LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 9 August 1990

The PRESIDENT (Hon. G.L. Bruce) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITIONS: SELF-DEFENCE

Petitions signed by 5 944 residents of South Australia concerning the right of citizens to defend themselves on their own property and praying that the Council will support legislation allowing that action taken by a person at home in self-defence or in the apprehension of an intruder is exempt from prosecution for assault were presented by the Hons I. Gilfillan, K.T. Griffin and Diana Laidlaw.

Petitions received.

QUESTIONS

COURT DELAYS

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about delays in court processes.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Adelaide solicitors have drawn my attention to their experience of severe delays by courts in processing documents seeking to enforce court orders. I understand that the Attorney-General has received the complaints but there has not yet been any satisfactory response. In fact, some 30 firms have taken up the issue through the Law Society because they are frustrated by their inability to get summonses, warrants of execution, unsatisfied judgment summonses and other processes issued within a reasonable time. It frustrates not only lawyers but, more particularly, their clients, and brings the legal system into disrepute. Delays in issuing summonses enable defendants to avoid their legal liability. If a judgment has been obtained and delays occur in issuing a warrant of execution against the defendant's goods and chattels to satisfy the judgment, it enables the defendant to dispose of the assets or secrete them or otherwise avoid liability.

Many examples of delay have been provided to me, but they include the following. In the Southern Districts Local Court a request for issue of a warrant of execution had not been attended to for over 20 weeks. In the Port Adelaide Local Court a request for the issue of an unsatisfied judgment summons had still not been attended to after nearly three months. In the Port Adelaide Court eight processes were one and a half to three months outstanding until a few days ago when five were fixed, leaving three outstanding. In the Southern Districts Court, I understand that delays of five to eight weeks to issue processes are not uncommon.

One has to remember that, after the process has been issued, it still has to be served and that may take many weeks, even months, thus adding to the time it takes a successful plaintiff to enforce the payment of a debt. But I am informed that the real bottleneck is in the courts. I am told that the introduction of computers in the courts is the main problem, but that the delays have been growing since at least February this year.

Rather than speeding up the service the computers have slowed it down. The best court for service is the Para Districts, but that is the only one that is not yet on computerisation. I am also told that court staff are pulling their hair out over the problems and that the delays are affecting morale. My questions to the Attorney-General are:

1. Does he agree that the delays being experienced by lawyers and litigants in respective processes in the Local Courts is unsatisfactory?

2. What steps are being taken by the Government to give better service and when is that likely to bear results?

3. What period of delay does the Attorney-General regard as 'reasonable'?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: If those figures which have been conveyed to me by the President of the Law Society by letter (which I saw only today) are correct, one could not regard them as satisfactory. I have responded to the President of the Law Society by inviting him to confer in the first instance with the Director of the Court Services Department to identify problems and, if need be, see me about it. That is the course of action that will follow. I am not in a position to indicate what time limits I consider satisfactory at this stage.

TANDANYA

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for the Arts a question about Tandanya.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Tandanya, the Aboriginal Cultural Institute in Grenfell Street, was opened on 1 October last year. I believe that most members received an invitation to attend, or did attend the opening. It is a unique arts institution based on a bold concept to support and promote Aboriginal culture as a living culture through the exhibition of private Aboriginal art collections and to provide training opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Tandanya's goals are commendable. In terms of tourism potential, the institution also helps to position South Australia to take advantage of recent surveys by the Australia Council, which found that Aboriginal arts and culture are a significant drawcard for international visitors. If ever the Bannon Government sees fit to make an offer for the Ruhe collection, Tandanya will complement this important acquisition by the South Australian Museum.

In recent weeks, however, these positive attitudes have become tarnished by reports of financial losses, mismanagement, abuse of funds and resignations by staff. Also, questions have been raised about the merits of a $50 000 trip to the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland by five representatives from Tandanya, including the Director (Peter Tregilgas) and Chairman (Vince Copley).

I have a number of questions to ask the Minister. I appreciate that she may not have all the answers at hand but perhaps she can provide them to the Parliament later. They are:

1. Was the sum of $139 000, injected into Tandanya by the Department for the Arts in June, a once-off grant on top of the $540 000 allocated last year for operating expenses and is the sum the full extent of the additional funds provided by the State Government to Tandanya in the past year?

2. In providing the extra $139 000 did the Minister and/or the Department for the Arts require management to undertake administrative and operational changes as a condition of the grant and, if so, what were those conditions?

3. What were the projected visitor numbers for the past year and for the forthcoming five years and have such

numbers now been revised following the visitor experience of the past year?

4. Did the injection of $139 000 relate solely to a shortfall in projected visitor numbers or did part of the allocation cover other areas of operation which did not meet budget projections and/or which arose from mismanagement?

5. In relation to the admission by the Director that there has been an abuse of expense allowances, what was the monetary value of that abuse and what action has been taken both to recover the funds and to ensure such abuses do not continue?

6. In relation to the $50 000 overseas trip by five representatives of Tandanya, what is Tandanya's and/or the State Government's contribution to the trip, as I understand some Commonwealth funds have been used, that the airfares were donated by Qantas and that funds are to be raised by the sale of art work?

7. Has the Minister sought an investigation of claims in the *Advertiser* of 4 August by Mr Steve Kennett who recently resigned from the position of Production Manager over disagreement with the administration about arrangements for an anti-racism student exhibition? If so, when does the Minister expect to receive a report on that investigation?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I agree with the honourable member that I will not be able to give a detailed answer to all these questions at the moment. I will certainly endeavour to supply as quickly as possible answers to those questions that I am unable to answer at the moment. I cannot recall the exact figure, but the extra sum referred to by the honourable member was of the magnitude of $139 000. It was certainly a one-off grant. It arose from the fact that when Tandanya was first set up no-one really knew what its budgetary requirements would be.

Tandanya is a unique institution of which all people in South Australia can feel very proud indeed. However, because it is unique, the actual operating expenditure required in the first instance was very much a matter of guesswork. It had been agreed right from the word go that there would be a review of the budget towards the end of the first year of operation and that any necessary adjustments would be made. That review took place in May or June of this year, and it was agreed that this one-off sum would be granted for the financial year just ended. The income obtained by Tandanya was less than had been originally budgeted for, partly because the visitor numbers were much lower than had been predicted. Of course, this is partly because Tandanya did not open until 1 October—in other words, three months into the financial year. Following the opening further construction work still had to be completed. This involved installing a lift in the main hall, which obviously affected the operations of Tandanya. It meant that the building was closed at times when it would otherwise have been open, thus reducing visitor numbers.

In relation to the second question, there was no requirement, in providing the extra money, to undertake administrative and operational changes. It had been agreed that budget adjustments would be made at the end of the first financial year. However, it was agreed at the time that Tandanya was established that there would be a review of its operations after one year.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Has that review been undertaken now?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Tandanya has not been operating for quite one year yet but, certainly, there are plans to undertake this review in the very near future. However, such a review has nothing at all to do with the $139 000.

It had been planned to have such a review after Tandanya had been in operation for one year, and that review will take place. As for the projected visitor numbers, I am afraid I do not have that information. I think the projected visitor numbers, which came from an interstate consultant, were of the order of 90 000 visitors a year, but the actual number of visitors was more like 30 000. I will check on those figures; I am quoting from memory and I may have the figures inaccurately. Certainly, there has been revision following the experience of the first year although, again, the figures for the first year will not be ones on which accurate forecasts can be based, considering that in 1989-90 Tandanya was not open for the full year, both through the late opening and the disturbances that occurred due to further building work still being required. In fact, I think Tandanya can be regarded as being fully operational for only six months of the past financial year.

I turn to question No. 4. Certainly, the review of the requirements for Tandanya was predominantly due to the lesser number of visitors than had been expected. I think there were other areas of operation, such as the cafe and the shop, which had not achieved the full targets that had been set for them, and were not part of the original budget, because they were expected to cover their costs. In fact, however, that did not occur and some adjustment was required for that reason. Again, they were not operating for the length of time that they were expected to operate during that financial year.

Questions 5 and 7 I will have to take on notice, because the information will have to be sought from Tandanya. I do not have any detail on that matter myself. With regard to question No. 6, certainly, the budget for the overseas trip presumed a certain amount of sponsorship.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Is sponsorship in addition to or incorporated in the $50 000?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: The total budget for the overseas trip was projected to be about $50 000. That was to be partly funded through sponsorship, including that of Qantas, which was providing fares. Also, other sponsorship was being sought for it. Certainly, no extra State Government contribution is being provided for that trip.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Other than some funds through Tandanya's operating budget?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: No extra funds are being supplied by the State Government for that trip and, certainly, part of the necessary funds are expected to be raised from the sale of art works, which are forming a special exhibition of Aboriginal art at the Edinburgh Festival. I was a little concerned at the projected trip.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was going to ask you whether you were going to seek to protest.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I was a little concerned at the magnitude of the proposed trip and the costs involved, and expressed my feelings to the Chair of the board of Tandanya, making it quite clear that the Government grant to Tandanya would not be varied according to the financial outcomes of the trip. I hope that the art sales will eventuate as projected in the budget since, otherwise, the programs for Tandanya in the current year may be affected by the expense.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Or they may have to curtail their trip.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Either curtail their trip or have the programs in Adelaide affected because there will be fewer resources available. I made quite clear that whether the trip took place and to what extent was a board decision. Tandanya is run by a board, and such decisions are the prerogative of the board, but I made very clear my concern at the possible financial implications of the trip. I wanted the board to be very clear as to the effect it may or may

not have on Tandanya, and that there would be no extra Government finance provided for this trip.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Local Government a question about voting at council meetings.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: My question arises from a Burnside council meeting some months ago and a report on ABC radio today regarding advice given by the Minister's department to the Burnside Residents Group, which had an interest in a council decision concerning a rubbish dump. The residents' chairman handed a letter from the department to the acting council chairman which made clear that in an elected council of 12 a majority of seven was necessary for a decision on the rubbish dump issue (and, I imagine, all issues).

There were only 11 members present at the meeting, the Mayor being absent, and the Residents Association was led to believe that seven were still required for a majority decision—in other words, an absolute majority of elected members and not simply a majority of those present, as the Act stipulates. Section 60 (3) provides:

> Subject to this Act, a question arising for decisions at a meeting of the council will be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present at the meeting.

The Burnside meeting voted six to five to allow the rubbish dump to stay open. I understand that the Local Government Divisional Director, Mr Roodenmys, said he would seek Crown law advice on this matter, which has serious ramifications for all councils and their decision-making process, including quorum, casting votes and declarations of interest.

This morning's radio story said that Crown law advice now supports the earlier advice given to the Burnside Residents Association that an absolute majority of elected members is required for deciding every vote of a council. This advice, I understand, is contrary to advice given to Burnside by Mr Brian Hayes, QC. My questions are:

1. Does the Minister acknowledge that, if Crown law advice is correct, there are serious implications for local government?
2. Will she seek to have Crown law advice tested?
3. Does she have advice that there will be a retrospective element concerning all past council decisions?
4. Will she seek to clarify the Act quickly so that there can be absolutely no question that the wording of section 60 (3) of the Act means that a majority of those present at a meeting with a quorum decides a question?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: As the honourable member says, there has been considerable controversy on this matter. We have sought and received unambiguous Crown law advice. I quote briefly from the Crown Solicitor's view, as follows:

> The Mayor or presiding member must be taken into account when determining the number of votes required to constitute a majority, notwithstanding that the Mayor does not possess a deliberative vote. Thus, where 12 members attend including the Mayor, seven members form a majority.

I do not suggest that, in any way, I query the Crown Solicitor's advice. I accept that advice as the legal position and, although some people have claimed that the Local Government Act is not clear on this point, the Crown Solicitor's opinion on this matter is quite unambiguous.

This is the second time in recent years that this question has been raised. Following the last occasion in 1982, a local government bulletin was issued to all councils describing a similar voting situation and explaining the reasons behind the Crown Solicitor's advice. It may be opportune to reissue that bulletin, although I expect all councils would have kept it since it was issued eight years ago. If there are queries from councils, we shall be very happy to reissue the bulletin so that the current legal situation is made very clear to all councils.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: As a supplementary question: is the Minister happy that the Crown Law advice follows the intention of the Act? I understood that when it was written section 60 (3) intended that a simple majority of those present at a properly quorate meeting decided an issue.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: It is not for me to question the legal opinions of Crown law. No representations have been made to me that there should be changes to the Act. It seems to me that the Crown law opinion is quite unambiguous. It has been circulated to councils in the past, but if the honourable member feels it is desirable I shall be very happy to circulate it again to all councils.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about access to justice.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: By correspondence, I have raised a matter with the Attorney-General in relation to a particular problem. In 1988 a company called Quartern Pty Ltd bought land on Kellidie Peninsula, near Coffin Bay on the Eyre Peninsula. The land was zoned coastal rural. Despite objections from many residents, in December 1988 the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula approved the company's plan to subdivide the land into 86 blocks. Twelve local people lodged appeals with the Planning Appeals Tribunal, which were heard in April 1989. The tribunal found in favour of the locals.

Quartern appealed to the Supreme Court, and on a possible different interpretation of the word 'coastal' the case was sent back for a re-hearing before a differently constituted tribunal from the one which had previously heard the case. The residents had, in essence, lost the Supreme Court case, but not the matter of the development which was still undecided. However, the Supreme Court judge ordered the residents to pay costs.

The second Planning Appeals Tribunal hearing once again found in favour of the residents—that the council approval of the Quartern development breached the council's development plan. Quartern is again planning an appeal in the Supreme Court.

The residents tell me that they are beginning to feel that in South Australia there is one law for the rich and another for people like them. Although they have essentially won the case twice in the Planning Appeals Tribunal, they are the ones forced to pay for the Supreme Court appeals. Being ordinary people, and lacking the financial clout of the development company, they are feeling reluctant to go to the Supreme Court again—an action which puts them at risk of further debt.

The theoretical strength of the Planning Act is that it allows interested members of the public a right to enforce the law. I have written to the Attorney-General on this matter and his answer essentially was that he did not want to reflect upon the court's exercise of its discretion in relation to costs and that perhaps the residents should consider taking the matter to the Planning Review which is now in place. There are two problems with that. The first is that the development is proceeding and there is a chance that,

long before the Planning Review has completed its task, a decision will have been made there, and they feel that they will have been denied their just right to enforce the law, simply because they cannot afford to do so. Secondly, the QC who has been acting on behalf of Quartern, Mr Brian Hayes, is also the head of the Planning Review, and that also raises some questions in their minds.

My questions to the Attorney-General are as follows. First, does the Attorney-General feel that justice is being served where costs are awarded in such a way (without reflecting upon the court itself) that people no longer pursue what in fact may be a correct case? Secondly, does the Government have any interest in perhaps appearing before the Planning Review or looking at other laws generally so that the power of the dollar does not preclude the ordinary person from getting justice?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The issue that the honourable member raises is a general issue which has been highlighted by this particular case; that is, whether courts or tribunals should have power to award costs against the party that loses. Different approaches have been taken to this issue. In what I call the regular courts it has been, and remains, the practice that costs follow the event, so that the losing party pays the costs.

The ultimate awarding of costs is a matter which rests with the discretion of the court, but in general terms, in the courts, the party that loses is obliged to pay the costs of the winning party. In other jurisdictions—the industrial jurisdiction is one—there is a general situation where each party pays its own costs irrespective of the result. However, the legislation that is in place dealing with planning matters has obviously adopted the position that costs are a matter for the discretion of the judge or the Planning Appeals Tribunal, and in the normal course the losing party would have to pay the costs.

When I said that if there are concerns about this matter they should be referred to the Planning Review, I stand by that, because we are dealing with a general issue of policy which the Parliament ultimately, if it is to review the Planning Act and planning legislation, will have to consider. The fact that Mr Hayes is acting for Quartern is not to the point in taking to the Planning Review, of which he is Chair, a general submission about this issue of principle. Until that matter is dealt with by Parliament—and if the honourable member feels that the law needs changing in that respect—I would invite him to have it raised with the Planning Review, or, indeed, when amendments to the Planning Act come to this House, no doubt he will be able to put his point of view then. It is a general issue, it is the general position of the law at present, and it is a policy matter that would ultimately have to be resolved by the Parliament.

I cannot change the law at the present time and the law is as I have stated it in that letter. The litigants concerned in this particular case will have to take their own legal advice on whether the matter should be contested in the Supreme Court or, indeed, whether there is an argument for costs not to be awarded against them. I do not know enough about the individual facts of the particular case. That is the general law which applies in this case as in other cases. I cannot do anything about that. If the Parliament, after reflection and consideration of the issues, wants to change the law, of course, that is a matter that it can consider.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: As a supplementary question: does the Attorney-General feel that justice rather than legality has been served in this case? Does the Government have an opinion on this matter?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I am not quite sure what the honourable member means by asking whether the Government has an opinion on this particular matter. I have outlined the legal position as I understand it, and the courts are operating within the law. I am not quite sure what the honourable member wants to happen in these circumstances. I do not know whether he wants the Government to pay. I am sure that the taxpayer would be delighted to know that the honourable Mr Elliott apparently wants the Government to pick up the costs of litigation. Clearly that is not an acceptable position, except in certain particular cases which may be in the nature of test cases to the full Supreme Court or to the High Court where the Government occasionally undertakes to pay the costs of the litigation because there is an issue of principle under the law which has to be resolved by the higher courts.

The Hon. M.J. Elliott: It means injustice for little people because of the power of money. That is what they are doing. People cannot afford to keep going.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. M.J. Elliott: It is not the law; it is justice that I am asking you about.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The honourable member has raised the question of justice. I do not think that these are circumstances where the Government can pay the costs of this litigant, because that would open up a situation where the Government could be involved in the payment of costs in circumstances which would not be appropriate and which would lead to claims for the Government to pay litigants' costs in all circumstances. The reality is that the law at the present time is that costs can be awarded against the party that loses.

The Hon. M.J. Elliott interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: If you want to abolish costs, put that argument and say that in all the courts of the land, or in the planning area in particular, each party should pay their own costs, you can consider that proposition and put it up for the Parliament to look at.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That is when the well-off will prevail.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The Hon. Mr Griffin says that that is when the well-off will really prevail, and he may well be right, because then, no matter whether the individual litigant has a good case or not, they will have to pay the costs of the litigation.

The other problem with each party paying their own costs is that relatively unmeritorious matters could go ahead because the party taking them will know that they do not run the risk of having to pay the other party's costs if they lose. So it is not a simple issue, as the honourable member has tried to make it out to be with the particular case that he has put.

The Hon. M.J. Elliott interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Justice goes both ways, as the honourable Mr Griffin has said. Is it just for an unmeritorious case to be taken on appeal with the person taking the unmeritorious case not having to run the risk of having to pay the other party's costs?

In that circumstance the party which is in the right is taken to a higher court, wins the case hands down and then has to pay their own costs. That is not just, either. The fact of the matter is that there are two sides to the so-called justice issue on the question of costs. I invite the honourable member to look at both sides of the situation. If people want to consider each party paying their own costs as a general principle in legal proceedings—

The Hon. M.J. Elliott: That is not the only choice.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: —then let the Parliament consider it. But you have to balance both sides. The Hon. Mr Elliott says that is not the only choice; perhaps he can tell us what the other choices are, apart from the Government paying the costs, which I do not think is acceptable, and it would not be acceptable to taxpayers, except in limited circumstances.

The Hon. Peter Dunn: Like Cornwall.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: That is a completely different situation. The honourable member has introduced a complete *non sequitur* into the argument by trying to equate the situation of Dr Cornwall to this circumstance. Dr Cornwall was acting as a Minister of the Government at the time he made the statements that led to the proceedings.

The law is as I have outlined. If the Parliament wants to change the law or if the Hon. Mr Elliott feels that it should be changed, I invite him to make those submissions to the Planning Review. If that is not successful, obviously he can consider the issue in the Parliament when any amendments to that legislation are proposed.

COMPUTER SEX GAMES

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about computer sex games.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: A report in the *News* of 31 July stated that children using home computers can link into computer sex games. In part, the article reads:

> Children, using a modum connected to the computer, can telephone to log in and call up files from bulletin boards—which cannot prevent the copying or introduction of pornographic files.
>
> 'There are about 35 bulletin boards in Adelaide which are mostly hobby boards and free, so a lot of kids are using them, and I'd say a good half have pornographic material on them,' Mr Cadzow said.

Mr Cadzow, a bulletin board operator, goes on to say:

> We have been quite aware of pornography and computers for about five years.

A Melbourne report states also that the police are powerless to prevent children tapping into computer sex programs. Legislation only controls pornography on film or video and in print. Computerised images fall outside police control. We can also take warning from another report, this time from New York. There, cable TV pornography is available to children, and this could be a problem when cable TV comes to Australia. As this is a most serious matter and concerns many of our parents and children, can the situation be considered to bring all aspects of modern-age pornography under suitable control, for the protection of our children?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: This is a difficult issue, to say the least. The South Australian Classification of Publications Board dealt with the issue of pornographic computer images last year. It was found that the current classifications system available in relation to books and videos did not apply to computer games. However, a person could commit an offence under section 33 of the Summary Offences Act, which deals with the publication of offensive or indecent material, if that person produced, sold or hired a computer program stored on a disc or tape and that computer program resulted in the display of offensive matter. The South Australian Classification of Publications Board agreed that consideration should be given to establishing a suitable classifications system for computer games and that discussions should be held with Ministers in other States to develop a uniform approach.

The issue was raised in May this year at the meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory officials responsible for censorship. It was noted that computerised images were not covered by the present classifications system. During discussion it became apparent that it would be extremely difficult to control access to computer images and games which are accessed by a modum operating through a telephone link to a local public bulletin board. From further discussions with officers in Sydney it appears that classification would be difficult, as many of the games contain an infinite amount of responses, some of which may never even be accessed. In other words, the response depends to some extent on the operator.

The law potentially does cover computer games, at least the Summary Offences Act, although there is no classification system for them. This issue has been raised on previous occasions. Certainly no agreement has been reached to date at meetings of censorship officials or Ministers, and it is very difficult to see how the area could be controlled. Apart from any legislative controls that might be considered, there is an obligation on parents and teachers to exercise some supervision and control when children are using computers, to try to ensure that they are not accessing this sort of material if their parents consider that the material is detrimental to them. It is an extremely difficult area to legislate against. However, I will raise the matter again at the national level to see whether or not anything further can be done about legislation in this area.

PASTORAL LAND

The Hon. PETER DUNN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Local Government, representing the Minister of Lands a question about the market value of pastoral land.

Leave granted.

The Hon. PETER DUNN: When we passed the pastoral lands Bill last year there was a determination to introduce market values for the properties, to determine rentals for those properties. However, since that time there has been a great deal of variation in income from those pastoral areas. First of all, sheep and wool prices went very high for the September-December quarter of 1989, but they have since plummeted dramatically to the point where they are now less than one-third of their value during that September-December period. Wool prices have dropped dramatically and therefore I would anticipate that the value of properties likewise has dropped.

The Valuer-General has not given any indication in any way that I know of, and certainly a number of pastoralists have contacted me and asked when they can start budgeting for rental for the future. However, if there is no value on their property, I guess that the rentals cannot be struck. My questions to the Minister are as follows:

1. How long will it be before the market value of pastoral land is likely to be known?
2. When are the new rentals likely to be applied to pastoral properties?
3. Has the recent drop in wool prices caused a delay in determining market values?
4. Have recent pastoral property sales been higher than those prior to the new Pastoral Act being proclaimed?
5. Are the criteria used to determine old rentals still being applied and, if so, are rentals under the old system still being charged?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

FAMILY COURT CHILD-CARE

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about child-care at the Family Court.

Leave granted.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I have recently received a letter of complaint from a woman relating to child-care facilities at the Family Court. She was due to appear at the court last Friday, 3 August, but was unable to attend because the child-care facility was unavailable at the time. She believes it would have been inappropriate for her to take her two young children into the court room. As a result, she was forced to give instructions to her solicitor over the telephone and did not attend the hearing. She believes she has been denied her right to attend because of a lack of child-care facilities. This woman is also concerned that the child-care service offered at the Family Court is staffed by a single worker, whom she believes to be unqualified as the sole supervisor of young children at that centre. Part of her letter states:

> . . . surely a court that places the welfare of children as a high priority should be looking at the facilities it provides for those children when their parents are present at the court.

My questions to the Attorney-General are:

1. What are the arrangements concerning the availability of child-care at the Family Court?

2. What are the staff numbers within the court's child-care facility?

3. Is staff within the facility suitably qualified to supervise young children?

4. Is the Family Court able to do what a local child-care centre is unable to do, that is, employ an unqualified person to supervise children?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: This is not a matter that concerns the South Australian Government or Parliament. I suggest that the honourable member take up the matter with the Federal Attorney-General and Justice Minister.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: As a supplementary question, would the Attorney-General, representing the administration of law in this State and as Leader of the Government in this place, undertake to refer the concerns that I have just expressed to his colleague on the federal scene?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: There does not seem to be any point in my doing that. I suggest that the honourable member does it himself.

NATIONAL CRIME AUTHORITY

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about the NCA.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: On 1 March this year the Attorney-General wrote to Mr Gerald Dempsey of the South Australian office of the National Crime Authority. I quote from part of that letter in the following terms:

> I [that is, the Attorney-General] would be most grateful if, first, you would provide relevant details of all persons charged with offences, together with details of outcomes (convictions, etc.) arising out of NCA activities since the establishment of the office up until 28 February 1990. (This will require an update of the December 1990 Operational Report.)

On 5 April this year the Attorney-General made a ministerial statement entitled 'Operations of the NCA during 1989'. In that statement the Attorney-General refers to South Australian reference No. 1. He states:

> This led to the apprehension and conviction of former Head of the South Australian Drug Squad Moyes and the unsuccessful charging of certain other persons.

Attached to that report, as the Attorney would know, was appendix 1, which was a list of the persons charged by the NCA as at 2 March 1990. On 11 April of this year I noted in a question in this Council that the charges against two persons, Mr Stephen Wright, the former private secretary to Don Dunstan, and Mr Fornarino, who were both associated with Mr Rocco Sergi, the gardener in the Moyes case, were not listed on this charge register and, of course, those charges were later dropped by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

On 10 July this year I received a letter from the Attorney-General in response to the question that I raised in April. The Attorney had written to Mr Dempsey and Mr Dempsey had indicated that in his view the list provided in the ministerial statement of persons charged referred only to NCA reference No. 2, and that that was therefore the reason why Mr Wright and Mr Fornarino were not listed on the charge register. The Attorney's letter quotes Mr Dempsey as saying:

> As to the other question posed by Mr Lucas, namely, the reason for the dropping of the charges, the authority [that is, the NCA] is unable to assist in this regard. The NCA had no input into, or prior knowledge of, the dropping of these charges. An explanation has been requested from the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, but such explanation has not yet been received.

I make it clear that that is Mr Dempsey, a member of the National Crime Authority, writing to the Attorney-General. In his letter to me, the Attorney then writes:

> As there has been no response as to why the charges were dropped, I have written to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in Adelaide seeking information to enable me to respond to that aspect of the question.

My questions to the Attorney-General are:

1. Will the Attorney-General now seek a complete list of all persons charged in South Australia as a result of any NCA operation at all?

2. Has the Attorney-General yet had a response from the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions to his request?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: No, I have not seen a response to my request to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. However, I will follow up the matter. As to the honourable member's first question, I will refer it to the National Crime Authority for its comment.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY ANNUAL REPORTS

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about Government agency annual reports.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: On 11 April 1990, some four months ago, I asked the Attorney-General a question about Government agency annual reports. I drew the attention of the Attorney-General to the Government Management and Employment Act, which provides that Government agencies must report once a year; that the report must be presented within three months after the end of the financial year to which it relates, and it should then be tabled in Parliament. I expressed concern that a large number of statutory authorities had flouted the requirements of the Act and had not reported within the due time. Indeed, within the first two days of this new session reports from six statutory authorities for the financial year 1988-89 were tabled in this Council. That is more than 13 months after the end of the reporting period.

In April I asked the Attorney-General to detail the Government agencies that had not reported at that date—11 April. I asked him what the Government was doing about its longstanding promise to establish a register of the hundreds of Government agencies reporting to Parliament. The Attorney-General promised to give me an answer. However, he has simply failed to give me an answer in that four-month period, and I find that unacceptable. Indeed, I find it totally unprofessional, unbusinesslike and disgraceful that statutory authorities flaunt the requirements of the Government Management and Employment Act.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Orders of the Day.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: Will the Attorney-General—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The time for questions having expired, I call on the Orders of the Day.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 8 August. Page 100.)

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to support the motion and, in doing so, I thank His Excellency for his speech to open the session. I also place on the record my thanks to His Excellency and Lady Dunstan for the work they have done during their period in office.

I look forward to this important budget session of the Parliament, and at the outset I want to offer on behalf of Liberal members in this Chamber the hand of cooperation to you and your staff, Mr President, to the Attorney-General and to the Government Whip. We express our willingness to work with all involved in the operation of this Chamber to ensure that we have a productive and, on most occasions, I would hope, a harmonious working relationship.

The Hon. I. Gilfillan: What about us; will you work harmoniously with us?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Yes, I am rightly admonished by the Hon. Mr Gilfillan and indicate, as he would know, our preparedness to work with both the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Australian Democrats on a regular basis in the productive working arrangement that generally evolves in this Parliament. I would hope that, as a Parliament, we might look at some changes in relation to Standing Orders in the Legislative Council at some time, whether it be in this session or perhaps some time during this Parliament.

One issue that many of us have spoken about in Parliament, in relation to a grievance procedure for members of the Legislative Council is, perhaps, something that we in the Council might address. I also hope that the Attorney-General takes on board the comments that I made on behalf of Liberal members and that the Hon. Mr Elliott made on behalf of the Democrats about trying to program our workload during this busy August to December period.

Let me say that we accept that, on occasions, emergencies occur where, in the latter weeks of the session, legislation might have to be passed or regulations might have to be considered by this Chamber. In the main, however, we believe that, if we set our minds to it, all of us ought to be able to program our working arrangements better so that we have a more even spread of that workload. Certainly, we on this side of the Chamber are prepared to cooperate with the Attorney-General in working harder in the early and middle weeks of the session in the hope that we will not have to sit for too long a period and also in the hope that we do not have to truncate some contributions that members would like to make on important matters in the last weeks of the parliamentary session.

I want to address two matters in my Address in Reply speech. The first is the State budget and the second is the issue of youth suicides. The State budget will be a critical one for the State economy and, obviously, critical decisions will be made in relation to the expenditure side of the budget. There will be a series of questions from community groups and parliamentary members in relation to cutbacks in various areas.

The other side of the equation is in relation to revenue and, obviously, the business community in South Australia will be vitally concerned with decisions that the Government takes in relation to the revenue side of its budget. Members will already be aware that, over the past few weeks, the Premier has been softening up the South Australian community for a significant increase in taxation. The Premier has made the oft repeated claim that there has been a $180 million cut to the State finances from the recent Premiers' Conference. I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* a table prepared by the Premier's staff, I presume—certainly, it is issued by the Premier—headed 'Impact of Commonwealth Decisions on South Australian Budget 1990-91 compared with 1989-90'.

Leave granted.

IMPACT OF COMMONWEALTH DECISIONS ON SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BUDGET 1990-91 COMPARED WITH 1989-90

	$ million
1. *(a)* Cut in real level of financial assistance grants	40
(b) Cut in real level of capital grants	3
2. Reduction of water quality grant	53
3. Change in Grants Commission period	50
4. Cost of national teachers' award	34
	180

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: This table purports to identify the component parts in the $180 million cut in Commonwealth funding for 1990-91, compared with the past financial year 1989-90. It indicates a $34 million cost for the national teachers' award; $50 million for a change in the Grants Commission period; $53 million for reduction of water quality grant; $3 million for a cut in the real level of capital grants; and $40 million for a cut in the real level of financial assistance grants, totalling $180 million.

I want to consider in some detail that claim by the Premier and Treasurer. In doing so, I want to quote at the outset from a document issued by the Commonwealth Treasury. From one of the documents from the Commonwealth Treasury, the 'Australian Treasury Table on the Real Grants to South Australia in 1990-91', we can see that the untied general revenue grants rose from $1 397.1 million to $1 445.9 million; and that other net tied payments rose from $954.9 million to $1 165.2 million. In summary and overall, the table shows that South Australia's total net payments from the Commonwealth increased by $258.6 million from $2 391.5 million to $2 650.1 million. Even if inflation is to be higher than the Commonwealth estimates made in those budget papers, it is clear from that increase of $258 million that there has been no real cut in funding to South Australia.

We have heard from the Premier and Treasurer on a number of occasions that all the Liberal Party is doing here is accepting the figures produced by the Commonwealth Treasury. If there is something wrong with those figures it is incumbent on the Premier, and the Attorney-General representing the Premier in this Chamber in his response to the Address in Reply, to indicate in precise detail where that Commonwealth Treasury table No. 1 is incorrect. Either

the Commonwealth Treasury is, in effect, lying in its officially produced information prepared and published not only for State Treasury officials but also for public consumption, or else Premier Bannon, the Treasurer in South Australia, is not telling us the truth. One or other of the Commonwealth Treasury and the State Treasury must be correct in this respect.

If one looks at the component parts of the claimed $180 million cut from the Commonwealth Government, one can see the specious nature of most of those component parts. First, let me address my own area of responsibility, which is education. Listed in that $180 million was supposedly a cut to the State Government of $34 million in the cost of the national teachers' salary award discussions. All teachers and all involved in education know that the national salary benchmark discussions have been entered into freely by representatives of all the State Governments and the Commonwealth Education Minister, the Hon. John Dawkins. In fact, after recent interstate ministerial discussions, the State Minister of Education (Hon. Greg Crafter), on 1 June this year said:

> It would cost the South Australian taxpayers a total of more than $36 million.

He was also widely quoted in the media on that day as indicating that this agreement had paved the way for further major improvements to the quality of education in South Australia.

The State Minister of Education and the Bannon Government were consulted, and have been consulted all along the way, in relation to this national salary benchmark for teachers. In fact, the Minister of Education in South Australia, on a round robin basis, is currently the spokesperson for all the Ministers of Education on the Ministerial Council, and, after that recent Education Council meeting, was interviewed on the *7.30 Report* (I think by Paul Lyneham) representing all State Ministers as well as the Commonwealth Minister of Education in a debate with Di Foggo representing the Australian Teachers Federation.

So, it is just not true for the Bannon Government now to be listing the $34 million that it freely negotiated and agreed with teachers as a cut from the Commonwealth to the State in funding for this year as compared to last. It can fairly maintain that it is an increased expenditure that the State Government will have to incur; no-one could object to that. However, it cannot claim that it is part of a Commonwealth funding cutback and it cannot, therefore, claim that as a result of Commonwealth funding cutbacks it needs to raise more revenue and increase State taxes in South Australia.

The second aspect I want to address is in relation to the change in the Grants Commission period. The Premier has maintained that the Grants Commission in its 1990 report recommended a three-year period of review rather than a five-year period, and that the State Treasury had therefore assumed that it would receive a larger grant, based on the three-year period. In essence and put simply, what is being argued is that, if there was a five-year period of review, there would have been a $10 million increase in funding to South Australia; if there was to be a three-year period of review, the State Treasury was arguing that there would be a $60 million increase in funding to South Australia.

As I said, the Premier maintained that the Grants Commission in its 1990 report had recommended a three-year period of review and that Treasury had budgeted accordingly. I advise members interested in checking the veracity of various claims by the Premier to read the Commonwealth Grants Commission Report on General Revenue Grant Relativities 1990 Update. Page 33 of that report states:

> The Minister's letter conveying the terms of reference indicates that the decisions on whether the per capita relativities to be applied in 1990-91 should be based on the three-year or the five-year review period and on whether annual updates are to be continued after 1990 will be made at the 1990 Premiers Conference.

Further on the same page it states:

> In this regard, the calculation of the alternative 1990 relativities supports the view that a five-year review period would even out the fluctuations in States' budgetary positions, especially differential movements in their revenue-raising capacity. Accordingly, it is likely that five-year review periods would improve the distributional stability of general revenue grants.
>
> A five-year review period (relative to a three-year one) would reduce the impact on the relativities (and general revenue grants) for an individual year of an isolated episode affecting the fiscal capacities of the States, but it would also ensure that the episode would affect the relativities for a longer time, thus delaying the full consequences of any change in underlying fiscal capacities.
>
> 4.10 The commission was not required by the terms of reference for this inquiry to make a choice between the three-year and five-year review periods for the 1990 update relativities, the choice by Governments will turn upon their collective preferences for stability in the general revenue grants, as against up to dateness in the economic circumstances reflected in the relativities.

So, it is quite clear from that that the Grants Commission report did not say what the Premier indicated it said, and made quite clear that the Grants Commission said that the decision was to be made at the Premiers Conference. Anyway, if the Grants Commission had a view, on balance one could say that it was leaning towards the five-year review period and not the three-year review period as indicated by Premier Bannon.

In one of the appendices of that Commonwealth Grants Commission report is a very interesting comment. The South Australian Treasury was evidently asked at some stage late last year or early this year to comment on the 1990 update of relativities, and in one of the appendices to the Grants Commission report is the following notation:

> South Australian Treasury letter of 26 January 1990 advising nil comment on the 1990 update of relativities.

If the choice between a three-year period of review and a five-year period of review was to mean a difference of $50 million to South Australia, surely the State Treasury would have been expressing a very strong view in its letter of 26 January 1990 that it wanted a three-year as opposed to a five-year period, yet here we have the Grants Commission indicating that the State Treasury, representing the Treasurer (the Premier, Mr Bannon), made no comment at all on this critical question in its letter of 26 January 1990.

The simple fact is that, through the Grants Commission, South Australia actually gained an increase in funding from the Commonwealth. There has been no cut. We were one of the States that actually increased its share of funding from the Grants Commission: we received an extra $9.5 million this financial year as compared to last financial year as a result of the Grants Commission decision.

There has been no cut of $50 million in Commonwealth Government funding from the Grants Commission as shown under the heading of the table prepared by Premier Bannon, 'Impact of Commonwealth Decisions on the South Australian Budget 1990-91 compared with 1989-90'. It is just not correct to say that, in comparing this financial year with last, we have lost $50 million as a result of a change in the Grants Commission period. Again, the Attorney-General, representing the Treasurer, in his response should seek to justify that statement in the table released by the Premier on 5 July of this year in relation to the alleged $180 million cutback.

The third area to which I want to refer is the question of the reduction in the water quality grant, supposedly of $53 million in real terms this year. The advice provided to me is that a grant of $30.5 million, nominally for water quality,

was paid to South Australia in 1988-89 as a one-off grant. In 1989-90, just before the State election, we had another one-off grant of $56 million with no commitment for ongoing funding from the Commonwealth Government and Commonwealth Treasury.

In 1991, a much smaller contribution will be made by the Commonwealth Treasury in the nature of a one-off grant for water quality of $3 million. Obviously, the Premier has indicated the difference between $56 million and $3 million. If one were being generous, one could say that on average we seem to be getting about $30 million a year by way of one-off grants, although I stress again that the advice provided to us and certainly to the State Treasury is that these commitments were specifically one-off water quality grants and they could not be assumed to continue for ever and a day as part of normal Commonwealth funding to South Australia.

I wish to refer to something that is not included in that amount of $180 million. The other areas of cutback in the financial assistance grants are correct (and we concur in their inclusion), but the Premier has not indicated an increase in specific purpose grants to South Australia. The Premier deliberately and deceptively makes no reference at all to the increase that the State received in specific purpose grants. It is true that some of the increase in specific purpose grants does not reflect itself in the State budget. In particular, I refer to higher education funding which is channelled through the State to the various higher education institutions in South Australia.

So, it is fair for the Premier and Treasurer to say that any increase in specific purpose grants that go through the State coffers directly to higher education institutions should not be used as an offset for cutbacks in general revenue and capital grants—and we agree with that. But the increase in specific purpose grants does not relate only to off-budget items, such as higher education funding. If we look at the budget papers for last year and the table of 1989-90 specific purpose recurrent payments to South Australia and the purposes for which they were used, we see that hospitals and health received $325 million; higher education operating costs, $200 million; primary and secondary education, $135 million; local government, $58 million; housing and accommodation, $34 million; roads, $22 million; technical and further education, $16 million; home and community care, $16 million; rural assistance and soil conservation, $12 million; and legal aid, $9 million.

With the exception of higher education and local government operating costs, virtually all of that funding can be classified as on-budget or State budget lines. So, the amounts of money spent by the Commonwealth by way of specific purpose grants—for example, primary and secondary education ($135 million) and hospitals and health ($325 million)—are important aspects in the delivery of State Government health and education services.

So, it is erroneous of the Premier to claim that we should therefore discount all the specific purpose grant increases because they do not affect the State budget. I call on the Attorney-General, representing the Treasurer, in his response, to give us a breakdown of the increased specific purpose payments and to indicate which of those in the Government's view should be considered as off-budget payments (such as higher education funding) and which of them should be included as on-budget lines (such as primary and secondary education, hospitals and health) and as increases in specific purpose grants which will assist the State Government in the delivery of health, education and other services.

Finally, related to this $180 million fib, as my colleagues in another House have labelled the Premier's tax grab, was a stunt undertaken by Premier Bannon. Members on this side of the Council refer to these stunts as 'Rann stunts', a stunt that has been performed on the advice of the Minister of Employment and Further Education (Hon. Mike Rann) when he came out with the claim that the Liberal Party wanted to spend $1.8 billion in a spending spree.

I will not go into the detail, but $1.4 billion of that $1.8 billion referred to two or three lines of an Address in Reply speech given by my colleague, Graham Ingerson, when he said that we ought to be looking at dual-lane highways between all the cities of the nation, as a long-term planning option. The Government costed this idea at $1.4 billion and said that the Opposition wanted to spend this amount. As I said, that is the sort of game that is being played.

In relation to the $1.4 billion, I wish to refer to one item which concerns me. This relates to a letter that I wrote to the *Sunday Mail* supporting a State Government decision to increase salaries for teachers. This is listed as a recurrent cost of $36 million. My letter indicated support for the State Government's position of increased salaries for teachers and also supported the Government's position, as opposed to the teachers' position, by putting a quota on the number of advanced skills teachers to limit the cost to the State. Yet, this extraordinary stunt is produced on Sunday by the Premier as part of this $1.8 billion Liberal Party spending spree. The amount of $36 million was attributed to me as the shadow Minister of Education when, in fact, all my statement said—and, indeed, all I have ever said—was that I support the decision that the State Government freely negotiated, along with all other State Ministers, with the Commonwealth Minister of Education.

This gives a good example of the sort of quality of the mathematics that went into this particular stunt and producing a figure of $1.8 billion. Most members of the media in South Australia have seen it for what it is—a stunt.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: It's knocking a bit of bipartisan cooperation, isn't it?

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Exactly. The Government is calling for bipartisan support and when I, as shadow Minister, offer it I am attacked by the Premier for, I think, fiscal irresponsibility or the hypocrisy and inconsistency of the Opposition's approach, a Jekyll and Hyde approach to economic management, when what we did was to indicate support for a decision taken by Premier Bannon and the State Minister of Education.

I now turn to the second topic I wish to address in my Address in Reply speech, namely, the question of youth suicide. Each of us in recent years has probably been touched by the tragedy and despair of youth suicide within our own circle of acquaintances or perhaps, even more sadly, our own families.

It seems so hard to understand what must be the utter hopelessness and isolation felt by these young people as they seek to take their own lives. Then, of course, there is the feeling of inconsolable grief felt by their loved ones and families as they seek to understand the reasons for such a decision, and perhaps the nagging guilt of what they should have attempted to do to help. Of all the issues we are asked to confront on a regular basis as members, I believe the question of youth suicide is one of the most difficult. I recall speaking to John Cornwall, when he was Minister of Health some five or six years ago, about shared concerns in this area and indicating that I intended to raise the issue publicly and ask him some questions.

His response at that time, based upon his department's advice—I do not seek to attack a member who has left this place—was a fervent plea not to raise the issue publicly because of the possible adverse consequences of any ensuing

media coverage. I know of other members who, after discussions with various people, have chosen not to take up the issue in the public forum for the reasons given by the Minister's advisers.

The possible effects of media coverage on youth suicide are very difficult to determine. There are many varying views, even among experts, on this issue. I will return to the issue of media coverage later, but I now believe that Minister Cornwall's view, and that of his advisers, is no longer appropriate, if indeed it ever was.

I believe the issue of youth suicide is so important that the community and the Parliament must debate publicly our approach to the problem in a considered and rational way. There is no doubt we must ensure the debate is not trivialised or sensationalised, but nevertheless the topic cannot remain hidden in the cupboard and only discussed in hushed tones at seminars and departmental meetings.

I do not profess to know all or, indeed, any of the answers. Even the experts appear to disagree on fundamental questions like causality and appropriate intervention strategies. Youth suicide is the perfect example of an issue which should be tackled honestly in a bipartisan fashion to see if we together can arrive at some agreed strategies which can translate into long-term policies which persist irrespective of the colour of the Government of the day.

First, we must establish the seriousness of the problem. In 1965, 115 young Australians under the age of 25 took their own lives. In 1988 that figure had jumped to 448 young Australians. For young males, in particular, there has been a 385 per cent increase in that period, from 80 to 388. Even more startling is the fact that in 1966 only one in 20 male deaths aged 15 to 19 years was due to suicide, and this figure has now risen to one in every six male deaths. In 1988 there was one teenage suicide every 47 hours, and an estimated 9 000 years of life are lost every year due to teenage suicide.

Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for young males. In fact, one expert at a recent national conference on youth suicide predicted that if current projections for road deaths and suicide continue into the next century, then suicide would become the leading cause of death for young males in Australia. While this prediction was not universally agreed, what a tragic statistic it would be.

Suicide rates are much higher for young males than for females. This is, in part, related to the method chosen to attempt suicide, which is significantly different between the sexes. A recent paper by Dr Chris Cantor shows that 57 per cent of young males used a violent method, such as firearms or hanging, compared to only 18 per cent of females, while 57 per cent of young females used drugs compared to only 18 per cent of young males. I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* a table from Dr Cantor's paper on youth suicide.

Leave granted.

METHODS OF SUICIDE AUSTRALIA BY SEX 1968-1981 FOR PERSONS UNDER 25 YEARS

	% Male	Female
Firearms and explosives	44.3	11.1
Solid (drug) and liquid substances	18.0	57.4
Hanging, strangulation, suffocation	13.4	7.1
Non-domestic gases and vapours	12.7	5.3
Jumping from high places	3.4	8.4
Other/unspecified	3.5	3.8
Gases in domestic use	2.5	4.3
Submersion (drowning)	1.2	2.0
Cutting and piercing instruments	0.5	0.6

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: An international comparison of 19 countries by Diekstra shows that in 1985-86 Australia had the second highest rate of young male suicides. In 1970 we had the seventh highest rate. A word of caution: there are possibly differing data bases for the statistics. I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* a further table from Dr Cantor's paper, comparing young male suicide rates for those 19 countries.

Leave granted.

MALE SUICIDE RATES PER 100 000: 1970 AND 1985-86 BY COUNTRY AND AGE

Country	1970 15-29	1970 30-59	1970 60+	1985-86 15-29	1985-86 30-59	1985-86 60+
1. Hungary	33.2	70.6	131.3	33.5	98.3	156.9
2. Australia	15.3	29.1	33.2	26.1	22.3	28.6
3. Canada	17.1	27.1	23.9	25.6	26.2	28.2
4. Denmark	15.3	44.7	50.0	24.3	47.1	72.5
5. Belgium	8.8	27.0	76.0	22.7	38.6	85.8
6. France	11.3	32.2	68.5	22.7	41.5	93.7
7. USA	16.2	25.4	39.3	22.6	23.6	43.4
8. West Germany	22.8	39.5	67.7	19.7	32.3	59.2
9. New Zealand	11.1	21.2	26.8	19.6	18.5	33.1
10. Japan	16.5	20.8	70.2	18.4	40.3	64.7
11. Czechoslovakia	32.5	52.3	87.9	18.1	43.4	79.7
12. Ireland	2.8	5.0	4.2	15.9	15.9	16.1
13. Scotland	6.7	14.9	20.8	15.8	23.4	21.1
14. Bulgaria	9.8	16.2	82.5	14.0	22.8	102.5
15. Singapore	10.4	20.3	98.4	12.7	18.1	99.4
16. Venezuela	14.6	17.4	19.1	10.9	13.4	23.4
17. England and Wales	6.7	13.0	21.4	10.5	16.7	19.9
18. Netherlands	6.0	14.1	35.1	10.0	17.7	37.7
19. Mexico	3.1	3.4	5.8	4.3	4.1	9.6

Data source: Diekstra 1989.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The number of actual suicides is really only the tip of the iceberg we see above the water. Estimates of attempted suicides far outnumber completed suicides. Estimates vary widely from 50:1 to 200:1, but a figure of 100 attempted suicides for every completed suicide is the most common estimate. If that estimate is correct, then it means there are about 45 000 attempted suicides by young Australians each year.

Part of the reason for this apparently significant jump in suicides over recent years is the fact that some coroners have tended to categorise some deaths previously 'unexplained' into the suicide category. This has occurred, for example, with some single passenger car accidents which were deemed by the coroners to be suicides. There are a number of others which could be so categorised. For example, in some cases drug overdoses, whilst listed as drug

overdoses, if all the information were known, could be classified in the suicide category as well.

A 1984 survey by the Clinical Associate Professor, Robert Goldney, at Flinders University, reveals an even more startling figure than those for completed suicides and attempted suicides. This survey of 1 014 young men and women with a mean age of 19.6 years showed that 11.7 per cent of the males and 9.7 per cent of the females had a significant suicidal ideation. This judgment was made after respondents answered a series of questions which indicated their state of mind and thoughts on suicide. These figures of 11.7 per cent and 9.7 per cent are extraordinary and, if extrapolated to Australia's 15 to 24-year-old population, indicate that up to 300 000 young Australians had a significant suicidal ideation in 1988.

It is interesting to note, however, that in 1988—four years after that survey was conducted by Robert Goldney—the survey was repeated among the same people, and 40 per cent of those who expressed a suicidal ideation in 1984 denied ever having had any suicidal ideation in their lives. One could speculate on a number of reasons for this result. However, even if this figure of 300 000 is discounted by up to 40 per cent, the number of young people with suicidal ideation remains an extraordinary large one of 180 000 young Australians.

This analysis of suicides, attempted suicides and those with suicidal ideation is just one section of a continuum of self-destructive or risk-taking behaviour engaged in by young people. Some young people might actively and consciously carry out an act which is likely to end their life; others might engage in self-destructive behaviour (for example, reckless and intoxicated driving) which they know has the possibility of being fatal, but their attitude is one of 'Who cares if I die?'

A recent report by the Australian Institute of Criminology concluded that suicide ought to be regarded as the ultimate and final stage of self-destructive behavior. It recommended it should therefore be addressed in the context of other life threatening and self-destructive behavior and lifestyles that prevail among some young people. What then are the factors which cause youth suicide? This question is becoming a wonderfully fertile ground for research as there is clearly no one single, simple answer to this question.

The first major disagreement among the experts is whether suicide is due solely to psychiatric illness or not. Some experts like Ennis and Kreitman argue that the vast majority of people committing suicide suffer from psychiatric illness and, in particular, depression. Others, like Hawton in an article in the journal, *Developmental Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry*, note:

> Although the difficulty in diagnosing psychiatric disorders in young people may contribute to this discrepancy, it seems likely that suicide in the young is more often a reaction to external circumstances and that suicide in adults more often due to hopelessness and dispair arising out of severe psychiatric disturbance.

It is important, if indeed that is correct, that we understand that possibly the reasons for youth suicide might be quite different in general terms to those commonly accepted as generally holding for the suicide of older Australians. The World Health Organisation also endorses the view that the majority of young people who suicide do not have a diagnosable mental disorder. Its 1989 report notes:

> The transition to adulthood is often painful, entailing as it does the loss of childhood dependence and new expectations by the young and those around them of more adult behavior in sexual, social and vocational roles. However suicide is not an isolated phenomenon; the causes may be multiple ... in the majority of young people who commit suicide, however, there is no diagnosable mental disorder and personal and social factors play the major role.

Despite the psychiatric versus non-psychiatric controversy, there is more general agreement about the sort of factors which are associated with or common to cases of youth suicide. Some of these are: family discord—lack of communication/support; child abuse; depression, hopelessness, alienation; psychiatric disorders; psychiatric problems in family; loss; unemployment; poverty and homelessness; and media coverage. Many writers have concluded that in many cases of youth suicide multiple factors are involved in a complex web of causality. Time does not allow me to look in detail at each of these possible suggested causes, but I do want to consider one: media coverage and the concept of suicide contagion, suicide clusters and copycat suicides.

As with most issues, the role of the media in youth suicides is a controversial and important one. In 1989 the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists concluded:

> Televised fictional and news coverage of suicide and novel violence acts have led to acts of imitation. The best documented is imitation of suicide following news coverage. The consensus of studies is that there is an increase in general levels of suicide immediately after the coverage. The increase cannot be explained as simply a bringing forward of expected suicides, as they are not followed by a commensurate decline in suicides. The additional suicides tend to be youth and those in a similar age bracket to the victim. The same or a related method is more likely to be used if the method was reported.

The College of Psychiatrists strongly recommended that media guidelines be established. In particular it argues that:

> Guidelines should discourage repeated or romanticised coverage of suicide and of novel acts of violence. Depiction of method should particularly be discouraged.

There has been a number of research studies on this issue. For example, Phillips and Carstensen in 1986 suggested a 13.5 per cent increase in the young male suicide rate in the week following television coverage of a youth suicide story.

Goldney has noted that in the past 20 years there have been 13 studies on this topic and, of these, 10 have supported the view there is a significant relationship between the reporting of suicide and further subsequent suicides. The other three papers reported similar results, but not of a statistically significant nature. There have been only a few studies of the effects of fictional suicides upon suicide rates.

For example, one English study looked at the possible effects of an episode of the popular English soap, *Eastenders*, in which a female character took an overdose of drugs. In the week after the broadcast 22 patients with an overdose were admitted to one hospital. The weekly average for the 10 preceding weeks had been six to nine, while the average for the previous 10 years had been six to seven. A more significant study of 63 English hospitals, following that episode of *Eastenders*, showed a significant increase in suicide attempts for all females.

I know that here in Adelaide many schools have raised concerns about the suicide scene in the popular film *Dead Poets Society*. It is clearly not sensible to be talking about media bans or suppression of stories on youth suicide. Media coverage of the issue is not the problem but the nature of quality of the coverage is important. Clearly the media should not sensationalise the issue or provide graphic detail about methods of suicide. The suggestion of sensible media guidelines, arrived at after discussion with media representatives, should obviously be considered seriously by all concerned. It is very easy to blame the media for their role in the growth of youth suicides. Therefore, some recent research in South Australia raises a number of cautionary notes.

Dr Graham Martin, the Chief Executive Psychiatrist at Southern Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, has, in my view, undertaken some very frightening and worrying

research at a number of schools. Dr Martin and his team were called in to one Adelaide school in 1988 when two suicides occurred within a week. Dr Martin conducted a survey among 357 year 10 students in that school, and two other similar schools used as control schools. At the school where the suicides occurred, 33.3 per cent of the students stated they had had suicidal thoughts at some time. However, perhaps of even more concern was the fact that, in the two control schools, 24.5 per cent of those year 10 students had suicidal thoughts at some time.

Dr Martin concludes that there is a group in each of the schools who report themselves as depressed and suicidal. This group can be called 'vulnerable' or 'at risk' and appear to be more prone to awareness of a completed suicide than other students. Dr Martin goes on:

> We would postulate that they are then placed at an increased risk for acting out suicidal impulses. We would postulate that what occurred at the index school was that this vulnerable group was supplemented by the large number of other students knowing about the deaths in their school. This additional group certainly then had thoughts about suicide, but levels of depression and acting out of impulses did not occur [or probably, more accurately, did not already exist], thus accounting for the lack of associations with suicidal ideation in results from the index school.

Dr Martin's research is continuing and is now exploring the contagion and copycat effect of suicides in these schools and one or two nearby schools. I quote from his report (the letters of the alphabet to which I refer are abbreviations of students' names) as follows:

> S... from school 4 [who suicided in 1987] had a sister K... who sat behind J... in class 1. J... [who suicided in 1988] had been friendly with N..., H... and J... from school 3 [all from the same class]. N... attempted suicide after she was dropped by the other H... at school 3. J... [school 3] also attempted suicide at about the same time. E... [from school 3] was in the same class as the others and, due to unbearable teasing for her good academic performance, was moved to school 2 into a class with C..., E..., J..., A... and T... After a term, E... attempted suicide when things did not work out. In hospital she atempted suicide again with a massive overdose. During this time she was sent cards and a poster by her class and visited by three of the girls [including C... and J...]. A few months later, C... successfully suicided by jumping [she was to have been escorted two weeks later to the school formal dance by H... from school 3]. The day after, E... [school 2] made a serious attempt by blocking doors and windows and turning the gas on. She was unconscious when found. Within two weeks J... [school 2] attempted suicide by overdose.
>
> These links are tenuous. They do not take into account other factors in the lives of the students and there is little evidence that suicide was ever talked about seriously in the groups in which they mixed. M... [school 1] and S... [school 5] in their individual grief work over the loss of friends both talked about suicide having been mentioned by several of their friends but, as it were, only in passing.

Having some knowledge of these schools, I am dismayed at the results that Martin's research is establishing. I know that many families with children at these schools are worried. They want to know how to respond, if indeed they should respond at all. How do they know if their child is serious when in a moment of anger he or she shouts, 'You don't love me or you don't understand me and I might as well be dead'? Whom do they turn to? What should they do? Martin's continuing research therefore highlights the fact that media coverage cannot be solely blamed for any contagion or copycat effect. These cases in Adelaide have all arisen as a result of local knowledge and word of mouth throughout the schools.

The final major area I want to address is how we as a community and the Parliament should respond to these questions. Are we doing enough? A recent major report by the Australian Institute of Criminology says unequivocally—no. The report states:

> But it does mean that, unlike many overseas countries, the State and Federal Governments in this country have so far paid very little attention, and committed very few resources, to the dilemma of suicide among young Australians.

That is a damning indictment of all of us, and it is imperative that we give the issue the higher priority it deserves. Having attended some sessions of a recent national conference on youth suicide, it is clear there is no consensus on what the most appropriate policy should be. In fact, there are vigourously differing views between various experts. A number of psychiatrists were strongly critical of the approach being adopted by the Western Australian Government, whose departmental representatives claimed to be 'leading the way' in Australia.

It is clear there is no simple answer and that any response has to be multi-pronged. If Goldney's figures are right, that there are up to 300 000 young Australians with suicidal ideation, then it is impossible to suggest the psychiatrists of Australia should be consulting all of them. Clearly, there must be a mechanism to filter or identify those most at risk and ensure that appropriate professionals are involved in their counselling. Our schools and agencies must ensure that our children understand how to cope with and respond to the many problems that they will confront without resorting to self-destructive behaviour. As a community we will have to rethink the values we are imparting to our children and the pressures we place on the family unit. All families must endeavour to keep the lines of communication open between parent and child. Our children must know that they are loved and they can talk to their parents in time of need. If they cannot talk to their parents, another option must be provided.

In relation to Government programs, there is a clear view that the approach should be multi-faceted and not concentrated on suicide prevention alone. Programs should be aimed at tackling all parts of the continuum of self-destructive behaviour. I have some concern about the approach of the Macarthur suicide prevention task force in New South Wales, which is distributing leaflets as part of a community suicide prevention initiative. It has leaflets entitled 'Live life with Sui-Cider; and inside there are caricatures of a funny little creature saying, 'Hi, I am Sui-Cider. Suicide is the second largest cause of death in people aged 15 to 19. I am here to tell you when your friends may be thinking about suicide and what you can do about it.' These leaflets like 'Live life with Sui-Cider', which are being distributed among young people, have raised eyebrows among many experts in youth suicide.

The Western Australian Government has established a youth suicide working party which has made a series of wide-ranging recommendations to the Government. The major emphasis of these recommendations is on a response by schools. In the United States, school programs have become the most popular method of attempting to prevent youth suicide. There are strongly differing thoughts in Australia about the appropriateness of similar school programs. These programs concentrate on facts of suicide; causes; warning signs and how to recognise a suicidal adolescent; how to talk to and help a young person who is suicidal; and how and where to get assistance and professional help.

As with most other methods of youth suicide prevention, there is virtually no solid evidence that the program or strategy reduces suicide. A study by Shaffer in 1988 concluded that there was little value in these general educational programs as most students do not need them. Shaffer goes on quickly to say that there is a need for the high school curriculum to include education on mental health and how to obtain help for emotional disorder. In 1989 Shaffer also found that many young people reported that the program had made their problem worse; it distressed them; and they would not recommend that other young people go on the

program. He also suggested that exposure to the program was likely to normalise suicide among a small number of students. He also found that a larger proportion of teenagers changed from indicating (before exposure) that suicide was never a solution to problems to indicating (after exposure) that it could be. On the other hand, a study by Spirito in 1988 found no harmful effects from these programs.

It is important, therefore, that we exercise great caution in South Australia before we adopt similar programs. Other popular programs in the United States are peer counselling or peer support programs. Again, experts in Australia believe that, while there may be some benefits in these programs they are not recommended as appropriate for youth suicide prevention. One other policy option that has been recommended is screening for suicide risk by having students answer questionnaires to establish an individual level of depression or hopelessness.

Again, opinion is divided on the appropriateness of this strategy, although the Australian Institute of Criminology recommended against it. Having rejected most other options, the report by the Institute of Criminology did recommend support for holistic, social and health education programs into school curricula. While suicide and other forms of self-destructive behaviour should be incorporated into the program, they would be presented within the context of broader issues of better mental health, stress, depression and hopelessness, together with strategies to cope with all these things.

CAMHS here in South Australia also has staff like psychiatric registrars and psychologists who will do risk assessments and there are also six beds at the Children's Hospital in which kids at risk can be placed. The Adolescent Health Resource Unit in Adelaide also operates a grief and loss program for schools which responds to tragedies such as death, including suicide, and also offers bereavement education.

However, it is also fair to say that the need for specialised psychiatric services for young people is critical. In South Australia only 6 per cent of the mental health budget goes to child and adolescent psychiatry, yet they make up one-third of the population. The proportion of children and adolescents with mental health problems is nearly the same as it is for adults, yet $200 is spent on every adult compared with only $15 for children. There is also a problem with access to services in some city areas, in particular, Salisbury and most rural districts. We need to consider whether we can reallocate our existing mental health budget to move resources into this area of need.

CAMHS and other agencies have also called for the establishment of a 24-hour a day crisis assessment team, comprising a psychiatrist, a nurse and other staff. This crisis team could provide mediation services, assess whether a child needed to be hospitalised, help calm and counsel disturbed young people and provide advice to staff on how to cope with crisis situations. There is also a need, perhaps, for some kind of residential unit where a young person could be sympathetically detained if mentally disturbed but was deemed to be unsuitable for hospitalisation at the Adelaide Childrens Hospital, which, of course, is not able to provide a 'lock-up' capacity.

In conclusion, it is clear that we have a significant problem in South Australia and in Australia with youth suicides. We need to do more to address the problem. It is time for much more public debate about appropriate policy responses. I hope we can have a sensible and rational debate and, in a bipartisan fashion, develop long-term strategies for reducing the level of youth suicide in this State and in this nation.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I support the motion, and I thank His Excellency for opening this second session of the 47th Parliament. I also take the opportunity to commend His Excellency and Lady Dunstan for the service that they have given South Australia during their term in office and I wish them the best in their retirement.

My shadow portfolio responsibilities are transport, tourism, the arts and the interests of women. They are portfolios of major importance to South Australia economically, culturally and socially. I take my responsibilities very seriously and certainly seek to be diligent, not only in keeping respective Ministers accountable for their management of each portfolio area but also to determine a Liberal position on the many and varied matters related to each portfolio and to develop an agenda of future initiatives in each area.

Accordingly, I was looking forward to hearing His Excellency's address. I was keen to learn the Government's legislative agenda for the forthcoming session for transport, tourism, the arts and the interests of women. But, other than a few overview references to the importance of tourism to South Australia, sentiments which I totally endorse, there was no reference to matters to be addressed in transport, the arts or the interests of women. For transport, nothing, for arts, nothing and for women, nothing.

Perhaps, by being silent on these matters, Ministers want us to believe that all is well in their respective portfolios. Perhaps transport Minister Blevins has been so monopolised by his other responsibilities as Finance Minister, or so distracted by arguments in his Party about the .08/.05 debate, that he has not had time to develop an agenda for transport. And perhaps Arts Minister Levy has been so busy putting out bushfires arising from her administration of the Local Government portfolio—areas such as the West Beach Trust and Marineland, the Stirling council and the proposed Henley and Grange, Woodville council amalgamation—that she has not had time to develop an agenda for the arts. And as for the Premier, nobody hears a thing these days about the activities of the office of the Women's Adviser to the Premier.

Mr Acting President, this afternoon I wish to look at the arts portfolio in some detail. Yesterday in a question to the Minister I referred to the alarm expressed by the Director of the Department for the Arts, Mr Amadio, to the Under-Treasurer about the Treasury's proposal to cut $880 000 from the arts portfolio in 1990-91 and to make further cuts of up to $400 000 per annum in subsequent budget periods. Mr Amadio, I would suggest, had reason to be alarmed.

Over the past four years under the administration of the Bannon Labor Government the arts portfolio has been required to sustain a disproportionate cut in funding, compared with other portfolios. I endorse the comments that were made to me flippantly initially, but increasingly more seriously, that it is little surprise that Premier Bannon, who likes to be associated with good times, gave up the arts portfolio 18 months ago and all too readily handed it on to the Hon. Ms Anne Levy.

Over this four-year period around $2.5 million has been cut from what arts could otherwise have expected to receive by way of a no policy change budget. This represents a real terms reduction of approximately 12.5 per cent in arts funding. Now it seems likely that further cuts are around the corner and, for good reason, arts organisations are questioning their future. And they have reason to be worried: they have worries compounded by the fact that the Government has developed no arts agenda.

Mr President, in recent years Labor Governments, both Federal and State, have developed agendas for multiculturalism and for the environment and I support both those agendas, but they have ignored the arts. And, in the absence of such agendas for the arts, the arts are vulnerable to the

agendas of State Treasury and the Federal Finance Department. Certainly, this has been the experience of the arts in South Australia and Australia in the past few years and, regrettably, it appears to be the fate for the arts in South Australia for the next few years.

To me, it appears as if the Bannon Government believes it can escape from committing itself to the arts on the basis that private sector support will rush in to fill the gap. This approach is flawed. It is also unacceptable in a State that claims to be the Festival State and that at one time held a proud and pre-eminent position in Australia in the arts.

Mr Gough Whitlam addressed this issue when delivering the inaugural Kenneth Myer lecture at the National Library in Canberra on 10 April this year. He referred to the nexus between government and private or corporate funding for the arts. He stated:

> The point must be made that private and corporate benefactors will not take over the financing of activities which Governments cease to finance; they will only be interested in activities in which Government continues to be interested.

Mr Whitlam, then Chairman of the National Art Gallery, was well qualified to address this issue. He said it was his experience that '... the necessary sponsors will be attracted only if the Federal Government is seen to be maintaining support for the gallery's standards of management and presentation, research and conservation.'

This rule applies equally to the State Government's responsibilities to arts organisations that are being required to rely more and more heavily on private support. The State Government must recognise that life is tough for companies at present. Generally, such companies have little disposable income, and the funds that they are prepared to allocate and the community projects that they are prepared to support are both being rationalised. As a general rule, companies are becoming more and more discriminating with their corporate dollar. As Mr Whitlam said, if they believe that the government of the day has made a strong commitment to an arts organisation and that it has faith in that organisation, companies are more likely to support that organisation and/or to do so more generously.

This lesson in private sponsorship psyche is more important for the South Australia Government to grasp than for the Governments in the eastern States. Arts organisations in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland not only enjoy the benefits that derive from larger population bases but also the fact that most corporate head offices are based in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The old saying 'out of sight, out of mind' applies in this regard. Adelaide, being west of Wagga Wagga, has to work harder and smarter to capture the attention of boards meeting in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. When approaching such boards for sponsorship funds, arts organisations in Adelaide need the backing of the State Government, both for the confidence such backing gives to the organisation making the approach and for the credibility which such backing gives to the submission under consideration.

Mr President, I have laboured the relationship or nexus between Government and private or corporate funding for the arts because, if the cuts proposed by Treasury for 1990-91 become a reality, arts organisations will face double trouble. They will have to curtail their creative programs and exposure to the public—possibly in terms of both hours of opening and outreach activities—and they will face greater difficulty attracting sponsorship in the future. To compound these problems, they will face increased competition for sponsorship from a smaller pool of available funds as companies restrict their activities due to the current economic recession.

In outlining these impending dilemmas for arts organisations, I appreciate that the Minister for the Arts may choose to argue that South Australia, in *per capita* terms, is still the strongest supporter of the arts in Australia. Commonwealth Grants Commission papers reveal that South Australia expends around 1½ times the amount expended in Queensland and Western Australia, and approximately 2½ times the amount expended on a *per capita* basis in Victoria and New South Wales.

I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a table outlining the funding that States and Territories provided to the arts in 1989-90.

Leave granted.

STATES/TERRITORIES ARTS FUNDING—1989-90

Major Institutions:	Vic.	NSW	SA	Qld.	WA	Tas.	ACT	NT
	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s
*Gallery	6 300	7 631	2 510	4 080	5 187	1 463 Hobart 788 Launceston		1 759
*Museum	7 000	11 368 Australian 22 472 Powerhouse	4 307 SA Museum 2 149 Spec. Museums (1)	5 863	8 168		500	4 194
*Film	4 800	2 313	2 921 (2)	810	1 000			2 000
*Performing Arts Centre	5 200	11 492	3 391	5 300	1 274			838
*Cultural Centre Trust			1 946 (3)	8 000				
Arts Development Grants	13 800	8 765	12 319	9 180	11 714	1 667	3 106	1 300
Heritage/Historic Homes		3 399	492	74			350	192
Festivals (Major)	2 500	809	1 259 (4)	436	650		870	
	39 600	68 249	31 834	33 743	27 993	3 918	4 826	10 283
State/Territories Recurrent Budget Outlays—1989-90	11 859 ($ Mill.)	15 076 ($ Mill.)	4 407 ($ Mill.)	6 452 ($ Mill.)	4 720 ($ Mill.)	1 549 ($ Mill.)	903 ($ Mill.)	1 142 ($ Mill.)
Arts Support as % of recurrent budget outlays	0.33%	0.45%	0.72%	0.52%	0.59%	0.25%	0.53%	0.90%

Major Institutions:	Vic.	NSW	SA	Qld.	WA	Tas.	ACT	NT
	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s	$'000s
Total State/Teritory Populations (000's)	4 315	5 762	1 423	2 830	1 591	451	278	156
$'s per Capita Support to Arts	$9.18	$11.84	$22.37	$11.92	$17.59	$8.69	$17.36	$65.92

Notes: *Recurrent funding only (i.e. no capital or loan redemption expenditure included)
(1) Comprises funds to Maritime, Birdwood Mill, Migration and Old Parliament House Museums
(2) Comprises Funding to—

S.A. Film corporation	516
Film and TV Financing Fund	650
Govt. Documentary Fund	550
S.A. Film and Video Centre	1205
	2 921

(3) Comprises funding of four Regional Cultural Trusts
(4) Comprises Adelaide Festival of Arts, Adelaide Fringe and Come Out

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: When members look at this table they will note that in the financial year 1989-90 on a *per capita* basis South Australia's support for the arts was $22.37 compared to the next highest figure which is Western Australia, with a figure of $17.59, followed by the ACT with $17.36, Queensland at $11.92, New South Wales at $11.84 and Victoria at $9.18. The Northern Territory's funding *per capita* is $65, well above any of the other States or the ACT.

The figures also show how dismally South Australia supports the gallery, the museum and, in particular, film compared to other States. Our arts development grants, however, are well above those of other States. Last year South Australia expended $12.319 million on arts development grants which, on a *per capita* basis, was well above the figure of $13.8 million expended by Victoria, or $8.765 million expended by New South Wales.

However, the use of *per capita* figures when considering the quality and quantity of respective States' arts industries can give misleading results. This conclusion is not mine alone, but one stated in a paper entitled 'Briefing Notes on Arts Funding', dated 7 April 1989, a paper which, incidentally, has been forwarded to my office anonymously in an unmarked envelope. The paper continues to argue that:

The smaller States, like South Australia, have certain cost disadvantages, mainly due to smaller potential audiences. Fixed costs do not alter according to audience capacity. For example, theatres cost the same to construct and operate and shorter performance runs (due to smaller potential audiences) mean high *per capita* costs.

While it is acknowledged that South Australia has a strong and vibrant art industry, it is clear that the Government, if it wishes to maintain an arts industry which is at least equivalent (relatively) to the larger States, must spend more *per capita.*

Those comments by a senior executive within the Department for the Arts were written in April 1989. Today, 16 months later, our arts industry is less strong and less vibrant due to further cuts in funding to arts institutions last financial year. The plea made in April last year that the Government must spend more *per capita* '. . . if it wishes to maintain an arts industry which is at least equivalent to the larger States' was not accepted by Treasury or the Government. This is disheartening. The department last April and again this April has not argued for budgets that would allow South Australia to re-establish its former pre-eminent position in the arts nor for budgets that would help justify our claim to be the Festival State. The department was merely arguing for sufficient funds to help maintain an arts industry at least equivalent, in relative terms, to the industry in the larger eastern States. But its plea has not been heeded. I seek leave to incorporate into *Hansard* a table summarising the recurrent allocations of the Department for the Arts for the years from 1986-87 to 1989-90.

Leave granted.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE ARTS
1989-90 RECURRENT ALLOCATION SUMMARY

Printed 10 May
File Ref. Table

	For Comparison							
	1989-90		1988-89		1987-88		1986-87	
	$'000	Per Cent	$'000	Per Cent	$'000	Per Cent	$'000	Per Cent
Department for the Arts:								
Art Gallery of South Australia	2 510	6.8	2 425	7.0	2 414	7.0	2 192	6.8
South Australian Museum	4 307	11.6	4 220	12.1	4 041	11.8	3 632	11.3
Carrick Hill	492	1.3	578	1.7	453	1.3	492	1.5
State Conservation Centre	827	2.2	795	2.3	752	2.2	648	2.0
History Trust of South Australia (including Museum accreditation program)	2 149	5.8	2 147	6.2	2 067	6.0	1 976	6.1
Central Directorate	1 653	4.5	1 337	3.8	1 292	3.8	986	3.1
Sub-Total	11 938	32.1	11 502	33.0	11 019	32.2	9 926	30.8
Debt Servicing	5 309	14.3	4 831	13.9	4 648	13 6	4 710	14.6
Grants for the Arts	19 896	53.6	18 491	53.1	18 598	54.3	17 624	54.6
Total Department	37 143	100.0	34 824	100.0	34 265	100.0	32 260	100.0

NOTES:
1. Amounts shown for 'Grants for the Arts' represent cash flows made during the relevant financial years. They do not reflect allocations made on a calendar year basis. Details of the grants program are attached on the following papers.
2. Grants for the Arts figures include $400 000 advance made to the State Opera in 1987-88 and the subsequenct repayments $100 000 in 1988-89 and $300 000 in 1989-90.
3. The 1989-90 Grants for the Arts figure includes $528 000 for the Aboriginal Cultural Institute (Tandanya).

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: In looking at this table, one wonders whether the department would be more successful in arguing its case to Treasury if the department could identify that it had made strenuous efforts to restrict its own expansion *vis-a-vis* the operations of arts organisations, but the table reveals that the one area of real expansion in the arts in the period 1986-87 to 1989-90 has been in the Central Directorate. I suggest that the Government takes a long, hard look at this situation. The table reveals that, in 1986-87, $986 000 was spent on the central directorate, representing 3.1 per cent of the department's total recurrent allocation for the arts. By 1989-90 that sum had leapt to $1.653 million, representing 4.5 per cent of the department's recurrent allocation for the arts. In terms of grants for the arts, no other area funded by the Government and noted in this table—neither the Art Gallery of South Australia, the South Australian Museum, Carrick Hill, the State Conservation Centre or the History Trust—has increased to the extent of the Central Directorate. Indeed, most have declined in terms of their proportion of the State arts budget.

It is also apparent from further papers that have come into my possession that the department and the Minister for the Arts must take a long, hard look at the future of the arts industry in South Australia. I have received—again anonymously—a copy of a report commissioned by the department earlier this year from MacDonnell Promotions Pty Ltd. This report was commissioned by the department to help it argue its case to Treasury this year. Mr Justin MacDonnell wrote to the Director of the department, Mr Amadio, on 9 April as follows:

> Dear Len,
> Herewith, the four little papers of which I spoke this morning.
> May I emphasise again that they are not intended as a draft towards the final document but rather as a series of arguments around the principal topics. What I need at this stage is a response from you and your executive staff about these points.
> Equally, when I suggest that the department may or may not have done something, I am not suggesting it hasn't but rather being provocative. Maybe all this ground has already been traversed.
> By and large, I am convinced that the structural adjustment plus sunrise opportunities is the best bet for additional funds because it is the sort of argument with which Governments are having to deal every day. It also happens to be true. but if you adopt it you will need some excellent examples and need to recognise that the down side is that some arts enterprises may not survive the change. Depends upon how ruthless you're prepared to be, I guess.
> Obviously, too, we need some good figures especially to fill in the gaps in Paper 3.
> Regards,
> Justin

Mr MacDonnell essentially informs the Director of the department and the Minister that, in the face of past cuts to the arts portfolio and likely future cuts, they have two options in administering the arts industry: to continue to limp along, cutting at the edges and progressively undermining the effectiveness and morale of all arts organisations or to make some ruthless structural adjustment decisions. The same two options are canvassed in a further paper I have received—again forwarded to me anonymously—prepared by an officer of the Department for the Arts. The officer states:

> I do not believe that a short-term approach is the way we should be presenting our argument to Treasury—for two reasons:
> - we have based our previous arguments on the same approach, albeit not planned and laid out as thoughtfully, and it has not had the desired effect. We do not have the statistics to adequately support the economic case, and come out looking like amateurs every time (perhaps the Festival EIS may give us something solid).
> - Treasury has clearly indicated its desire to reduce further and I believe swimming against the current will not do us any good. The mandatory percentage will be simply knocked off and arts will be forced into the same pruning exercise as the previous three years.
>
> I agree totally with Justin's introductory statement of Paper 1—the strategy along which the department has been proceeding has been flawed—

I emphasise that—

> because it lacked an overall plan. Short-term reactive thinking has been the approach. I believe we should be devoting our energy to achieving such a plan over the next six months, with a view to presenting it to the Minister/Cabinet/Treasury by the end of the year.

I have no idea, at this stage, whether the Minister has taken up that advice to develop such an overall plan, but I believe that it would be a wise course to follow, particularly if the funds for the arts are to be cut, as has been indicated in papers that have been released over the past couple of days. The officer's memo continues:

> Most importantly, I believe we need to define the 'essential plant' both in macro and detailed terms. Personally, I suspect that regardless of whatever brilliant arguments we present in the next couple of years, the subsidy will continue to reduce.
> I believe for the arts to survive without fundamental damage, the department should be identifying the core, essential activity and ensuring that is adequately funded (and undertakes programs which reflect Government priorities).
> Such an exercise will require ruthless decisions and will impact initially on certain sectors of the population which believe their activity is essential, but, with analysis, could be shown to be superficial and peripheral.

They are strong words.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I am quoting from a document prepared by an officer of the department for the Director—and subsequently for the Minister—arguing that, if the Government continues to cut the funds for the arts, the arts will have to develop a strategy. This officer is suggesting that this strategy should identify core activities and cut the peripheral. It is up to the Minister to identify what the officer means by 'peripheral' and what she plans to do in this whole area. The officer continues:

> I believe it is more prudent, and ultimately sounder planning, to ensure survival of core activity, totally cut the peripheral, and with a unified approach sit out the screams and the flak (which will be short-lived).
> When (if?) funds become more freely available in five or 10 years time, at least the core or 'essential plant' will provide the basis for a new wave of expanded activity.
> To continue on the current path of cutting at the edges will inevitably lead to a weakened infrastructure of the entire arts fabric, with a real potential that irreparable damage—

I stress those words—

> could be done to the core activities and flagships such as the Festival, State Theatre and Opera, South Australian Museum, Art Gallery, etc.

In response to the Attorney-General's earlier interjection, I suspect that this officer is suggesting that activities beyond the core activities which he or she identifies, such as the Festival, the State Theatre and Opera, the South Australian Museum and the Art Gallery, etc., will be deemed to be peripheral activities.

In a question to the Minister for the Arts yesterday in relation to the budget of the Department for the Arts for 1990-91, I asked what, if any, strategy she had requested from the department or what advice she had accepted to help arts organisations in South Australia to weather a further cut in their funding base this financial year. The Minister got quite excited, suggesting that I must consider that she was born yesterday because 'matters related to the forthcoming budget are not discussed until the Treasurer brings down the budget'.

I was well aware of that fact, but I should have thought that the Minister was sufficiently concerned for the arts (or at least for the fact that officers or someone else in her department were sufficiently concerned about the situation to forward such papers to me to raise in the Parliament), that she may have sought to answer that question or comment in more general, or even specific, terms about her feelings on what has been happening in the arts in the past few years under the Bannon Government. She carried on for a bit longer, but did not attempt to answer my question. It is a legitimate question.

The Hon. G. Weatherill: You went fishing.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I argue that it was a legitimate question. Arts in this State are said by the Government to be important in cultural, social and economic terms. I was simply seeking some clarification on that from the Minister but, as I said, she did not choose to answer my question. It is a legitimate question and I will continue to seek the answer. I know that this question is of great interest to the wider arts community, which wants to know, and for good reason, what the future holds.

The Minister can and does say from time to time that she and the Government recognise the importance of the arts and the various arts organisations in this State—and she uttered the same sentiments yesterday. I recognise that the Labor policy for the arts issued prior to the last election stated that the Bannon Government was committed to support the arts in South Australia, but this is all rhetoric. I and arts organisations and the general public in South Australia want to see some hard evidence at some stage—the sooner the better—that the Bannon Government is willing and able to match its rhetoric with actions and dollars. We await the State budget with great interest, and at that time it will be interesting to note whether the arts budget has been determined by an agenda established by the Department for the Arts or by the Treasury.

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE

The House of Assembly informed the Legislative Council that it had passed the following resolution:

That this House—

(a) notes the decision of the Attorney-General to withdraw from the appeal in the matter of *Lewis v Wright and Advertiser Newspapers Ltd* after the time for other parties to the case to commence further action in the matter has lapsed;

(b) notes that the view of the nature and extent of privilege taken by the Supreme Court is not in accord with the view of this House as previously expressed; and

(c) supports the establishment of a Joint Select Committee to take evidence on and consider proposals for the codification of parliamentary privilege.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.47 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 14 August at 2.15 p.m.