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At approximately 4 p.m. on Monday the 27th day of January, 1986, DAVID JOHN HARDING was assaulted on the northern mound at the Adelaide Oval in the vicinity of the scoreboard.

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Call for more consideration for victims of crime

SIR — If the statistics given by Canberra criminologist Dr Paul Wilson relating to murders, attempted murders, rapes and serious assaults are accurate, and I have no reason to doubt them (*The Advertiser*, 10/4/86), there is no wonder that South Australians are mystified by some of the ludicrous sentences being handed down by our judiciary.

One might be entitled to pose the question whether some of our judges and magistrates are in touch with what goes on in our community.

I have noticed from meetings I have addressed for Victims of Crime Service throughout the State in the past two years that people believe inadequate prison sentences are being given.

I believe that the Bannon Government, through the Attorney-General, Mr Sumner, are trying desperately to right some of the wrongs that were allowed to permeate our society in the late '60s and '70s by the Government of that time.

Sure, it costs a lot of money to keep a prisoner in gaol, but I don't believe this sort of thinking should be applied to criminals who have committed horrific crimes.

Some of our vicious crimes are drug-related, but that is no excuse for inadequate sentencing. It is nonsense to say an offender was under the influence of drug or alcohol and expect this to be taken into account, because it is claimed the offender was not aware of what he or she was doing.

More consideration is needed for the victim.

BOB WHITTINGTON,
Royston Park.

Child abuse

SIR — As the executive officer of the SA Children's Interests Bureau — a body which is recognised as having a legitimate voice when advocacy for children's interests is called for — I would like to comment on the recent debate in your pages on the subject of child sexual abuse.

The chairman of the family law section of the Law Society of SA, the Director-General of the Department for Community Welfare and the Minister for Community Welfare all agree on the most fundamental issue in this debate, which is that the protection of children is of paramount concern.

Social workers within the Department for Community Welfare care very much about the abuse of children and are faced with the awful realities of this abuse, sexual and physical, every day.

Courts, too, are, as Margaret Nyland rightly says, faced with complex custody and access cases involving serious allegations of child sexual abuse. We must all be concerned about the need to provide as much help as possible to assist judges who must make difficult decisions.

It would be a great shame if a polarising of views and defensive reactions detract us from our most important task, which is the protection of children.

All of us — lawyers, social workers and administrators — have important professional responsibilities.

We need to acknowledge the difficulties, legal or otherwise, and work together to achieve a constructive solution.

It is not helpful to make statistics the focus (can we ever really accurately assess such private behavior?); even one sexually abused child is one too many. It is very easy to cloud the real issue which must always be how can the child's best interests be safeguarded.

I am hopeful that the concerted efforts of many professionals from many agencies and the consistent interest of the SA public and the media will bring about some of the very necessary reforms — legal, social and educational — which none of us denies are necessary.

If we are to achieve these then we must work together for the benefit of the least vocal and most vulnerable group of all — the children involved.

SALLY N. McGREGOR,
Executive Officer,
Children's Interests Bureau.

Meat needed

SIR — May I reply to Veronica Johnson's letter on a vegetarian diet for animals (*The Advertiser* 10/4/86)?

Any veterinary surgeon will tell you that all carnivorous animals, which includes cats and dogs, need meat in their diet.

Meat has essential amino acids necessary for their health and well-being which are not found in any vegetable.

This is why no vegetarian diets are published or recommended for cats, dogs et cetera.

J. SMITH.
Torrensville.

Unmarried mothers

SIR — Marina Craig (*The Advertiser*, 10/4/86) appears to have missed the point in her rush to defend the rights of unmarried women to have children and be supported by the Government while doing so.

Is it really possible, in 1986, with the availability of the pill, the condom, the IUD, the diaphragm, et cetera for a woman to claim two or more "little mistakes"?

I think Ms Craig is indulging in sanctimonious hyperbole when she writes of the community being critical and inhuman to "fallen women and their bastards."

I don't believe this to be the moralistic attitude of either the Queensland Welfare Minister or the community, but rather a more practical one.

If women make the choice, and Ms Craig has always supported women's rights to controlling their own bodies and have two or more children when not married, they should accept the responsibility for their support, or choose not to have them.

Mrs BETTY BISHOP,
Seaview Downs.

Disillusionment

SIR — The 47 p.c. of South Australians who preferred the Liberal Party on December 7, 1985, were no doubt as astounded as I was by the editorial (*The Advertiser*, 4/4/86) on the Federal Government's decision on savings bank home loans.

Your only reference to the unbounded hypocrisy and deceit of the Labor Government's decision was to describe it as "a clever political about-face."

The unqualified commitment of the State and Federal Labor parties to the 13.5 p.c. ceiling during the State election campaign was a decisive factor in the swing to Labor.

Less than four months later that promise to SA voters has been broken like so many other Labor promises.

Your failure to take Labor to task over its electoral deceit has only added to the growing disillusionment with your newspaper among the 400,000-odd South Australians who did not vote Labor on December 7.

NICK MINCHIN,
State Director,
The Liberal Party of Australia,
SA Division.

Farmers' plight

SIR — After reading the article "Struggling farmers must go, says bank" (*The Advertiser*, 7/4/86), I am curious as to what the National Australia Bank's current "solutions" promotion means. It seems that its "solutions" for our farmers are "exit" and "reconstruction."

It is no wonder our farmers are becoming non-viable in the face of crippling interest rates, excessive taxation and legislation, little control over costs and prices and cleverly fostered divisions in interest and direction. I would therefore ask all Australians to consider:

- What is wrong with the monetary system in this country when the world's most efficient farmers produce a surplus and still go broke?
- Surely, fewer farmers mean a reduced political voice, hence easier governmental manipulation?
- Wouldn't it be better drastically to cut interest rates, taxation, legislation and costs and allow farmers the right of decentralised, democratic self-determination in their respective sectors?
- Is it possible then that farmers could remain viable, produce less at lower prices for domestic markets and become more than competitive on overseas markets?

I think then, that as the N.A.B. recommends, it is time for "the adoption of innovative techniques and improved ... management practices," by our politicians and banks — not farmers.

R. D. FOREMAN,
Echunga.

LETTERS to the Editor

Address your letters to: Letters to the Editor, GPO Box 339, Adelaide 5001. Letters should be brief, legible, and must include your name and address for publication.

'We must prosecute Nazi war criminals'

SIR — What began as a beautiful column by Des Colquhoun (*The Advertiser*, 9/4/86) suddenly became a confusing hodge-podge of misguided notions.

One moment he speaks of the crimes of the Nazis as "unforgettable and unforgiveable"; the next he calls the pursuit of the murderers of our parents and grandparents, our husbands and wives and our children a "national witch-hunt for old men."

One moment he mentions atrocities so inhuman that their perpetrators "excluded themselves forever" from mercy and forgiveness. The next he compares the murder of more than 12m gypsies, disabled people, opponents of Nazism, homosexuals, Communists, freemasons and Jews — people marked for extermination — with the "callous behavior of our Diggers."

Today West Germany is Australia's ally, but Nazism is not. It will be painful for some people to learn that neighbors, business associates, relatives or friends are among history's most notorious mass-murderers. But the good name of our society demands that we prosecute these criminals now.

We cannot allow Australia to be remembered, along with a few quasi-fascist dictatorships, as the last haven for the butchers of more than 1m little children. We cannot allow Australia to be known as the one place civilisation's most ghoulish criminals were allowed a second chance.

RABBI JEFFREY A. KAHN,
Beit Shalom Synagogue,
Hackney.

Horrendous reading

SIR — Has it taken 40 years for Sydney researcher Mark Aaron to track 150 alleged war criminals in Australia?

Your articles by Psavonpera and Colquhoun (*The Advertiser*, 8/4/86 and 9/4/86) respectively, make horrendous reading.

The persons responsible for these murders should have been brought to justice a long time ago.

Most persons similarly accused in the US and Canada have been investigated and exonorated, yet their lives have been ruined and the standing of their ethnic groups damaged.

Reference of cross-examining files from countries of their origin means Soviet sources. For a long time the Soviet Union has sown disinformation in those countries where immigrant groups enjoy good standing and respect.

The Latvian community feels that any statements should be backed with evidence of the names of the offenders, their crimes and the source of information.

E. VOITKUNS,
President,
Latvian Federation of Australia and New Zealand.

Soldier's duty

SIR — Mr Colquhoun's column (*The Advertiser*, 9/4/86) made some sense until he reached "And yet, and yet" where he seems to have lost the point.

Of course the war criminals should be pursued to the ends of the earth and if it offends the susceptibilities of some bleeding hearts, let them spare a thought for the dead and the survivors of the atrocities.

The "old men" will certainly suffer, not from pangs of conscience but perhaps out of fear of exposure, so it is not we who will suffer for justice.

But please do not equate the actions of those of us who fought in the wars with those of mass murderers of helpless men, women and children.

The lurid tales of Mr Colquhoun's forefathers, magnified into legend in the oft retelling to impressionable youth may seem to him to be as atrocious as the behavior of the Nazis and the Japanese martial fanatics, but he should know that it is the soldier's duty to kill the enemy.

The manner of killing is of little moment; if he is a good soldier he does it well, if not he is often dead. In the exuberence of action, it is inevitable that certain excesses may occur, but mass murder?

As the Western adage had it: "Kill as often as you have to, but never with hate in your heart or you will end up with an upset stomach."

L. M. OPIE,
Torrens Park.

'Witch-hunt'

SIR — As a member of the post-war generation, I wish to commend Des Colquhoun on his article "Must we suffer for justice." (*The Advertiser*, 9/4/86).

Education Department and indeed Government policies aim to foster a multicultural society. Children are taught to be proud of their own heritage and tolerant of others.

Is there a country, victorious or vanquished, that can be exonerated of committing horrendous acts? Will a "witch-hunt," concentrated against one particular group, compensate family losses, or will the result be to undermine the national standing of a small part of Australian society?

M. ZVAIOZNE,
Henley Beach.

Why the pomp?

SIR — What, may I ask, is the need for the pomp and circumstance that is being planned for Pope John Paul's visit to Australia later this year?

It has been said that he is entitled to the honors due to a Head of State: Vatican City as a State is hardly larger than an 18-hole golf course and the Pope who normally resides there is head of a church whose founder did say that his kingdom was not of this world.

We live today in parlous times with the world poised on the brink of nuclear disaster and destruction. No-one is more cognisant of this fact than Pope John Paul and, if permitted, he would make his visit to Australia a barefoot pilgrimage of peace, shorn of all protocol and trappings. Why not let him do so? If anything, the impact on a materialistic world would be far-reaching.

When Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize she declined to attend the dinner for its presentation and suggested that what would normally be spent on it could be better spent on her homeless poor. Given the opportunity, Pope John Paul would express similar views about his Australian visit.

H. L. FINNIMORE,
Fulham Gardens.

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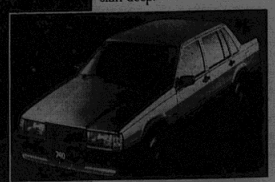

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