Jackson concert.

Mr Koutsantonis: No.

Ms THOMPSON: No, there hasn't been. There has been no thought of—

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. There is a motion before the House to which an amendment has been moved. I ask you to move on the relevance of the honourable member's contribution to the motion before the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have been listening closely to the honourable member's contribution, and I believe that the majority of what she has said is relevant, but I ask her to bear that point in mind.

Ms THOMPSON: The motion relates to the committee's need to report on the spending of $18.5 million. As part of this process, the committee needs to consider a number of important matters, and it must be free to do so according to its own conscience and not be directed by any outside body, as other members implied earlier.

It needs to inquire into and report on any public work referred to it by or under this Act, including the stated purpose of the work. I have already indicated to the House that I am having trouble finding out what the stated purpose of the work is or clarifying whether it is about spending $18.5 million on hosting seven Olympic soccer matches—important as these matches are—whether it is about providing a long-term venue for soccer or whether it is about providing entertainment facilities for the State.

We have to look at the necessity or advisability of constructing the work. I think I have outlined to the House that it has been difficult, despite the many questions that we asked, to identify the necessity or advisability of upgrading the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. We have not been able to ascertain that the upgrading of Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium is the only way in which we will secure Olympic soccer. Members would expect that, if this were the case, we would have clear evidence to that effect. We have no idea whether we can attract Olympic soccer by any other means.

Last Tuesday, we received a letter from Mr David Hill, who, as many members would know, is the head of Soccer Australia. Mr Hill indicated that a number of things were quite desirable about upgrading Hindmarsh. I agree that it is quite desirable that we have a lovely venue for soccer, but not if it means that we do not have functioning hospitals or that we put all our resources for soccer into one venue that sits empty most of the time when soccer facilities in the suburbs need money to top dress their playing fields, let alone the $2 million that, it seems, will be required to develop a prime venue for soccer in the south at the Southern Sports Complex.

What does Mr David Hill, the Chairman of Soccer Australia, say? He says that Adelaide's Olympic host city chances would be kept alive as a result of the Hindmarsh Stadium option, but only if we were to increase the permanent seating. That is all right. He also says that the approach will require FIFA's approval, but we have had no indication that FIFA has given approval. Further, he says that it would not be possible for Soccer Australia or FIFA to support the conduct of any future international competition matches under their control at Hindmarsh unless Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium was upgraded. However, he does not say that international events would be supported at Hindmarsh or that international events could be held in South Australia only at Hindmarsh. Again, we have a bit of fluff but no essential information to answer the questions that we asked on 4 March, 18 March and 1 April.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms THOMPSON: David Hill is not responsible to the people of South Australia: the Minister is. It is the Minister who has not been able to provide the evidence that upgrading Hindmarsh will attract Olympic soccer and continuing international events and will be good value for the people of South Australia who know that their health facilities, their schools and their public housing stock are being run down.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Reynell to come back to the matters raised within the amendment.

Ms THOMPSON: Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. Another matter at which we have to look before we can report concerns the revenue that the upgrade might reasonably be expected to produce. I have indicated previously to the House some of the attempts made by the committee to extract information about what revenue this upgraded facility will produce.

Another issue is who will get the revenue. We have been told that if international events are to be staged at Hindmarsh the revenue will not go to the South Australian Soccer Federation or the development of junior soccer in this State but to Soccer Australia. We are supposed to examine what

revenue might reasonably be expected to be produced. It might be possible to say at the moment, 'No revenue: only debts' but I feel compelled to ask more questions to protect the valuable assets of the people of South Australia.

We also need to inquire into and report on the present and prospective public value of the work. Again, I have indicated to the House a range of the issues that we need to identify in relation to the public value of the work. We were aware of this responsibility, way back at the beginning of March when we saw the first witnesses. We asked questions then and were told that they had the information to provide us with the evidence we required, but it has not been forthcoming. Experienced public servants who were involved in putting together the Cabinet submission and who agreed to provide information to us that would help us to answer some of these questions, some weeks later suddenly decided that these documents that we needed were now Cabinet documents and therefore not available to the committee. I consider that this is rather impugning the reputation of these public servants who were experienced enough to know in March what was and was not a Cabinet document but who now suddenly find that they made a series of errors. I wonder what was the role of the Minister there, in working out what were and were not Cabinet documents.

We must also look at the recurrent or whole of life costs associated with the work, including costs arising out of financial arrangements. One of the issues I have been worried about is maintenance. If we have a facility that has been upgraded by nearly $30 million in the past two years, we must consider who will maintain that facility so that it does not deteriorate, crumble away and become an absolute shame as a shabby venue for soccer instead of the prime venue that we want in this State. I am concerned that the maintenance costs will go back to the clubs, who are already burdened by trying to pay for some of the upgrade in stage 1.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the time allotted for the debate be until 6.30 p.m

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (22)

Brindal, M. K.	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Gunn, G. M.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L.	Ingerson, G. A. (teller)
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Lewis, I. P.	Matthew, W. A.
Maywald, K. A.	McEwen, R. J.
Meier, E. J.	Olsen, J. W.
Penfold, E. M.	Scalzi, G.
Such, R. B.	Venning, I. H.
Williams, M. R.	Wotton, D. C.

NOES (18)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
De Laine, M. R.	Foley, K. O. (teller)
Geraghty, R. K.	Hanna, K.
Hill, J. D.	Hurley, A. K.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
Rankine, J. M.	Rann, M. D.
Stevens, L.	Thompson, M. G.
White, P. L.	Wright, M. J.

PAIR(S)

Armitage, M. H.	Breuer, L. R.
Brown, D. C.	Ciccarello, V.
Hall, J. L.	Snelling, J. J.

Majority of 4 for the Ayes.

Motion thus carried.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): I support the amendment moved by the excellent Chair of the Public Works Committee. Soccer in Australia has suffered serious setbacks in the past few years. One of the major setbacks is in relation to the development of our young soccer players. We have seen in the past decade or so most of our Australian team, who represented Australia in our World Cup qualifying side, taking most of their development overseas. In fact, most of our young stars have to go overseas to train and play professional soccer because, unfortunately, there is no infrastructure in this State for our juniors. The Government is attempting to remedy this, but the way that it has gone about it is quite confusing. I understand that it is spending $9.3 million on the stage 1 development of Hindmarsh stadium, and on stage 2 is spending $18.5 million on the stadium, with a capacity of only 20 000 seats.

I remember watching a television program where David Hill was discussing where soccer would be played during the Olympic Games. He mentioned the Gabba, the SCG, Homebush, the MCG and the WACA. He did not mention South Australia at all—he did not even mention Football Park. It shows the commitment to soccer of this Government—not even communicating with David Hill or showing an interest in South Australian soccer and having an Olympic soccer game in South Australia.

Members interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Members opposite are interjecting. The fact is that David Hill has received no correspondence from this Government requesting Olympic soccer games in South Australia. Even if they did request games, David Hill would have to write back and say, 'I'm sorry, FIFA will not let you have a game at Hindmarsh Stadium because its capacity is not enough: the ground is substandard; you have mucked up the development; and you have totally stuffed soccer in the State.' Members opposite come here today thinking that if they just throw money at soccer in South Australia they will fix it. The fact is that this Government has set soccer back 20 to 30 years in this State. A number of developing clubs in the northern and southern suburbs require infrastructure to get their young soccer players up and running. But this Government believes that, by pouring $19 million into a white elephant in Hindmarsh, without consulting with either the local member or local residents, it can solve soccer problems in South Australia. The member for Hartley is interjecting out of his place, to start with.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I ask you to rule as to relevance. We are debating a specific motion and an amendment to the motion.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I do not uphold the point of order. However, I believe that we are all starting to get a bit pesky, and I suggest that the honourable member stick to the matters in the amendment.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Talking about pesky, all those mums and dads who take their children to play soccer every Saturday and Sunday morning are the ones who are becoming pesky with the likes of the member for Unley, his front bench

and the Government. They have seen soccer set back so far in this State—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Hartley says that that is not true. The fact is that the participation rate for soccer in this country is the second highest—netball being the first and football coming third. This Government has wasted $19.5 million on a stadium that will not benefit soccer in South Australia at all. As a young lad I would go to Hindmarsh Stadium, and before that to Thebarton Oval, to watch my beloved West Adelaide Hellas—I will not call them the Adelaide Sharks; they are Adelaide Hellas. I have seen many young players developing over time, including the likes of Stan Lazaridis, who is now playing for West Ham in the premier league division. The problem is that, as the member for Davenport interjects, all our new players are being taken overseas from a young age—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the member for Peake that he return to the matters in the amendment.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I have attended many public meetings of the Belarusian Church. The Belarusians are a very small community in South Australia. They have a very small, yet very beautiful, church located in Hindmarsh—in the shadow of this great white elephant which has been built. This church was built by my constituents with their own blood, sweat and tears—

Mr Condous interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Colton says, 'With a contribution from Stalin.' I remind the honourable member that the Belarusians fled Soviet occupation in Russia and came to freedom here in Australia. So, I would say that they did not have any contribution from Stalin. They built this church, and they were given guarantees by the Government. One of those guarantees was that during the divine liturgies on Sundays there would be no rugby 11 games and there would be no testing of the PA system—because, with a stadium the size of Hindmarsh, the PA system spreads out through the entire suburb. There is this huge monolith spreading out all over Hindmarsh.

As members would understand, when the Belarusians attend their church to take Holy Communion, the last thing they need to hear is PA testing during the liturgy. That is why I am supporting this motion—because we need to address the concerns of the locals, something that the Government has not wanted to do. I wrote to the Deputy Premier on this issue of the Belarusian Church, and he wrote back saying that there is nothing the Government can do. I heard him interject before, saying that he has fixed it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peake will resume his seat. The time for the debate has expired.

The House divided on the amendment:

AYES (19)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
De Laine, M. R.	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K.	Hanna, K.
Hill, J. D.	Hurley, A. K.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
Lewis, I. P. (teller)	Rankine, J. M.
Rann, M. D.	Stevens, L.
Thompson, M. G.	White, P. L.
Wright, M. J.	

NOES (21)

Brindal, M. K.	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Gunn, G. M.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L.	Ingerson, G. A. (teller)
Kerin, R. G.	Kotz, D. C.
Matthew, W. A.	Maywald, K. A.
McEwen, R. J.	Meier, E. J.
Olsen, J. W.	Penfold, E. M.
Scalzi, G.	Such, R. B.
Venning, I. H.	Williams, M. R.
Wotton, D. C.	

PAIR(S)

Breuer, L. R.	Armitage, M. H.
Ciccarello, V.	Brown, D. C.
Snelling, J. J.	Hall, J. L.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; motion carried.

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) (COMMENCEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* was passed by the South Australian Parliament in June 1996. The Act makes provision for the operation of a national electricity market. It was intended that the Act be proclaimed once the jurisdictions had agreed that the National Electricity Market (NEM) was ready to commence.

The NEM was due to commence on 29 March 1998. This did not eventuate due to a number of major issues that were still be to resolved by both the National Electricity Management Market Company (NEMMCO) and the jurisdictions (NSW, Victoria, Queensland, ACT and South Australia) and it will not start until some time after 20 June.

The delay in the commencement of the NEM is entirely separate from the Government's announcement of its reform and sale program for ETSA and Optima Energy.

Pursuant to sub-section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act* the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* will, if not proclaimed earlier, come into operation on 20 June 1998. In the absence of a market, proclamation of the Act would equip National Electricity Code Administrator (NECA) and NEMMCO with powers that would conflict with existing jurisdictional arrangements pursuant to current South Australian legislation.

To prevent this occurring it is necessary to amend the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996.* The proposed amendment expressly excludes the operation of section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1915*. Thus the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* will not come into operation on 20 June 1998. Instead, the Act will come into operation once the Act has been proclaimed by the Governor of South Australia.

The amendment also gives the participating jurisdictions (NSW, Victoria, Queensland and the ACT) until 20 June 1999 to enact their corresponding law to the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996*.

Each jurisdiction has nominated a relevant minister (the 'Designated Minister') to oversee that jurisdictions entry into the NEM.

Under clause 6.1 of the National Electricity Market Legislation Agreement, legislation to amend the Act requires approval in writing by each jurisdictions Designated Minister. Pursuant to clause 6.1 of the National Electricity Market Legislation Agreement the Treasurer has obtained support through written approval from each of the other Designated Ministers to amend the Act.

South Australia showed leadership among the States in enacting the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act* in 1996. The National Electricity Law contained in this Act has since been applied by legislation passed by the other jurisdictions. As lead legislator, South

Australia in now required to amend the Act to enable the NEM to start after 20 June 1998.

I commend the Bill to Honourable Members.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of s. 2—Commencement

This clause excludes the application of section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1915* to the commencement of the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996*.

Section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act* provides that an Act or a provision of an Act that is to be brought into operation by proclamation will be taken to come into operation on the second anniversary of the date on which the Act was assented to by, or on behalf of, the Crown unless brought into operation before that date.

Clause 3: Amendment of Schedule

This amendment is consequential on the amendment proposed to section 2.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): If this Bill is not passed the Acts Interpretation Act will result in the National Electricity (South Australia) (Commencement) Act coming into force by 20 June, which will have the effect of putting South Australia into the national electricity market under the control of the National Electricity Market Management Company. So, if we do not join the national electricity market before it is in force, this Bill must go through our Parliament.

I support the national electricity market in theory. In a country such as Australia, which has a relatively small population and differences in resources, it makes sense that there be a national electricity market which enables us to have a reasonable and efficient use of those resources all around Australia so that citizens and businesses can make the best use of the resources that we possess. However, in order for that fine theory to be properly affected, the market must work and work very well. The national electricity market, which was due to start in March this year, has been put back. We do not know until which date it will be put back, but certainly it will be beyond this month.

In expressing my support for the national electricity market, which was carried through by the Opposition in passing the National Electricity Act, I must emphasise that this does not require the privatisation of our electricity generation or transmission systems. The Hon. Sandra Kanck, in her contribution to this Bill in the other place, implied that the Labor Party's support for the national electricity market led to the inevitability of privatisation. One suspects that she is looking for an excuse to support the ETSA sale Bill. However, our support for the national electricity market does not have a corollary that privatisation must occur. Efficient use of the market can be made by our public sector generation and transmission companies.

The Labor Party did, indeed, cooperate with the supporting the national electricity market Bill and has supported a number of other Bills that have arisen out of competition policies and national markets. I remember the Gas Pipelines (Access) Bill was rushed through on the assurance from the Government that South Australia as the lead legislator had to get it through very quickly in the last session. In spite of the fact that it was a very large and complex Bill, the Opposition did its best to get properly briefed on that Bill and cooperated in the passage of that Bill. Now, once again, we have the Government coming and saying that there is a Bill that must be urgently rushed through and that we must cooperate on the passage of that Bill.

The Gas Pipelines (Access) Bill was not proclaimed because it took some months for the Federal Parliament to deal with it. It just did not want to deal with it and took some time to deal with it; thus, all our work in getting up to speed on that Bill was for nothing. We could have considered it at our leisure and had a detailed discussion on the clauses of that Bill. It seems to be an all too common practice of the Government to paper over its mistakes by expecting the Opposition to cooperate by rushing things through Parliament.

However, we had a little difficulty with getting a proper briefing on the Bill before us, because we had had a bad experience with the Treasurer in his treatment of briefings. Indeed, the Treasurer in the other place, in discussion of this same Bill, gave an explanation of his reason for coming out and putting out press releases about briefings that were given to the Opposition, which was quite interesting. He made a distinction between confidential, non-confidential and partly confidential briefings, which I certainly was not aware of. The Hon. Robert Lucas has been in the Parliament longer than I have, but in my dealings with other Ministers they were quite happy to offer full briefings on a confidential basis, and that always seemed to me to be a useful understanding.

I know that, since the election, by and large Ministers have been in the habit of having a political staffer in briefing meetings, taking copious notes and reporting on those briefings, so the Opposition has felt a little constrained in having a full and frank discussion in briefings on legislation and various issues in the portfolios.

With regard to an ETSA briefing attended by members of the Opposition, the Hon. Robert Lucas said:

> I assure the Council that I was not going to a briefing involving Mike Rann and spoonfeeding him with information on the sale of ETSA and Optima with which he could beat the Government around the ears.

That is an interesting position. The Minister does not want to give any information to the Opposition in case it uses it to oppose a Government measure. I find it strange that someone could treat the processes of Parliament with such contempt. It is my understanding that the Opposition is entitled to a range of facts so that it can properly debate and consider Bills. If the facts about the sale of ETSA and Optima are so sensitive that the Treasurer feels he is unable to give them to the Opposition, they must be even worse than we think.

However, the Opposition did some research when talking with NEMMCO on the Bill before us, and the Treasurer also provided some written briefing notes regarding the Bill. I am certainly now of the view that there is quite a strong case to be made for this Bill to pass quickly, so once again the Opposition is prepared to be cooperative in the interests of the State of South Australia, despite the endeavours of the Government to frustrate that cooperation. However, several key questions need to be answered before the final vote and—

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: What are they?

Ms HURLEY: I am just about to say: give me a chance. We have been told that major issues are outstanding, which means that the national electricity market cannot begin, and that these issues relate to the testing of systems by NEMMCO. I ask the Minister whether these major issues relate only to that testing or whether other issues—major or minor—are outstanding.

My other question concerns the other jurisdictions that are involved in the national electricity market. I understand that South Australia and Queensland have Acts in place, and I am interested to know whether the other States involved in the national electricity market have enacted legislation prepara-

tory to their joining the national electricity market. Further, is there any indication as to when the national electricity market is due to start?

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2.

Ms HURLEY: I will repeat my question. We have been told that the delay in beginning the national electricity market which has necessitated this Bill is due to a delay in the testing of systems by NEMMCO. I ask the Minister whether these major issues relate only to that testing of the systems by NEMMCO or are there other issues relating to the agreements by the other jurisdictions and any other major or minor issues that are getting in the way of the formation of the market?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: From the advice I am given here, the major reason for the delay is the NEMMCO market system. Apparently at this stage a revised start date is to be taken into account to test the systems, and at this stage they expect to know that by the end of June. From what I read in the briefing, NEMMCO is the major problem with the revised start date.

Ms HURLEY: I was aware of that. My question was, 'Is that the only issue?' I understand there may be some problems with negotiations between the jurisdictions and that preconditions are required before the electricity market begins.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I am unaware of that. I can seek that sort of detail for the honourable member, but I am unaware of any other problems.

Ms HURLEY: Have other jurisdictions, apart from South Australia and Queensland, enacted the legislation to join the national electricity market and, if not, why not?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: To my knowledge, as we are the lead legislator in this situation, they are basically waiting for us to move in this area, and then they will follow us.

Clause passed.

Clause 3.

Ms HURLEY: In dealing with this clause, I refer again to a question I asked earlier. The Minister said that other jurisdictions were waiting on this piece of legislation, but this in fact only prevents the proclamation of the national electricity market legislation. I was asking whether other States have enacted legislation in respect of the national electricity market. We have already passed that. We have already been the lead legislator and that is done.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The advice given here suggests that the Queensland law that applies to the South Australian National Electricity law has already been proclaimed. I do not have advice before me as to whether other jurisdictions have proclaimed it or not.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

NON-METROPOLITAN RAILWAYS (TRANSFER) (BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT WORK) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

SEA-CARRIAGE DOCUMENTS BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 28 May. Page 987.)

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): The Opposition has studied the Bill and will be supporting it. The Bill, which repeals sections 14 and 15 of the Mercantile Law Act, makes the buyer of goods under a bill of lading, sea waybill or ships' delivery order a party to those contracts and thus enables the buyer to sue and be sued directly on the contract of carriage. At common law a bill of lading was a contract between the vendor or consignor on the one side and the shipper on the other. The buyer or consignee was dependent on the bill of lading, but not a party to it and unable to sue on it. Under the repealed sections, the buyer had more rights on the bill of lading than at common law.

The Bill before us further enhances the buyer's status on the contract of carriage. The Bill, by clause 5, accommodates electronic commerce by giving formal legal recognition to what it terms 'data messages'. The Bill is uniform national legislation and we are told by the Government that it accords with the law in many jurisdictions with which we trade.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government): I thank the Opposition for its informed comments on this matter and for its support of the Bill. I look forward to its speedy passage through the House.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1.

Mr ATKINSON: I notice the short title is 'The Sea-Carriage Documents Act 1998'. I understand that the Bill replaces sections 14 and 15 of the Mercantile Law Act 1936. Given that the Bill is comparatively short, why was it not possible to incorporate these provisions in the Mercantile Law Act? Why must we have a separate Bill to add to the post-war explosion of legislation?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Other States and Territories had similar provisions in discrete Acts. We thought it was much simpler for it to be done in this way so that it involved a similar situation as exists in all other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth.

Clause passed.

Clause 2.

Mr ATKINSON: When does the Government intend to proclaim the legislation?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The Government will, as is customarily the case on its assent by the Governor, consider the date at which it should be proclaimed. I presume that it will be as soon as possible after the Governor's assent.

Mr ATKINSON: I understand that this is national uniform legislation. The Minister told us as much in his reply to my question on clause 1. Where in the order of States and Territories enacting this uniform legislation is South Australia: at the front, at the back, or in the middle? Surely that will determine the proclamation date.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: There is no need for Acts to be proclaimed on the same date throughout jurisdictions. The Government will determine the best date. I put to the member for Spence that it is irrelevant whether it is the first jurisdiction or the last to proclaim the Act—and he knows it.

Mr ATKINSON: I draw the Minister's attention to my question of where we were in the order of enacting this legislation. Are we the first State? Are we the last? Where are we amongst the States and Territories in enacting the Bill?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Spence will be very pleased to know that we are the fifth State to pass

such legislation. If he wishes to know what the other five States are, I will take the matter on notice and ensure that departmental officers reply to him fully and fulsomely in due course.

Clause passed.

Clause 3.

Mr ATKINSON: Clause 3 provides:

> This Act applies only in relation to sea-carriage documents coming into existence on or after the date of commencement of this section.

Does this mean that clause 3 might be proclaimed at a time different from the rest of the Bill?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That is not the intention.

Clause passed.

Clause 4.

Mr ATKINSON: I understand that bills of lading have a long and distinguished history in our law, that at one time at common law a bill of lading was a contract between the consignor and the shipper and that the buyer had no rights on the bill. So, if the goods were not delivered the buyer of the goods would have no action against the shipper or consignor on the bill of lading. I understand that that changed with the first statutory enactments in this area and that now we are making the buyer a full party to a bill of lading.

Will the Minister confirm that this Bill has the effect of making a buyer or consignee of the goods a full party to the bill of lading, or is the buyer or consignee still not fully a party to the bill of lading? Will the Minister outline the history of a bill of lading and explain how a buyer or consignee's rights have developed over the years? I understand that the Attorney-General in another place made some play of this, and I would like the Minister to repeat that wisdom for members of the House who may not have acquainted themselves with that debate.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am surprised that the member for Spence needs instruction on this matter, because I am sure that he has read the second reading explanation. However, since the honourable member has asked me this question, I point out that, as he says, at common law the buyer of the goods being either the consignee or the endorsee of a bill of lading is not party to a contract or carriage between the carrier and the shipper. Therefore, as he rightly says at common law the buyer cannot sue the carrier for breach of contract if the goods are damaged or destroyed in the course of shipment. This has resulted in inequitable and anomalous situations.

As a result, in the last century legislation was enacted in all States and Territories to overcome the commercial difficulties created by this fact in common law. The member for Spence would be aware that this was based on the 1855 British Act which provides that every consignee or endorsee of a bill of lading to whom property and goods passes upon or by reason of consignment or endorsement of the bill of lading has the same rights and is subject to the same liabilities in respect of those goods as if the contract contained in the bill of lading had been made with that person.

That is a fairly basic and important principle which I am sure the member for Spence understands. In South Australia this provision is currently contained in section 14 of the Mercantile Law Act 1936. However,since the introduction of this provision, legal, commercial and technical conditions have substantially altered and practices in the shipping industry have changed. As the member for Spence knows, as a result there are now a number of circumstances where there is no link between the transfer of property and goods and consignment or endorsement of the bill of lading to the buyer. As a result, many buyers do not now require the rights and protections which were originally envisaged in section 14 of the Mercantile Law Act and the bill of lading legislation passed in other States and Territories. That is a brief history of this matter for which the member for Spence asked, and I believe that that is an explanation which most members of this Committee will find more than adequate.

Mr ATKINSON: It is all very well for this Minister, who at short notice has taken over the conduct of this Bill, to read from someone else's second reading explanation. I would like him to explain succinctly to the Committee in his own words what rights a buyer or a consignee has under this Bill that was not available under the provisions of the Mercantile Law Act.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: They get the same rights of suit as they did under previous legislation, but this Bill gives them more rights in more situations. It expands those situations and their rights.

Mr ATKINSON: I understand that to some extent bills of lading have been succeeded by sea waybills and ships delivery orders. Will the Minister explain to the Committee how sea waybills and ships delivery orders differ from bills of lading and why in maritime commerce they have succeeded bills of lading? Secondly, will the Minister cite some concrete examples of the increased rights of buyers or consignees under this Bill compared with under sections 14 and 15 of the Mercantile Law Act?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Regarding the second part of the question, they will not get more rights but they will get them in slightly different circumstances. Regarding the first part of the question, if the member for Spence wants an absolute and complete briefing on this matter, he can do one of two things. He is entitled to ask me questions and for me to parrot back answers or he need not detain further other members of this committee and seek a full briefing from the officers concerned.

Clause passed.

Clause 5.

Mr ATKINSON: Will the Minister explain to the Committee the necessity and desirability of this clause?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Since the member for Spence does not want me to reiterate this matter, which is very carefully canvassed and explained in the second reading explanation, I recommend that he read that explanation.

Mr ATKINSON: It is appropriate to remark at this point that the Government is sending a Minister into the House with carriage of a Bill in the Attorney-General's portfolio without his having any knowledge of the Bill. It really is poor form for the Government to have a Minister, who has only just found out that he is to carry the Bill, to come into the House and have carriage of it. I have asked a number of questions seeking to have the Minister explain the Bill and he is unable to do so. So, it is the mark of an arrogant Government that it merely sends the Minister responsible for the Bill, the Minister representing the Attorney-General—

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Hart is out of his seat.

Mr ATKINSON:—home on a pair and then sends a junior Minister in to handle a Bill with which he is simply not familiar. It is, I suppose, amusing to see the Minister for Local Government floundering on this Bill—and we could extend this amusement for any length of time—but I want to remark, on behalf of the Opposition, that this manner of legislating is entirely unsatisfactory.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The honourable member was asking a question: he will get an answer. The fact is that the Government has given me a task: the record shows that I have answered the questions put by the member for Spence. If the member for Spence chooses to sign a point score, that is of course the member for Spence's right, but the Government has a job to do. The Government is doing the job and I object to the nature and character of the remarks of the member for Spence.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

The SPEAKER: Order! Earlier this afternoon the Leader of the Opposition rose on a matter of privilege alleging that the Premier may have misled the House. In giving a ruling on a privilege matter, I am constrained to the quotations in *Hansard* attributed to the Premier and delivered to me by the Leader of the Opposition. It is not my role to carry out an investigation of any other supporting documentation. There is nothing in those quotations which leads me to conclude the notion that the Premier deliberately misled the House, as required to set up a privileges committee and, as a consequence, I rule that I am unable to give precedence to a motion to establish a privileges committee.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I rise on a point of order, Sir. In commenting on this I want to say by way of a point of order that if we were in Westminster or the House of Representatives both the Premier and Deputy Premier on the evidence before this Parliament would be gone.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order; the Leader will resume his seat.

VALUATION OF LAND (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the Bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

No. 1 Page 1 (clause 3)—After line 21 insert the following paragraphs:

(a1) by striking out from subsection (1) 'by notice published in the *Gazette*' and substituting 'on a recommendation made by resolution of both Houses of Parliament';

(a2) by inserting after subsection (1) the following subsection:

(1a) On a vacancy occurring in the office of Valuer-General, the matter of inquiring into and reporting on a suitable person for appointment to the vacant office is referred by force of this subsection to the Statutory Officers Committee established under the *Parliamentary Committees Act 1991*.;

No. 2 Page 2, lines 3 to 7 (clause 5)—Leave out all words in these lines after 'by striking out subsection (1)'.

No. 3 Page 2, lines 15 to 24 (clause 5)—Leave out all words in these lines.

No. 4 Page 7, line 3 (Schedule 5)—Leave out the following item:

'Section 9(4)(b) Strike out this paragraph and substitute the following paragraphs:

(b) resigns by written notice addressed to the Governor; or

(ba) completes a term of office and is not reappointed; or.'

and substitute the following item:

Section 9(4)(b) Strike out this paragraph and substitute the following paragraph:

(b) resigns by written notice addressed to the Governor, or.

SEA-CARRIAGE DOCUMENTS BILL

In Committee (resumed on motion.)

Clause 5 passed.

Clause 6.

Mr ATKINSON: My next question to the Minister regards bulk handling. With a bulk cargo there may be a large number of consignees, buyers or endorsees and if, let us say, the ship were to sink and the bulk cargo were lost, it may be that none of those buyers would establish that a particular part of the bulk cargo was theirs. So, will the Minister inform the House how the Bill before us overcomes that problem and how it differs from its predecessor?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That may well be a very interesting question, but it has nothing to do with clause 6.

Clause passed.

Clause clauses 7 to 10 passed.

Clause 11.

Mr ATKINSON: Will a bill of lading remain evidence of title to the person in possession of the bill, and will the other documents—the sea weigh bill or a ship's delivery order—now become evidence of title? Is there a change in their status in this respect?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Subclause (2) provides that a bill of lading to which this section applies is *prima facie* evidence in favour of the ship or against the carrier for the shipment of goods or of the receipt of the goods for shipment.

Clause passed.

Schedule passed.

Title passed.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): As the Bill comes out of Committee it is quite inadequately explained by the Minister responsible for it. Nowhere is it worse explained than in his response to clause 6, where he claimed that my question was entirely unrelated to the clause. Clause 6 is headed 'Application where goods have ceased to exist, or cannot be identified', and as it comes out of Committee it provides:

Without prejudice to the operation of section 7(4) or section 11, nothing in this Act precludes its operation in relation to a sea-carriage document where the goods—

(a) cease to exist after the issue of the document; or

(b) cannot be identified (whether because they are mixed with other goods, or for any other reason).

That section is precisely about bulk handling; that is what it is all about. The Minister had a story to tell about this Bill and bulk handling, but he failed to see the connection.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7.22 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 30 June at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 2 June 1998

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

CORONER'S FINDINGS

36. **Ms STEVENS:** What specific actions has the Government taken, or intends to take, to implement each of the eighteen recommendations made by the Coroner in his report on findings from inquests into the deaths of three people by persons found not guilty of murder by reason of insanity, and the deaths of another three people who were patients at Glenside Hospital and were killed by trains?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: An extensive 'community up' consultation process, involving written submissions and workshops, was put into place to review current directions in mental health.

The Government has responded to the priorities identified by announcing a five point plan for the further development of mental health services—

1. An increase in mental health funding—
   * an additional $5.25 million allocated to mental health this year in response to extra pressures has been converted to permanent funding over four years—a total of $21 million;
   * an extra $3 million per year over four years, a total of $12 million, will also be provided for new service initiatives;
2. A range of service developments better targeted to the needs of particular groups;
3. A framework for education and training in mental health issues;
4. The development of community support networks;
5. An injection of capital funds to ensure the regionalisation process continues.

In relation to the 18 specific recommendations of the Coroner, the following action has been taken or is proposed—

1. The benefits of early diagnosis and treatment

   Early intervention service development initiatives have commenced as part of a national focus in this area. Assessment Crisis Intervention Services have been established which can be accessed through one phone number and are available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

   An initiative arising out of the mental health consultation process is the proposed establishment of a 24 hour mobile crisis service catering for young people, their families and the organisations that assist them. The service will be set up in metropolitan regions and will also provide telephone and telepsychiatry video conferencing support in rural and remote areas.
2. The need to remain focussed upon the primary illness, and to provide effective treatment for it, rather than become preoccupied with the symptoms and effects of the illness, such as socio-economic factors

   Specialist State Government Mental Health Services have consolidated assistance to clients to manage their mental illness. This incorporates a holistic approach in assessing the range of services the person needs. Services such as housing management and community living support, which are viewed by consumers as vital to their well-being, are being developed and managed through the non-government sector. The broad Human Services portfolio provides increased opportunities for co-ordinating services.
3. Where coercive orders by the Guardianship Board are called for, the need for clear, accurate, up-to-date and helpful information to be provided to the Board
4. There should not be a reluctance to approach the Guardianship Board for such orders where the patient's condition requires them, and that such action should be seen as therapy rather than punishment
5. Where it can be reasonably anticipated that specialist opinion will assist in such an application, the services of a qualified psychiatrist should be available to assist in presentation of the case to the Guardianship Board

   Discussions between Regional Mental Health Services and the Guardianship Board have been held regularly over the last 2-3 years with the aim of establishing better working relationships, including the provision of appropriate information.
6. Where the treatment of such a patient is to be in the hands of a general medical practitioner or Career Medical Officer, such a practitioner should receive supervision and assistance from a consultant psychiatrist so that strategic decisions concerning such issues as changes in medication, orders by the Guardianship Board, the need for detention, transfers between institutions, and the like are not made without specialist psychiatric input. The limits of the non-specialist practitioner's role should be clearly defined and mutually understood

   Directors of Clinical Services were appointed in each region in 1996 to ensure clinical standards are maintained, including appropriate supervision of staff.

   A Clinical Advisory Group is being convened, arising out of recommendations of the mental health consultation, to advise on clinical service issues.
7. The level of medication used in the treatment of such patients should primarily be determined by the minimum levels required to control the patient's symptoms, particularly psychosis. Of course, the side-effects of such medication should also be considered, and treated where possible, but should not deter aggressive attempts to treat the patient's illness
8. Medication should be given an adequate trial before being changed. During the trial, careful monitoring and accurate recording of the patient's mental state should occur. Changes in medication dosages should only occur after a full analysis of these factors over an adequate period of time
9. The adequacy or appropriateness of particular types of medication should also be analysed carefully. If one form of medication does not prove effective, resort should be had to the other medications available, and an adequate trial should be undertaken before any conclusion is reached that the patient's condition is not amenable to medication

   These are clinical matters which are constantly under review, on a case-by-case basis. The balance between safety issues and the patient's right to manage their illness with the minimum medication dosage is a clinical judgement, but the need to consider past experience is agreed.
10. The role of family members in the monitoring of a patient's mental state for the purposes of paragraphs (8) and (9) should not be underestimated. They are often in a position to provide information which the patient is unable or unwilling to disclose, but which is highly relevant to a diagnosis or, for example, re-emerging psychosis

    The role of family members is acknowledged. A Carers Policy has been developed as well as a plan to amend service practice to encourage maximum involvement of family members while acknowledging confidentiality requirements.

    Community involvement in mental health will be significantly strengthened, taking into account the findings of the mental health consultation process.
11. The standard of record keeping should be sufficient to enable the assessments referred to in these recommendations to take place. In particular, regular and accurate recording of the patient's mental state, including a note of the presence or absence of both positive and negative symptoms, should occur

    This has been drawn to the attention of the Regional Directors of Psychiatry
12. Consideration should be given to the computerisation of psychiatric casenotes to assist in this process.

    The Department of Human Services is examining the information systems required to improve information flow.
13. Mrs Rimmer's recommendations, which I quoted in the findings in relation to Mrs Gwenneth Hogarth, referred to the need for better communication between therapists and families, more support for families, better community education about mental illness, and better and more flexible and suitable non-institutional accommodation for patients. These are all extremely sensible and appropriate suggestions, and I adopt them for these purposes

    These proposals are core elements of a comprehensive service system and are basic goals for regional services. They

are part of the Government's five point plan for the further development of mental health services.

14. The practice now adopted at Carramar Clinic, as described by Dr Rose in the matter of Mrs Consiglia Ciampi, whereby one member of the treatment team is specifically allocated the task of liaison with the family and supporters of the patient, should be considered for general application

This is general practice within the specialised Mental Health Services.

15. The security of staff in psychiatric institutions should continue to receive close attention

A major review of security was carried out after Dr Chandra's death and improvements were made to facilities as a result of the findings.

16. The future planning of psychiatric services should take into account Professor Goldney's views that at least one 'centre of excellence' for the provision of psychiatric treatment should be retained, and that a facility should continue to exist where patients may seek asylum in such a centre in appropriate cases

In accordance with National Mental Health Policy, inpatient facilities are included in General Hospital settings. These will develop as centres of excellence in their own right.

17. The condition and ambience of closed wards should be improved so that the detention of a patient in an appropriate case can be seen as humane and therapeutic, rather than as a punitive measure. At the same time, the security of such wards needs to be improved so that patients are prevented from having access to illicit drugs, thereby complicating their psychiatric condition

New secure facilities are progressively being established in each general hospital location.

18. The fact that under-staffing, high staff turnover, lack of cohesive management, and under-funding can all result in the death of patients, when staff morale drops to the extent that a sense of hopelessness develops, described by Professor Goldney as 'malignant alienation', should be recognised and addressed

These are complex issues and are constantly being monitored by the Department of Human Services. In part, they have been addressed through the development of regional mental health services and through staff development and supervision. A workforce planning project to analyse recruitment, training and retention issues is cur&rently underway. These issues will be further addressed as part of the Government's five point plan for further development of mental health services.

EDUCATION TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT

59. **Ms WHITE:** As a consequence of amalgamating the Departments of Education and Children's Services and TAFE to form the Department of Education, Training and Employment, will there be any job losses and, if so, how many?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: At each stage of the formation of the new department, efficiencies have been achieved through the removal of duplication/overlap which has resulted in a reduction in a number of positions. These have included two chief executive positions and three other executive positions which have been abolished.

To address the changes that have impacted on the organisational structures of the department, the chief executive has sought and received approval from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to offer up to an additional 60 targeted voluntary separation packages (TVSPs) to 31 December 1998.

During this process, strategies have been developed to maintain a consistent, responsible and equitable approach to the management and implementation of structural change.

Through improved coordination and administration of programs that link across the schooling and vocational education and training sectors, efficiencies will be realised to enhance the delivery of education and training programs. By examining organisational improvement strategies, the department will continue to identify further ways of extending the quality and level of front-line services.

SEXUAL ASSAULT DESK, PORT ADELAIDE

85. **Mr ATKINSON:** Why was the sexual assault desk of the Port Adelaide police unmanned on Monday 9 February and Tuesday 10 February 1998?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS:

- On 6 February 1998, a member of the Port Adelaide CIB Child Abuse Section, having received a facsimile notification from Woodville FACS concerning the alleged indecent assault, attended at the complainant's home address and advised her of the status of the investigation.
- On 9 February 1998, Port Adelaide CIB Child Abuse Section contacted a country CIB in an attempt to locate the alleged offender. The complainant was contacted by Port Adelaide CIB Child Abuse Section that day, and advised of the action taken.
- On 11 and 12 February 1998, the members of the Port Adelaide CIB Child Abuse Section were off duty, and the answering machine was operating. Messages were recorded.
- On 13 February 1998, and after having left several messages on the answering machine, the complainant contacted the Port Adelaide CIB and spoke to an unknown detective. The detective was unable to assist with the status of the investigation as the number of the Police Incident Report quoted by the complainant was incorrect.

  The complainant was allegedly advised by the detective to contact the local member of Parliament if she was not satisfied.
- On 13 February 1998, and as a result of a contact being made by the complainant, a detective from the country CIB telephoned her. A fax was sent to the Port Adelaide CIB advising of the results of the inquiry and the complainant further contacted the Port Adelaide CIB.
- The complainant confirmed having received contact by both the country CIB and Port Adelaide CIB.
- The complainant stated that she had absolutely no complaint against either the Port Adelaide CIB or the Child Abuse Unit and is completely satisfied with the action taken.
- As a result of this incident, a policy has been implemented whereby the on duty CIB supervisor monitors all answering machine messages in the absence of Child Abuse Investigators.