

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 6 June 1995

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

SGIC (SALE) BILL

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

INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

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

That the sitting of the House be continued during the conference with the Legislative Council on the Bill.

Motion carried.

VENNING, MR H.M., DEATH

The **Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier)**: I move:

That this House expresses its regret at the recent death of Mr Howard Venning, a former member in the House of Assembly for the seat of Rocky River and places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious service and that, as a mark of respect to his memory, the sittings of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

For those who knew him, Howard Venning was a very dear friend. He was a person who contributed an enormous amount to the State, to the industry that he loved so dearly, particularly the grain industry and also the broader agriculture industry, to his community of Rocky River and particularly his home community of Crystal Brook and of course to his family.

We are in the unique position in having Howard's son here in the House with us today and, as we think back over the achievements of Howard Venning and what he did for those four areas that I have outlined, it is worth paying a tribute to someone who was a pioneer in his field. I knew Howard because I shared a room with him in this Parliament for a number of years. I sat on the benches opposite with Howard alongside me when I was a young turk, a young member of Parliament, and Howard was put alongside to occasionally put a steadying hand on this young member of Parliament who had just arrived in this place.

Through those years I grew to appreciate Howard very much. He was a person who had a great care for people and a great love for his industry, and it is worth noting some of the things that Howard achieved in his lifetime. He started out, as I said, in the district of Crystal Brook. He was born and raised in his family home and lived in the same home at Montrose throughout his entire life. He took a particular interest in the community in a range of areas, such as the school council, the tennis club and then, latterly, the Crystal Brook Show, regarded as one of the best in the State. Howard followed in a family tradition because his own grandfather had been involved in that show. Howard was very proud of the Crystal Brook Show and was President in 1945-46. It is interesting because Howard's grandfather, William Jasper, organised at Crystal Brook the very first ploughing match

back in 1873. His son, Richard, is still President today. The whole family has taken a great interest in that area.

But Howard's interests extended beyond the local agricultural community. He became involved in the Agricultural Bureau and then in the late 1950s he became involved in the Wheat and Wool Growers Association and was branch president and a member of the State Governing Council and also the South Australian representative on the Australian Wheat Growers Federation. Howard loved wheat. He loved to see it growing, he loved the feel of it and he loved to tell me how his crops were going from about September onwards. Apart from his family I guess that nothing was closer to his heart than seeing the growth of that industry.

Those who knew the industry back in the 1950s would realise that it was very much a hard slog. It was all about handling wheat in bags and it was very, if you like, inefficient and labour intensive. Howard was a pioneer in that industry and revolutionised it with the introduction of bulk handling. That became a passion for the rest of his life. Together with a close friend, Bill Frith, he called a public meeting on 22 July 1960 to commence the battle for an appropriate silo to be built at Port Pirie for bulk handling of grain, and 400 people attended that meeting. As a result of that tremendous public pressure a silo was built. Howard then went on and pushed for silos and bulk-handling facilities in other surrounding areas: Port Pirie, Jamestown, Gladstone and Crystal Brook. He was then elected as the Chair of CBH (Cooperative Bulk Handling Association) in 1980 and served two terms as the Chair. I know the extent to which that really became a passion and it is also a great tribute when one considers this State's bulk-handling facilities and what Howard and other pioneers achieved in this State.

As a member of Parliament, of course, he took an enormous interest in the rural industries. He realised the importance of those rural industries within the State being more broadly understood, because very few people appreciate that agriculture from South Australia accounts for 11 per cent of our Gross State Product, which is significantly above the *pro rata* percentage one would expect from this State. Agriculture production accounts for almost half of this State's exports. It is a very important industry and Howard, as I said, strove to make sure that the industry was able to expand and keep up with the latest technology and handling methods. On a personal basis, I would like to say how much I appreciated Howard's friendship over those years that we shared an office and the benches in the Parliament.

He was one who always looked on the brighter side of things. At times when you were tired in this Parliament late at night, Howard would walk through the door of the office singing. He had an absolutely magnificent tenor voice, and at those moments Howard would throw an entirely different perspective on your day's sitting in the Parliament. By nature he was a man who loved music. He played the piano and loved to get the family around the piano on Sunday nights to sing. He loved hymns and he wanted to make sure that others in the community also understood and appreciated music.

To Ivan and Kay and their immediate family; to Shirley; to Mary, Max, Richard and Julie—Howard's family—to his brothers and sisters still alive and to the broader Venning family, on behalf of the people of South Australia, can I say how much we have appreciated what Howard has done for this State and for this Parliament. I pass on the condolences of all members of Parliament and of the broader South Australian community. The service at Crystal Brook yester-

day was a mark of respect, given the very broad cross-section of people who attended that service, including former Premiers, former Ministers, former members of Parliament and former representatives of grain handling in South Australia. We have lost a dear friend and a person who strove hard to achieve in this State but, at the same time, through that loss we have very fond memories of a man we greatly appreciated. Ivan, our thoughts are with you.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): In seconding the motion strongly we on this side of the House would also like to place on record our condolences to the family of Howard Venning. I had the privilege of knowing Howard for the last couple of years that he was in this Parliament, when I worked for Des Corcoran and before that Don Dunstan. He was affectionately known as 'Rocky' by everybody around this Parliament. I remember talking to people such as Des Corcoran and Geoff Virgo over the years. Howard Venning was one of those MPs who was held in great respect and affection by people from both sides of the House and throughout the community. The Premier has mentioned his role in this Parliament. He was a strong member of the Land Settlement Committee, and he was very much liked and respected in his committee work around the Parliament. He was also a stalwart of the parliamentary bowls team, but I guess he will be remembered particularly for his dedication to his electorate and to rural areas here in South Australia.

He earned great respect for his work as an agri-politician through his highly active role with the United Farmers and Graziers of South Australia, as it was then called, and particularly as President of Zone Four and as a member of State council. Indeed, I understand that he served the UF&S in various capacities for more than 30 years. Until he was preselected he was a delegate to the Australian Wheat Growers Federation. As the Premier has mentioned, he was certainly highly regarded for his dedication to the cause of wheat growers, and he served as a member and Chairman of the South Australian Bulk Handling Authority with great distinction. Like his son, the member for Custance, he was a mate to many members of this Parliament across both sides of the House, whilst maintaining a strong reputation for diligence and hard work. He resigned to make way for John Olsen, the Minister for Infrastructure, to enter the Parliament in September 1979.

The thing I personally remember about Howard Venning, or 'Rocky', as he was known to staffers of this Parliament as well as to MPs, was that he always had a smile and a kind word. He will be remembered as a good and decent man, a person of integrity and a member who was committed to his electorate and who cared deeply about the country and country people. He did not take the battle of this Chamber into the dining room or corridors: he was not that kind of person; he was not that kind of politician or member of Parliament. It was marvellous that he had the opportunity of seeing his son elected to this Parliament. That would have been an enormous source of pride to Howard Venning. I join the Premier and all members of this House in extending our commiserations and sympathy to Shirley and the family, and particularly to you, Ivan.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development): I join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in this condolence motion to the late Howard Venning. The

Premier, in some detail, has moved this motion well in pointing to the achievements of Howard Venning during his parliamentary life. Howard took the view that being a member of Parliament was a privilege, and he took his responsibilities seriously and worked diligently on behalf of the people whom he represented.

It was a privilege for me to follow him as the member for Rocky River. After 11 years, Howard decided to step down, creating an opportunity for me. He encouraged and facilitated my entry into this Parliament, for which, members will understand, I am grateful. Howard and Shirley assisted me with my introduction to the electorate and the responsibilities of a member of Parliament. He was committed to that electorate.

After his retirement he continued a close involvement. Whether it was country shows or community events, even though Howard had retired, he and Shirley would invariably be at those shows, continuing their interest and involvement in the electorate. It was something that I appreciated because it assisted me in my early days and years of becoming a member of Parliament. In a way, the electorate had two members for a continuing period.

Howard Venning enjoyed his parliamentary term. It was a team effort, not only with Shirley, who very ably assisted and supported Howard in all his endeavours, but with family members who were also very supportive of him. They believed in the principles of the Liberal Party and were prepared to stand up and be counted. Whether it be letter boxing in Port Pirie, manning polling booths or door knocking, they were out championing the cause of the Liberal Party. I know that Howard was delighted when Ivan became a member of this Chamber. In following in his father's footsteps, Ivan has a very big pair of shoes to fill, and I know that he will do it well.

I extend my condolences to Shirley and all members of the family. Howard would have been pleased with the service yesterday. The Premier mentioned the cross-section of people who were present to show their respect for a lifetime of contribution. Although the passing of someone is sad, I think on this occasion we ought to rejoice that Howard had a full, purposeful life in which he strove to make a meaningful contribution, whether in industry, Parliament or family life, and in that he was successful.

Mr KERIN (Frome): I, too, support the condolence motion. While others who have spoken knew Howard Venning mainly through his role as the member for Rocky River, my memories come from a somewhat different perspective. I have lived nearly all my life at Crystal Brook, and from childhood I saw Howard Venning as somewhat larger than life. His property, Montrose, dominated the southern entrance to the town. Looking at it, one saw the fruits of hard labour and of a man with an innovative mind. The property was always immaculate and a model farm which others could try to emulate.

The children of the town seemed automatically to respect Mr Venning as a community leader. However, as I grew older I progressively began to realise the real contribution made by Howard Venning not only to our community but also to agriculture, and particularly to the growing of cereals. Whilst the rural sector in the 1960s and 1970s was often suspicious of new ideas and whatever, Howard was really a man of progress. Not only did he personally embrace them within his own farming business but he was pivotal in the introduction of bulk handling, which made farmers not only more

productive but also took a lot of the back-breaking work out of farming.

Whilst bulk handling was probably inevitable, Howard's vision and determination were vital to the pace of introduction, and he was personally involved in lobbying for and the decision to build many of the silos around Frome. This included the Crystal Brook silo, for which my father was the first agent, a position he held until his retirement a couple of years ago. I know how greatly he appreciated the support he and all the farmers in the area received from Howard. I know that Dad supported that, both in that sphere and also in business.

As a young person in business, I always valued Howard's opinions. He was not one to stand there and lecture you or give lengthy advice: rather, he had the ability, in a few simple words, to put you on the right track. It was always very pleasing and reassuring to receive a few words of praise if you got something right. He always listened, and I always appreciated the fact that he would listen to other people's opinions. He was not self-opinionated from all his success and I appreciated the way I could always get his ear. In yesterday's funeral service, the hymn 'Awake, awake to love and work' was sung. One line in that hymn reads:

To give and give and give again, what God has given you.

I think that sums up Howard very well. He gave enormously to the community in many ways, whether through the terrific work for the show, which the rest of the family have carried on, the tennis club, the swimming centre or the numerous clubs and organisations many of which he was a member or patron, not only in Crystal Brook but in the area.

Also, he gave enormously to his industry, as we have heard, through his involvement in the Agriculture Bureau, the Wheat and Woolgrowers, the United Farmers and Graziers, and the Wheat Growers Federation, but most notably through the role he played both in the early days and later as Chairman of Cooperative Bulk Handling. Of course, he gave to the State not only through his work as the member for Rocky River but also in the fact that the work he did in industry had an impact across the State.

Very importantly, he gave enormously to his family. Howard was a very dedicated family man, and that showed to everyone. He cared deeply for the family, particularly the grandchildren. During his long illness, they had a chance to repay that, and they certainly did so. I know the local community enormously admire the strength of Mrs Venning and the tremendous support she gave Howard through the last few years, indeed right throughout their married life. The family did really rally around Howard in the final years. I will perhaps give special mention to Ivan's brother Richard, who was continuously with Howard in the last couple of years, and could always get him out onto the farm, which is where he wanted to be. I know that Ivan shares many of the aims and interests of his father. With his community, industry and political interests, I know he will be able to carry on much of Howard's work, for which Howard would be very grateful.

My family and I offer our condolences to the whole Venning family. I am sure that the community of Crystal Brook and the people of the electorate of Frome, which covers most of the area which Howard served as the member for Rocky River, would like to express not only their sympathy to the family but also gratitude to Howard Venning for the enormous contribution he made to the area.

Mr De LAINE (Price): I would also like to briefly record my sadness at the passing of Howard Venning, former member for Rocky River. Although I did not serve with him in this Parliament, I travelled with Howard and his wife Shirley on many occasions to represent South Australia at parliamentary bowls carnivals interstate. Whilst Howard played with the past members and I played with the present members, we still had time off the bowling greens to talk together and to get to know one another, joining in the fun that goes with these types of carnivals. Howard was in every sense a true gentleman and I had enormous respect for him. I would offer my sincere condolences to Shirley, Ivan, Kay and the entire family.

Mr VENNING (Custance): On behalf of my mother and our family, I want to thank all members for their kind words on our behalf and on behalf of our father. He was a good man who lived life to the full. He had high expectations of us all. He enjoyed his time in this place, serving his beloved Rocky River. We are very proud of him. The 'Cocky from Rocky' has gone, but he leaves the footprints of his shoes in his beloved soil. My father had friends on both sides of this House. I thank you all for your expressions of sympathy.

The SPEAKER: I would like to extend to the Venning family my condolences. I enjoyed the privilege of being a member of Parliament with Howard Venning, whom I regarded as a friend. I ask the House to carry the motion in silence.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.26 to 2.35 p.m.]

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answer to a question without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

In reply to **Mr De LAINE (Price)** 11 April.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Since the introduction of gaming machines in 1994, there has been a steady increase in promotional activity associated with the operation of the machines. Many of the promotions have involved some form of lottery and in several instances, hotels have offered free 'eyes down' bingo sessions as a means of attracting patrons to those venues. I have been approached by several charitable organisations expressing concern at declining revenues from their traditional fundraising activities which they have attributed to the operation of gaming machines. Particular concerns have been expressed regarding the potential threat presented by free bingo in hotels to the fundraising bingo operations of non profit organisations.

The following action has been initiated to address the specific issues raised:

- as an immediate measure, arrangements have been made through the Liquor Licensing Commissioner to preclude the conduct of free bingo sessions by hotels as a condition of gaming machine licences. For the longer term it is proposed that the regulations under the Lottery and Gaming Act be amended to prevent such activity as a mechanism for the promotion of trade.
- it is proposed also to amend the regulations to enable non profit organisations to become more competitive for the disposable dollar. This would be achieved by increasing the prize limits for instant ticket lotteries and 'eyes down' bingo, which are the most popular of the fundraising lotteries, to make them more attractive to the public.
- all organisations which hold a gaming machines licence have been made aware that any gaming machine promotions which

involve some form of lottery must have regard to the Trade Promotions Lotteries Regulations. These regulations require that trade promotion lotteries must allow free entry and cannot be made subject to any condition which involves a cost to participants.

EUTHANASIA

Petitions signed by 64 residents of South Australia requesting that the House oppose any measure to legislate for voluntary euthanasia were presented by the Hons S.J. Baker and M.H. Armitage and Ms Stevens.

Petitions received.

TRADING HOURS

A petition signed by 11 060 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to allow people to shop and trade in the city of Adelaide on Sundays was presented by the Hon. G. A. Ingerson.

Petition received.

VEGETATION PROTECTION

A petition signed by 146 residents of South Australia requesting that the House ensure that effective legislation is enacted to protect urban trees and/or bushland from destruction was presented by the Hon. G.A. Ingerson.

Petition received.

ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

A petition signed by 11 913 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to request the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Heritage to increase State Government funding for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra was presented by Mr Caudell.

Petition received.

CONTAMINATED SITES

A petition signed by 18 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to decontaminate the ANR site at Islington, stop the development of the Collex waste plant at Kilburn and stop obnoxious odours emitted from factories around Grand Junction Road was presented by Mr Clarke.

Petition received.

LADY GOWRIE DRIVE LIGHTING

A petition signed by 523 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to provide street lighting on Lady Gowrie Drive, North Haven, was presented by Mr Foley.

Petition received.

WALLAROO JETTY

A petition signed by 953 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to ensure that the Wallaroo jetty remains open to the public during peak tourist times was presented by Mr Meier.

Petition received.

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

A petition signed by 2 136 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to recognise the cultural and educational importance of Old Parliament House Museum and support its continuation as a museum for the people of South Australia was presented by Mr Rann.

Petition received.

MENTAL HEALTH

A petition signed by 894 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to increase funding for mental health in South Australia to provide extra beds at mental institutions and day-care monitoring for those people with a mental illness living in the community was presented by Ms Stevens.

Petition received.

PROSTITUTION

A petition signed by 16 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to uphold and strengthen existing laws relating to prostitution was presented by Ms Stevens.

Petition received.

BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I wish to make a ministerial statement. I formally advise the House that the Government has entered into an agreement to sell the Bank of South Australia Ltd to Advance Bank Australia Ltd for \$730 million, and I table a broad summary of the sale agreement for the information of the House. As can be seen, a number of steps are to take place to completion of the sale by around early August. A deposit of \$10 million has already been received. This table also covers the issues of the funding facility arrangements with the South Australian Asset Management Corporation, the treatment of the Government guarantee, underwriting arrangements and warranties required for a sale of this type. The sale involved complex negotiations under which the Government achieved a successful outcome in terms of price and other contractual arrangements. These arrangements were finally agreed in the hours before a special Cabinet meeting was called for 6.45 a.m. on Friday, 2 June 1995 to consider my recommendation.

With the sale of BankSA, the Government will achieve a number of its objectives which include: a fair price for BankSA; reducing the level of the State's net debt; retention of the BankSA name and Sturt desert pea logo; retention of an Adelaide head office and local board; avoiding large job losses had a sale been made to another bank with an extensive branch network in South Australia; enhancing competition within the banking industry in South Australia; and providing further opportunity in employment and investment in this State. The Government looks forward to a successful future for BankSA under its ownership by Advance Bank in South Australia. The Government welcomes Advance Bank as a new corporate citizen of this State.

QUESTION TIME

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Why are public patients of the privatised Modbury Hospital being required to wait up to 10 months before having a condition assessed? Will the Minister intervene to ensure that this unacceptable situation is resolved? The Opposition has been contacted by a patient angry at the Premier's claim that hospital waiting lists have been cut. This person tore a cartilage and knee ligaments on 16 February, and went to the Modbury Hospital with his doctor's letter to arrange an appointment with a specialist. He was told the first appointment to assess his condition would be on 26 November—a wait of almost 10 months. Because of the pain this person was suffering his doctor then referred him to another specialist and he was forced to pay to have an operation performed as a private patient.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: First and foremost let me repeat to the House: waiting lists have been cut. The simple fact is that in the past 12 months—March to March—this Government's changes have seen waiting lists decrease by 10 per cent. The trend is downwards instead of, as under the previous Government's decade of rule, inexorably upwards. Let us once and for all put that furphy well and truly to bed. The waiting lists have been addressed and are going down. Rather than carp on about failures of the Government I would expect that a shadow spokesperson, the member for Elizabeth, would be saying, 'Well done', because a 10 per cent decrease has occurred in 12 months. That in fact is a plus rather than a negative.

Secondly, I reject the allegation that the privatised hospital has not been doing its job, because I am fairly sure that the member for Elizabeth said that this patient attended on 16 February. Healthscope took over only on 6 February. It takes more than 10 days to address 10 years of neglect by the previous Government. It had only 10 days to fix the problem. The previous Government had 10 years and did nothing except allow the numbers progressively to increase. It is fallacious and I will not stand for that.

The whole question of waiting lists at Modbury Hospital is an interesting concept, because I am informed that there is a waiting list at Modbury Hospital for ear, nose and throat surgery. In the abstract, presumably the member for Elizabeth would say how terrible it is that there is a waiting list for ear, nose and throat surgery at Modbury. For the benefit of *Hansard* I note that the member for Elizabeth is nodding. She is saying how terrible it is that there is a waiting list for ear, nose and throat surgery at Modbury Hospital. Let us ask when the ear, nose and throat service was first provided at Modbury Hospital: only after Healthscope went in there. There was a decade of neglect by the Labor Party—it did nothing—but, recognising that it is a growing area and that a lot of children out there need ear, nose and throat services, I repeat that those services were provided only after Healthscope went into Modbury Hospital.

Healthscope decided that it was a priority area; it is providing a service there; and, because it is providing a service there, there is a waiting list. In the abstract, one could say it is terrible that there is a waiting list at Modbury Hospital: I happen to believe that in that situation it is wonderful, because it means that the people of the north-

eastern suburbs are receiving a service that they were not provided with under the previous Government.

STATE BUDGET

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): My question is directed to the Premier. What has been the public reaction to the Government's second budget?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: There has been very strong support for our budget. It has been interesting to see the extent to which the broader community—one would never hear this from anyone in the Labor Party—now starts to understand the extent to which this Government inherited a disastrous situation. However, in just 18 months, with two budgets, it has started to bring down the debt very significantly, substantially reduce interest payments, made sure that we start to slash, as we have, two-thirds of the previous Labor Government's overspending, made sure that we stuck to our election promise of no new taxes, which is exactly what we have done, and introduced some very innovative programs such as Building a Better Future, which puts \$300 million of private funds out in the community to build essential community infrastructure such as the Berri bridge.

I happened to be in Melbourne over the weekend for the launch of the one-nation rail link around Australia. While I waited for half an hour for the Prime Minister to come to the function on Sunday morning, I had a chance to meet a considerable number of business people with interests in Melbourne. They were commenting on how well the South Australian Government had fixed up the financial mess that it inherited. They were saying that it is now perceived throughout the Eastern States that things are very much on the mend here in South Australia.

That is in sharp contrast with the Labor Party pamphlet that has been put out this week. We predicted that the pamphlet was coming—I think that I foreshadowed to the media about a week ago that the Labor Party was preparing it. The Labor Party had probably already put it on the printing press, because the pamphlet clearly is untrue in several respects. In one whole panel of the pamphlet, the Labor Party could not even think of something to say. All that it could do was say, 'We are the Labor Party—the ALP.' Those are the thoughts of the Leader of the Opposition when it comes to our budget.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. The Premier has the floor, and he will wind up his answer.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Let us look at the pamphlet. It is fair to say that one of the 'strengths' of the pamphlet is not the truth. Under the heading 'Privatisation' the pamphlet states:

Now he is selling off control of our water system.

An honourable member: Wrong!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Wrong! Clearly, the Leader of the Opposition, in that rather shabby pamphlet, is telling untruths, trying to claim that the Liberal Government is selling—or privatising, as he puts it—the water supply. He goes on to state that in Britain water prices increased by a massive 67 per cent after privatisation, but we are not privatising our water supply. That rather shabby pamphlet, where it does say something, implies that the budget actually increases class sizes. This budget does not change class sizes one iota. Again, quite clearly—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is clear that truth does not count when it comes to the Labor Opposition in this State. Members opposite do not care a damn about what they put in their pamphlet, which they try to peddle around South Australia. It is interesting, because the Electoral Commissioner found that the Labor Party did the same during the election campaign. In a finding brought down after the election the Commissioner found that the Labor Party in South Australia had misled the people of this State. There is one other area about which the Leader of the Opposition has been beating his chest, and that is the issue of policing services to the community.

Have we heard the Leader of the Opposition say, 'This Liberal Government has increased the number of police on duty in our community by 135, and I congratulate it'? No, we have not. When has the Leader of the Opposition publicly acknowledged that in the first operating budget we brought down we increased the operating expenses of the Police Force by three times the inflation rate—a \$24 million increase? Clearly, we again find that the Labor Party in South Australia has no regard for truth when it is out there peddling a political story, and so I urge the people of South Australia, when this document comes through the post, to tear it up because it is not worth reading.

Last week the people of South Australia appreciated the enormous headway made in this State to fix up the mess that the Labor Party created. South Australians also appreciated the fact that on Friday we secured an excellent deal for South Australia in the sale of the bank. The price was fair, and BankSA was sold to a bank that will maintain the branch and staff structure in South Australia; it was sold to a bank that will build up service within South Australia, retain the head office, retain the name 'BankSA', retain the logo and, importantly, will make sure that banking decisions are made here in South Australia. But most important of all is the fact that in the past three weeks we have been able to sell non core assets and reduce the State debt by \$1 000 million. As a result, we have reduced interest payments by over \$100 million a year of taxpayers' money. That is a significant achievement for South Australia. This means that we are heading in a whole new direction compared to where the former Labor Government was taking us previously.

POLICE BUDGET

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Given his reply to a previous question about his commitment to the police, will the Premier give an assurance today that he will meet personally with the Police Association to hear firsthand about the consequence of his budget cuts on law enforcement in South Australia? Will he explain how a \$10 million cut and the loss of 250 jobs, including 185 police, will not affect the fighting of crime in South Australia? In the last election campaign the Premier quoted a letter—and this is what he said in his election speech—from a man who wrote as follows:

Our homes are ransacked, and my elderly neighbour takes a walk in her backyard every evening because she is afraid of the hooligans and their dogs. Her home is a fortress, doors and windows shuttered.

Will the Premier tell us whether she can feel safer knowing that there will be fewer police, despite what the Premier said in his shabby election promise speech?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I point out that, first, this Government has put additional resources into the Police Force compared to the former Government, and a substantial increase—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: It's a \$10 million cut, and you know it.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Just listen. In our first budget we put \$24 million more into the Police Force and its operating expenses compared to the previous Government, and that was three times the inflation rate—\$24 million extra into operating expenses. The South Australian community appreciates the fact that we have put an extra 135 police out in the community on the beat. You cannot tell me—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader has asked his question. He has had a fair go and I ask him not to interject.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: He doesn't have the guts—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Leader of the Opposition cannot bring himself to acknowledge what this Government has achieved. We have put more police out on the beat: 135 more. In fact, it is part of our target to put 200 police out there in the first four years that we are in Government. We are well on track to achieve that. There is scope to achieve improved efficiencies within the administrative areas of the Police Force, and in that regard I refer to the new computer technology. The new communications technology provides scope to make savings in that area, and that is exactly what this Government is doing. However, it is important to acknowledge the additional resources that this Government is giving to the Police Force compared to those put in by the previous Government.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: More computers on the beat, is that right?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: There will be another 135 police. To show the extent to which the Labor Opposition has been out there trying to beat up an issue on this and not face the facts and the truth, on Friday night we had the shadow Treasurer claiming that I had met with the Police Commissioner on Thursday night together with the Minister for Emergency Services. That was put out as a matter of fact. I had no meeting with the Police Commissioner and I do not know from where the shadow Treasurer gets his information. I would have thought that if I had a meeting I would know about it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It appears that the shadow Treasurer is willing to grab any possible rumour around the place and go on radio and quote it as fact. It appears that the Labor Party has ended up well and truly with egg on its face. I can assure the shadow Treasurer that I did not meet with the Police Commissioner on any occasion last week.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That is the responsibility of the Minister, quite clearly. This Government has also allocated an additional \$1.6 million for the first time to establish a crime prevention strategy for South Australia. That is a major new initiative of this Government. The former Government—after 11 years—had no crime prevention strategy in place whatsoever, but what we have done as a Government is to put more police—135 more—out on the beat and at the same time we have a strategy to make sure

that we reduce crime in this State. The clear fact is that we are reducing crime and, as a result, people are safer in their homes.

Mr BASS (Florey): Will the Minister for Emergency Services explain to the House the action that had to be taken by the new Liberal Government straight after the last State election to rectify the police budget problems following the slashing of the police budget by the previous Labor Government?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Florey for his question. The member for Florey was Secretary of the Police Association and remembers full well the fall out in the Police Department after the Labor Party slashed the police budget in the 1993-94 financial year. Having looked at how Labor tackled the police budget at that time it is understandable that it cannot comprehend how Governments can do more for less with Government departments. Labor's strategy was to cut \$3 million from the police budget and walk away from it. Labor did not address the organisational problems within the Police Department and did not address difficulties the department might have been facing in coping with aspects of its day-to-day business. It just walked away from it and left the department to its own affairs. In fact, it is fair to say that the department had almost nothing to do with its Emergency Services Minister for some nine months prior to the last State election.

On becoming Emergency Services Minister, I was advised by the Commissioner that the department had a crisis situation on its hands. I was advised that its budget, which was \$274.4 million in 1992-93, was cut by \$3 million by a Labor Government to \$271.4 million, but without any measures being put in place to better manage the department with less. As a result, two different budget figures appeared in the budget papers for the 1993-94 financial year: one set comprised the figures set by Labor for its 1993-94 budget; the other set of figures was the budget rescue package implemented by the incoming Liberal Government when it poured an extra \$4 million, on top of Labor's budget, into the Police Force to take its budget to \$275.5 million.

Then, in 1994-95, we put another \$14.5 million into the Police Department to take its budget to \$290 million. In this financial year we injected another \$9 million to take its budget to \$299 million and, in addition, \$1.4 million is set aside separately for the police band. Those are the facts as they appear in the budget documents, and they speak for themselves. How ironic that on many news broadcasts on Friday night the Leader of the Opposition was quoted as follows:

That is the first cut in police funding for—in living memory.

One of only two possibilities arise: either the living memory of the Leader of the Opposition is very short and does not go back to 1993-94, when he was a member of the Labor Party Cabinet and sat around the very table that approved the cut to the police budget, or the Leader has trouble with the truth.

I leave it to others to judge which is the case, but clearly there are no other possible options. This whole budget fiction for the Police Department has been built by the Opposition by separating out the recurrent portion of the budget. The Labor Party knows full well the budget comprises two sections: recurrent and capital. The capital portion of the budget this financial year has increased by \$11 million. That is the portion of the budget that covers police vehicles, equipment and police stations. That is the portion of the

budget that will allow the decentralisation of the Police Department, and it will provide the police stations from which officers can work to put police back where they belong: in the community and not sitting behind desks in high-rise buildings in the city.

The reality is that the Labor Government created two police headquarters in Adelaide: it left No. 1 Angas Street filled from top to bottom with police officers behind desks, and it also took out a contract for Flinders Central, the new police headquarters, filled from top to bottom with police officers behind desks. The strategy of our Government is to move those police where they ought be: back on the beat and into the suburbs where the community wants them. As the Premier has already indicated, by 30 June an extra 135 police officers will be working in the community. The recurrent budget has not been cut by \$10 million but by \$2 million because the Police Department must learn to do it better.

Having said that, one may well ask: why is it that the Labor Party cut the police budget in the way it did? In my view, there is no better person to tell that story than the previous Minister responsible for police, Mr Kym Mayes. To ensure that the story is related accurately, I am happy to put on the record the words attributed to former police Minister Kym Mayes on 16 December 1993, just after the State election, when he said that 'the South Australian Police Department urgently needs a major overhaul.' The ABC reporter, David Bevan, reported as follows:

Mr Mayes was the Minister responsible for the police during Labor's last year in office and he says it's obvious the Police Department could be more effective. . . Mr Mayes says the independence of the Police Commissioner and entrenched views among the senior ranks makes it extremely difficult to reform the Police Force. . . especially for a Labor Government which traditionally had a fragile relationship with the department since the Salisbury affair in the 1970s. Mr Mayes says the emotion surrounding law and order makes it difficult to cut out inefficiencies but he's sure there's money in hollow logs around the department and savings of \$10 million a year could be achieved through reforms.

Those are the words of former Labor police Minister Kym Mayes. That is the reason the Labor Party cut the police budget, but the Labor Party lacked the management expertise to show police how to do it better.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the Deputy Leader that he not proceed as he is, as he is preventing the member for Playford from asking his question.

POLICE BOARD

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): When the Minister for Emergency Services spoke to Police Association delegates on 10 May, did he indicate that he was examining the introduction of a police board to ensure that Government policy was implemented and followed through and, if so, what specific policies is the current police administration failing to carry out?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Yes, I certainly did address the Police Association conference. I was invited to close the conference of union delegates which met to discuss issues within the Police Department. I went further: I provided union delegates with the opportunity to ask any questions they desired of me, so that those delegates could be fully informed as to steps being taken by the Government to have a better managed and better resourced Police Department. One question put to me by delegates concerned the issue of a police board. The reason that issue was raised was

quite simple: a police board was raised by the previous Government as something it believed was necessary to better manage the Police Department. There is no secret in that. The report was tabled in this Parliament by the former police Minister, Kym Mayes, and the report recommended that a police board be established.

In 1992 I became aware that this secret Government report was being put together, and I telephoned the President of the Police Association, Mr Peter Alexander. I advised him that I thought a document would be tabled in Parliament that day by the police Minister and that, in fact, I thought there might have been two. My information was that one document would be for the Labor Party to form a police board and the other was a Labor Party analysis of the introduction of contracts for all police—the whole lot.

The Police Association was quite surprised because it said, 'No-one from the Labor Party has discussed such issues with us.' I was pleased that the President of the Police Association came to see me in Parliament House, at which time I gave him a copy of both documents. Until that time the Police Association had no idea of the preparation of those documents. It is understandable that, when a Minister attends a Police Association conference and consults with delegates, they may wish to know this Government's policy on a police board.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The 'Labor Listens' slogan might be wishful thinking on its part or it might be another Labor Party myth because it is still not listening. I indicated to the conference that the Police Commissioner and I had been looking at alternatives for differing management structures for the Police Department.

Those structures cover a wide variety of things, including the way in which civilians are used in the Police Department, whether senior executive officers need to be sworn police officers or civilians, whether contracts ought to be introduced for commissioned officers of the Police Department only, and whether it is more appropriate to manage the department utilising a police board. I think there could be some advantages in implementing a board, but no decision has yet been made and, if it is, that will be a decision of Cabinet. No recommendation has gone from me to Cabinet. In the interests of consultation, I am always happy to meet with representatives of the Police Association. I met with them on Friday; I meet with them regularly and they have been speaking with my staff again today. I hope that that sort of consultation will indicate to the Labor Party how this State can be governed.

STATE DEBT

Mr EVANS (Davenport): Will the Treasurer clarify South Australia's debt position, following the delivery of the budget last week? Following the budget, the Leader of the Opposition was quoted in the media last week as saying he had found a \$1 billion hole in the debt figures.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the honourable member for his question, because there was this strange quote on the ABC (and I have to keep this very brief) that a \$1 billion black hole had been found, but nobody could actually find it. I remembered two things. I well remember that, before the last election, when the then Premier of South Australia had laid down the Meet the Challenge statement, he said, 'These are our targets; these are what we will stick to; this is what we are delivering to South Australia.'

On about 18 November 1993, a document emerged that indicated that perhaps the \$7 billion was not accomplishable, because there was a \$577 million black hole. So, I can understand why the Leader of the Opposition has a preoccupation with black holes—because the then Government was fiddling the budget, using dedicated superannuation funds as an offset, or counting them as a financial asset, which was totally illegal under the accounting standards. I also well remember the poor old Premier being left to stand and answer the question while the then Treasurer whizzed off to Whyalla and disappeared without trace. They are great moments in history, and I could mention a lot of other things if I had time.

I refer members to table 2.3 of the financial statement, indicating \$8 598 million at 30 June 1995, going to \$7 657 million in 1996, and the figure decreases after that. Compare that with the record of the previous Government. I must close on one note. A myth is being circulated by the mouthpiece of the Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition, in the form of Don Dunstan, who keeps saying that debt is not a problem: just spend, spend, spend and do not worry about the consequences. He says, 'It is not a problem: you keep borrowing money and it does not matter.' I point out to the House that net interest costs to the Government in 1950 were \$30 million; in 1960, \$40 million; in 1970, \$58 million; in 1980, \$158 million; and in 1995, \$900 million—and who is to blame? They are. So, next time a has-been in politics gets up and talks about debt, perhaps he should get it right.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Deputy Leader not to interject again. The Chair is of the belief that the House would like Question Time to continue. It is up to the discretion of the Chair who is called. If members continue to interject they obviously do not want to ask a question. The member for Playford.

POLICE NEWSLETTER

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Did the Minister for Emergency Services or any other Minister order the recall of issue No. 61 of the *Police Post* issued on Thursday last, entitled 'Budget containment strategy' after it was circulated to police stations around the State? Why was the newsletter recalled and does he believe that our Police Force should remain free from Government interference? The *Police Post* of last week outlined the Government's plans to cut 250 positions from the Police Force, including 185 police on the beat.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I was wondering when this question would come up, because the member for Playford has been saying on radio and TV for the past two or three days that he was going to ask this question, and here it finally is. No, I did not order the recall of any document from the Police Department. The Police Department issued a bulletin, the *Police Post*, prior to the budget speech that was given in this Parliament. The document contained information which was erroneous in some respects and which was misleading in others. I was not made aware of the document prior to its release. When I was made aware of the existence of the document I immediately telephoned the Police Commissioner. I advised him that I had a copy of the document in my hand and drew matters in it to his attention. It was his understanding that the document had not been circularised. Some two hours later he contacted a member of my staff and advised that the document had been circularised in part and that he had issued an order for its recall.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: So, you advised him.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Hanson.

PRISONS CONTROL

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Will the Minister for Correctional Services explain how action taken by this Government has gained control of the prisons system after the former Government's inaction?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Spence that, if the Chair was to enforce that Standing Order rigidly, very few questions would be asked in the House. If the honourable member would like me to enforce it, the Chair is very happy to do it. The Minister for Emergency Services.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the honourable member for his question because, as one of my Correctional Service Advisory Committee members, he is aware of some of the details of the incidents that were facing this Government the day we came into office. I think Labor Party members might well care to listen very carefully to what is about to be revealed in this Chamber. On day one as Minister, I was advised by my department that a serious situation had been confronting Correctional Services for some six months—that police were on stand-by, that the department had no control over any of its eight prisons, and that previous requests had been made to previous Ministers and had resulted in a turnover of Ministers and their portfolios.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The honourable member may like to hear some of the quotes I am about to read from Government documents. In reply to the honourable member's question, I refer to two documents which were sent by way of memorandum from the former CEO of the Department for Correctional Services, Mr John Dawes, to a former Minister of Correctional Services, Mr Bob Gregory, dated 9 March 1993 and 10 March 1993, the year of the last election. The memo of 10 March is entitled 'Dispute in Correctional Services' and that of 9 March is entitled 'Prison contingency plans in the event of staff action'. The memo of 10 March in part states:

As you are aware, the Department of Correctional Services has been the subject of intense industrial pressure in recent times to the degree it can no longer guarantee the safety and welfare of the prison population. The Public Service Association has run an effective media campaign discrediting the work of the department and has shown no concern for the welfare of prisoners or indeed little regard for the likely prisoner reaction to this ongoing disruption to their prison lives, nor the subsequent risk to officers' health and safety. The department is concerned there is a very real risk of prisoner unrest if the officers continue to target the normal regime of the prison.

That was a serious message to me as Minister that the department had some very serious problems. The former Correctional Services CEO put to his Minister an outline of how to address this crisis in our prison system. The outline is quite extensive. He said:

It is necessary to develop a plan of short and long-term strategies which will facilitate the Department of Correctional Services regaining control of correctional policy and the ability to meet its budgetary obligations.

He outlined contingency plans for the operation of prisons in the event of long-term industrial action. At the same time, the short-term strategies, which were outlined in the memo of 9 March, indicated:

In the case of withdrawal of services by correctional officers, the department is confident that, through the use of department staff,

volunteers and the police, it could successfully accommodate prisoners under a restrictive regime. In cases like the Yatala Labour Prison, due to its size and layout, the involvement of the Police Department of South Australia would become a necessity very early in the process. The plans have been reviewed by police regional commanders and appear to have the support of the Police Association of South Australia.

The question that I naturally asked was: what did the Government do, faced with this crisis? It sat on it for as long as it could, for Mr Gregory was also the industrial relations Minister, and he was brought in to replace the now member for Giles as Minister for Correctional Services to get the industrial situation under control and make prisons safe and a non-election issue for the outgoing Labor Government. Minister Gregory failed, so it then brought in Chris Sumner, considered to be a reliable, safe manager, to keep the problem under control so that this Government was faced with the problems on coming into office.

The long-term strategy becomes important. Central to John Dawes' solution was, ironically, the Mount Gambier Prison, which at that time was under construction. In his memo, John Dawes says:

The department is of the view that with the likely budgetary constraints there is a distinct possibility that this facility will not be opened as it is likely that the Public Service Association will object to staffing levels and operational procedures.

He goes on to say:

The department has very few bargaining tools given the campaign of the Public Service Association and an option is for the department to negotiate on the basis that if agreements cannot be reached expressions of interest for the private operation of the prison should be sought.

In light of that, one has to ask: how can the Labor Party in this Parliament say that any crisis in the prisons system has occurred only after the election, and how can it oppose the private management of prisons which, to a significant extent, has already gone a significant way towards rectifying the problems that we inherited in our prisons system?

POLICE MOTOR CYCLE ESCORT SQUAD

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Unfortunately, my question is directed to the Minister for Emergency Services. What is the future of the motor cycle escort squad used approximately 400 times in 1994 to escort loads on roads in South Australia? Is this duty to be transferred to ordinary police patrols? Many companies which use this service are unsure of what will happen in future.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I thank the member for Playford for his question, because this is a classic example of the difference between Labor and Liberal Governments. Less than two weeks ago I received a memo from the Director of the Fleet Task Force, who has been conducting an assessment of police vehicles in this State. The assessment included not only cars but motor cycles. The findings were very interesting. They were that there are eight motor cycles which, over any one month, had travelled less than 400 kilometres. In fact, one motor cycle had travelled not at all and had been sitting stationary in a shed somewhere, and another motor cycle had travelled an average of 95 kilometres a month.

Further, the Fleet Task Force Director found that motor cycles, unlike police cars, are single officer issue—in other words, one motor cycle, one rider. Police cars are usually shared between at least two shifts. His recommendation is that if the eight motor cycles, which are being used only to

ferry an officer from home to work and back again, are sold, and also if the motor cycle numbers are halved, so that motor cycles are shared between two officers, the savings to taxpayers will be at least \$830 000—just under \$1 million. That is an example of how the police can better utilise their budget.

WATER CORPORATION

Mr KERIN (Frome): Will the Minister for Infrastructure report on the implications of a new enterprise agreement for employees of the Engineering and Water Supply Department and what it means to the future of the new South Australian Water Corporation? This new agreement has been signed by all employees of the department and it has been described as 'ground breaking'.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Whilst the Leader of the Opposition has been pursuing his fear campaign about increases in water prices, we have been effectively—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is a fear campaign. The 67 per cent increase in water prices in the United Kingdom has absolutely nothing to do with what we are proposing in South Australia, and you know it full well. Whilst the Leader of the Opposition is pursuing his fear campaign, unsubstantiated, we have been effectively getting on with the job. And from whom do we have support? The unions in South Australia, which have now signed an enterprise agreement with the Government in relation to the restructuring of the Engineering and Water Supply Department. That leaves the Leader of the Opposition like a shag on a rock over his complaints about the proposed direction of the new Water Corporation.

After about seven months of negotiation, there has been an agreement between the unions representing EWS workers and the Government, which was signed at a joint sitting of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on Friday. That agreement drew commendation from the Employee Ombudsman and also from the bench in terms of its ground-breaking nature. It supports initiatives which will achieve greater productivity within the EWS, greater efficiency, a greater standard of service for South Australians, flexibility and financial performance.

As regards pay increases, the employees—it is a double-sided deal, as the enterprise bargaining system is—will get a \$17 a week increase from 21 February last, a \$10 a week (or 2 per cent) increase in July this year and a further \$10 a week (or 2 per cent) increase on 30 September next year. That is the benefit for the employees.

The benefit for the Government, taxpayers and consumers in South Australia is that by June this year they will achieve productivity and efficiency gains of \$12.3 million; by June next year productivity and efficiency gains worth \$27.3 million; and by 30 September next year productivity and efficiency gains worth \$31.4 million. And if we can get greater productivity and efficiency gains beyond that, the Government, taxpayers and employees will equally share the benefits once those benchmarks have been reached.

This demonstrates, in a major area of restructuring, that we can reach agreement with the unions and the work force. In this instance, I commend Claire Bossley, Director of Human Resources in the EWS, her staff and the union representatives who sat around a table over those seven months thrashing out the agreement. It was a very significant step forward. It proves that the policy, thrust and direction of the Government is right, because even the union movement

can see that it is right and is prepared to enter into an enterprise bargain to bring about the restructuring.

EDS

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Can the Premier confirm a recent media report that quotes him as saying that the Government may not be able to clinch the signing of a contract with EDS and, if it is to be signed, when will this take place? In April the Premier announced that a signing of the EDS contract had been put back until June. On 19 May the Premier announced that there were 'some real difficulties' but said, 'It is still on track in terms of what we have been talking about recently, which is for June.' However, last weekend the Premier was reported in the *Australian* as canvassing the possibility that the Government may not be able to clinch the deal with EDS as it had been previously announced.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I can certainly confirm that the report in the *Australian* is correct, but it refers to a hypothetical case that was put to me. I was asked specifically when this commercial negotiation would be finished, and I said, 'With any commercial negotiation, until you finally resolve it, you don't know whether it will be tomorrow, next week or never.' Therefore, until you have resolved commercial negotiations, all those possibilities exist. The Government will not reveal details of commercial negotiations. It is inappropriate to do so whilst discussions and negotiations are taking place, and I do not wish to add anything further.

HINDMARSH ISLAND BRIDGE

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Was the Premier advised by the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner, on the morning of 9 July 1994 that the Federal Minister had not at that time made a decision about the future of the Hindmarsh Island bridge?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Much has been said in the Federal Parliament about the issue of the Hindmarsh Island bridge and about when Mr Tickner in fact made his decision. In recent days, my name has been brought into this, and I believe it is time I clarified a couple of the points in terms of the manner in which that decision was made. First, on the afternoon of Thursday 7 July we were faxed, through the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, a draft copy of the proposed findings of the Saunders report. We were asked to respond by the next day as the Minister was going to make up his mind in the very near future and, therefore, if the South Australian Government wanted to say anything on this matter, we had better make sure that our response was back to the Federal Minister, Mr Tickner, well before 5 p.m. on Friday 8 July.

However, from the information we had received from Canberra, we were particularly concerned as to what the Minister looked like deciding in relation to the Hindmarsh Island bridge. It was fairly obvious to all of us here involved in that issue that in fact the Federal Minister was about to ban the construction of the bridge. As a result of that, on the Saturday morning, after we had sent back our response from South Australia, I telephoned Canberra in an attempt to speak to Minister Tickner. On contacting his office, I was told to telephone him on a number in New South Wales—I think it was his home or electorate office—where I spoke to Mr Tickner for about 15 minutes.

The Optus record of my telephone call is clearly recorded from the location at which I made that call on 9 July, and it

shows that I finished the call at 11.7 a.m. eastern standard time on Saturday 9 July last year. That is important, because the Federal Minister has told the Parliament that in fact he made his decision at 11.15 on that particular morning, so somewhere between 11.7, when he hung up after talking to me, and 11.15 a.m. the Minister apparently made up his mind. This is very important, because the Minister has been claiming in the Federal Parliament that he clearly indicated to me that, up to 11.7 a.m., he had not yet made up his mind. I would dispute that, because in fact I kept putting a point to the Federal Minister, and he refused to respond to the point I kept putting to him. Quite clearly to me, the Minister was not wanting to admit to me that he had already made up his mind.

In fact, I was so concerned, having hung up at 11.7 a.m. eastern standard time after talking to Minister Tickner, that I immediately picked up the telephone and got through to The Lodge to speak to the Prime Minister. Quite clearly, if the Minister had given me any assurance whatsoever that the ban was not going to be imposed, I would not have bothered to telephone the Prime Minister, but in fact just the opposite was the case. I was so concerned with my discussion with Minister Tickner that I immediately tried to track down the Prime Minister on a Saturday morning. Again, it is clearly recorded that I telephoned a number in Canberra (which turns out to be The Lodge) at 10.38 Adelaide time (which members can clearly work out is 11.8 eastern standard time) literally within one minute of hanging up from my conversation with Minister Tickner: that is how concerned I was. In fact, I spoke to the Prime Minister later that day and expressed my concern.

So, we had Minister Tickner claiming that he had told me that he had not made up his mind, which was not factual. We had Minister Tickner claiming that he had made up his mind by 11.15.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Whether or not that was factual, we cannot be certain at this stage. We do know that I was still on the telephone to Minister Tickner at 11.7 eastern standard time. In my conversation with Mr Tickner, I had a grave fear—in fact, I felt there was an absolute certainty—that the ban on the bridge would be imposed, so much so that, without further speaking to Minister Tickner, I alerted my staff that afternoon to prepare for the Minister to make an announcement either that evening or the next day banning the construction of the bridge. That is how concerned I was, and I warned my staff to prepare for that before I had a chance to speak to the Prime Minister. So, quite clearly, it is about time that Minister Tickner came out with the truth on this issue and stopped burying the truth and trying to distort the facts as to when the true decision was made by him in relation to the bridge.

There is one other important matter that I think this House and, in fact, Australia should understand. The South Australian Museum has an international reputation as probably having the best records on Aboriginal heritage items of any museum—certainly in Australia. I am able to say, after consulting with the Museum, that the Museum was given no official role whatsoever in the issue of the Aboriginal women's business. I point out that Doreen Kartinyeri, although an employee of the Museum and having made statements in that area, made those statements as a private individual and with no recourse back to the Museum and no authority of or consultation with the Museum.

So, although the South Australian Museum has by far the best historical records anywhere in Australia on this issue, I am sad to say that at no stage in the preparation of the Saunders report for Minister Tickner were those resources of the Museum used. Therefore, unfortunately, that raises serious doubts about the extent to which Professor Saunders, or the other people who were working for Minister Tickner, bothered to properly research this issue and make sure they used what could only be described as the best likely resources available to ensure that the truth was upheld.

EDS

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is again directed to the Premier. Has the value of the potential EDS contract decreased and, if so, by how much? Will the Premier confirm his statement to the House previously that savings to the taxpayer are locked in at \$140 million? In July last year the *Australian* reported the EDS deal as being worth up to \$1.2 billion; in September last year the Premier told the Estimates Committee that the contract involved \$1 billion of Government expenditure; and in May this year the *Advertiser* described the EDS deal as being worth \$700 million.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As the due diligence process involving the value of the contract and the extent of the work being carried out is a complex and a key part of the negotiations, it is quite inappropriate for me to make any comment while those negotiations are going on.

DROUGHT RELIEF

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Primary Industries explain to the House how South Australian farm families benefited from the national Farmhand appeal, which raised almost \$10 million to assist drought affected families?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: In August last year, when we were in Canberra meeting with Minister Collins to get assistance for needy farmers in South Australia, we became aware of the Farmhand appeal, which had just been launched. That appeal was launched in Canberra but was funded dollar for dollar by the Federal Government. Ultimately, \$9.2 million was paid out to needy families in Australia, which was experiencing one of the worst droughts ever. A total of \$1.3 million was paid out to 521 families in South Australia, more than 1 000 adults and 700 children being beneficiaries of grants that averaged about \$2 500. Further, 20 particularly needy families were able to get a second grant, and I compliment Mr Doug Miell, who was administering that program, because there were no strings attached: needy families had only to telephone or to write in. It was not about assets: it was about food on the table, essential car repairs and medical bills, to keep those families going.

I particularly commend Mission SA, which heard about this program and which, after I had had several meetings with them, offered to raise money in South Australia to donate to the Federal appeal. In fact, from Adelaide and with the help of Mission SA, \$250 000 was raised from South Australians making, in effect, \$500 000 that went towards that appeal. That was a magnificent effort, and I compliment the Mission SA people, who really got behind that effort. It shows that people in the city do care about the problems in the country, and that is why the contribution ultimately, involving the national campaign, was over \$9 million.

BUDGET INFORMATION LEAFLET

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier detail the cost to the taxpayers of the budget leaflet called 'We are coming into the home straight to a better future' and state whether individual Liberal members of Parliament who have distributed the leaflet in their electorate paid for the full cost of its production, printing and distribution?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The pamphlet put out by me as Premier, by the Cabinet and by the Government was information about the budget. It was available to all members of Parliament if they wanted it. I offered it to the Labor Party members: the Treasurer has sent them 20 copies. The Treasurer has indicated that he is willing to make sure that there is a copy for every household, because it is important information about the budget of South Australia. I would have thought that, if the taxpayers of South Australia are having to put in over \$900 million a year to pay interest on the debt created by the Labor Party, the least they could get is some information about how we are starting to reduce that debt and reduce the payments.

DEBT LINE

Mr WADE (Elder): Will the Minister for Family and Community Services explain why the Debt Line financial counselling service has been closed and say what effect this will have on South Australians? Concern has been expressed that the closure of Debt Line will have a detrimental impact, particularly on those in need of urgent financial assistance.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I thank the honourable member for his question, because it provides the opportunity for me to clarify the situation; there has been some misinformation about this service. The services previously provided through Debt Line will continue: only the name and telephone number will change. People can still access the same level of services by telephoning one of the 19 Family and Community Services offices throughout the State or by making personal representation in these offices during business hours. I do not believe that the cancellation of a dedicated telephone service will have a detrimental effect. In fact, many people who telephoned Debt Line previously were referred anyway to one of the 19 offices for more detailed counselling. All we are doing is streamlining the services, channelling the help at grass roots level.

FACS offices have teams of highly trained counsellors to assist during times of financial distress and to make representation on behalf of struggling members of the community. It is a good service that will continue to be provided in South Australia through these Family and Community Services offices, and I thank the member for Elder for giving me the opportunity to clarify the current situation.

TRADING HOURS

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Industrial Affairs agree to conduct a secret ballot of small and large retailers, shop workers and residents in the CBD, under the auspices of the State Electoral Office, to determine the majority views of the interested persons as required by the existing Act with respect to the extension by proclamation of Sunday trading in the CBD? In the event of the Government's Bill seeking to extend Sunday trading in the CBD failing to win parliamentary approval, section 13(7)

of the existing Act requires that the Minister be satisfied that a majority of interested persons desire the proclamation to be made.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It so happens that today we have had a couple of those reports in, and they might be of interest to the Deputy Leader. I did not realise he could write these questions, but I will give him the answers. Last week it was reported that an independent statistical study was done, and I have been advised this morning that all the statistical studies that have been done fall within plus or minus 3 per cent of the actual results of the study compared to a true poll. So, I suggest that they are fairly accurate, and it might be of interest if I read out those results to the Deputy Leader. Last week the community in total voted with 87 per cent in favour of Sunday trading in the city, and if you put that plus or minus 3 per cent you will see that is a fairly significant number. That brings it down to 84 or up to 90 per cent.

Today a study was done in which a range of shops were surveyed, using exactly the same method, and the positive vote was 75 per cent plus or minus 3 per cent, so between 72 and 78 per cent are saying 'Yes.'

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It was exactly the same group: Harrison's research did the survey, and I am informed that on all the sampling done it is within plus or minus 3 per cent. In that study they specifically looked at small business, and that was 64 per cent, plus or minus the 3 per cent, which is 61 per cent in favour. However, the very interesting one is that shop assistants were directly interviewed and the result was 70 per cent in favour, plus or minus 3 per cent.

The other interesting statistic showed that 87 per cent (plus or minus 3 per cent) of the residents of the CBD, the people who will be affected directly, were in favour of Sunday trading.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If the Minister and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition want to continue their discussion, I suggest they do so outside the Chamber.

HOUSING TRUST SALES

Ms WHITE (Taylor): In light of the Government's stated aim of encouraging home ownership, will the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations allow some flexibility in Housing Trust policy governing the sale of renovated Housing Trust properties? A Taylor constituent recently approached the Housing Trust to buy the house in which he was a tenant and which had been recently renovated. For him, like many in my electorate, home ownership is a very high priority. My constituent was willing to negotiate a figure above market price to secure that property, but because of the three year rule the Housing Trust would not countenance any negotiation with my constituent.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: At the moment, the trust has strict rules concerning the amount of time that should be undertaken from when it either builds a home and then sells it or renovates a house and then sells it, and there are specific reasons for that. We are about to enter into a budget process, and the honourable member will find when she examines the budget figures that the amount of capital available to the trust through the sale of properties will be down somewhat this year because of high interest rates and the difficulty we are having in getting people to purchase properties. At the moment I am examining the policy on this question of how long people have to be in a property before we sell it, because

the most important part of this whole exercise is to ensure that we have a cash flow to get out there and rebuild or refurbish existing properties. I will take the member's question on board. I will give it serious consideration and report back to the member.

NETTING

Mr KERIN (Frome): Will the Minister for Primary Industries explain why the Government has taken the decision to ban recreational gill nets? This decision brings South Australia into line with New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory where the nets are also banned.

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: Other members have approached me on this matter because they have been approached by not only recreational fishers but also professional net fishers.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: Yes, that is right. It was a decision that had to be taken by Government. As the honourable member said, ultimately we followed the line adopted by the Northern Territory, Victoria and New South Wales and the very severe phasing out restrictions in Western Australia and Queensland. There was consultation with local government and tourism, because one of the great things about South Australia is that the hookers, as they are called, form a great part of our tourist industry. It is estimated that 300 000 people in South Australia enjoy recreational boating and fishing. It has been claimed by some of the recreational net people that they take only lower target species.

All of this was put in place to protect our most valuable asset: whiting stocks. Scientists have been able to show that up to 15 per cent of fish taken in recreational nets are whiting—many in nursery areas. It left us with no option but to follow what is going on in other States and ban this form of fishing. The professional net industry has been hit just as hard because, in conjunction with local government, we have closed a lot of the recreational bays as well as those bays which are considered nursery areas. If professional netters who have a history of netting in a particular bay can establish hardship, we will let some of them back in so that the amount of fish coming onto the Adelaide market is not affected severely. However, they will not be able to transfer those licences and they are there for the life term only.

It is a very responsible decision. There has been eight months of consultation on this matter with representatives of the industry and not only professional fishermen but also amateur fishing people. I know that members have had some representations, because when any of these measures are taken to protect sustainability and long-term recreational use there are people who get upset. I assure members that it has been done on very sensible grounds.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I refer to the sale of the State Bank and put on record that I welcome the decision of the Government to sell the State Bank to the Advance Bank of Australia. I will go as far as congratulating the Government

for what would appear to be, on the information made available so far to the Opposition and the public, a very good sale. I offer my congratulations in all sincerity.

The Hon. M.H. Armitage: Grudgingly?

Mr FOLEY: No, not grudgingly at all. I have always been an advocate for the sale of the bank. I must temper some of my comments and qualify them to the extent that only limited information was made available to the Opposition, and clearly a number of issues have yet to be resolved. My congratulations are obviously contingent upon a number of issues, as the Deputy Premier said today, such as further due diligence which must be undertaken by the Advance Bank. Settlement will be subject to any adjustments of the purchase price resulting from the final due diligence and the preparation of the audited completion accounts. There is also the issue of warranties, which the Opposition will ask further questions on during the Estimates process so that we can gain exact information about the nature of this sale.

With those qualifications to one side the Government is to be commended for its ability to sign a deal with the Advance Bank of Australia. It was certainly not widely tipped as the successful purchaser. Westpac thought that it was in the box seat, and that was certainly the impression given by the markets. Perhaps one of the big four learnt a very good lesson out of that process: it should not necessarily think, because it is a major bank, that it will automatically be at the front of the pack when it comes to an issue such as this.

The Labor Party has suffered greatly over the whole State Bank issue. The issue is now drawing to a close. It was a very unfortunate incident. As somebody who was involved with the former Premier, Lynn Arnold, in making the crucial decision to sell the bank, both in the Labor Party and ultimately in the Parliament and in the wider community, I point out that it was a decision and a view that I held at the time, along with the then Premier (Hon. Lynn Arnold), other members of the Premier's staff and other Cabinet Ministers. It was a very difficult decision for the Labor Party. It was not one that we wanted to have to make, but we realised at the end of the day that there was no other decision.

It is also most important to put on the record that this sale would not have been as financially attractive as it appears if it had not been for the work of the former Premier, Lynn Arnold, in negotiating with Prime Minister Paul Keating a \$640 million financial assistance package from the Commonwealth Government. Much has been said about that package, including the assertion that it was purely a gimmick by Paul Keating. I repeat: it was an initiative of the then Premier and his office, and the Prime Minister was most receptive to it. I was involved in the very first negotiations with the Prime Minister's staff at the time, and I feel some credit must be given to the actions of the former Government in negotiating that financial assistance package which has made the Advance Bank sale all the more sweeter.

The reality is that we should look at not only the \$730 million but we must combine it with the \$640 million package from the Commonwealth. That then becomes somewhere in the order of \$1 400 million in terms of the financial contribution to this State which enabled this Government, and the former Government as well, to go about the restructuring process.

On the options that were available, I was always personally strongly of the view that it should not go to one of the majors. I was genuinely concerned that Westpac would be the likely winner in the dual. I did not think that Westpac offered the best for the State. My favoured position, as I have

said before, would have been for, perhaps, an Asian bank or a major international bank to form a presence here in Australia, using our bank and perhaps the New South Wales State Bank and BankWest as a network. That did not happen, but I am pleased that a regional bank has given this State a commitment that will see, in the main, the branch structure remain, the head office functions remain, and the regional focus remain. Again, I compliment the Government on its actions.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Owing to the great concern for the survival of the King George whiting resource, I take this opportunity to place on record some details of a workshop into the King George whiting resource, which was held at the SARDI Aquatic Science Centre at West Beach on 3 and 4 May 1995. One important conclusion was determined at the workshop: too many people are targeting too few fish. I believe that all the people involved in that strategic workshop agreed that the King George whiting resource was subject to too much fishing pressure. Personnel involved in the workshop came from a wide spread of interests and comprised tourist, recreational and commercial fishers, and researchers, writers and compliance officers. It was agreed that there is still much to learn about that icon of the State's fishing industry.

The proceedings were well organised, with debate being focused and constructive for the whole two days. I believe that its success can be attributed, first, to the dedication of those involved in the workshop and their commitment to ensuring the future of the resource and, secondly, to the ability of David Hall of PISA and John Keesing of SARDI in using their experience and ability to keep a focus on proceedings. I am pleased to say that many priorities were identified at the workshop, and I am sure that the State's fishery managers are now better informed on the directions necessary to achieve a fully sustainable fishery.

Not all the research data released at the workshop supported present practices in the fishery. Of serious concern to me was the finding that was released by SARDI marine scientist, Dr Martin Kumar, into the impact of hauling nets and recreational lines on the survival of under-sized King George whiting. The aim of that FRDC-funded study was to quantify the mortality rate of under-sized King George whiting taken inadvertently by commercial garfish net fishers using small mesh, hauling nets and recreational line fishers.

Although the study is incomplete and the results are unpublished preliminary results, they show that the mortality of King George whiting can be quite high from garfish netting in the first three months of the year, that is, January to March. That coincides with the fact that fish in those nursery areas are about 17 cms to 22 cms in length. Further analysis of the research will be used to quantify the effects of that netting technique on the yield and egg production of King George whiting. The workshop also identified that additional work is required in identifying important King George whiting nursery areas around South Australia. Once fully identified, additional protection can be afforded to those areas if fishery managers think that that is the appropriate step to take.

Also of concern is the status of the resource. An earlier workshop held at the SARDI Aquatic Science Centre on 7 and 8 December 1993 emphasised that the King George whiting fishery is over-exploited in terms of yield and egg production. While the finding was modelled on the best available data, many participants in the workshop agreed that

much more research work must be undertaken to determine the true state of the King George whiting fishery.

In 1993, it was estimated that a 56 per cent reduction in total fishing effort was required to increase the estimated egg production to a target of 20 per cent of the maximum potential. Twenty per cent has been adopted internationally as the minimum benchmark for egg production of most fish species, thus lowering any risk of stock collapse in that species. We need better information on where and when fish actually spawn, where eggs hatch and where they settle in nursery areas.

I am concerned that many of our city planners do not understand the value of seagrass beds in our marine environment. Many planning decisions were made in the past without taking account of the effects on seagrass beds. All levels of Government have to improve their knowledge of the links which affect life in the sea. I am pleased that Flinders University has developed an annex to the university on the shores of Boston Bay. The university will increase our knowledge of the sea, which will lead to more profitable fisheries and to a more sustainable resource.

I am also encouraged that additional work will be devoted to a proposal to enhance the stocks of King George whiting in South Australian waters. I believe that a workshop should be held on that potential industry and that participants should be invited from tourist associations, economic development boards, local government, commercial fishermen, researchers and aquaculturalists-

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I shall spend a few minutes revisiting the Minister's answer to my question on the treatment of a public patient at Modbury Hospital. It was interesting that the Minister led into his reply to my question by confidently claiming that waiting lists had decreased by 10 per cent across the State in the past year or so. However, using waiting list statistics is a meaningless exercise. People need to understand that they can make waiting list statistics say what they want them to say. It is a matter of changing the definition, measuring the figures in different ways, and we can come up with the answer that we want. Let us leave aside waiting list statistics and let us start looking at what is happening to people instead. Across South Australia and, in particular, in some metropolitan hospitals patient care is absolutely and utterly at risk.

The next thrust of the Minister's answer was simply a complete rejection that anything could be wrong at Modbury Hospital. In fact, he asked how we could expect services to be right on top when that person went to Modbury Hospital on 16 February and Healthscope had taken over only on 6 February. In other words, we have given it over to a private manager whom the Minister has said was the best thing since sliced bread. Surely we could have expected that, when Healthscope took over, things would immediately have started to make the massive improvement about which we have heard so much from the Minister.

However, the Minister says, 'No, it took over on 6 February; you cannot expect it to have made any changes by 16 February.' Remember, that person was told that the operation would not be done until the end of November. How much time do we have to give the private manager, who is supposed to be able to come in and do everything so much better than the public hospitals?

The Minister finished by laughing, pointing the finger and talking about ear, nose and throat surgery. He made the big point that at Modbury Hospital, at last, under a Liberal Government, there would be ear, nose and throat surgery. I draw attention to something that has come out of the budget. The Minister has announced that there will be a review of elective services that are currently offered and that 'A number of clinical services with significantly elevated hospital activity rates will be targeted to reduce them to comparable national averages.' That means that we are going to cut back on certain types of elective surgery—certain types of surgery that we do more than the average across Australia. Although the Minister confidently laughs and taunts in the House about ear, nose and throat surgery at Modbury Hospital, he will have a different expression on his face when his review of elective services has taken place.

Let me return once again to the issue of Modbury Hospital. Modbury Hospital has been the flagship of privatisation of our hospital system, privatisation which is going to occur throughout the entire system before the next election. The Minister has said time and again that private enterprise can do it better than public enterprise. First, we found that Modbury Hospital could not actually do all the operations and had to resubcontract to a public hospital—the Royal Adelaide Hospital—for certain services.

Today we see that privately managed hospitals have not made a difference to the waiting lists for patients. It is about time the Minister realised that the core business of our health system ought to be patient care, which comes from an adequately resourced public system.

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

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Today I would like to make a few comments on surveys that I have conducted since entering politics in the seat of Lee. The survey questions and the results are as follows:

	Yes Per cent	No Per cent	Don't Know Per cent
1. Would you support the introduction of the mandatory death penalty for those convicted, beyond all reasonable doubt, of murder?	75	16	9
2. Do you support the Liberal Government's focus on improving educational standards through basic skills testing?	67	10	23
3. Should third party property car insurance be compulsory?	93	0	7
4. Would you support the introduction of citizens' initiated referenda to increase community participation in the political process?	43	13	44
5. Is Neighbourhood Watch working in your area?	29	42	29
6. Do you support the State Government's plans to return police to the local community through the opening of regional police stations?	88	6	6
7. Do you feel that the amalgamation of the Hindmarsh and Woodville councils has been successful?	42	17	41
8. Are you satisfied with the standard of journalism in South Australia?	34	51	15
9. Should juveniles, convicted of violent crime, be treated as adults?	92	8	0

10. Would you support a policy giving universities the right to give some places to full fee paying Australian students as they already do for foreign students?	76	15	9
11. Should the advertising of gambling be allowed on television and billboards?	8	84	8
12. Should recipients of the dole be made to work for it?	92	0	8
13. Do you believe the Federal Government is abusing its external affairs powers to override State rights?	69	15	16
14. Do you support the installation of surveillance cameras in certain areas to prevent vandalism and other such crimes?	90	2	8
15. Would you like to see AFL football played at Adelaide Oval?	48	24	28
16. Do you support the policies of the Federal Keating Labor Government in raising interest rates?	15	69	16
17. Should Australia become a republic	45	45	10
18. Should the Australian flag be changed?	29	41	30

I have been impressed with the responses received in the survey. I have handed out the survey to new electors coming into the area. Every time there is an electoral update I have provided the survey and I hand out surveys when I do my doorknocking along with various questionnaires. As to the results, I intend to raise these issues with the Party and also in this Parliament. Some of these matters are controversial but, if it is the view of electors that they want to go in certain directions, then those ideas should be debated.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): A letter received by the Attorney-General's office on 27 August at about 10 a.m. and written on 25 August 1993—two days earlier—addressed to the department's Secretary, reads as follows:

Dear Sir,

I have received the enclosed Form 1 from Harold John French of 16 George Avenue, Murray Bridge, for appointment as a justice of the peace, and the attached statutory declaration. He is unknown to me other than the recent interview I had with him, shortly after he left the application in my office.

My assessment of him arising from that interview, confirmed by others whose names he mentioned to me, is that he has a very deep seated desire to 'help' other people, particularly anyone of Aboriginal extraction. He presents as someone who, perhaps because of his deep seated and sincere wish to help, could be easily manipulated and or mislead by a devious character who might deliberately exploit these generous and caring aspects of his nature.

I therefore conclude that it would be unwise and undesirable to grant his application, as it may not only lead to his own embarrassment or worse, but could also bring discredit on the status of JPs in general and the system through which assessment and appointment of them is made.

I wrote and signed that letter to the Attorney-General's Department, testimony to which is the stamp on it. On 30 May 1995 the following letter was written to me:

Dear Sir,

Re HAROLD JOHN FRENCH

Please note that we have been instructed to act on behalf of Mr French, who has handed to us your letter dated 25 August 1993—how he came by it, I do not know—

to the Attorney-General's Department, in relation to his application for appointment as a justice of the peace. We enclose herewith for your information a copy of your said letter. We note from the contents of your letter that Mr French was unknown to you, other than the interview he had with you, which we are instructed was of approximately 15 minutes' duration.

Your assessment of Mr French appears to depict him as a man possessing a truly magnanimous character; that is a 'deep seated desire to help other people. . .'. This would appear to be a compliment of the highest order and, we think, very much in line with the ideals that JPs in general should strive for. Please explain, then, what led you to conclude that because of such traits Mr French 'could be easily manipulated and or mislead (sic) by a devious character who might deliberately exploit these generous and caring aspects of his nature'.

Is it your opinion that all persons with a sincere wish to help other people are at risk of being easily manipulated? Did you seek out other information to assist you in arriving at your conclusion? Kindly explain how a person with Mr French's qualities could ' . . . bring discredit on the status of JPs in general. . . '. To what extent, if any, are your views influenced by your observation that Mr French has a deep seated desire to help other people ' . . . particularly anyone of Aboriginal extraction.' Surely you are not implying that the 'devious' manipulative characters Mr French may be deliberately exploited by are likely to be Aboriginals!

Bluntly, we are simply unable to reconcile your assessment of our client's character with your ultimate recommendation. We respectfully feel that your reason for refusal of the application falls far short of:

1. a proper and detailed overall explanation;
2. overcoming your adverse finding, which seems totally at odds with your glowing appraisal of our client.

Our client's desire to become a justice of the peace has not abated. Accordingly we ask that you provide us with your detailed explanation, as requested above.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. Awaiting your reply. (Signed) Andrew Dudek, Solicitor.

That letter is from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Incorporated. How it came into possession of my letter to the Attorney-General at the Attorney-General's Department, I have no idea, but I intend to find out. Moreover, I personally believe that to be part and parcel of the other things about which I have been warned in recent times since my determination to see the truth come out about the Hindmarsh Island bridge affair, where departments have been rung, files have been opened where it relates to issues I have raised and correspondence examined without applications for freedom of information.

It is outrageous and a gross abuse of the role of a member of Parliament in dealing with matters of concern with departments, where I believe it probably goes to the core of privilege in dealing with the matters that are brought to us to deal with on behalf of the members of the public whom we represent. To that extent then, it is also relevant that I should report that, during the weekend, my office was entered—it could not be locked until now—and my computer records destroyed.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I raise the issue of waste around our city. The recent rains have revived suburban Adelaide's parks and gardens, however the negative effect has been that discarded rubbish and litter has found its way into drains, creeks, the Torrens River and eventually into the gulf.

Mr Becker interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: Not necessarily: it is not trees. While the Government's conscientious 'Do the right thing' approach via television advertising and other visual media has had some impact amongst those in the community who need only gentle reminders, I suspect it has not quite reached its target. This voluntary strategy does not appear to be successfully

tackling the hard-core problems associated with the litter stream. Rubbish deposited in car parks and along roadsides appears to comprise mainly convenience packaging for fast food, paper board beverage containers and cigarette packages.

Very rarely seen are cans and bottles, which are covered by container deposit legislation. As soon as these value-added containers are dropped they are picked up and cashed in by people in the community. Visitors from interstate often comment on the lack of beer and soft drink cans on our roadsides. Litter with no value is discarded by thoughtless consumers and is not collected by anyone at all. If this type of packaging material were covered by some sort of container deposit legislation, I am sure it would be seen as a resource of value and would be recovered.

I was very pleased to see the stormwater pipe, made from recycled plastic milk bottles, being installed as a joint exercise between the State Government and the Enfield, Prospect and Woodville councils. An article about the stormwater pipe featured in the *Local Standard* some weeks ago; some members might be interested to read that article. The majority of plastic material used to make this pipe would have been collected by the various kerb side collection systems operating in conjunction with household rubbish removal. I would be interested to know the number of milk containers recovered for recycling compared with the total number distributed. I am sure we would find a higher number not collected. Unfortunately, the truth of the matter is that these milk containers end up in household rubbish bins and into land fill, and that issue needs much more attention.

I believe the Government would have greater success with its litter stream reduction strategy if it were to extend the container deposit legislation to cover a wider range of packaging than is covered at the moment. Container deposits started with the milk and beverage industry when they wanted their own containers returned to be refilled. I guess we could say they were the good old days, when containers were reused many times. Because those industries have changed their approach to packaging and distribution it should not mean that the idea of reuse goes by the board. I understand the health regulations preclude the reuse of plastic-type material for food packaging but, as the stormwater pipe example shows, there are other uses for these types of materials.

Whole new industries employing new South Australians—something the Government is always talking about—could and should be encouraged to develop the reuse of the no-value material that is currently discarded. Quite a few councils in South Australia encourage recycling, two in my electorate being Tea Tree Gully and Salisbury councils. I certainly commend them, because they have done a great job in the community and we find less litter in both those council districts. I certainly encourage the Government to look at that.

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

A quorum having been formed:

SGIC (SALE) BILL

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

That following receipt of the message from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the appropriation of revenue in the SGIC (Sale) Bill a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting the Council return the Bill to enable its reconsideration.

Section 59 of the Constitution Act provides that it is not lawful for the House to pass any Bill appropriating any part of the revenue which has not been first recommended by the Governor. It is therefore necessary for the House to pass the third reading of the Bill again.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL 1995

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 1 June. Page 2495.)

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): The Liberals' first budget last year was first and foremost a budget of broken promises. It followed a campaign in which the Premier and his Party could have been elected without making a single promise. Instead, he was the most promising Opposition Leader in South Australian history. We read his lips, but what followed was a budget that revealed that the Liberals had made promises they never intended to keep. We all now know that the Premier's promises, when he was Leader of the Liberal Opposition, to increase funding to hospitals and schools were cynical and dishonest. So was his promise not to increase taxes and charges.

To break these pre-election promises he claimed that the State's financial position was worse than he could have imagined when in Opposition. In fact, all the figures on debt and liabilities were on the public record in the 1993-94 budget papers and the Auditor-General's Report. The Audit Commission could not fault those figures. Indeed, one of the best known commentators on South Australian finances—and, incidentally, no apologist for the previous Labor Government and no apologist for the Labor Party—Dr Graeme Scott, described the financial records inherited by the Liberals as 'probably the best kept set of State books in the country'.

Last week's second Brown budget signalled that, with a record majority from the people, the Government had decided to make a clean sweep by breaking the few promises to the people it had left to break. The Treasurer talked about a new dawn following the dark night of debt. South Australia, he said, was back on track. He had somehow fixed the State's problems with the wave of a wand, but behind the overblown rhetoric and the purple prose was the simple truth that ordinary South Australians will bear the brunt of the Government's attack on their living standards, from privatisation and closure of hospital wards to appalling cuts to schools and selling off the running of Adelaide's water supply to foreign companies. Let me not be misunderstood. We do need to control and reduce our debt and liabilities. That is why the previous Government brought down its Meeting the Challenge financial statement, which included the sale of the State Bank and securing Commonwealth compensation for that sale. But this Liberal Government has mounted a systematic, ideologically driven attack on the basics.

This Government is cutting hospitals, schools, police and TAFE. It is privatising public transport, the supply of

Adelaide's water and the management of our public hospitals and, according to the weekend press, there is more to come. Let us look at the cuts: \$99.5 million will have been ripped off the schools budget by the Brown Government by 1996—almost \$100 million out of our schools. We have larger class sizes and reduced subject choice, as well as school closures. In this year alone, the level of the cut is about \$15 million and, allowing for inflation, the real level of the cut is \$47 million. That is the equivalent of closing nine large schools—nine Adelaide high schools, for instance. By the end of 1995-96 the Brown Government will have cut 522 teacher jobs and 287 school service officer positions. Benefits to needy students and parents under schoolcard have been slashed. Our TAFE system, the best in the country for so many years, has been hit hard and is about to lose millions of dollars. From the way this Government behaves towards vocational training and education, one could be forgiven for thinking we had the best rate of job creation in the country, not the worst. This is from the Premier who as Opposition Leader promised increased spending on schools and training. How does this marry with the Premier's plans for an information technology driven recovery?

A sum of \$65 million has been ripped off of the health budget, with \$35 million being taken out last year alone. Yet, while waiting lists are growing and wards are closing, the Minister for Health is actually underspending his own budget; over \$11 million has been cut from the health capital works budget and recycled this year. Over the past two years, the Minister for Health has cut hospital expenditure to the equivalent of closing Modbury Hospital twice over. This is from the Premier who as Opposition Leader promised increased spending on hospitals.

Now the Government is selling off the operation of Adelaide's basic resource—water—to one of three foreign firms. We can look forward to price increases and the kind of outrageous increases in executive salaries that we have seen in England. None of this was mentioned before the election—no mention, no mandate—and no legislation will come before Parliament on this critical matter. This is from the Premier who as Opposition Leader promised to enhance Parliament's accountability to the people. Policing is to be cut by \$10 million or 250 staff, including 185 officers. Those to go will be back room jobs, according to the Premier, which simply means more paperwork for the front line police who remain. Our police will be forced to fight crime with one arm tied behind their back. Some of these back room duties under threat include forensic photography, training and specialist RBT units. These are not useless, paper shuffling jobs. Again, this is from a Premier who as Opposition Leader promised 200 more police on the beat.

This is not a back-to-basics budget: it is an attack-the-basics budget. When a Government attacks public schools and public hospitals and sells off publicly owned assets to foreign companies it attacks the very basics and the hopes of our battlers for a better future. This budget is an attack on average South Australian families. I see that the Premier has again been embarrassed by people pointing out that there is no family impact statement accompanying this budget. Remember family impact statements? They were to accompany each Cabinet decision. A big deal was made of them last year in the International Year of the Family. In the hundreds of pages produced in this budget, the impact on families and on women receives fewer than two pages of coverage in the middle of Financial Paper No.1. That is the level of priority assigned to families and women by this

Government. Of course, the budget is really an attack on the fundamental services on which families rely; that is why there is no family impact statement. That is why, on this budget, no family impact statement was undertaken privately and no family impact statement was released.

Indeed, this budget is an attack on hope. It is a fine print budget; its fine print contains a multitude of cuts to schools and hospitals. The cuts to law and order put community safety at risk. It is a budget that locks in the privatisation of key Government services and assets with little or no regard for the welfare of ordinary South Australians. It is a budget that engages in disreputable social engineering, for which this Government has no mandate. It is a budget that reinforces the low growth and high unemployment of the Premier's disastrous first year. Where there is no growth there is little hope, particularly when the Liberals are destroying so much of those essential community services and safety nets. While services are down, charges are up. Finally, in spite of all the rhetoric, hype and fine print, it is a budget that fails the Premier's own debt and financial targets. In this budget the Government has turned on the battlers of South Australia. It has attacked the school and hospital systems that until now have been the best in the country and it has embarked upon an ideological 'private good, public bad' campaign of privatisation.

Let us take education first. In this budget the Premier has again broken his key promises on education. Remember the Premier's promises to increase spending on education and to maintain class sizes? Remember his promise to increase spending on school maintenance by \$20 million? Those promises have been broken. More staff will go, and now the spectre of privatising school management hangs over the system. For the second year in succession, the Government has cut spending on schools. Another 100 teachers and 250 school service jobs will go, and that comes on top of 422 teachers and 37 support staff last year. The Premier would have us believe that spending on education has been increased by \$29 million, but the reverse is true. The recurrent budget has been increased by \$7 million, but this represents a cut of \$25 million in real terms, allowing for inflation. He knows it, but he will not admit it. He hopes that the PR gloss will get him through the day.

More cynical is the way in which the Government underspent capital works on schools by \$22 million on last year's budget and then rolled the funds over to prop up this year's budget. Seven major school projects were allowed to slip a year and maintenance was underspent by \$9 million. Add these to the inflation factor and the real cut to schools this year is \$47 million. I repeat, this is equivalent to nine of our largest high schools, such as Adelaide High. That is the measure of these budget cuts that the Premier tries to pretend is a budget increase. Secondary school programs will be cut next year by \$17 million, transport concessions will fall by \$800 000 on top of the \$2.8 million cut last year, and funds to isolated children and students have been cut by over \$350 000.

Most cynical of all was the decision to cut 50 to 100 teachers from special programs. The Minister justified more teacher cuts by saying that these salaries were not for classroom teaching but for special programs such as Aboriginal education. Apparently these programs are no longer important to this Government. Enrolments fell by almost 4 000 students this year, which created savings of between \$10 million and \$16 million. That windfall gave the Government the opportunity to reinstate class sizes and

curriculum choice. Instead, it pocketed the money and ran. The Premier was not going to keep his election promise on class sizes, even when a falling number of students meant that it did not have to do anything to keep that promise.

Our TAFE system has for years been the envy of the other States. Our courses are sold interstate and overseas. The South Australian TAFE system is the model for the rest of the country. Under Labor, we consistently led the nation with innovative technologies, such as TAFE Channel and video conferencing. We led with the Youth Conservation Corps, which was copied by every other State and then the nation and then copied overseas. We were able to attract the world's best, such as the Swiss Hotel School and the *Cordon Bleu* School of Cookery to form a partnership with TAFE in South Australia. We forged new links between TAFE and the university sector and between TAFE and the high school sector.

As Minister for TAFE between 1989 and late 1992, I was proud of the progress that we made and the growth of our system. All of this was accompanied by an unsuccessful takeover bid by the Commonwealth for the TAFE systems of every State—a bid headed off largely because of South Australia's leadership. Now it appears that that struggle was for nothing. The Brown Government has cut TAFE spending by \$25 million in real terms when millions of dollars of Commonwealth growth funds that I negotiated depend on our maintaining effort. That was promised by the Government. Increased funding for TAFE was promised and there would be no cuts in terms of maintenance of effort, we were told in this Parliament time and again. Of course, we now face the loss not only of State funds but of Commonwealth growth funds. If ever there was a signal of a State saying to the Commonwealth, 'Please come back and take our TAFE system off our hands because we can't cope,' this is it. The cuts that have been announced are the equivalent of closing a campus the size of the Croydon Institute, and this at the very time when we should be creating a very highly skilled work force.

Under this budget our hospitals have been cut by almost \$20 million once allowance is made for the transfer of the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital from the Commonwealth. That is a \$45 million cut allowing for inflation. Add this to last year's \$35 million hit and we have had \$80 million ripped from the system in just two years. I repeat: that kind of cut is equivalent to the closure of two Modbury Hospitals.

While the Liberal Government has slashed health funding for the second year running, the Commonwealth has actually increased funding to South Australian hospitals again. Capital funding for such projects as the upgrade of the accident and emergency service at Flinders Medical Centre was provided in the last budget, but work still has not started. Indeed, there are some projects for which funds were allocated in the last Labor budget that still have not started. It is called program slippage, and it is being developed as an art form by the Brown Government: announce it for next year, then announce it the year after and then announce it again the year after that; keep getting the press, hope that its memory only lasts three or four weeks, get another headline out of it, but it does not actually happen. It will boost up the figures: announce it again, announce it again and again, but the press release is the only thing really produced because that will save the Government money.

What do these funding cuts in hospitals mean? They mean the closure of more wards and more beds; longer waiting times for surgery; the loss of hundreds more skilled nurses

and hospital staff; inexperienced agency nurses in our front-line medical services; higher fees and charges for some medical supplies and appliances; reduced outpatient and other hospital services; older, inferior and more poorly maintained equipment; and quicker and sicker discharge of patients.

Let us turn to public transport. The Government has increased bus, train and tram fares for the second time in less than six months, and more increases are on the way because it is about upping the price so that the Government can privatise it and make it more profitable for people to whom it is going to flog off our public transport system. In February, multitrip zone tickets were increased by 2.7 per cent; in July they will rise to \$16—an increase of 6.7 per cent. The Government has announced that the multitrip ticket will increase to at least \$18.90 over the next three years. This is a rise of nearly 30 per cent since February this year and will cost regular travellers up to \$224 more each year. The Government has also raised the cost of interpeak multitrip tickets to \$5. That is a 4.2 per cent increase on top of the 33 per cent increase announced in February.

Let us turn to the police and law and order. The Premier claims to be well on target to fulfilling his promise of an extra 200 police on the beat. This is being done in the context of a \$10 million cut to the Police Force. The Premier claims that he is putting more police on the beat and cutting back on administration. The reality is that the administration has to be done by someone, and administration will still have to be done in order for the Police Force to continue its operations on the front line of fighting crime, presumably by police taking time from the beat to push paper, deal with red tape and the routine. In the last election campaign the then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier of this State, quoted with great emotion from a letter from a man who wrote:

Our homes are ransacked, and my elderly neighbour takes a walk in her back yard every evening because she is afraid of the hooligans and their dogs. Her home is a fortress: doors and windows shuttered. I wonder whether she feels safer now that the Premier has cut spending on community safety. I wonder whether he will write back to that man whose letter he quoted with such emotion and fake sincerity to explain why he has broken his promise, why he is cutting our Police Force, and why he does not have the integrity or the gumption to sit down and discuss the implications of these cuts with the South Australian Police Association.

This is a budget that locks in privatisation. It is premised on large-scale privatisation and the continuation of large-scale outsourcing, which is really just privatisation by another name. Unlike the Liberal Government, Labor has no hang-ups about private ownership. We supported and, indeed, initiated the sale of BankSA; and we also supported the Government's privatisation of SGIC and the Pipelines Authority. We have examined privatisation on a case-by-case basis. We have looked each time and debated, examined and re-examined the public interest aspect. If it is in the public interest, we have supported the privatisation.

But this Government clearly believes, in an ideological way, that private profit-making companies can do a better job than the public sector in the running of our schools, the operation of our prisons, the supply of water to Adelaide homes and the running of our hospitals. This Government has got it wrong, and is out of step with ordinary South Australians. There is a social deficit that the Liberal Government is ignoring. Its privatisation agenda is an ideological one. Its policy is one of social engineering of the most extreme kind.

Labor knows of the social deficit caused by the privatisation of water in the United Kingdom as well as under the French franchising system. We know all about the obscene price rises that have introduced a new form of poverty in England—water poverty. Disconnections because people cannot pay their water bills have increased by 50 per cent. The incidence of preventable diseases of water poverty, such as hepatitis B, has skyrocketed. We know only too well that, while the executives of privatised water companies have imposed large burdens on the least well off, they have gorged themselves obscenely on huge salaries.

Let us look at some of the studies. A recent report by the University of New South Wales made the following claims concerning the United Kingdom's privatisation of water in 1989: first, domestic water charges are up an average of 67 per cent, with some increases in some areas of up to 108 per cent for water and up to 122 per cent for sewerage; secondly, disconnections because people cannot pay their bills are up 50 per cent; and, thirdly, infrastructure investment levels have failed to keep pace with agreed schedules.

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The university study plainly states what we all fear about water privatisation. Members on this side of the Parliament sat in silence last week and listened courteously to the budget speech of the Treasurer of this State, and the Minister for Infrastructure will stay in his place and listen to my reply, equally as courteously and equally in silence.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Leader will not correct any member. The Chair has that prerogative. However, the Chair would request that the Minister listen in silence. The Minister will have the right of reply should he wish to respond yet again.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The university study that I mentioned plainly states what we all fear about water privatisation. It says, 'The need for companies to make water contracts profitable leads to increased pressure on water rates.' In the UK there has been an enormous backlash against the privatised water utilities, and there will be an equal backlash here, mark my words. While in the UK they have been jacking up water prices for householders, they have been jacking up the pay and perks of their senior executives. In 1989, before privatisation, the Chief Executive Officer of Thames Water was on a package worth more than £181 000 (\$380 000). In 1993, his package had skyrocketed to £317 000 (more than \$660 000)—a 'nice little earner', as people living around the Thames would say. It is a 57 per cent pay hike.

In 1989 the pay for the head of Northwest Water, so close to the heart of the Minister for Infrastructure, was £58 000. The Chairman's salary package of that firm is now up to £360 000 (more than \$750 000). The Chair of Northwest Water is the highest paid executive in the UK water industry and one of the highest paid private sector executives in Britain. It is Thames Water and Northwest Water that are bidding to run our water system.

Another British report on private water summed it up very succinctly as follows:

The basic statistics of the water company since privatisation are not pleasant. Disconnections because people cannot pay are up 50 per cent. Charges up 65 per cent, profits up 125 per cent, Chairman's pay up 130 per cent, and also up are river pollution and the water company's contributions to Tory Party funds.

In France, which uses the model favoured by the Minister for Infrastructure, water charges have also increased by well in

excess of inflation, while industry observers point to a decrease in water quality over time. Senior executives of French water companies that are bidding to win control of South Australia's water system are being investigated for corruption following allegations of bribing both public officials and politicians.

I want an assurance from the Premier and the Minister for Infrastructure today. The Premier says that his involvement in the Catch Tim and Moriki political donations scandals somehow reinforced his credibility. The Premier says the laundering of donations from Australia through a maze of paper companies and false front men overseas helped underpin the integrity of his Government and his Party. No-one outside of the Premier and one or two of his most idolatrous staff actually believe that. I want today to hear the Premier give one of his categorical promises. I want him and his Infrastructure Minister to finally agree on one thing. I want them to assure the public of South Australia that no donations have been made to the Liberal Party by any tenderer for the outsourcing of our water supply. It is a big contract—the biggest in our State's history—and the public must be assured of the integrity of the process, even though the outsourcing has not been approved by this Parliament.

I want an assurance from the Premier and the President of the Liberal Party that their Party will not accept any campaign donation from overseas tenderers for this giant contract—not now, not in the future, no ifs, no buts, no qualifications or sidestepping or passing of the buck down to Greenhill Road. I want a clean, straight veto of any water money trickling down for the next campaign.

Labor opposes the drive to privatise the operation of Adelaide's water supply. The Minister for Infrastructure would have us believe a private operator can make an internal profit, observe the present array of community service obligations of the EWS, not compromise water quality and not raise prices above the CPI. He would have us believe that, while the Government would retain nominal ownership of the infrastructure, it can assure the compliance of a large foreign multinational company to the provision of water and sewerage services at world's best practice without any loss of control over the provision of a basic service to the people of South Australia.

Labor does not believe these claims. We have seen what has happened overseas, and we know it will happen here. The most significant parts of the Government's privatisation program are being carried out without the agreement of Parliament and without there having been any mention of privatising hospitals, education or water before the last election. No mention—no mandate. With any move to privatise, outsource and sell off assets there must be adequate and proper parliamentary scrutiny, and that has not been the case so far. This Parliament represents the people of South Australia. It is their assets that are up for sale. It is vital that Parliament be confident that any proposal is in the long-term interests of the people of South Australia.

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: In considering privatisation or outsourcing, key questions must be asked and answered—and it would do the Minister for Infrastructure well to sit here and listen quietly to those key questions. Do the benefits of the sale or outsourcing exceed the cost? Will the impact of the State's finances and debt position be better or worse over the medium to long term as a result of the privatisation, particularly in light of the Commonwealth's decision not to provide the States with compensation following privatisation? What

are the social costs and what will be the impact on services to the community and on jobs? What will be the impact on prices, particularly for consumers on low incomes or those from remote areas? Will the privatisation result in more or less competitive pressure on the enterprise concerned? What consultation will there be prior to the privatisation with all relevant parties, including unions and the key users of the service provided by the enterprise? And will privatised assets in South Australia see excessive profits and huge increases in executive salaries as a flow on from increased prices to the public?

These are just some of the many questions to which this Labor Opposition is demanding answers. As yet, we have received next to no information from the Brown Government and, in the case of water, from this Minister for Infrastructure, who has staked his credibility and political future on the success of his selling of this project. The reality is that listed private sector companies are required to make much more extensive disclosures in the event of a takeover bid or sale of major parts of their operations. The Opposition's stance is that privatisation can be supported only when it has been subject to parliamentary scrutiny and when it passes that basic test of the public interest. The public should be the Premier's interest, and the public interest must be the Parliament's interest.

I know that the Government is currently doing market research with focus groups and polling to find the words and the right PR gloss to try to sell its privatisation agenda. It has hired this Kortlang fellow who used to work for Greiner (he is now head of one of these companies) to arrange a bit of work around the place, such as surveys to see whether we can find the right formula of words to sell a crock. That is what is being done right now: the Government is so concerned about the public backlash from the outsourcing of water that it has all these consultants running around to see how we can make it a real gloss. The Government should be warned. At our 'Labor listens' meetings in the suburbs the message from South Australians about privatisation is quite clear: do not mess around with the basics and do not sell off the fundamentals.

Let us talk about tax increases. Under this Government our services are cut and we pay more. Let us remember the Premier's promise. The Minister for Infrastructure likes him: they are great mates; there is enormous affection between them. Let us go back to that historic Gettysburg address by the Premier, who said in the *Sunday Mail* of 5 December 1993:

I will go on record here and now with the promise to resign as Premier if I am forced to introduce new taxes or increase the rate of existing ones.

The Premier said that he would go on record and resign. No wonder the Minister for Infrastructure wants him to keep increasing taxes! He wants him to carry it out, because he does not have the numbers. In the first Baker-Brown budget new tax measures were announced that netted an extra \$25 million. The Liberals dropped the land tax threshold, catching an extra 30 000 people in the land tax net and increasing by 150 per cent the land tax liabilities of people owning second properties valued at \$100 000. The Government lifted the take from payroll tax, a tax the Liberals have described as a tax on jobs. The take was lifted by forcing employers to pay tax on their superannuation payments. Their superannuation payments will increase in line with the Federal Government's superannuation

guarantee. The Liberals have ensured that their tax grab will grow.

Of course, in July 1994 there were more than 800 increased fees and charges, with more than half of them above inflation. Then, on 2 December, 24 hours after Parliament rose, by strange coincidence—purely an accident—the Government announced a 5.9 per cent increase in gas charges. Assuming an average family of four using gas for cooking, heating and water heating, the additional annual cost is of the order of \$40. User pays for water consumption means all annual water costs rising by at least \$20 regardless of capacity to pay. An increase in pensioner concession prices to half the level of standard fares caused a one-third rise in the price in one instalment. This year the Treasurer treated the Parliament to some of his inimitable candour when he said:

There are no tax increases, no new taxes or adverse changes in taxation rates in this budget.

That is what he told this House after talking about the 'new dawn'. Some media commentators parroted this claim even though, just three weeks before, the same commentators reported the Treasurer's announcement of what he euphemistically called 'annual fee adjustments'. Over 1 000 increases were announced, many involving increases to items that had already been hiked on 1 July last year, with over 300 being in excess of inflation, despite the Premier's 'If I do it, I will resign' claim quoted so accurately by Mike Duffy in the *Sunday Mail*. Also, sewerage connection fees were to rise by up to 63 per cent, adding more than \$300 to the cost of building a new home; offences under the Road Traffic and Motor Vehicles Acts would be increased by up to 61 per cent; registration of vessels and boat owners up 7.1 per cent; and the massive rake-off from ETSA makes further increases in prices all but certain. These tax and fee increases hit those on low and average incomes hardest.

The Treasurer may crow about the stamp duty rebate for CBD strata developments, but this is in the context of the massive cuts to the Housing Trust's capital budget that will see a decline in dwelling construction from 650 in 1993-94 to 500 in 1994-95, to 280 in 1995-96. We all remember the days when 2 700 homes were constructed. Public housing is rapidly disappearing from the policy landscape of South Australia. Moreover, it is disappearing at a time when it is sorely needed. This is the reality of Liberal policy: to hand out tax concessions to developers and those who can afford to buy, whilst slashing the budget for affordable rental accommodation. This is a budget that also slows growth.

The latest Brown-Baker budget is born of the dry, economic rationalist religion that has been found so wanting elsewhere. It is a religion that says that, if we cut public services and employment to the bone, all will be well. The reality is that there are enormous dangers in the Premier's policy for South Australia's fragile economy. These dangers are apparent already. Let us remember the Premier's pre-election promise was for: first, 4 per cent annual growth in gross State product, or GSP (it had to be explained to him by journalists what GSP was); secondly, 12 000 jobs in his first year of office; and, thirdly, a 15 per cent per annum export growth. That is what he promised in his first year and, to date, the Premier has failed miserably to achieve each of these targets. Moreover, it is his singular achievement to have done so during the highest national growth rates in over a decade.

Let us take growth for starters. The recently released December quarter State accounts measure State growth rates in the year to December 1994—the first year of the Brown

Government. They provide an objective record by the Australian Bureau of Statistics of the economic results of the Premier's first year in office, and obviously give us a comparison between the reality of the statistics with his own rhetoric. In the year to December 1994, the national economy grew by 5.5 per cent seasonally adjusted. Over the same period, South Australia had the lowest growth rate of any State or Territory in Australia.

Whilst Western Australia and the Northern Territory grew above the national average (7.7 per cent and 14.3 per cent respectively), Victoria and Queensland grew at just below this national average, both at 5.4 per cent. Even those below average States, except one, turned in respectable performances. New South Wales grew at 4.1 per cent, the Australian Capital Territory grew at 4.9 per cent and even Tasmania sped past us at 3 per cent. South Australia's performance was not the 14.3 per cent of the Northern Territory, not the 5.4 per cent of Victoria, not the 4.1 per cent of New South Wales and not the 3 per cent of Tasmania but was a deplorable .1 per cent. Over the year, Australia grew at 55 times the rate of South Australia—and the Government is proud of it.

The Government boasted of it with a pre-Christmas news conference on the success of its first year. When the ABS figures came out and blew it apart, we were told that the ABS had got it wrong. Furthermore, in the December quarter of 1994, at the time when the Premier was saying that it was all rosy, that his policies were working and that there was a boom on, South Australia went into negative growth, -.3 per cent—not the faltering upturn we could have expected due to our having entered the national recovery late but the second worst result for the quarter of any State or Territory and off a disastrously low base. The Premier says he finds the ABS figures hard to believe. The Treasurer tells Parliament that the ABS figures are simply wrong and that the real growth rate of South Australia's economy is around 5 per cent—ahead of New South Wales, ahead of Tasmania, around the mark. But not one single figure in the country supports the Treasurer's claim.

The Treasurer said that the drought had distorted the figures. New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria all suffered the drought as well, but their Treasurers seem to accept the Australian Bureau of Statistics' figures. Even the Government's own targets for growth, published in this year's and last year's budgets, show that at no time during its four years in office does the Treasury expect it to achieve 4 per cent growth.

There is one indicator above all others, however, that proves the seriousness of South Australia's position—employment and jobs. From December 1993 to April 1995 the employed labour force of Australia grew by nearly 450 000, or 5.5 per cent. Over the same period, the South Australian labour force grew by just 9 200, or 1.4 per cent. Even this was largely due to an April rise of 5 900 jobs which could eventually be no more than a statistical aberration. The ABS trends series shows South Australia with a flat, depressed labour market despite all the boasting, all the hype and all the public relations gloss. The Premier was a very loose talker about our economy. From the moment he came to power, he said that things instantly improved in the State and that all our economic problems had been swept away with his arrival, just as last Thursday the Treasurer said that the financial problems of the State were all fixed up with his magic wand.

He quoted numbers to illustrate his case. The Premier has claimed variously 20 000 new jobs in his first year, but there

is not one statistician or economist in the country who will back him up. Privately, local businesses laugh at him and say they wish the Minister for Infrastructure was in his job, because at least he is prepared to talk turkey with them rather than read from the glossies. There is another indicator apart from that: he went on to say that there had been 4.5 per cent employment growth since his election and the creation of 12 100 new jobs in the year to March 1995. He seems not to have appreciated that, even if his boasts were factual, it would still be an admission of failure. Given our 8.3 per cent share of national population, South Australia needed to create 37 000 new jobs since the election of the Liberal Government just to gain a fair share of the jobs growth happening nationally.

Finally, I refer to exports. Extraordinary claims were made about export performance. We were told by the Premier that there would be massive increases in exports and that there was a spring in the step of the exporters. In the eight years to 1993-94—the last year of Labor—South Australia's overseas exports during our term in office grew by an average 9 per cent: in the first eight months of 1994-95, and since this Premier took over, our export income actually fell by 1.9 per cent. Once again his economic performance does not match the rhetoric.

The Premier has scoffed at our call for a recovery summit. Whatever excuses he may find to refuse this initiative, the idea of the summit is all about listening to what the people who are actually trying to make things happen in the South Australian economy are saying. The summit would and should involve all the Parties in Parliament, large and small businesses, local government, the rural sector, unions and workers. Rather than being a talkfest, a recovery summit would ensure, to use the Treasurer's rhetoric, a new dawn of reality in dealing with the difficult and complex issues that confront our State rather than a recycling of rhetoric and press releases that never come true.

Let us deal with the deficit. The Treasurer claims great credit, of almost supernatural proportions, for reducing outlays last year. It is claimed that non-commercial sector outlays have fallen by \$172 million. The Treasurer claims the so-called underlying non-commercial sector deficit will fall from \$265 million this year to \$114 million in 1995-96. Financial paper No. 1 even contains a series of cartoons for the gullible. One wonders how many times some of the cartoons had to be drawn and redrawn to make them look good. It is Mickey Mouse economics and one can only hope that all the Premier's economic briefings are not presented to him in cartoon form. The reduction in outlays is an illusion. The figures which the Government claims show this reduction are not comparable. For example, interest payments are shown to fall but this is largely the result of asset sales. Certainly, this may reduce interest repayments but only at the expense of dividends from the operation of a business that was formally in public hands and formerly producing revenue. Even more significant is the \$210 million payment from ETSA to the Government. In financial paper No. 1, the ETSA capital repayment is shown as being a reduction in outlays of the non-commercial sector. That is breathtaking from a Premier who, in Opposition, stated:

A Liberal Government will stop using ETSA as a branch of the State tax office.

It was not a branch office that the Premier was talking about: he made it into the head office of State taxation. It is a total con and if you read the fine print you will see that ETSA is

being taken for a ride, as is the public of this State. The ETSA payment under us was then a mere \$95 million. This Premier, who opposed the policy of doing so, has more than doubled it. The inevitable consequences are further cuts in ETSA or price rises for consumers of electricity or both. It is a pea and thimble trick and the Minister for Infrastructure knows it.

The Liberals claim to be bringing down the deficit on the non-commercial sector. The Government wants the non-commercial sector to live within its means, yet the bogus reduction in the non-commercial sector deficit is the result of a massive transfer of money from a commercial Government enterprise. None of that supports the Premier's boast to have achieved significant reduction in the deficit.

Let us have a look at debt strategy because it is very important to do that. The Treasurer claims that, by the beginning of 1996, there will be a major reduction in debt. So there should be as there have been asset sales of \$347 million in 1994-95 with a further \$956 million in asset sales scheduled for this year. As I have already said, this Opposition has supported the sale of certain Government assets. We supported the sales of BankSA, the SGIC and the Pipelines Authority. Indeed, the sale of the Pipelines Authority of South Australia could not have occurred without Labor's support in the Upper House. However, the Treasurer of this State actually forbade any tenderer from briefing the Opposition about what it was doing. We strongly supported a trade sale of BankSA, not the Liberals' preferred option of a public float. If they had not changed their mind and adopted our approach, they would have been \$250 million down the gurgler.

That is why we in Government negotiated with Paul Keating for an assistance package from the Commonwealth and reorganised the structure of the State Bank to facilitate its successful sale. Nevertheless, excluding the effect of asset sales, which even the Treasurer acknowledges are of a one-off nature and do not fundamentally affect the State's net worth, the State's debt will have risen by around \$1 billion from the time the Liberals came to office until June 1996. How can that be? After all, no less a person than the Treasurer said in his budget speech:

We are coming into the home straight. With a few more months of adjustment—we lock in place the financial recovery of this State.

Let us see what the Government's own figures really tell us. Over the three years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96, the Government's own figures tell us that there will be a rise in debt excluding asset sales of \$1.15 billion. That is clear if we compare nominal figures given for debt in the last two budgets of the Liberal Government. I repeat: these are the Government's own figures. We see nominal debt, net of asset sales, rising from \$8.249 billion in 1993 to \$8.548 billion in 1994, to \$9.075 billion in 1995 and to a nominal figure of \$9.4 billion, adjusted for 3 per cent inflation, in 1996. Not even the Minister for Infrastructure is prepared to disagree with those figures.

It is also important to note the slippage of just over \$200 million between the estimate of our debt in 1996 made in the 1994-95 papers and the papers released last Thursday. The Government says that that is purely the result of increased spending on targeted separation packages. But, so the Government story goes, as jobs are shed from the public sector and expenditure comes down, so too does debt. The Government's budget certainly predicts reduced debt in the later years of this decade. It is true that, over the period, around \$700 million will have been spent on targeted

separation packages. However, the Government is not saying that over the same period special Commonwealth assistance of \$400 million was provided. That assistance will not be repeated. There was also a special capital repayment of \$160 million to the Government by the State Bank.

The underlying position is that we are left with around \$1 000 million due to an excess of expenditure over revenue. The Government's own figures show that, while the non-commercial sector's deficit is estimated to fall by \$150 million, that is more than offset by a \$200 million increase in the commercial sector. That is merely transferring a problem from one sector to another; it does not solve it.

To reiterate, the Government is failing to meet its own financial targets. Those are not targets which the Opposition or anyone else has imposed on the Government. They are of the Government's own making. The Government is failing to meet its own financial targets which are not targets that the Opposition or anyone else is predicting or supporting. We are saying that the Government is not meeting its own targets.

The Premier claims that there will be gain from the pain, but that is not borne out by analysis of our financial or broader economic position. Of course he claims that debt has risen over the past two years, largely to reduce the public sector work force, and that once that is achieved debt will gradually decline towards the end of the decade. Nevertheless, we have just seen that abnormal items with a significant value have contributed to the budget over the three years to 1996 which will not be contributing as the decade continues.

We can only hope that the Government is right and that there will be a sustained reduction in the real level of debt over the decade. However, it is quite clear that the Government is making massive assumptions about the future which verge on fantasy. For there to be real hope of it reaching its debt targets by the end of the decade, we would need to see economic growth running at levels far exceeding those of 1994, the first disastrous year of the Premier's Government, in which we grew by .1 per cent compared to the 5.5 per cent nationally that I mentioned earlier, and compared with a South Australian budget prediction of 3.75 per cent for 1994-95.

We would also need to see actual savings from privatisation and outsourcing when much of the international evidence shows that costs rise under privatisation. Interest rates would also have to remain stable. Finally, we would have to see that the process of sacking public sector workers was carried out efficiently and will therefore not require expensive additional recruiting and expenditure in later years. We are already seeing a wave of expensive consultants being hired by the Government to perform the tasks traditionally performed by much cheaper public servants. All that I have described remains to be seen and the Opposition is sceptical. However, there is one thing of which we are certain: whatever problems are encountered in future by this Government, the Premier and his Treasurer will blame everyone and everything but themselves.

Let us have a look at Labor's approach to debt. I said that the Government has failed to meet its own financial targets. I have also said that those targets are not those of Labor. Labor is committed to debt management and reduction without closing down growth or turning the clock back in our schools, hospitals and our fundamental community services. Labor believes in the need for a debt reduction strategy that keeps those fundamentals and the social fabric intact. A measured and balanced approach is required. It needs to be acknowledged by members opposite, and understood in the

broader community, that the debt levels prevailing when Labor left office were similar to the levels that prevailed when the Liberal Government of David Tonkin left office. The current Premier was the Minister for Industry in that Government. I cannot recall a single journalist in this State, an economic commentator or a political animal around town asking the incoming Government of John Bannon how it was going to cope with the massive debt left by David Tonkin's Government. Under Labor, debt fell throughout the 1980s until the State Bank and SGIC bale outs brought our debt levels up to just exceeding those of the Tonkin period.

As a responsible Opposition, we strongly believe that, in today's environment, lower debt levels must be achieved. Where we differ is in the approach and timetable for debt reduction. We believe that South Australia's response to our debt problem must be intelligent and meet the basic tests of fairness without putting at risk those fundamentals which underpin our future and the future of our kids. Unfortunately, too much in the Government's actions suggests that it is reckless and lacking a clear strategy, while displaying the kind of arrogance and insensitivity to people in need that I hoped that I would never see in South Australia.

The Opposition believes that the Government should seriously consider a longer-term plan that allows us to reduce our debt while our economy grows and continue essential social services such as schools and hospitals. The Government should consider adopting a longer term perspective requiring financial responsibility year on year in a strategic and phased approach to debt reduction. That would involve setting targets for annual stepped reductions in State debt into the first decade of the new century.

The Carr Labor Government in New South Wales has committed itself to a rigorous set of targets for the elimination of debt by the year 2020. That involves an established debt reduction timetable and a requirement for clear benchmarks to be achieved at each budget. Where, for any particular reason, the budget for any one year is inconsistent with the debt reduction timetable, the annual debt statement will outline proposals to maintain the pace of debt reduction.

The Opposition is not suggesting that the South Australian Government should slavishly follow the New South Wales example or a similar New Zealand model. However, we believe that there is much merit in a stepped and strategic approach to debt reduction that does not sacrifice all else on the altar of debt. Such a debt reduction program could be divided into segments of five years, over which time it would be possible to set intelligent parameters for such key variables as interest rates, Government revenue, overall economic growth and inflation, all of which influence the possibilities for debt reduction.

The targets set under the long-term debt reduction program could include real and nominal debt levels for the next five years, gross and net debt to general and total Government revenues, gross and net debt to gross State product, and target debt servicing costs to revenues. Such a set of targets can demonstrate resolve to the markets and ratings agencies, while allowing adjustments to be made at a pace that the community can tolerate without killing off economic growth.

So why should we adopt a disciplined but stepped approach to debt reduction? Families go into debt over decades to buy an asset such as the family home. A debt incurred for an intelligent investment that will earn income in future, reduce costs of Government or provide important infrastructure for the community into the future is desirable.

We need to pay off our mortgage—our debt. We should treat the Government debt like a mortgage—that is, to be stabilised reasonably quickly and reduced intelligently and gradually, but with determination and clear resolve. As no responsible parents would wish to make their children go to bed without dinner just to pay off the mortgage a little faster, no responsible Government would sacrifice the education of our children or the care of our sick to pay off its debt a little more quickly.

But let us look at the State's balance sheet. This is the second Liberal budget that has failed to provide any comprehensive valuation of State assets, yet this is absolutely critical, whether the Premier and the Treasurer realise it or not, to any assessment of the State's financial position. In the previous three Labor budgets, those valuations were presented.

That goes to the very heart of the Government's economic credibility. The Audit Commission was unable to fault the figures that were provided by the previous Labor budget and the 1993-94 Auditor-General's Report on the size of our debt and superannuation liabilities. In order to beat up a shock-horror headline, the Premier used the Audit Commission's faulty valuation of State assets to claim that the net worth of the State had fallen by \$10 billion overnight. Because he had inherited the best-kept set of State books in the country, according to Graeme Scott of all people, that was the Premier's only avenue for breaking the promises that he never intended to keep. It was the Premier's canard of the \$10 billion black hole. Once again, despite the assurances given by the Treasurer in Parliament on 8 March, the Government has failed to publish any valuation.

Yet the Opposition knows that the Treasury has those figures. They have not been provided in this budget because the Treasurer and the Premier know full well that they would give the lie to the Premier's claims of a year ago. What we can tell from the little that is in the budget provides yet more evidence that the \$10 billion black hole was pure fiction. For example, valuation of the assets of ETSA and the EWS at deprival are vastly higher than their book value.

Let us look at waste and extravagance. The Premier claims to lead a lean and efficient Government but, since the previous Labor budget, spending in the Premier's Department—the department that the Minister for Infrastructure should have been heading—has actually increased by a staggering 34 per cent while in Treasury expenditure is up by 45 per cent.

Some of the growth in the central agencies represents the cost of obvious duplication between the Premier's Department, the Economic Development Authority and the Treasury. For example, we have an Economic Development Authority under the Minister for Infrastructure and the expenditure of more than \$1.3 million on the South Australian Development Council. That duplication reflects the well-known tensions and petty jealousies within the Cabinet—not petty jealousies that I attribute to the Minister for Infrastructure: he is bigger than that, thank goodness. The Premier does not want his Minister to get any credit. His staff telephone companies and threaten them, insisting that it is the Premier who will do the opening and cut the ribbon, and seeking to limit the Minister's time in the spotlight or before the cameras. It is as puerile and petty as that. While South Australian politics would hardly be the same without continued Liberal leadership rivalries, whether they should be subsidised in such a blatant and expensive way by the South Australian taxpayer is another issue entirely.

Let us look at economic development. The Brown Government, by its own admission, has sacrificed essential services on the high altar of big business. It has given tens of millions of dollars in handouts to multinational companies while at the same time it has made massive cuts to schools and hospitals. Where has that 'commitment to growth' got us? According to the ABS, it has landed us with a growth rate of a pitiful .1 per cent, one-fifty fifth of the nation's growth rate.

However, in this budget, even the project focused EDA, which is led at least by a Minister who appears to be committed to the task at hand, is facing substantial cuts. Savings are being spent not on schools or hospitals but rather on increasing funding to the South Australian Development Council, the Premier's own private talk shop.

The Government thinks that this budget, with all its PR gloss, has gone down a treat, but anyone who has been around politics a long time knows that the impact of a State budget occurs when the cuts bite, not when the press release has been issued or when the ink on the fine print has dried. The battle over the budget is not over: it is about to begin. It is a battle about the fundamentals—about the security and ownership of what we and the vast majority of South Australians regard as sacred as well as basic.

We have been and will continue to be a responsible Opposition. We do not oppose for the sake of opposing. When it has been in the State's interest to be bipartisan, we have been bipartisan. But Labor will forge an alliance with the community, parents, teachers, nurses and health workers to rescue our schools, our first-class TAFE system and our hospitals.

The Government's targeting of schools and TAFE makes no economic sense. Education is the engine room of our economy—the backbone of our society. The Opposition has a fundamental belief that a strong public education system is a pre-condition to a growing economy and a just and equal society, not a result of it. Where public education goes, so goes South Australia. As our public education system rises or falls in the second half of the 1990s, so will the South Australian economy in the next century. Learning is lifelong, and Labor knows that. The Premier promised to create a world-class education system. Instead, he is setting about to destroy all the good work done by parents, teachers and the community under Labor.

South Australia cannot afford an education formula based on failure. To be a successful country economically and socially we need to invest in our intellectual infrastructure. We are not a big enough State to be able to afford to have children dropping out of education and training. We have seen the retention levels drop from 92 per cent to 75 per cent. We are not a big enough State to be able to afford to lock out people because of the colour of their skin, their gender or how fat are their parents' wallets. However, we are big enough as a people to know we are just as intelligent as the Germans, Japanese and Singaporeans.

The Premier needs to be looking overseas at some of the successful economies and societies. When he does he will learn that there is a direct link between the education and skills of a work force and the standard of living of a nation. Enterprises go where the work force is the most highly skilled. That is not a matter of choice for them: it is a matter of being competitive. There is very little patriotism involved. Third world skills command third world wages. The successful countries have known this for a long time.

Education is not something academics do to children: it is forever, and it is a process of learning for life as well as for work. Only through education can we create opportunities so that young people choose lives of promise over lives of personal and social destructiveness. Lack of knowledge is economic impotence: knowledge and work skills offer hope. Labor will mount a major campaign to save our schools and TAFE colleges. We will take that campaign to the schools, the colleges, the universities, the workplace, the suburbs and the streets.

But it is not just schools that are under threat; the health of our hospital system is rapidly deteriorating. We are already seeing the dismantling of years of experience, skills and resources. Despite the Premier's categorical promises made at the last State election, it is clear that he is not committed to ensuring that every South Australian has access to free hospital and health care. But the Premier and his health Minister cannot blame the Federal Government for the state of South Australia's health budget. The fact is that the Commonwealth has been consistently increasing its contribution to the health budget and, more specifically, hospital funding since 1988-89. It is the Brown Government that must remain responsible and accountable for all the staff who have lost their jobs, all the services that have shut down, all the beds that have been lost, the wards that have been closed, and the financial crisis that has been created in almost every public hospital by a casemix funding system that has been horribly mismanaged.

The 'doctor-knows-best' health Minister says he knows best but he does not, and the health care of every public patient in this State is being put at risk by his inability to manage cost savings and efficiencies in the system and to do so fairly. Of course, now we are told that the Government is committed to privatising our health system, and the privatisation of Modbury Hospital is just the beginning. It is quite clear that the privatising of the public health system is not a recipe for cost containment: in fact, it is the reverse. We do not want to see the US prescription for health written here.

We in opposition will continue to be positive and put forward positive ideas. We will continue to act in a bipartisan way when it is in our State's best interests, but there are some areas where we will not cooperate. We will not assist the Premier in destroying or running down the schools, colleges and hospitals that Labor regards as fundamental to our State's future. We will not assist him to sell off the basics regardless of the benefits to the public. We will not assist this Premier to abandon a positive pro-active role for Government. This budget's fine print will be exposed and so will a Premier who made promises he meant to break, who prefers to boast rather than to achieve and who cares more about photo opportunities and camera angles than he does about the people of this State.

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): I am delighted and pleased to support this Appropriation Bill as the second budget brought down by the Brown Liberal Government. Quite obviously, it illustrates our continued responsible economic management of this State. This 1995-96 budget maintains the Government's four year debt reduction strategy and savings target as outlined last year. The performance of last year's budget now indicates that the State's debt is being controlled successfully and that the State is now on track to a budget surplus for 1997-98, despite the interest rate increases that we have had to bear because of Federal Government policy and the wage pressures that have arisen in this State over the past 18 months.

Of course there can be no credibility given to any suggestion or argument that we should live with higher unmanageable debt and continue to spend more than we earn. Savings in the order of \$800 million from asset sales will mean ultimately something in the order of \$500 per family per year in this State—savings that in the future can and will be spent on services and providing increased and renewed job growth in South Australia. The Leader of the Opposition has quoted figures in relation to State debt and implied that when the Liberal Government prior to this one was in Government in the early 1980s it left his Government with no greater legacy than we have inherited. I point out that the State debt in 1980 was in the order of \$158 million; in 1990 it had blown out under the Labor Government to the order of \$900 million; and in 1993 it reached a figure of about \$3.5 billion before it doubled with a nearly \$4 billion explosion as a result of the State Bank and the SGIC blow-out.

This State's spending obviously is now progressively being brought under control. South Australia was overspending more than \$300 million per year when this Government was elected and in just 12 months it has been able to reduce this by about two-thirds so, as I have indicated, by 1997-98 the books again will be balanced. This sound financial management means that the public sector as a proportion of gross state product will fall to around 19 per cent in 1997-98 in comparison with three years ago when it was around 28 per cent. It is relevant to compare the estimate for Victoria for 1997-98 which is something like 23 per cent. Overall, this budget focuses fairly on the necessary balance of State debt reduction—both long-term and recurrent—in combination with assisting an increase in economic growth with the incentives that it provides. At the same time it produces that delicate balance of providing quality Government services which are also affordable.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): The member for Unley and the Deputy Leader are out of order.

Mr ANDREW: As I have indicated, I believe the budget focuses on three cornerstones—debt reduction, economic growth and the provision of quality and affordable services. I wish to point to examples within my electorate to indicate how this budget and the Appropriation Bill for 1995-96 will directly benefit and have a positive impact upon my electorate of Chaffey. The first principle I acknowledge is one endorsed strongly by members from this side of the House. I thankfully accept that even the Opposition has acknowledged the importance and priority in the debt reduction policy of the sale of the State Bank for which a contract has been signed with the Advance Bank, as indicated publicly last Friday.

Not only will this provide the considerable reduction in State debt which we had planned and which is appropriate, but the successful nature of the contract is significant for South Australia in terms of retaining the name of BankSA, the local head office and local board. Indeed, as indicated by the Managing Director of Advance Bank (Mr Jim Service) in the public announcement last Friday, he was particularly positive in his assurances that the Advance Bank strategy would be a growth strategy for BankSA here in South Australia.

As to my electorate, that situation is particularly good news. From the telephone calls and contacts made with my office last Friday subsequent to the budget release and the personal contact that I have had over the weekend, there has been a strong and positive response to the news that Advance

Bank, not being one of the big four, has been the purchaser of BankSA. That response has been particularly positive in my electorate, because in the Riverland each major town has a BankSA branch, and historically the bank and its predecessor the State Bank of SA has had a particularly strong involvement with the Riverland over the last century.

The cooperative corporate structure has played a major part in the development of the Riverland, and the bank has played an important role in administering loans to producers and the concessions in which the cooperative structure was able to participate. The State Bank was the major banking institution in the Riverland, with a strong and large employment force, and these people indicated clearly to me at the weekend that they were relieved and heartened about their future job security and pleased that their employment stability will be strengthened by this development in the Riverland.

Economic growth is another important principle underlying the Appropriation Bill, and I refer particularly to the capital works program and the Building a Better Future program announced by the Premier as part of this economic growth strategy. The Government has identified \$300 million of potentially privately funded construction that will contribute to the future economic growth of the State. In doing so the Government has committed about \$90 million to this budget and over the next four years to fund these infrastructure provisions that have been so strongly identified. A significant part of the program involves the announcement that the new Berri bridge has been given the green light—

Mr Becker: About time.

Mr ANDREW: It is about time, and I will come back to that point made by the member for Peake. In giving the green light for construction of the Berri bridge, the Government has justly recognised the importance of this major infrastructure project, which all people in the Riverland and many other people across the State would recognise has long been a priority need. The State Government has recognised the fundamental social and economic benefits that building the new bridge will bring to the Riverland. Not only will its construction bring immediate time and cash savings to local Riverland commuters and businesses, but it demonstrates specifically the faith and confidence of the State Government in the Riverland. This bridge will be a significant catalyst to stimulate further economic growth in the region.

A national study commissioned and undertaken through Monash University last year indicated that the Riverland is in the top 10 of 80 regions in Australia recognised as having the greatest growth potential. The whole State will benefit from this growth but it will depend on the provision of adequate local infrastructure and the removal of unnecessary costs. Of course, the Berri bridge will be a major contributor to realising that potential, and the bridge will provide a range of further benefits, including a reduction in delays in emergency situations and the improvement of service provision between the towns, as well as providing a significant income generating effect from the construction itself. It will provide a tremendous boon in terms of reducing loss of business down time and, as I have indicated, because of the strong economic growth happening now in the region in response to horticultural potential, the region will be able to contribute that growth and participate in the future potential of the State.

I reiterate that, while I have lobbied long and hard for the bridge since I have been in this place, as did my predecessor in his time here over 20 years, I am pleased to concede that the decision to proceed with the bridge has resulted from a

coordinated and concerted team effort within the whole Riverland community. I refer particularly to local government groups such as the Local Government Association in the Riverland, the local councils of Loxton and Berri and more recently—specifically over the past 12 months—great cooperation from the Gerard reserve and the Aboriginal Lands Trust. I want to congratulate them all at this proud time for the Riverland and I look forward to the next phase of the project involved in choosing a design and the formal Cabinet provision of agreeing to the financial options which still have to be agreed to. I will use future opportunities to progress the development of the bridge.

I now refer to some of the other major infrastructure capital works projects highlighted in the budget which will have a major impact on my electorate. The sum of \$3.4 million is provided for the continued sealing of the Spalding, Burra, Morgan and Renmark route. As members are aware, between Morgan and Burra there is still about 60 kilometres of unsealed road, and funding this year will allow the provision of another 20 kilometres of sealed road. As I have pointed out to the House previously, that road is a fundamental link between east and west, between Perth and Sydney and Melbourne—indeed, between Perth and all of the eastern seaboard. The sealing of the road will ensure that the Riverland maintains its position as the hub of the transport corridor in terms of business and tourist transport. Through the sealing of this route the Riverland will be able to participate fully in that activity across the nation.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 8.15 p.m.]

Mr ANDREW: Before the dinner adjournment I was referring to the Morgan-Burra road and the further sealing that would take place this year.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Mr ANDREW: Not just the member for Custance but all members whose electorates are involved with that road. With the sum of \$4.9 million approved for continuing the Government highland irrigation rehabilitation program in the Loveday division of the Cobdogla irrigation area, this Government's contribution, in terms of its confidence in the Riverland, will bring about efficiency of irrigation practices, increased productivity and, at the same time, improve environmental results in terms of minimising the drainage impact upon the Murray River system.

The \$5 million allocated last year with respect to the Glossop High School upgrade will be continued and, although none of that money has formally been expended, the final planning of that development, that is, whether it be on one or two campuses, will be decided within the next month or so. That development will proceed as soon as possible.

The other significant impact from the budget with respect to infrastructure is the contribution—not just to the State but specifically to my region—of \$20.5 million to upgrade the Adelaide Airport. While we all are aware that it involved a Federal Government decision, members can be assured that this upgrade would not have happened unless the \$20 million had been allocated in the State budget this year. I put on record, as I suspect I have already done at least once, that the transport of produce to developing Asian markets will be significant to my region's local economy, not just in terms of minimising—and therefore making more competitive internationally—the cost of overland transport to Melbourne to meet freight schedules, but facilitating the runway extension to allow jumbos fully laden with airfreight to depart

Adelaide will permit more appropriate schedules for produce from the Riverland to be exported and therefore to arrive in superior condition.

As always, it is unfortunate that time is limited for me fully to express the great impact this budget will have on my electorate. However, in terms of economic packages for economic growth, I note that \$1.5 million is allocated to the upgrading of the State Government representative offices in Asia: Tokyo, Jakarta, Hong Kong and Singapore. It was my pleasure only a fortnight ago to organise a program for our new Hong Kong representative. My electorate was able to appreciate the value that that representative and her office will bring in terms of increasing export opportunities for our local companies.

In this economic package \$750 000 is allocated also for regional development boards. The Riverland Development Corporation, which has established a record with its strategy of development for the region, has made significant achievements, including the gas pipeline to the Riverland, and so on, and this allocation will provide a direct and positive stimulus in that regard.

Dealing with growth and economic assistance, I refer particularly to the youth unemployment program, 'KickStart for Youth', which will focus on young people in my region and work in the shadow of the general KickStart program, which has been a tremendous success in my electorate. The program will focus on young people particularly under the age of 19 and provide them with greater access to work opportunities with basic training and skills. I know that many local companies are keen to participate and share in this program.

It is also important that we are continuing with our \$50 a week subsidy to the group training scheme for trainees. A special program has been introduced for a 98 per cent payroll tax rebate on trainee wages. I know the new trainee provisions will be well received by local companies in my electorate. Over and above that, of course, we are continuing our 50 per cent payroll tax rebate for value-added export products from the region. It is a tremendous budget for my region.

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

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): I am sure that everyone on this side of the House enjoys the political contestability that is the adversarial Westminster system. It is nice to stand in here and freely debate with the Opposition. It is nice for the ship of State to fire the occasional broadside at those who sit opposite. The ship of State would have a great deal of trouble in hitting anyone on the benches opposite. My good friend and colleague the member for Price attends in this place, as he often does, and is prepared to listen to reasoned debate. He has survived more than one election and knows the value of listening and the value of taking all points of view under consideration. His younger colleagues would be very well advised to take an example from people such as the honourable member; from you, Mr Speaker, who have been in this place for 25 years and one week; and from others, because they will not be here terribly long if they are not prepared to listen.

Mr Andrew: They're not prepared to be here to listen to the truth.

Mr BRINDAL: As my colleague says, they are not prepared to be here and listen to the truth.

Mr Kerin: They don't want to listen.

Mr BRINDAL: No.

Mr Kerin: They're out listening.

Mr BRINDAL: That is the trouble: they are always in the wrong place listening. The previous Premier was out listening but he was not listening to the right people and we lost \$3 billion. I suspect that, in the 'Labor listens' campaign, they are out listening but listening only to what they want to hear. They are not listening to what the people of South Australia tell them.

Mr Lewis: They're not listening to what they need to know.

Mr BRINDAL: That was never more obvious than in the 24 hours after the budget, when we were absolutely inundated with a tirade of radio advertisements which I suspect were supposed to be clever but which, I must inform the Opposition, many ordinary electors in my district—and I am not saying Liberals but ordinary electors—found totally offensive. My personal assistant had the radio on and, after about three minutes of a tirade, I was bemused to hear—and I do not know whether it was Bob Byrne or Shane Sody—the commentator say, 'It (referring to the ALP) can put all the clever ads it likes—it can make up anything it likes—about this budget, but one thing the people of South Australia will not forget is who squandered the money and put the State in the precarious debt situation that it finds itself in today.'

I would say that in absolute comradeship, as members of Parliament are all trying to work in this place for the betterment of South Australia; and I know that the member for Price and other members opposite are doing so. It is pretty poor politics given that we are \$3 billion in debt because of the State Bank and goodness knows how many billions of dollars because of other encumbrances in the State. I pause to welcome the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley will address himself to the matter before the Chair.

Mr BRINDAL: I will, Sir. I would rather address the Chair than the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, so I will certainly attend to your advice.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I would tell the member for Ross Smith that while I sit on this side of the Chamber I have a lot better chance of making the front bench than he has by sitting over there on that side of the Chamber. I should tell him that, in the Westminster system, before you can even aspire to the front bench you must first become a member of the Government team. I can assure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that, with the carry on that he and that person who passes as his Leader have been engaging in over the past few days, it will be many decades before his Party graces the Government benches of South Australia.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Ross Smith, may think the people of South Australia are fools, but I have news for him: most of them are sensible, intelligent people. Most of them understand the trouble the State is in and want the best for their children and grandchildren and are not particularly happy with the member for Ross Smith or many of his colleagues on that side of the House. They might run smart ads and might think they are listening and that the people of South Australia have forgotten, but I have news: they have not forgotten. St Paul might have got away with being converted on the road to Damascus, but biblically he never converted many Jews. I would warn members opposite that they may be seeking to convert themselves on the road to somewhere—and goodness knows where—but they are not likely to pass as acceptable to the

electors of South Australia for a very long time. So, he scuttles out with his tail between his legs. It is true that Labor listened, but Labor also lied and Labor also lost, and it is a salutary lesson—

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The honourable member referred to members of the Opposition as liars, by inference, given that he said that the Labor Party lied during the last election. I would ask you to rule on this matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! As I recall, the member for Unley said that Labor lied; therefore, he made a collective statement, which is not in itself unparliamentary, even though I do not believe it is in the best practice of the House. I suggest to the member for Unley that he would be better off if he rephrased his comments and did not use that term again. I suggest to the honourable member that other terms are more acceptable in Parliament.

Mr BRINDAL: I thank you for your ruling, and I do apologise for erring, Sir: I was after all only quoting a recent court case in respect of the last election. This is a good budget, because the Government has fulfilled its promise of containing the debt. There would not be one person on either side of the Chamber—and I include my colleagues on the Government benches—who take much pleasure in cuts to education, health, police or community services. There is a lesson that every person who keeps a household budget knows, which is simply that, if you do not have the money to pay for something, you can run up the bankcard until your credit is at its limit but, once your credit is at its limit and there is no more money, you have to cut back on what you can purchase.

Quite simply, the people and Government of South Australia—I would say the entire South Australian community—with the exception perhaps of 11 people who seem to have got lost somewhere and who constitute themselves as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition—all know that we have to cut our cloth according to our budget. The Premier has not put up taxes; he fulfilled his election promise. The Opposition makes much of the fact that a thousand charges have gone up. That may be true, but it is playing with semantics, because most of those charges have gone up at or below the level of inflation, and there are no new taxes and no new revenue raising measures in this budget.

Members interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The water catchment levy is placed on the people of this State at the behest of this Parliament through water catchment authorities and through local government. It is not revenue collected by the State of South Australia: it is revenue collected by and through local government for a specific purpose and, even in the definition of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that hardly constitutes a new tax.

To return to my theme, none of us likes to see cuts; none of us likes to see a school or education program curtailed. That there are now fewer nurses in our hospitals, fewer teachers and fewer policemen than there were a few years ago we must all feel sorry about, but I return to the overriding consideration, which is that we must cut our cloth according to our income and that we were not the ones who squandered the inheritance of this State. Electors are always coming to me and saying, 'What are going to do when you finish selling the assets? Put up taxes?' My answer is quite simple: South Australia had better hope that this Government manages to get to the end of the debt before it is necessary to put up

taxes, because I tell my electors, quite frankly, when we run out of things to sell—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that as the Leader of the Opposition next has the call he let the member for Unley continue.

Mr BRINDAL: When we run out of things to sell, if revenue is still to be raised it will be necessary to increase taxes; it is quite simple. I really hope we do not reach that point, but it is a simple proposition, and the logic of it must be found compelling even by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We are very lucky that we had a series of prudent and prudential managers in this State, such as Tom Playford and a lot of very wise managers, who built up assets which we can now question and dispose of without detriment to the good governance of South Australia. That is necessary.

The Leader of the Opposition says, 'Oh, *per capita* State debt was higher under this or that regime.' That is true but, if he looks back and is honest (and you will recall this, Sir), he will agree that *per capita* State debt was built up when this State was purchasing enormous assets. What do we have to show for the last increase in debt? Zilch: absolutely nothing. We have squandered billions of dollars. If we had a bridge to Hindmarsh Island, the Berri bridge, new schools, new hospitals and new roads, we could all sit here and say, 'Perhaps we were a bit exuberant in our spending, but perhaps it will stand the people of South Australia in good stead for decades to come'.

We are faced with the unique situation of looking at the State debt and saying that it has got bad or worse. What have we got to show for it? Absolutely nothing. Liberal members can take cold comfort from that. It is no comfort to the Premier, the Treasurer or any Ministers to bring down a constrained budget. Every one of them would have loved nothing better than to have inherited the sort of books that John Bannon inherited when he came to the premiership of South Australia.

Mr Clarke: With the same level of debt as you have.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley has the call.

Mr BRINDAL: We did not have that privilege. We had a legacy of debt, mismanagement and sheer incompetence. That is what we got, that is what South Australians believe we got, and that is what we will keep telling them that we got, because it is nothing more than the truth. The Opposition can put as many clever ads on the radio as it likes, but I suggest—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who says that the record should show the true picture, takes absolute delight in the cheap political tricks that he is perpetrating on the electorate of South Australia.

Mr Clarke: What do you call this, at taxpayers' expense?

Mr BRINDAL: The Deputy Leader raises a Government information booklet which was made freely available to him and to every member of this Parliament for distribution in our electorates. I say to the member for Ross Smith, in the face of this House, that if he wishes me to distribute them in his electorate I will do so at my own electoral expense. I would love nothing better than to distribute those pamphlets in his electorate so that his electors in Ross Smith are as informed as the electors in Unley and as your electors are in Eyre, Sir. Liberal members took great pleasure in distributing those booklets and sharing our part and responsibility in this budget.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Ross Smith says that not even the sheep will believe it. When you have to drag out the old sheep dog, after years and years in retirement, and he has to spend week after week in the *Sunday Mail* defending the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I might not be a full stop in a history book, but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will not even be a blink in the reader's eye.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: If the member for Ross Smith is around for a long time, as the member for Torrens comments, all I can say is that I feel sorry for the electors of Ross Smith.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the member for Torrens has had a fair go.

Mr BRINDAL: The budget is a considered document. I believe that the budget will bring much credit on all Ministers, the Treasurer in particular and this Government in general, because it is a responsible document which does the best with the available money. It is not lavish and it does not address some issues, but it does the best that can be done. In the brief time available to me, I should like to point to one factor which came to my attention.

Mr Atkinson: Would you recognise it?

Mr BRINDAL: In answer to the member for Spence, last year the Minister for Emergency Services pointed out that Operation Patriot cost this State \$300 000 and eight full-time police officers. I invite all members, in their analysis of the budget documents, to look at the number and nature of the prosecutions that we paid \$300 000 to obtain. I believe that the budget is a responsible document, but it behoves us all to look at expenditure in various areas and to make constructive criticism. My constructive criticism is that I do not believe we have \$300 000 to waste policing people's bedroom antics. If people wish to visit prostitutes, I for one intend to put up my hand and say that I am not prepared to pay \$300 000 to stick my nose into people's business as regards their own morality.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: It's a criminal waste of money.

Mr BRINDAL: As the member for Giles said, it is a criminal waste of money, and I will stand in this place and continue to say that.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: It is also morally wrong.

Mr BRINDAL: I thank the member for Giles: it is morally wrong and also a criminal waste of money. I believe that the Opposition, and the Leader of the Opposition principally among Opposition members, was saying today that we are cutting down police resources. Whatever the truth of that, let us focus on where police resources are needed and where they are most effective. I say that a quarter of a million dollars policing adult morality is not a good expenditure of money. I will put my hand up for eight more police in Unley to curb the number of housebreakings. I am sure that you, Sir, will put up your hand for a few more police to patrol some of your far flung areas, and I am sure that the member for Torrens would also like a few more police. I do not think that any of us wants or needs police spending all their time and effort policing things which are basically none of our business, and it is about time that this House and the people of South Australia came to terms with some of the waste that goes on.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): It is a somewhat mixed pleasure to follow the member for Unley on these matters. However, I must say—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: I apologise if my voice gives out, but I am sure that, even if I have to croak to the very end, I shall take the full 20 minutes. Things are very rough for the Government when, amongst the first ranks of the Government's defenders of its budget, it has to drag up the grovelling member for Unley, who is so intent on crawling his way on hands and knees to Ministry status on the front bench with respect to this Government that he will do anything to achieve—

The SPEAKER: Order! Although the Deputy Leader may have taken offence at remarks made by the member for Unley, I do not think that he really wants to go down that track.

Mr CLARKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think that I have made my point concerning the member for Unley. We know the Government is on the run when, at taxpayers' expense, it produces a bit of Goebels-like propaganda in the form of this leaflet headed 'We are coming into the home straight to a better future.' It does not say who authorised the printing of the leaflet. It has the piping shriek, the smiling face of the Premier and a lot of misinformation and absolute untruths within it purporting to represent a factual statement on the Government's budget. I understand that it has been widely distributed throughout the community at taxpayers' expense. The costs of printing, production and distribution are being met by the Government, I assume, from the answer given by the Premier today to a question that I put to him on this issue.

Rather than forthrightly stating, 'No, we produced this as a Party political leaflet and each of our members is distributing it at their own cost, and the cost of printing is a cost to Liberal members of Parliament,' effectively, what he said in his answer was that the cost of this bit of Goebels-like propaganda was being met by the taxpayers of South Australia. It is a nice, glossy three-coloured leaflet, but we know a Government is on the skids when, within less than two years of its coming into office, it has to use taxpayers' funds to try to mislead people as to the effect of its budget. However, people will see through that.

In particular, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out today, on issues such as the privatisation of water—and I notice the member for Unley scuttling away because he cannot bear to hear the truth—the Liberal Party's own polling clearly shows that the general public has not fallen for the three-card trick. If it is handing over to private enterprise the control and management of its water supply, it is in effect privatising it. It is taking it out of the day-to-day control of the people of South Australia. That has been seen through, and the Liberal Party's own research shows that.

It does not matter what the Premier or the Minister for Infrastructure say, the fact is that the general public despise the idea of either the sale of the assets or in fact the handing over of the control and management of the water supply to private industry. It is total anathema to the general public. They might wear the sale of the Pipelines Authority, SGIC, the State Bank, the State Clothing Authority and certain other Government instrumentalities but, when it comes to water and power supply, they regard it, quite rightly, as the natural right of every citizen to be able to access those precious resources, and those precious resources should be in the control of the State.

Mr Lewis: Why?

Mr CLARKE: The member for Ridley asks 'Why?' I can only assume that the member for Ridley endorses the sentiments of Serco, as reported in the *Sunday Mail*, that very reputable and widely read weekend newspaper. Last weekend it carried an article about Serco making a submission to the Government. Effectively, as long as we do not privatise the Parliament, the judges and all of the Police Force—although the Commissioner of Police is about the only one you do not privatise—the rest can go to the private sector. We know with this Government that, after 12 years of being in opposition, and more particularly being out of government for 20 of the past 25 years leading up to 1993, when it actually got into government, it realised it did not really want it: it did not want the responsibility. It wants to hand over the control of our hospitals and water supply to the private sector. It wants to hand over all these essential services to the private sector because it finds being in government too hard and too challenging.

Its Ministers just want to sit there and get the white cars, parade before the television cameras and the like and pretend they are actually in charge of the State, when in fact they find it all too difficult and would rather hand over the essential day-to-day control of the economic leaders of this State to the private sector. It will parade around like an empty head and pretend to the general public that it has actually something meaningful to contribute to the government of this State.

When one looks at the budget for 1995-96, one has to look at the track record of this Government and, in particular, the record since its first budget in 1994. Members will recall that the Liberal Party's election campaign—and you, Mr Speaker, trumpeted it widely in your own electorate—promised a 4 per cent annual growth in gross State product, 12 000 jobs in the first year of government, 200 000 new jobs over 10 years to the year 2004, and a 15 per cent per annum export growth. We have had various statements by the Premier, Mr Brown, saying that there has been great success in turning around the economy. I will refer members to a few of those quotes. On 24 November 1994, in this House the Premier said:

The latest figures also show that in South Australia since March this year we have had an annualised growth rate in employment of 4.5 per cent compared with the national average of 3.9 per cent—again the highest State in Australia. It shows we have gone from the bottom to the top.

Further, in his address to BOMA on 13 December 1994, he said:

I said we would aim for 4 per cent annual employment growth. We have actually exceeded that at 4.5 per cent. That is ahead of a 3.9 per cent national figure.

The recently released December quarter State accounts measure State growth rates in the year to December 1994. They provide an objective record by the Bureau of Statistics of the economic results of the Premier's first year in office. In the year to December 1994, the national economy grew by 5.5 per cent seasonally adjusted. Over the same period, South Australia had the lowest growth rate of any State or Territory in Australia. While Western Australia and the Northern Territory grew above the national average, that is at 7.7 and 14.3 per cent respectively, Victoria and Queensland grew at just below the national average, both at 5.4 per cent. But even those below average States turned in a respectable performance, except one. New South Wales grew at 4.1 per cent, the ACT at 4.9 per cent, and even Tasmania speeded past us at 3.4 per cent. South Australia's performance was a deplorable .1 per cent.

Over the year, the growth rate in Australia was 55 times the rate in South Australia, yet we are to believe the Treasurer and the Premier in the Treasurer's budget statement that we will have a growth rate in South Australia for the next 12 months of 3.5 per cent, 35 times the growth rate that we recorded last year. If anyone believes that, they are quite readily able to believe in the fairies at the bottom of the garden. It will just not happen. The Government's projection of the deficit for next year is predicated on achieving a growth rate of 3.5 per cent. When the Australian economy was booming at an average of 5.5 per cent last year, our rate grew at .1 per cent.

As every member in this Chamber knows, because of economic factors that the Commonwealth Government has instituted to cool the national economy, the national growth rate is expected to be less than 5.5 per cent, so how South Australia will actually swim against the tide and produce a growth rate at 3.5 per cent when the national economy is actually going backwards, or slowing down, absolutely defies imagination: at a time of optimum growth in Australia last year, we could achieve a growth rate of only .1 per cent.

Furthermore, in the December quarter of 1994, South Australia went into a negative growth of .3 per cent. It was not the faltering upturn we had expected due to our having entered the national recovery rate but the second worst result for the quarter of any State or Territory, and off a very low base. The Treasurer claimed that the ABS figures are simply wrong and the real growth rate of South Australia's economy is approximately 5 per cent. He cited the high implicit price deflator for South Australia as indicating the ABS is incorrect, and that is simply absurd. The ABS applies deflators to State economies, recognising the specialisation in different activities. This is precisely to prevent factors such as a rise in the price of motor vehicles, whitegoods or wine from distorting the real growth of gross State product. The nominal rise in GSP was of the order of 5 per cent. This does not measure real economic growth, merely the rise of price inflation.

The ABS implicit price deflators have always influenced the measurement of economic performance. For the Treasurer's claim to be credible, we would have to accept the possibility that in 1993, the last year of Labor in which the ABS tells us the South Australian economy grew by 3.8 per cent, the real position was probably much better.

However, there is one indicator above all others that proves the seriousness of South Australia's position—employment and jobs. From December 1993 to April 1995, the employed labour force of Australia grew by nearly 450 000, or 5.5 per cent. Over the same period, the South Australian labour force grew by just 9 200 jobs, or 1.4 per cent. Even this was largely due to an April rise of 5 900 jobs, which could eventually be no more than a statistical aberration. The ABS trend series shows South Australia with a flat, depressed labour market.

The Premier is a very loose talker about our economy. He has made claims variously about 20 000 new jobs, of 4.5 per cent employment growth since his election and 12 100 new jobs in the year to March 1995. The Premier seems not to have appreciated that, even if his boast were factual, it would still be an admission of failure.

Given our 8.3 per cent share of national population, South Australia needed to create 37 000 new jobs since the election of the Liberal Government just to gain a fair share of the jobs growth happening nationally. As a result of this poor performance in the generation of new jobs, any reduction in

officially recorded unemployment in South Australia—9.9 per cent for April—needs to be seen in the context of a falling participation rate; that is, fewer persons are actively seeking work due to their discouragement at poor job prospects. By contrast, the national unemployment rate of 8.3 per cent has occurred in the context of an increasing participation rate.

For a range of reasons, primarily to do with the Commonwealth's policies of internationalising the Australian economy and of microeconomic reform, the South Australian economy is very delicately positioned in the 1990s. The economy's dismal performance over the past 18 months raises the concern that the Liberals' policies of deep public sector cuts have contributed significantly to the problem. The danger is not merely that our economy may have become stuck in first gear, to remain there for a time but eventually to recover: concern is rather that the shocks to the economy, particularly the reduction of demand caused by deep cuts to public sector employment in conjunction with the other factors, may have reduced over the long term the economy's capacity to grow and to provide employment.

It is important to note that the full macroeconomic effect of the Liberals' budget cuts will not be felt for another couple of years, and it appears likely that the economy will remain flat. Before we can give serious countenance to the optimistic pronouncements of the Treasurer for the budget for the next 12 months, we must look at what has actually been achieved by the State Government over the past 18 months and contrast also what has actually happened with the real economic indicators to which I have already alluded. This clearly shows that the Government's budget aims of last year were not even remotely met in terms of economic growth or jobs growth in this State at that time, so what confidence can we have in the Treasurer's pronouncements for the next 12 months that this is a new dawn, a new era, where all our economic troubles are being left behind because of his so-called creative management?

Not only does this Government actually hate being in government but it hates having to take decisions and manage the State. That is why it wants to outsource and to privatise all the core services in this State, because it finds it all too hard after so many years in opposition actually to do the job. Not only does it want to blame everyone other than itself for its own failures but it wants to pick on the Commonwealth Government as a whipping boy. The Minister for Health has not stopped carping from the day he became Minister for Health; he has blamed everyone but himself for the chaos in the health system in South Australia. Yet, he cannot escape, after 18 months of his stewardship of that ministry, his and his Government's decisions that have contributed to the malaise in our health system. The Commonwealth Government has actually increased spending on health. The State Government has reduced its expenditure on health and pocketed, for its own reasons, the extra funds that have been provided by the Commonwealth Government.

In education that is also true. Whilst there has been a reduction in the level of Commonwealth grants to South Australia for education purposes as a result of the reduced share of children of secondary school age and reduced TAFE participation, this is not a *per capita* cut and applies similar logic to the Minister for Education's decision to cut a further 260 teachers from the system on the basis of falling retention levels. We will have a situation where the TAFE system in this State has been effectively gutted by the Government's decision to cut its budget by some \$25 million. We are in very real danger of losing significant funds from the

Commonwealth through the ANTA agreement because we as a State have not maintained the training effort.

We hear much from the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education about the need for vocational training and upskilling of our work force and about the need for us to be the smart State to be able to attract the type of industry we want in this State, but at the very same time we cut off our nose to spite our face. What we have done is say that we will cut funds from those very institutions that can provide the necessary training for a skilled work force to attract the industries that we need in this State to generate jobs and economic growth. That is an appalling indictment of this Minister who, every time he is asked a question or appears on television, proudly boasts about the need for more training in South Australia, not only for our young people but for our long-term unemployed and others who need to acquire new skills if they are to have any hope of re-employment within this State. But the very institutions that can provide those necessary skills are those that this Government, and in particular this Minister, has happily gone about hacking and slashing for a supposedly short-term gain.

In conclusion, I want to hark back to my original point: what faith can members of the public of South Australia have in the budget pronouncements of this Government when they only have to go back to its budget announcements of last year and its earlier pronouncements when it sought to win government in 1993, and compare what it has actually achieved with what its goals were, also comparing what has been achieved on a national basis and by other States—all of which, I might add, have had to contend with droughts and with rising interest rates?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Bass): Order! The honorable member's time has expired. The member for Peake.

Mr BECKER (Peake): There is no doubt about the members of the Labor Party: they just have not realised that they are in opposition. They have not learned yet that they are in opposition as a penance for the mismanagement of the economy of this State over many years. On two occasions the Labor Party in South Australia got away with misleading the people of this State—for about nine to 10 years. We have the very sad episode of a former Premier of South Australia, Don Dunstan, chasing headline after headline wherever he can. He did it some 30 to 40 years ago to get into Parliament and he made a good fist of it when he was Attorney-General. He undermined dear old Frank Walsh. I will never forgive him for what he did to Frank Walsh, who was one of the true, old-fashioned Labor leaders. After Frank Walsh gave the bank officers a special holiday at Christmas, I am told that Dunstan reduced him almost to tears, pulled the coup and replaced him as leader.

Mr Clarke: He stood down.

Mr BECKER: I don't fall for those tricks—this one resigns and this one retires: he was pushed, and pushed very strongly by Dunstan. He crucified Frank Walsh, and then he came out and reminisced in the paper about 25 years ago when he was elected to South Australia as Premier. He was Premier long before then. He had 12 months before that period in 1970. But what we are doing now and what we have had to do in the past 15 months or so is to clean up the folly of previous Labor Governments going right back to the Dunstan era. Dunstan came in here and had a ball, because it was a tightly run, tightly managed, tight-fisted operation.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BECKER: Yes, it might have been a little too conservative for some of the Left wing radicals in the socialist club, and they had a ball. But he plunged this State into such serious debt that we had to have an election in 1977 to sell off the railways.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BECKER: We did not want to get rid of the railways: the poor old railway workers were not asked. The railway workers had no help at all. They had it sold from underneath them.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was heard in silence and I would appreciate the same courtesy being given to the member for Peake.

Mr BECKER: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker: I'm enjoying it. The railways were sold.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr BECKER: It was Dunstan who sold the railways. The honourable member should not talk about privatisation, State debt or anything else. It was Dunstan who realised that the railways were costing us an arm and a leg. They were costing us dearly. Poor old Dapper must be going pretty rough in his restaurant if he has to resort to writing in that rag (the name of which I cannot recall) that comes out once a month—no doubt to get a quid to promote his restaurant for the American Express awards, and so on. We will test this restaurant out one day; we will sneak around, have a look and help the poor blighter. There is no doubt about Dunstan. He cannot retire gracefully. He has passed his use-by date, and it is time he realised that one of the toughest things for anyone who has been in politics is to be able to slide away gracefully and leave the scene. He made such a mess of the finances of this State in the 1970s that we are still trying to reorganise and work our way out of it.

Bannon knew that he had to go to the Government enterprises in those days to get them to earn money. That is why he took from the people the people's bank. The Savings Bank of South Australia did not belong to Government. It was the people's bank: it belonged to the people. The Labor Party grabbed the bank and brought in this smart, young upstart of an entrepreneur (Marcus Clark) who could not believe his luck at getting his hands on the till of the State Bank. Marcus Clark was brought down two months after I predicted he would crash. I remember the first questions I asked in this House in 1985: why was he lending \$50 million to a shopping centre in Geelong? What did that have to do with South Australia? Why should South Australian money go to shopping centres in Geelong when it should have been put into housing?

Marcus Clark would not give discounted housing loans. That is what the previous, old management of the Savings Bank of South Australia was all about. It used to undercut the market by half or quarter per cent to help the people of South Australia. It was the building industry and the people of South Australia who benefited from the Savings Bank of South Australia. It is the people of South Australia who have had to bail out of the mess that Marcus Clark and the rest of the board got away with. The people of South Australia have seen their bank sold once again. It has been sold to an interstate consortium. I will not go any further than that or make any predictions about it whatsoever.

It is a damn shame to see some of these things disappear from South Australia. The Labor Party had no qualms about

getting rid of the railways, and that was a terrible thing to do. We had a good railway system; we had great workshops and expert engineering facilities. Like the EWS Department, we had some of the best apprentice training schemes in Australia. It might be stepping back in history to mention this, but we had some of the best. That was destroyed by the Labor Party, not by the Liberals, but now that the financial situation is there we have to clean it up. It is a jolly shame that we have had to take such action to do that.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition had a crack at the Government for putting out a pamphlet entitled, 'We are coming into the home straight to a better future.' Under the heading 'Overspending to stop', the pamphlet states:

When the State Government was elected, South Australia was overspending by more than \$300 million a year. In just 12 months we will have slashed this by two-thirds. By 1997-98 we will balance the books.

The budget document indicates proposed payments of \$5 105 170 000, with proposed receipts of \$5 452 782 000, creating a surplus of some \$347 612 000. It is a fair sort of an effort to turn around the deficit of the previous two years, pull it back into credit and square the Consolidated Account. We have to get the Consolidated Account back into credit because we are paying out something like \$900 million a year in interest. It is absolute lunacy. There is nowhere to move when you are paying out huge sums of money—something like \$3 million a day—in interest alone. How can you move and how can you create jobs for young South Australians who are entitled to expect their State to lead the way and to encourage employment? It is a terrible shame that, with two political Parties in a State both claiming to represent the people, one political Party—the Opposition—has a policy of simply increasing taxes and charges rather than cutting costs. That is clearly written in the Labor Party's manifesto.

The Liberal Party is faced with the problem of having to reduce costs and to make it a realistic situation so that the people can afford it. So much for the pamphlet that has been put out to educate the people and to let them know what it is all about in South Australia. Let us have look at something else that has hit the western suburbs, particularly in the area of the member for Colton. I have here a letter from the Hon. Mike Rann, MA, MP, Leader of the Opposition, Parliament House, North Terrace, Adelaide 5000, dated 30 May 1995. The letter states:

Dear . . .

The Labor leadership team in South Australia has given a commitment to all South Australians to provide a constructive and positive Opposition. We are also committed to personally meeting as many people across the State as possible.

It is a bloody shame they did not do it in the 10 years before 1993; they might have learnt something. The letter continues:

We believe it is vitally important for members of Parliament to keep in touch and listen to the views of the local community. We would therefore like to invite you to come along to the Temple Uniting Church hall, on the corner of Durham Street and Military Road, Henley Beach, on Wednesday 14 June 1995 at 2 p.m. to meet with us—

this would be the first time they had ever been to church; there is a bit of hypocritical nonsense going on there—

We will be joined by my Deputy Leader, Ralph Clarke, who is shadow Minister for Industrial Relations, Employment, Training and Further Education, and John Quirke, shadow Treasurer and the Opposition's spokesman on Emergency Services. Like the many people who live and work in the western suburbs, we share concerns about the real problems facing local people. The Labor Opposition is extremely concerned about the Liberal's move to privatise our hospitals and water services. The message we have been getting is

that people do not want the Government messing around with basics and selling off the fundamentals—

what about the railways; they did not care about them—

there is nothing more basic or fundamental than water and health. We are keen to hear your views on these or any other State related matters and would be pleased if you would stay and join us for a coffee and informal chat after the meeting.

Yours sincerely, Mike Rann, State Labor Leader; Carolyn Pickles, Leader of the Opposition, Legislative Council. Written authorised and printed by M.D. Rann, Parliament House, Adelaide.

I will bet anything that that has been printed on Parliament House paper by Parliament House equipment and probably posted out under the parliamentary allowance. How dare the Deputy Leader of the Opposition swipe at Government members for doing something similar. Attached to that letter is this little beauty:

David Abfalter, candidate for Hindmarsh, invites you to a street meeting.

Nowhere on any piece of literature, sign, hoarding or billboard do we find that David Abfalter is the ALP candidate for Hindmarsh. He is too frightened—a coward. In the old tradition of the good old Labor Party, never did I think I would see a candidate too frightened to put up that he is an endorsed ALP candidate. The pamphlet continues:

I will be in your neighbourhood this Saturday. If you have any concerns or problems or would just like to speak to me come along for a chat. I am a local, born and raised in the area. As the candidate for the Federal seat of Hindmarsh I am eager to hear the views of the community. I believe it is important to hear what you have to say. It is also important that you get to know me, too. Have a chat with David Abfalter, candidate for Hindmarsh. I would like to hear what you have say—

there is nothing there about the ALP—

When: Saturday 10 June 1995. Where: corner of Burbridge Road and Tapleys Hill Road, West Beach. Time: 10.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

Look for him in his 'flash' caravan! I hope that it was not being towed by his flash Government car. When he established his office, what was all the gear being moved in? It was his little Government car. Where was he supposed to be? He was not at work—no way. Nothing was going to be done about him driving his little Government car. Of course, we do not have 'David Abfalter, ALP candidate for Hindmarsh' on anything—he is not game; he is a coward. Let us look at his employment contract. We would not want to look too closely at that to see the fine print and how far he is allowed to work from the GPO. He is not allowed to be employed outside the metropolitan area. That is not a bad sort of contract in the dying days of the previous Government.

Does the Opposition want us to dig a bit further into what happened in the dying days of the previous Government? You can bet your socks that, if I get my way, I will. We will reveal hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions of dollars, of little deals that have been done around the State. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should not stand here and have a cheeky swipe at Government members for doing their job or at the Government for informing the people, because previous Labor Governments did that time and again. They did not give a damn what resources they sold. They did not care what they got rid of or where they transferred it. They kept transferring it to Canberra. Deals were done by the score in Canberra to reduce the debt to the State. They could not give us any money so they reduced the debt.

We are not going to worry about who created what debt and where. It is who created the debt that we cannot pay. The debt that we cannot pay is this historical debt that was created by the smart alecs who tried to get the State Bank and a few

similar organisations to do whatever they could to create the income and the opportunity for the developers in this State. What they did not gamble on—and the matter on which they would not take advice from those who were South Australian born, bred and trained—was that there are some pretty smart little shysters around the city—they have been around for over 150 years, right from the first day of the settlement of this colony.

I have no fear of making those sorts of allegation. Anybody who worked in banking knew who the floaters were, from bank to bank, from financial institution to financial institution, always looking to make a quick quid—'Come in, sucker.' The State Bank management was one of those suckers, and it was on the gravy train for every penny that it could take—\$3.15 billion of South Australian money was taken by some of those smart little entrepreneurs.

Thank goodness we were a little more civilised than they were in the west of America in our treatment of some of those people, but not one of them has yet been brought to book for what they did. Not one of the management team will ever be successfully brought to heel for what they did to the Government, to the State and to the taxpayers of South Australia. It is a terrible shame.

A few weeks ago, I was dragged along to a meeting at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I received a telephone call saying, 'We sent you a letter but you didn't respond.' They found out that the letter went to the wrong address, so I was asked to go along as the union at the hospital wished to give us a briefing. What a sham of a meeting that was. Ten minutes after we arrived, of course everyone was having the usual cup of coffee to wake themselves up, shake the old head a bit and clear out the mustiness of the night before. Of course, we had the television cameras there. I was led to believe that it was to be a private briefing by the recognised unions within the hospital precinct, but it was not that at all: it was a political setup.

The shadow Minister was there in all her glory with a few local members from both sides. There were a few union representatives, for some of whom I have great respect and others for whom I would not give you two bob. There they were in full glory, full belt, denigrating the Queen Elizabeth Hospital management and the Government for what it is doing in trying to sort out the health system, and predicting a massive multi-million dollar deficit for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

I am advised at present, as I was advised then, that the figures they were quoting were shonky. It was merely a game of scare tactics for which the Labor Party is well known. If we in the Liberal Party had tried that, we would have been abused, insulted and threatened with police investigations. We would have had all sorts of threats and intimidation put upon us. We would have had abusive telephone calls until 1 or 2 a.m. It is par for the course.

If new members think that they are working in adverse conditions, they should refer back to the 1970s, when we were trying to expose the waste and mismanagement of the Dunstan era. One would stand in the House and lay ground to the allegations, backed up by the Auditor-General's Report. It would be nothing to receive abusive telephone calls at 2 or 3 a.m. from ALP supporters saying how dare we criticise the great white wonder of the workers. The meeting was to scare the people of the western suburbs and to obtain cheap publicity using cheap scare tactics.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital has an expenditure budget of about \$117 million. It is too soon yet to know exactly what

the final result will be, but the deficit might be \$1.6 million, if that. It is still too early to know. It will be a pretty good result after some mighty changes that have had to be made. Every sector of the Public Service has been overstaffed for years. Unemployment in South Australia has been kept down because the Government has seen fit to continue to put people in jobs all over the place. That is fair enough if you can afford it, but we were overstaffed by many tens of thousands of people. The Labor Party had a vested interest in that because, for every person it employed, it received a kickback by way of union and affiliation fees.

In any other country there would have been a royal commission or an inquiry. There would have been all sorts of allegations of shonky behaviour and of abuse of taxpayers' money, but not in this country; we are still out in the wild west sometimes when we have situations such as the bank going bust and kickbacks involving unemployment conditions. In all that—

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

Mr KERIN (Frome): I congratulate the Treasurer and the Cabinet on being able to deliver a budget that meets the Government's economic goals without inflicting further pain on the people of South Australia. It amazes me that the Opposition even comments when we deliver a budget, after what it did to the economy of the State and the way in which it betrayed the trust of all South Australians. The Leader of the Opposition said this afternoon that a lack of knowledge is economic impotence. When I heard him say that, it struck me that it is probably as good an explanation as the people of South Australia are ever going to have about what happened in the past few years.

A lack of knowledge leads to economic impotence: perhaps the Leader will wish to repeat those words if any member of the previous Government decides to do the decent thing and apologise to South Australians for what that Government did to this State. If Opposition members really believe their motto, 'Labor listens', they would know that people are looking not for scare tactics but for someone to say that they are sorry for what happened.

We keep hearing about the 'Labor listens' campaign but, basically, any signs of Labor listening are non-existent. Are Labor members as deaf as they are dumb, or is it only the faithful ALP member who did not desert during the disaster who is left to listen to at meetings such as the member for Peake outlined? Tired of scaring a few parents and children with their education tactics, the Opposition has now turned to radio. I heard its advertisements previewed free on the ABC last night.

I can promise the ALP right now that, if it listened to the people, it would know that the people of South Australia are not ready for the mob that wreaked havoc on the State to turn to humour to attack a Government that is seen as doing the right thing in cleaning up the mess. The tactic of using humour is similar to the pathetic State Bank advertisements that we have to endure if we want to watch the cricket. Many people have commented on the insult and irony of the State Bank attempting humour after that organisation's massive losses. Anyone who has seen those advertisements would agree that they are fair dinkum shockers. One of the new ALP ads makes the point:

The Brown Government is slashing at the fundamentals of life in South Australia.

That statement really indicates a lack of memory on the Opposition's part and, once again, shows its total lack of apology for what it did to the State during its term of office. It is interesting that, since the budget, I have had much more comment about the good news of the sale of the State Bank than I have had about anything in the budget itself. The sale has been welcomed by the vast majority of South Australians as a move in the right direction, and the Opposition should not delude itself as to people knowing why we had to sell the bank and whose fault that is.

As a rural person, I was particularly happy that the Advance Bank was the purchaser. If the purchaser had been Westpac or the National Australia Bank which, like the ANZ, have extensive branch networks in regional South Australia, we would have seen much duplication of branches which could have cost many jobs throughout the countryside, and we certainly did not want to see that.

I have received a couple of budget calls. They were not the result of any scare campaign or the like but resulted from some rather unfortunate headlines which appeared in our weekend country press and led people to believe that we may sell off roads and hospitals. Certainly, after discussing the issues with those constituents, neither of them were the least complimentary about the present Opposition or the former Government. I commend the Treasurer on his budget, but I would like to make further comments on specific portfolio areas.

The education portfolio seems to have been fully exploited by the scaremongers over the past 18 months, particularly those who put politics ahead of people. The constant politicising of the education process has resulted in much unnecessary fear being suffered by both parents and children. No-one backs away from the fact that many difficult decisions had to be made but, on top of that, there has been much deliberate confusion aimed at scaring people for dubious political gain. In last year's budget plans were announced to save \$40 million in three years in the education budget, but the games played have seen those cuts duplicated many times over by the Opposition and SAIT.

I know from talking to many parents that every time another letter is sent out they think another round of cuts is coming, and that is not fair to school communities. If SAIT is fair dinkum about class sizes and education in South Australia, it should embrace enterprise bargaining as a preferential course of action to take rather than pursuing the Federal award. The possible scope of negotiations under enterprise bargaining is broad in the education sector, and I am sure that many teachers, if properly informed, instead of being fed the information they are given, would agree that this is a far better option than going to the Federal award, with the resulting impact it will have on the education budget and, therefore, on the system.

In my electorate I have also heard SAIT claiming enormous increases in Stage Government funding to private schools out of last year's budget. This is an absolute distortion of the facts and basically it seems to be an attempt to exploit the point that many parents do not have access to the facts as they are. I have received several approaches from people wanting to know why we increased funding for non-Government schools last year by \$52 million. That is absolute rubbish, especially when we note that the total 1994 budget allocation to private schools was only \$54 million. There was no funding increase for inflation or wage rises and any increase was simply based on enrolment increases.

These rubbish claims cause nothing but ill feeling between people in the community, and such claims are to be condemned as a raw political stunt. I wish that people who start such rumours in smaller rural towns where there are two schools would realise the pain they can cause in the community. The fact remains that despite all the propaganda South Australia still has by any Australian standard one wishes to name a well resourced education system.

Despite the cutting of SSO allocations, which is probably the main cut in the budget, South Australia will still have about 10 per cent more school service officers than the national average. This type of statistic is typical of the way in which our education system in South Australia stands up to the national standard. Sure, we would all like smaller class sizes, more SSOs and more of everything, and we all look forward to a time when the economic damage to the State has been adequately addressed so that these wishes can be met.

This Government inherited an education infrastructure that could be described only as disgraceful. Even Labor members would have to admit, based on approaches they have had from schools in their areas, that the condition of schools suffered badly over the past 10 to 12 years. This year's allocation of \$90.6 million will build on a similar allocation last year in an effort to start addressing the situation. That will not be the answer, because it will be a long haul. However, I do applaud the allocation of \$650 000 to the John Pirie Secondary School. This announcement has been warmly greeted by the school community and is well deserved. As I have outlined to the House before, the John Pirie Secondary School is an amalgamation of Port Pirie High School and Risdon Park High School. It has been a successful amalgamation and has certainly proved many cynics wrong.

The success is due to the community's embracing the amalgamation concept, with the staff and school council working extraordinarily hard to ensure the school's success. Most importantly, the students have put aside all former parochialism and have quickly melded into a student community which wants to achieve without any trouble between what would have been two factions. All the people involved are determined to make John Pirie Secondary School an excellent centre for learning in the Port Pirie area, and I applaud the decision to put further money towards improving facilities. We will continue to lobby to have facilities improved until the school is completely up to scratch.

Health has been a major concern not only of this Government but of all Governments in recent years. Not only did we inherit a system that needed review but the new Minister also has had to face the double jeopardy of the State's financial distress and a Federal Government more interested in political philosophy than good health care. While change will always be too fast for some people, I feel confident that many efficiencies have been achieved in the health budget. These and ongoing efficiencies will be absolutely essential if the best in health care is to be affordable to this State and to everyone in Australia.

We have heard many people say that we are entitled to the best health care, education and other services, but everyone has to realise that at the end of the day these services must be paid for or be put on bankcard. We all realise that the bankcard we took over from the former Government was over the limit, and we realise that the day of reckoning does come. I have kept a careful watch on health issues in my electorate, and it has led me to have much contact with the Minister. I appreciate the amount of work the Minister puts in and the

fact that he always gives one a hearing. The Minister is on the right track, and I am pleased to see a real increase in the number of people in the system, some of whom initially had doubts but who are starting to believe that we are really achieving something in the health area.

I would also acknowledge the numerous people in my electorate who have put their head down and worked on the health system. Looking at the regionalisation of some of their internal problems, I note that they and everyone else across South Australia are assisting the Government to come up with a system which in the long term will deliver good health care in an economically sustainable way. We have heard much recently, including today, about water. We have heard particularly about the irrelevant English water supply system and how costs are going up and about how there are disconnections and the like. The fate of the South Australian water system seems constantly to have been misrepresented. I know we can expect that from members opposite who are about as relevant as English water prices. Certainly, I wonder why a former Premier, who claims to have done much for the State, needs to get involved in the debate.

Perhaps he feels the Opposition cannot operate effectively without him, but it does disappoint me that he gets involved in such a blatant political campaign that misrepresents reality. However, much more important than the English water system to me and all other South Australians is the position in respect of water in this State. The Minister has worked tirelessly to create not only savings but also development opportunities from his proposals for Adelaide's water supply, and I certainly applaud that. I refer to country water supplies and the recent review of country service provisions within the EWS. Certainly, the review's findings have relieved a lot of anxiety both in country depots and the towns themselves. I believe we will see an improvement in customer service and the management of the system with minimal impact on workers involved in country communities.

Good news in the budget was the allocation of considerable moneys to continue work on sealing rural arterial roads, which is definitely in line with the Government's prime objectives and an important boost for regional communities. I particularly applaud, as the member for Chaffey mentioned, the \$3.4 million allocation for the sealing of the Burra-Morgan road. Not only is this vital to Burra and the future of Burra but also, when it is completed, it will provide an enormous boost to the entire Mid North of South Australia. It has been said in this House many times—in fact, rocks are still sitting around in drawers—that the state of that road is a disgrace; it is an area in which South Australia has not done well over time. A lot of traffic travelling between the East and the West could pass through there, which could help Burra and the Mid North enormously, and I am referring to not only heavy traffic but the tourist trade that the area is missing out on.

In the past few months, as a result of last year's budget, the connecting road between Burra and Spalding has been sealed. This project was years overdue, and regular users of the road have contacted me indicating that they are now happy. Importantly, for the first time, it also connects Burra to many other towns in the Mid North and to the Port Pirie region. As this is Burra's jubilee 150 year, it is hoped that the completion of that road will assist in drawing many people to visit Burra who may have previously avoided the trip because of the reputation of the Burra-Spalding road, which was similar to that of the Burra-Morgan road.

It also means that the member for Frome is now connected by bitumen to all major towns in his electorate and is not knocking tyres around as much. During the 11 years of Labor we saw a tragic run-down of our road systems. This was due to not only the previous Government but also the Federal Government and its attitude to roads and the imposition of an enormous fuel tax. Only about 10 per cent of that fuel tax is returned to the road system. If a fairer system could be implemented we would all be a lot better off. Roads, whether city or country, are vital to the way South Australians live, carry on business and drive safely from place to place.

This year the Government will spend \$222 million on road maintenance and construction. This is a continuation of what was stated in last year's budget to improve South Australian roads. While city people may take a bitumen road for granted, to many country people it is an enormous issue. I know that many unsealed roads still exist, and I receive a lot of contact from constituents about those. As a South Australian, I also welcome the \$2 million contribution to upgrade Kangaroo Island tourist roads, which will commence this year. Anyone who has visited the island would fully realise what a terrific place it is and the untapped tourist potential on the island.

The improvement of the roads on Kangaroo Island is absolutely vital if it is to reach its potential as a tourist destination. Once again, I commend the Treasurer on the budget and congratulate Cabinet on the leadership it is giving the Government in managing the State back to stability and prosperity. I support the Appropriation Bill.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I rise tonight to speak on the budget, having given it detailed consideration. I have spent quite some time poring over the figures and the analysis of the budget so that I can provide a balanced assessment of the budget—not the parochial, biased presentation we have come to expect from members opposite.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I am referring to the member for Frome. I apologise, Sir, for being distracted by the member for Ridley. Again, as a new member in this Parliament, I am surprised that longstanding members, like the member for Ridley, try to lead novice members like me astray.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Chair observes that members generally, since the Premier introduced the budget, have been showing one another sufficient respect to allow them to be heard in silence, which is a delightful variation from the norm. I ask members to listen dutifully.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your protection. As a new member of Parliament I need the Chair's protection. One of the features of this year's budget was its rhetoric. I must admit that I do not relish the task of having to form a budget. My colleague, the member for Giles, was involved in the formation of several budgets, and it is a very difficult process. The language of the Treasurer, the member for Waite, was quite surprising, and any Treasurer in this current economic climate who can bring down a budget using terms such as 'we are in the home straight', 'it is a new dawn' and 'the pain is over' is clearly misjudging the issues and is somewhat misguided in the way he is presenting the budget.

This State is coming through a very difficult financial time, and I do not resile from that. This Government is faced with a difficult task of having to frame a budget. It is a budget about which the Opposition has some major concerns and we disagree with the Government on some of its priorities. We would argue that some of the pain and cuts being inflicted by this Government are both unfair and unjust. The Treasurer

lacked credibility when he talked about 'the new dawn' and said 'we are in the home straight', giving the public of South Australia the illusion that with one magic wand all the economic problems of this State have been solved.

I do not want to dwell on that point; that is something the Premier and the Deputy Premier will have to live with in years to come when their new dawn is not perhaps as exciting as they may have wanted it to be. This budget inflicts some major pain on South Australians and flies in the face of many of the election promises made by the Premier and Deputy Premier leading into the last election. We all know what those promises were: more money spent on education; more money spent on health; more money spent on the police; and more money spent on just about every area of Government activity.

The people of South Australia, for whatever reason, decided to accept the Premier on that issue but, as we have seen in the previous budget and again with this budget, that is simply not what has been delivered. This is a Government that misled its way into Parliament; it misled the public and has spent the past two budgets breaking every promise upon which it was elected. The Premier went into the last election saying that, under his leadership, there would be no new taxes. We saw that promise broken when, for example, he increased payroll tax.

Of course, the Premier hid that and simply said, 'We will include superannuation contributions by employers in the payroll tax net.' That was a clever way of saying, 'I did not introduce a new tax but I have increased the tax net in respect of payroll tax.' I believe that was a new tax. Of course, only weeks prior to this State's budget some 1 000 charges were increased—many of them well in excess of inflation. The Premier may well be able to debate a technical point that a charge and a rate of tax are two different measures, but when the people of South Australia receive a bill they must pay they are not too fussed whether it is a tax or a charge. If it costs more money, it is an added impost. I would argue that the Premier broke his commitment to the electorate when he said that there would be no new taxes.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: It was certainly misleading by the Premier. What concerns the Opposition is the state of South Australia's economy. I am a bit sick and tired, as I am sure are most South Australians, of the constant rhetoric, clichés and lying coming from this Government that all is rosy on the economic front.

A comparison of December 1993 to December 1994 shows us that this State's economy grew by .9 per cent. What did Dean Brown promise us? What did the Premier of this State promise us in the lead-up to the last election? He promised that on average we would have 4 per cent annual growth in the State's economy. What has the Premier of this State delivered? He has delivered .9 per cent economic growth. How can we have .9 per cent economic growth yet have the Deputy Premier of this State come into this Chamber and have the audacity to tell us that the hard stuff is over, that we are on the home straight and that there is a new dawn? I am not too sure what the Premier, the Treasurer and this Cabinet think we are, but we are not fools.

How can you say to the public of South Australia that we are entering a new dawn, we are on the home straight, the hard stuff has been done and we are entering into some economic nirvana when we have .9 per cent economic growth, which flies in the face of the Premier's own commitment of 4 per cent economic growth? That is not to mention the growth in employment which the Premier said would

occur and which has simply not occurred. Framing a budget is one thing: the rhetoric with which you deliver that budget is another thing. But please do not treat us like mugs and fools and deliver to us a budget that cuts the most basic of services in this State and then try to tell us that the hard stuff has been done and we are on the road to recovery, because clearly that is not the point.

We have some major structural problems in our economy. I do not believe this Government is doing sufficient to address those impediments within our economy, and I am getting a little tired of the rhetoric. Little within this budget stimulates economic development and growth; it is a budget that has clearly savagely attacked the recurrent expenditure in areas such as education. Within my own electorate I am having to deal with the prospect of seeing some two or three schools close to assist this Government to meet its financial objectives. I suppose that, being in what is notionally called a safe Labor seat, my constituents have to share an unfair burden: it is their schools which must close as we see the schools within marginal Liberal electorates not receiving the same treatment as those schools within safe Labor electorates. I suspect that, if we look closely at schools that are due to close in safe Liberal electorates, we will see that they will probably suffer a similar fate. I suppose that one of the disappointing features of Australian political life is that if you live in a marginal seat your resources are perhaps somewhat more sheltered than those within safe Liberal or Labor seats.

One of the other very disappointing features of this budget is the Government's decision to perpetrate a disgraceful raid on the public utilities of this State. I am very pleased that the Minister for Infrastructure has entered the Chamber, because this is a very important point. I remember when I was in this Chamber in another capacity and the now member for MacKillop, the former Leader of the Opposition, sat here on my side of the Chamber and absolutely slammed the former Labor Government for using ETSA as a contributor towards the income base of this State. What did Dean Brown say in his budget reply in 1992? I suspect that the only time Dean Brown as Premier and the member for MacKillop have ever agreed on a thing—

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that he should address the Premier as 'the Premier' and not by the name he was given by his parents—either that or as the member for the electorate he represents.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member's point of order is correct: it is parliamentary protocol to refer to sitting members either by their electorate or by their rank.

Mr FOLEY: I apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker; I thought the name his parents gave him was not a bad name. I suspect that the Premier and the member for MacKillop agreed at only one time in their working life, and that was when they said that the Electricity Trust of South Australia should not be used as a milch cow—a cash cow. When the member for MacKillop was Leader of the Opposition he said that was a disgraceful practice of the former Government. In his budget reply in 1992 the Premier, the member for Finnis, also said that he would not continue that practice as Premier.

What have we seen? Last year, \$150 million was ripped out of ETSA, \$50 million more than under the former Labor Government. What do we see this year? Not content with \$150 million, they whack it up to \$205 million. Just about every single cent that ETSA made in profit has been handed over to the Government. Thank you very much: let us not deliver cheaper electricity to the consumers of South

Australia; let us not make industry more competitive; let us just shift it straight across to the State coffers. And what have we done with water? A sum of \$61 million has been taken out of EWS, not delivered in cheaper water but delivered straight across to the State Treasury. So, \$270 million in taxpayers' electricity and water bills have gone to prop up Dean Brown's phoney budget. This is from a Government which said it would not use ETSA as a cash cow. You are absolute hypocrites.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thought that, having been here for two years, the honourable member would know that in this place you refer to members by their title or by their seat, not by their name.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the member for Unley had been in the House a few moments earlier, he would realise that that point of order has been taken. The member for Hart has had a lapse of memory. The Chair will accept 'Premier Brown'. To refer to someone by Christian name and surname without title, as I said before, is improper. I would remind members that the majority of members have been heard in silence. Interjections serve to incense the moment and add more heat than light.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It must be my delivery style, but whenever I speak I seem to have to battle against constant interjections. I will have to learn and refine my style. The point I was making is that, if you pull this budget to pieces and analyse it on any consistent criteria, you find that it is a budget of tricks; it is a budget of mirrors. I do not want to go on about the fact that this Government has been hypocritical, but it is a very important point, because when it was in Opposition this Government made mileage of criticising what it saw as the shortcomings of the former Government. One of its key criticisms was that the former Labor Government took \$100 million in revenue from ETSA in its last budget. Two years into this Government, the Minister for Infrastructure signed over from his two portfolio areas in excess of a quarter of a billion dollars of what we have paid for electricity and water bills to the Treasury.

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The member for MacKillop and the Premier said they would not do that, it was terrible, it was horrible and it should not be done. I give credit to the Minister for Infrastructure in that he did not say that, but his Leader did. His Leader said that it was wrong. So what did he do? He quadrupled the amount from \$100 million to a quarter of a billion dollars. I will let the people of South Australia make up their own mind. Was that misleading of this Government, was that hypocritical, or what? I will let the public make up their own mind. My job is to put facts on the table and allow some scrutiny by the public. I think it is wrong, but I will let the public make up their own mind.

The reality is that this State's economy is not flourishing. We are not in the home straight and there is no new dawn. If this Deputy Premier and Treasurer and Premier think that they can wave a magic wand and solve the State's economic woes, they are sadly wrong. Again, I appeal to Liberal members, to the many oncers, that it is about time their voice was heard within their Caucus. It is about time that we had some sense and direction from this Government, not some blind grappling of theory which has become a hallmark of this Government. Be it outsourcing, privatisation, contracting out or whatever, this Government is looking for the easy options. This Government's solution is to throw money at the problem. It is about time that it addressed the fundamental

problems of our economy and talked about a growth strategy, not winding back economic activity.

I now touch on a couple of important points relating to some elements of this Government which are of concern. In opposition, the Liberal Party accused the former Labor Government of excessive use of consultants. What does this budget show us? It shows that this Government has taken the use of consultants to a new level. Only four agencies have identified the use of consultants in this budget, and they run to \$6 million or \$7 million. I suspect that by the end of the Estimates Committees that figure will have ballooned out threefold or fourfold. That is another point of hypocrisy by this Government which, in opposition, made it very clear that it would not resort to the use of consultants.

The Opposition has been constructive and supportive of the Government's move to privatise a number of key assets: the Pipelines Authority, SGIC, the State Bank and Enterprise Investments, to name four. We have been a constructive Opposition. We are not opposed to privatisation; it is a case by case issue.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD (Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): In debating the Appropriation Bill, I ask this House and the people of South Australia to look at the 1995-96 budget against the background of where we have come from. Thanks to the inability of a Labor Government to understand the basic principles of debt control, its lack of understanding of what governing within our means meant or the ability to control the financial disasters facing South Australia, as a State we faced the biggest financial disaster ever seen in Australia. We were spending \$3 million a day in interest on the debt only.

This Liberal Government came to office in December 1993 facing the most disastrous financial situation possible, deliberately projected on the community by Labor overspending. Indeed, the Labor Government's answer to any problem which arose prior to the election was simply to promise to throw money at it or, worse still, to borrow more on the bankcard and throw money at the problem. Never was there any consideration of stopping and examining the promises being made to the electorate. There was no questioning of the rationality of providing services and, most importantly, there was a severe lack of accountability and control over the expenditure and the debt being accumulated.

In particular, I expose some of those attempts to buy the 1993 election, not by promising to rein in the debt and get the State back on track but, rather, by spending more money and running up the bankcard bill even further. I should like to give a couple of quick examples from my electorate prior to the election. As part of the election campaign I identified the need for a police presence in the Aldinga Beach area. As part of our policy we agreed to put into that community in our first term of government a community-based police station. Instead of the Labor candidate at that time saying that was a good idea and perhaps it was a balanced need for the community, the Labor Government decided to spend \$10 million on a stand alone police station at Aldinga Beach. I remind members that Aldinga Beach has 2 200 people living

in it, and \$10 million was to be spent on a police station in that community.

The other example is that I argued very strongly during the election campaign for two extra services a day for a bus within the Aldinga Beach area. We got a promise that there would be some serious consideration of that after the election, which we have done. But Labor's answer to my campaigning during that time was that it would spend \$5.5 million producing an entirely new TransAdelaide (at that time STA) bus service to Aldinga Beach. Again, I remind members that that was to service 2 200 people. Those are two examples of Labor's idea of winning an election—throwing money away. It had no idea how to control debt and that is why we are in government. Some could cynically say that the then Labor Government was making those promises knowing full well that it had no hope whatsoever of winning that election. So all it was really doing was attempting to throw dollars at the sinking ship, but sadly that sinking ship was the State of South Australia.

Three years ago the net debt compared to gross State product was 28 per cent. This figure will be below 20 per cent by the year 1997-98. The importance of debt reduction cannot be stressed enough purely in the saving of interest to this State. The sales of the State-owned assets BankSA and the Pipelines Authority have already netted for the State \$1.1 billion to be put immediately towards debt reduction, with an immediate saving of \$100 million per year in interest payments alone. I remind those opposite or in the community who might scoff at the sales or carry on about asset sales that that \$100 million per year interest saving could build the Southern Expressway, four Mount Gambier Hospitals or 100 kindergartens.

The only down side of this whole process is the absolute tragedy that there is a necessity to pay back this debt and thereby put money into interest payments and not into the much needed services and capital works in our State. State debt grew from \$30 million in 1950, when the debt was paying for infrastructure, to a massive \$900 million in 1990. This budget is introduced with no new taxes and no increased taxes, and this is with the maintenance of major capital works and services in South Australia.

We hear much from Labor members about the costs that are included in the *Gazette* prior to the budget and the claims that we have introduced taxes by a back-door method. I remind Opposition members that when they were in government they increased charges across the board prior to every budget and they were announced via the *Gazette*—exactly the same as has happened in this budget period. It is the normal process for those charges to be announced via this method and in line with inflation.

Creating new jobs is a high priority for the Government. The capital works program will support 18 000 jobs for South Australians. In my electorate, I have been involved directly in the past few weeks in the official opening of several new businesses, such as the Seaford Rise Garden Centre and the SNAP printing business by Bob and Tod Bache on Beach Road. There is a massive building expansion going on at Wayne Phillis Ford on Beach Road, the Seaford District Centre is building an expanded stand alone video and hardware store, and a new bank is about to locate at Seaford. We have just seen the official opening of a new Hungry Jacks at Seaford, and we are about to have several new major office and service buildings built at Seaford, including Pizza Hut, a family restaurant, doctors, chemist and Barnacle Bill's.

All this activity is happening in my electorate because of the added confidence engendered by the improved climate under this Government. Keating has had a good try at destroying the growth by increasing interest rates, but luckily, with the Federal election just around the corner, even he has seen the wisdom of not continuing to push up interest rates. The factor of a 20 per cent lower per capita taxation in South Australia compared to other major States is an important reason for attracting new investment and jobs.

In this budget, a new payroll tax rebate for trainee wages will be introduced from 1 July 1995. This means that employers will be able to claim a rebate equivalent to 98 per cent of the payroll tax paid on trainee wages. A total of \$41.5 million has been earmarked in the 1995-96 budget for the economic development program. Funding is earmarked for the upgrading of the Adelaide Airport, tourism infrastructure and marketing, continuing the South Australian exploration initiative and \$1.5 million to the South Australian Development Council. Some \$27 million has been earmarked to help businesses achieve international competitiveness, lift the level of business investment and enhance the State's business climate. A total of \$750 000 has been allocated to support regional development boards.

These initiatives are all about getting people investing and getting people into work. It is blatantly obvious that the programs put in place by the Federal Government have failed dismally, and our programs are therefore greatly needed. This budget gives education a boost in my electorate of Kurna: 8 per cent of the capital works program will be spent in that electorate this year. In addition to the money spent on capital works within the boundaries of Kurna, children in those electorates of the southern areas will all benefit from \$1.5 million worth of redevelopment at the Willunga High School which will provide a new science and art facility block and replace the existing timber buildings. Those timber buildings have been there quite some time, because they were there when I was a student at Willunga High School. So, the work this Government has proposed is urgently needed.

The children who attend the Christies Beach High School will also gain from a major new capital works program worth about \$4 million at that high school. The member for Reynell has worked extremely hard to acquire that. The Christies Beach High School is one in the southern area that has been ignored completely by the previous Labor Government, and this upgrade is very much needed. Students at Christies Beach will also have a new senior specialist facility and the development of a new junior senior secondary school campus complex. In Kurna, the finalisation of the amalgamation of the upper and lower primary schools at O'Sullivan Beach will be completed.

Other major works within the electorate of Kurna include the commencement of the Seaford 6-12 school which will be ready for years 7, 8 and 9 in 1996. Stage 1A is to cost \$5.9 million. As part of the Seaford 6-12 school, a joint facility for recreation is to be built, and associated with that will be construction of the Seaford District Child-Care Centre valued at \$367 000. Aldinga Beach is a real winner from this budget with \$500 000 allocated to a new preschool in the area. This is a recognition of the continued growth and excessive numbers that have been enrolling in the current Aldinga Kindergarten. Bronnie Goodman has attempted to provide places for all those children who wish to enrol at Aldinga, but the situation is well above capacity.

I am particularly pleased that our Government is recognising long-suffering areas such as Aldinga, Christies Beach and

O'Sullivan Beach. For too long they have been the poor cousins in the southern area. The Noarlunga campus stage 2 of TAFE is due for completion in December 1995. The project is well worth a visit. At this stage it includes a two storey extension of 5 000 square metres and already houses hairdressing, hospitality, business studies and computing. We also recently announced, in conjunction with Dr Tom Atherton, who represents the Seaford Ecumenical Mission, and Richard Hicks, who represents Noarlunga Health Services, a joint facility to be built as the Ecumenical Centre-Seaford Health Centre. This is an absolute first for the churches in Australia and is certainly a first in a joint facility for Australia. Those involved in the long negotiations over the past 12 months are to be congratulated for their foresight and cooperation to achieve this magnificent result. Seaford will be watched by the world as this project is being built.

In terms of EWS and ETSA infrastructure improvements in my electorate, a BOO (Build, Own and Operate) scheme will commence at Aldinga Beach. This project was promised three times by the previous Labor Government and I attended each of the three announcements in three successive elections. It was not until this Government was elected that we will finally have an Aldinga Beach sewage treatment works. This project has a total cost of \$5.8 million, with \$1.8 million budgeted this year. This amount of money will consolidate the land and ensure that the contract can proceed. It is anticipated the successful tenderer will soon be chosen for work to commence late this year. Completion of this project is expected in September 1996 and this will overcome the need for tanking sewage to Moana which then goes on to the Christies Beach treatment works.

A total of \$4 million has been earmarked for major rehabilitation of the Christies Beach waste water treatment plant. The overall work at Christies Beach will cost \$9.5 million and is due to be totally completed by 1999. This money is intended to be for the upgrade and replacement of gas compressors, aeration blowers, clarifiers and outfall. Two large air compressors at a cost of \$1.8 million were installed last year. The two additional clarifiers separate remaining traces of treated solids and produce clear high quality recyclable water from the plant. A feasibility study is about to be conducted on a range of options for sewage treatment from the Christies Beach area, including the feasibility of pumping raw sewage from Seaford to the Aldinga area for treatment.

As part of the Government's water quality objectives, the filtered water tank at Myponga filtration plant will be completed at a cost of \$700 000. This will ensure better quality water for the constituents of Kurna. Ongoing sewerage projects include the continuation of connections at Aldinga Beach (\$300 000) and the Old Noarlunga township system (\$334 000). The member for Mawson should be extremely pleased to hear that, because his district will benefit from the work done by previous members for that connection at Old Noarlunga. This provision at Old Noarlunga will eliminate septic tank pollution on the Onkaparinga and was a key election promise of this Liberal Government. As well, \$700 000 has been allocated this year to allow investigation and implementation of strategies for operational upgrade to meet the environmental standards of the EPA.

I am also particularly pleased that undergrounding of power lines is continuing under this Government, and money for work on Gulfview Road and Sydney Crescent will be provided this financial year. This will certainly boost the

attractiveness of the area and, as they are part of the mainstreet program requirements this year, we are looking forward to that work adding to the enjoyment of that area.

With respect to law and order, the claim that the number of police on the beat will be decreased is patently untrue and is another example of Labor's lies. However, the facts are that, as part of our election promise, we promised that 200 extra police would be on the beat by the end of our first term of Government, and this will be achieved. Already 135 additional operational police have been appointed since the election. This has been achieved by redeploying non-operational police back to operational duties. Under the previous inept Labor Government, South Australia spent \$26 million, or 15 per cent, more than other States to produce a similar service. Like all other departments, Labor let the Police Department continue to spend too much to produce the goods. As part of the budget, the South Australian Police Department will reduce non-operational police by 185 positions, including 65 by natural attrition by June 1996.

In the capital works program, \$700 million has been allocated to the Darlington police complex. A backlog of areas awaiting Neighbourhood Watch programs will be eliminated by June 1996. It is particularly pleasing for my electorate, which has been waiting for some time for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme for Christies Beach, Port Noarlunga and Noarlunga Downs. Sellicks Beach and Seaford Rise have also petitioned the Neighbourhood Watch people, waiting for those areas to be serviced as well. The latest Neighbourhood Watch area in Kaurana is Aldinga Beach, and that has been working really well. It is very successful and has been well received.

This budget has allocated \$1.6 million for crime prevention strategies, and there will be an annual allocation for the next three years. A total of \$176 000 has been allocated to the Youth Court and will benefit children who have suffered physical and psychological abuse. Two extra care and protection coordinators will be appointed. Family care meetings have exceeded demand greatly and will benefit from this money. These family care meetings aim to provide an opportunity for a child's family and the care coordinators to make informed decisions about caring for the children. The juvenile justice legislation has seen 224 conferences set up. Under the Young Offenders Scheme, offences can be dealt with through a family conference to resolve issues and impose special requirements on young offenders. The Darlington police complex will be commenced in August 1995 and completed by May 1996.

A new complex of 4 100 square metres will be constructed on a new site that will house the regional command and support services, divisional administration, patrol base, traffic unit, CIB, breath analysis unit, detention facilities and amenities. Accommodation will also be provided for the Traffic Division, Southern and the Operational Response Group to be relocated from Thebarton Barracks. In contrast to the claims of the budget cuts to police numbers, consider that Labor claimed it was increasing police numbers while in power; but how was it doing that? It was actually taking non-operational and non-qualified members of the department such as carpenters and mechanics and calling them police officers. They had no police training and did no policing in the community but were included in the numbers that Labor counted as police. This is an example of blatant deceit, and we are addressing this.

With regard to the misrepresentation about our budget cuts to law and order, in 1993-94 Labor cut the police budget by

\$3 million and did nothing to put in place strategic plans to overcome the overspending and management problems. When a Liberal Government was elected in December 1993 we actually had to top up Labor's budget of that year by \$4 million to overcome problems created by that Party. In 1994-95 we increased the police budget by \$14.5 million and in this financial year we increase police by \$9 million, plus an extra \$1.4 million for the police band. The Leader of the Opposition scoffed today at the \$11 million added to the capital budget for police in this budget. This addresses items such as police stations, vehicles and equipment. These items are essential for the safe and efficient policing of our State.

Our electorate recently had the joy of receiving a personal letter from the Leader of the Opposition lamenting crime and vandalism in our State. The bottom line in this letter was not to offer any solution but, rather, to ask the electorate what it thought we should do to overcome the problem. If the Leader of the Opposition thinks that more money is the answer, how can he explain the crime levels that never improved under Labor's administration, when their solution was simply to throw money at all problems? I saw several of the answers that were sent to the Leader of the Opposition that came through my electorate office, when members of the electorate gave me the courtesy of a copy. If the Leader of the Opposition were honest he would admit that the five or six returns he received mostly told him to nick off; that he had had his turn and that his Party was a joke, both in performance and in raising the issue.

That summarises the members of the Opposition: they are a joke; they are not taken seriously; and the old game of resorting to fear campaigns is well learned and hard for them to give up. Well should they remember that a member in the other place, who was one of the campaign leaders for the ALP, was recently found guilty by the courts in relation to false election material. I suggest that much more of the ALP material that goes out from this place could qualify for similar treatment. I support the Bill.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): As other members have said, from the time the Treasurer first stated it and on the number of occasions upon which the Premier has restated it since the introduction of this budget, the whole object has been to reduce State debt, to retire that debt which is a burden around our necks—or so it has been and will continue to be until it is gone—and, in the process, to improve the efficiency with which the public sector delivers essential services to this State. It is a credit not just to the Treasurer, although indeed a credit to him, but to the Premier and to all Government Ministers that these objectives of reducing State debt have been achieved in an incredibly rapid time, much faster than the Audit Commission believed was possible in the recommendations made when it examined the State's finances shortly after we came to office.

I note that the underlying deficit in the non-commercial sector of the State's finances will be \$10 million lower than that which was estimated when we brought in the budget 12 months ago; that is, it will be \$265 million, not \$275 million. I note also that the public sector debt as a proportion of gross State product, about which I will have something further to say shortly, will fall to about 19 per cent or lower in the year 1997-98. We must acknowledge, as the Treasurer pointed out in his budget speech, that just three years ago it was 28 per cent. That is an incredible reduction: 10 out of 28 is an incredible achievement, and it is for that reason that I have placed on the record my congratulations to the entire Cabinet

and to the entire State Public Service for having accepted that there was a responsibility confronting South Australia that had to be accepted as a challenge and for making innovative alterations in the way in which we provide for the management of the delivery of services in South Australia.

I guess that, of all Ministers, none has been more outstanding in grasping that responsibility than the Minister for Infrastructure himself, in the way in which he has gone about ensuring that the basic services are continued but that the costs of delivering them are more accountable and cheaper to the taxpayer of South Australia. We note that, by the end of 1995-96, the South Australian public sector will be in surplus to the tune of \$758 million. During 1994-95, investment is estimated to have increased in real terms by 22 per cent to over \$2 500 million. We note also that at the same time job advertisements are 23 per cent higher than they were last year, with all sectors of the business community playing a part in that expansion of job advertisements. At the present time we do not have the independent audit assessment of the rate at which our State's economy has grown during the past 18 months and, in particular, during the past quarter. Therefore, it is astonishing to me that the members of the Opposition, as well as some commentators out in the public domain who should know better, have been saying that our economy has grown at only .1 per cent or some other fictitious figure they have plucked from the air.

When the figures are known I am quite sure that they will be surprised at the extent to which there has been growth, and that growth will have occurred where it is needed, namely, in the business sector of the South Australian economy, whether they be primary, manufacturing or tertiary industries. If we look at what the Government is doing about economic development we will note that the South Australian Economic Development Council, an innovation of this Government, will receive increased funding to enhance its role in establishing key strategic directions for the State's economic growth, and that the Economic Development Authority will have a recurrent expenditure program of a little over \$86 million. The emphasis of that work will be on improving the international competitiveness of our export enterprises.

It is a pity that we do not have the same kind of commitment from our Federal Government since, if we were to have that commitment, it would well understand the stupidity of continuing to increase wage payments generally in the economy when the capacity of the economy to produce everything it consumes is in deficit. In other words, we cannot produce everything we buy.

Every month we find ourselves with a balance of trade deficit, and in recent months it has been over \$2 000 million. That is not a good advertisement for responsible management of the country's economy, and the Federal Government should be ashamed of itself. It ought to take a leaf from the book of the South Australian Government. There is no necessity to be confrontationalist at all, but there is an urgent need to reform this country's labour laws to ensure that we are competitive. In continuing to look at what will help economic development in this State, we see that the Government has kept up to its rhetoric—if one can call it rhetoric; indeed it was a claim—contrary to what the member for Hart said. We will spend \$20.5 million on the extension of the Adelaide Airport runway. That is vital if we are to become reliable suppliers to the export markets for perishable products in the rapidly expanding markets in East Asia from as far north as Japan and Korea and as near to us as the

expanding regional economies within the Indonesian archipelago.

We also note that some focus on research as to where tourists have been coming from to this State has resulted in the Tourism Commission's deciding to establish an office in Frankfurt, giving South Australia marketing representation in Europe for the first time. That is not only in consequence of where visitors are coming from to this State and this nation but also in consequence of the numbers of tourists leaving Europe (and in particular Germany) and going overseas to see another part of the world. All we need to do is achieve a marginal increase in our percentage of travellers departing from that source to boost our numbers quite dramatically. Along with other market research that needs to be done we ought to look at the numbers of people who are coming to Australia from other destinations, or at least other sources, for their recreational leave purposes. For example, the number of tourists coming to Australia from Korea is growing quite rapidly, yet South Australia's percentage of that expansion is quite abysmal. We have not yet received into South Australia 2 000 visitors and are unlikely to receive that number this year, yet the whole of Australia has received already over 160 000 visitors from Korea.

We are attracting only one-eightieth of the total number of Koreans visiting Australia, and that is mainly because they do not know about us. They are at least as enthusiastic in the way they spend funds on their holidays as the Japanese or the Germans. I commend that as an object to which the people doing the research within the Economic Development Authority and the Tourism Commission should direct their attention to discover just where our visitors could be coming from compared to where they are coming from. We should more effectively target those markets which clearly exist but which we have not yet penetrated. The views I am expressing are shared by the staff in the Australian Embassy in Seoul.

I refer to other high priority projects where we can look easily at the information technology which will include that of development in spatial data and electronic services business. That is in consequence of the Government's review of the MFP which is now being refocussed. We have seen things in that area speed up quite dramatically. There is a \$900 000 outlay for commencement of the restructuring program on Eyre Peninsula guided by the task force which is developing a regional strategy to ensure future viability of that region. I draw attention to this point because I believe the same consideration needs to be given to people and the natural assets which exist in the region between the Riverland and the South-East, which I represent. That has been ignored without cause. There is an incredible opportunity for South Australia there, given the interest which could be generated in the production which could arise from proper use of the massive amount of underground water available from the Murray Basin, which underlies the Mallee.

I turn now to other matters of interest to people in my electorate. The South Australian Research and Development Institute will complete the construction of both the pig and poultry production units at the Roseworthy Campus of the University of Adelaide. As a member of the Council of the University of Adelaide as well as a member representing rural producers I commend the Government for persisting with that project and seeing it through. We are also allocating \$3.3 million to continue the exploration and resource processing initiative which was very encouraging in its results during the past 12 months. I am sure it will contribute to a

further increase in the expenditure on exploration from the private sector during this coming year.

When we look at the budget strategy we note that the Government, during its first two budgets, reduced net debt to the gross State product by 5 percentage points. In that ratio it was 27 per cent to 22 per cent, and it is still falling. In the 1995-96 budget we see a move into current surplus, and forward estimates show that that surplus will increase. At the same time we see the Government making substantial progress in tackling what was otherwise the fiscal time bomb of unfunded superannuation liabilities. That was ignored by previous Governments led by Premiers Bannon and Arnold. Indeed, that is the kindest way you could describe their indifference. They probably deliberately increased the unfunded liability, because in the process it allowed them to divert funds to pet projects which were more in keeping with their penchant for things.

The Government's first two budgets provided \$301 million towards meeting past service liabilities. There are some aspects of particular interest which need to be underlined in the course of responding to the Treasurer's remarks. I draw attention to the per capita State taxation in South Australia which is well over 20 per cent lower than in Victoria and New South Wales. If we look at some items portfolio by portfolio we note that, contrary to the propaganda—talk about clichés and rhetoric from the member for

Hart—of the Labor Party, this year we spent \$1.14 billion on primary and secondary education and children's services. Despite the budget announcements last year, the most recently published Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicates that South Australia has the lowest pupil/teacher ratio of all States in both primary and secondary education. The level of school administrative support staff in Government schools also continues to exceed the national average. It simply does not stack up for members of the Labor Party to carp both out in the public as well as in here about the way in which this Government has cut education—what drive!

We see that there is a further \$2.5 million in all that for early year's strategy, which includes the cornerstones program, to identify and help young people with learning difficulties, and the introduction of basic skills testing for all three-year and five-year students.

I commend to members the Treasurer's speech in delivering the budget to the House. In it, they can discover for themselves, if they did not hear him at the time, the effect of the matters to which he drew attention. But the matters that concern the people whom I represent I should like to illustrate in the course of my remarks now. Mr Speaker, I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a table about public sector net debt and another one on economic activity. I assure you, Sir, that they are purely statistical.

Leave granted.

Public Sector Net Debt (1)						
At 30 June		1995 Estimated Outcome	1996 Budget	1997 Forward Estimate	1998 Forward Estimate	1999 Forward Estimate
Net Debt						
Real, excluding asset sales	\$m.	9 075	9 126	8 974	8 671	8 394
Real, including asset sales	\$m	8 598	7 657	7 446	7 146	6 917
As percentage of GSP	%	25.2	21.8	20.6	19.2	18.0
Net debt plus unfunded superannuation						
Real, excluding asset sales	\$m	13 503	13 548	13 356	12 975	12 570
Real, including asset sales	\$m	13 026	12 079	11 828	11 449	11 093
As percentage of GSP	%	38.2	34.3	32.7	30.7	28.9

(1) June 1995 prices.

Economic Activity, Budget Parameters						
		1994-95 Estimated Outcome	1995-96 Budget	1996-97 Parameter	1997-98 Parameter	1998-99 Parameter
Real GSP growth						
Total	%	2¼	3	3	3	3
Excluding public consumption expenditure	%	2¾	3½	3¾	3½	3½

Mr LEWIS: We note that, in 1995, net debt as a percentage of GSP has fallen from more than 28 per cent to 25.2 per cent. By 1999, using very conservative figures in the formula, it will have fallen to 18 per cent. We also note in the first table that net debt plus unfunded superannuation from 1995 will fall from 38.2 per cent to 28.9 per cent of GSP by 1999. We can see in the table on economic activity, budget parameters, the real gross State product growth in percentage terms increasing from 2.75 per cent to 3.5 per cent during that period. I have incorporated that table for the deliberate reason that that figure is very conservative. This State will expand, through the investments to which I drew attention, at a faster

rate than that and at a faster rate than the other States under the initiatives of this Government and the lower taxation regime that businesses locating here could expect to pay.

If we look at taxes that the State has been collecting, we see that the revenue sources will continue to increase over the years to come as they have increased above the estimates during the coming year. It needs to be noted that the total of taxes, fees and fines in the budget came in at \$1.938 billion but, when we add the surplus from non-commercial public trading enterprises and income from commercial public trading enterprises, we see that the revenues obtained are pretty constant, at \$2.453 billion for the past year and

\$2.446 billion for this year.

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

Mr BUCKBY (Light): I support this Appropriation Bill and I commend the Treasurer on the budget that he has presented. I also commend the Public Service. This State is currently having to undergo a massive restructuring. It is because of the State debt that we have to undertake that restructuring. The Public Service is to be commended on the way in which it is accepting the restructuring.

The budget continues the Government's strategy to eliminate the recurrent deficit—a \$350 million deficit when we started in office. It was reduced at the end of June this year to \$265 million, and this budget reduces it to \$114 million. It is essential that that is done, because we cannot continue to spend more than we are earning. That only adds to the State debt and continues to add to our interest bill.

Many people ask why we need to reduce that deficit. It is not an easy exercise; it is somewhat painful. At the 1993 election, we came to office and said to people that that is exactly the program that we would deliver, that it would be painful, that we would end up with people complaining about the cuts that we would have to undertake, and that we accept. It is part of responsible Government, and it is part of the job we were elected to do, which is to get this State back on track.

Why do we need to reduce the debt? One of the major reasons is, first, the amount of interest that we are paying on that debt. If we look at the recurrent budget of \$350 million and adding to the bill each year, we see that we are paying \$35 million in interest alone just on that recurrent debt, and that is not on the \$8.5 billion as a result of the previous Government's debt and in particular the State Bank.

The second reason that we need to reduce that recurrent deficit is that the Federal Government told the State Government in no uncertain terms that, unless we reduced State spending, the final payout of some \$200 million as part of the State Bank bail-out would not be delivered to the State. As a result of that, we could not afford not to receive that money. That is the second reason that we had to bring our debt under control and to return to responsible Government within this State.

The third reason is our credit rating. Under the previous Government, especially with the State Bank bail-out and the debt, our credit rating by international agencies had slipped. As a result of that, we are paying greater interest on debt because the State is seen as a higher risk to lenders. By reducing our debt we improve that credit rating and, as a result, the funds that we borrow become available to the Government at a lower rate of interest. As a result of that, we not only save interest on the debt but also, when we renegotiate loans, the interest that we pay is lower, so there is a second tier of interest saving.

The final reason for getting the State budget back under control is the message to business regarding the responsibility of the Government and the message to business in Australia that this State is finally back on the road to responsible financial management and is open for business and to attract business rather than to hinder business in this State.

When we came to office, superannuation funding was one issue that was highlighted. The Audit Commission identified unfunded liabilities of \$4.4 billion. This budget allocates \$274 million to the accruing new service superannuation liabilities and \$147 million in respect of past service liabilities

related to agencies not having their own provision for superannuation.

I refer now to asset sales. It is interesting to note that, in the Federal budget, asset sales appeared in the recurrent budget. Federal asset sales were not taken off the national debt. Instead, that money was poured into the recurrent budget—dubious accounting, one would have to say, at the least. This budget takes the responsible attitude that proceeds from the asset sales that have been undertaken and that will be undertaken this year will reduce the State debt and will not enter the recurrent budget. Many farmers and many small businesses, when they have found themselves in high debt and have had to restructure, have done exactly that. They have paid off their debt and reduced their interest payments and the servicing of their debt to a manageable level.

If we think back to the late 1980s and early 1990s and the impact of the share market slump in 1987, we recall that Robert Holmes a Court was one of the few people in Australia—unlike Mr Alan Bond—who realised his financial position was overexposed for the market. He took a sensible position and reduced his assets, selling a number of assets particularly in the United States and, as a result, brought his debt under control. His wife now operates his businesses and has a profitable and stable future. We can compare that situation with other entrepreneurs in Australia who decided to ignore the signals and, as a result, have become bankrupt or have taken flight to a Spanish island.

There is no difference for this Government. The sale of assets in the past 12 months has included Enterprise Investments for \$16 million, the South Australian Asset Management Corporation, with a return of capital of \$65 million and the Pipelines Authority of South Australia for \$290 million. In 1995-96 the budget has forecast that asset sales are estimated to yield \$956 million and, as was announced by the Treasurer and the Premier just last week, the sale of BankSA to Advance Bank for \$730 million was a very acceptable outcome, and I applaud the shadow Treasurer, the member for Playford, for the comments that I heard on radio when he commended the Government and supported the sale of the bank.

Also on our books is the sale of SGIC during this financial year and, as the Premier indicated last week, the \$730 million from the sale of BankSA will go towards reducing the debt and be paid across in August this year. Likewise, with the sale of SGIC, which will take place later this year, the amount we receive will also reduce the State debt. How sad it is that we have been placed in the position of having to sell these assets to resolve the State's debt problem. It really does hark back to the management of the State Bank at the time and the difficult position that that management has placed us in. Also, we cannot overlook the head in the sand policy of the Bannon Government during that time when warning signals were issued not only by the Reserve Bank but from officers in Treasury to Premier Bannon. He decided to ignore that and, as a result, we are paying that debt.

Three years ago public sector debt was about 28 per cent of GSP. By 1997-98 this Government will reduce it to 19 per cent of GSP. What does this mean for our economy? As I said earlier, it means lower interest payments. It also means, as was said in the Premier's election speech, that we do not want to raise taxes because taxes in South Australia were already extremely high. Our whole idea is to keep taxes to a minimum so that we can attract business back into this State and restart the growth of South Australia once again.

Why should this be the aim? It is because in South Australia we face greater transportation costs: most of the goods that we produce in South Australia are exported either overseas or interstate, in particular to New South Wales or Victoria, the major markets. To be competitive we have to produce at 10 per cent lower cost than the eastern States. That is the regime that Sir Thomas Playford established in the 1950s and 1960s and it is that competitive edge that we have lost. That was lost during the 1970s reign of the Dunstan Labor Government and in the 1980s reign of the Bannon Government. Through continual tax increases, our businesses became uncompetitive. Businesses have moved from South Australia interstate because of the lower costs of conducting business and we need look only at FID charges in South Australia compared with those in other States. I know a number of people who run businesses in South Australia who bank in Queensland because Queensland FID charges are so much lower. It saves them thousands of dollars and I do not blame them for doing it: it is the result of the Labor Government's policy of saying, 'Let's slug business because business can afford it.'

Gross State product is expected to grow under this budget by 3 per cent and much has been made by the Opposition of the .1 per cent growth indicated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics' figures of not that long ago. Some blinkered vision is involved there, because the Opposition overlooks the fact that South Australia was in the grip of one of the worst droughts this State has seen and, as a result, production in this State was lower in 1994 than in any other year, certainly going back to 1967 when the other significant drought in recent times occurred, and also in 1983.

As a result of that situation one can only expect that gross State product will be lower; that makes common sense. I would have thought that was fairly obvious. Further, because of the drought, the multiplier effect of farmers' capacity to spend does not occur. As members know, when the country does well, the impact reverberates to the city because of farmers' spending what they earn. As a result, employment is created in the city as well as in the country.

There are many positive aspects to the budget, particularly in the capital works program, to which I now refer briefly. We have a continued commitment to the Bolivar-Virginia pipeline. I attended the Virginia Expo only three weeks ago and, in talking to market gardeners at the expo, I found that they are extremely optimistic at the expectation of the pipeline becoming reality. Not only will it deliver a guaranteed source of water to those market gardeners but it will allow the expansion of their production and, as a result, the expansion of the export industry for vegetables sold to the Asian market.

Another project is the \$30.8 million allocation to the MFP, part of that going to the Barker inlet. Members should look at that area. The Economic and Finance Committee visited the Barker inlet project only a few weeks ago. That excellent project will clean up water entering Barker inlet, which is a particularly important breeding ground for fish in South Australia, and that project will yield benefits in the longer term. On a local basis in the electorate of Light, a number of capital works projects are going ahead. I am pleased to see the budget allocation of \$1.35 million to the Mallala Primary School redevelopment, which has been on the books for about four years. By that I mean it has been talked about for four years. My discussions with the facilities section in the department indicate that building will commence in August and that the redevelopment will be completed by February

next year. The Mallala community is looking forward to that, because the Mallala District Council is the fastest growing district council in population terms in South Australia. I can assure members that there is a strong demand for primary school spaces in both the Mallala and Two Wells areas.

Also, I note the continued funding for development of Hewitt Primary School in this budget, as in last year's budget. Four weeks ago preparation of the oval was started and that is continuing. It is excellent to see, because it will deliver a boost to Gawler where, again, because of the growth of the Gawler area, significant spaces are required for primary schools. I point out that \$3.6 million has been allocated for Hewitt Primary School. Slightly outside of my electorate, the Tanunda Primary School relocation is extremely welcome. The sons and daughters of many of my constituents attend that primary school, which has also been long awaited and will be welcomed by that community.

The Roseworthy Pig and Poultry Production Institute has been mentioned; that involves a relocation of the Northfield Pig Research Unit and the Parafield Poultry Research Unit. The value in this budget is some \$4.04 million, and I commend the Minister for Primary Industries' approving this relocation. It will locate all agriculture research into three areas—the Waite Institute, the Roseworthy Campus and Turretfield. I also note that \$2 million has been allocated for a resort development at the Barossa Country Club. This project has been spoken about for quite sometime. It involves accommodation facilities, small convention facilities and a golf course, which will be a boost to tourism in the Barossa. I also note continued funding for the Greenock to Truro section of the Sturt Highway, which will commence in October 1995.

As I said, in 1993 the State's net debt as a percentage of GSP was 28 per cent, which was 8 per cent above the national average of all other States; the tax burden *per capita* was \$25 greater in South Australia than for all other States; Government expenditure *per capita* in South Australia was \$100 greater than the average of all other States; and the growth in this State was six points below that in all other States. The responsibility of this Government is to restore the community's confidence in the State's financial integrity.

If this is not done, South Australia risks being consigned to permanent national and international obscurity. This budget moves towards reinstating that commercial confidence in South Australia. We are already seeing it in the number of businesses making inquiries to return to South Australia, recognising that we are open for business. We must face up to the fact that, while we may like a Rolls Royce budget, unfortunately, at this stage we cannot afford it. We cannot afford any longer to continue the spending of the previous Government.

The bankcard has run out, as other members have said. A social restructuring and realignment must occur to recognise that, while we have been an extremely rich State over the past 30 and 40 years, especially since the war and the redevelopment by Sir Thomas Playford, unfortunately the fiasco of the State Bank has dropped us well down the list to a position where we cannot continue to fund at the previous level. We must wind back the debt and that is this Government's first priority. It is what this Government said it would do prior to the 1993 election, it is what this Government is sticking to and, painful as it is, it is what we must continue to stick to. I support this Bill.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Giles): The speech introducing this budget is probably the silliest budget speech I have heard in my 20 years in this Parliament.

The Hon. S.J. Baker: You should read some of your budget speeches.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I gave only one. I am not sure who wrote it, but I know that the bulk of it would have been prepared by Treasury. Whoever put in the flowery bits did the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, no service whatsoever. This silly talk about 'new dawns'—for goodness sake. It is only that we have a paper such as the *Advertiser* that a Minister could get away with a silly line like that. I do not blame the clowns who actually wrote the line, but I do blame the Deputy Premier for not scratching it out straight away. He said, 'We are in the home straight.' The week before it was all doom and gloom but now, apparently, we are in the home straight. I have never heard anything so silly in my life.

Of all the speeches given to date, something that the member for Unley said caught my ear. He was, in his usual way, pontificating and lecturing everyone about all manner of things but, in particular, he talked about the state of the economy inherited by John Bannon. It is strange, I know. The Deputy Premier is looking puzzled. I was puzzled too, because I thought that the member for Unley might have done a little bit of homework and not talked the nonsense he did. The basis of what the member for Unley was saying was that John Bannon inherited this tremendously vibrant economy and the State finances were all in good order.

Of course, the position was very little different from the position inherited by this Government in 1993. The level of debt was approximately the same. I did not hear anyone, with the possible exception of me, saying that the debt was too high. I did not hear anyone in the Liberal Government rambling on about debt during the three years it was in government. I actually think they were quite right not to, but it was pretty well the same level as it is today. There is no great difference. The member for Unley should have said that the Bannon Government, over the next eight years, got that level of debt down—which I thought was a reasonable kind of a level, something around 24 per cent or 25 per cent—to 16 per cent of gross State product. A commendable achievement, everyone would say.

That huge reduction in debt should be coupled with the fact that, when we went out of office, South Australia had the best student-teacher ratio in the whole of Australia; the highest paid teachers in the whole of Australia; the highest paid nurses in the whole of Australia; more spending *per capita* in health than anywhere else in Australia; the highest number and the highest paid police *per capita* in Australia, and I will come back to that in a moment; the lowest public transport fares in the whole of Australia; and the second lowest level of taxation in the whole of Australia. As I say, all those things occurred whilst the Bannon Government was reducing the debt from about 25 per cent—around the level it is today—to 16 per cent. A remarkable achievement.

John Bannon was known as a Treasurer who did not like to spend anything at all. During those boom years in the 1980s, everything which came in over the odds and which he did not feel was necessary to spend was squirreled away. Unfortunately, the State Bank took the lot. If the member for Unley was correct in saying that the Bannon Government inherited from the Tonkin Government a State in good financial shape, so did this Government from the Bannon Government, because the level of debt was approximately the same.

The bank has gone. I do not want to rehash the whole issue of the bank, but I want to say two things in passing. I congratulate the Treasurer on continuing to the letter the policies that I put in place when I was Treasurer for the reconstruction, change of name and sale of the bank. The program that was in place was followed by the Treasurer to the letter. I commend him for that; it was a very wise decision indeed. The same thing is occurring for the SGIC, and I am also very pleased about that. A lot of work and thought went into the reconstruction of those financial institutions, and we got it right. I know the Treasurer will agree with me that it is a pity that with the bank going and also SGIC (not that it was ever a great earner) it has reduced our income from that quarter and is a further narrowing of our tax base.

When we look at the budget papers and what has been contributed to the budget, particularly by ETSA but also by EWS due to the work that we started with the Government Agencies Review Group (the so-called GARG exercise), we see that, due to several thousand ETSA and EWS employees being offered and taking separation packages, there is now considerable income flow into the Treasury. That is to be applauded, because the biggest financial problem that State Governments have, apart from not having enough money, is the narrowness of the base; if anything goes wrong, it all goes wrong together.

It is a great pity that a couple of the financial institutions have gone. The Pipelines Authority has also gone. I know the pros and cons of doing that, but the income stream has gone. We are not paying as much interest, but the income stream has gone and again it is a narrowing of the State's tax base. At some time in the future that will be a huge embarrassment to a Government. We can argue about whether we ought to have pipelines or banks or all those things, but at least they broadened our income base and gave us some stability. That is history. Somebody will have to deal with that narrowing of the tax base at some time in the future, and it will be a problem, because there is no sympathy from the Commonwealth whatsoever. It is very happy for our tax base to narrow, and it would be very happy for State Governments to fall over. I am not arguing the merits of whether there should be State Governments, but the fact is that State Governments exist, and they ought to have the wherewithal to deliver the services that people quite properly demand.

I want to deal very briefly with two issues which come out of this budget and the financial management by the Government and which concern my electorate in particular. The issue of the clothing factory got considerable publicity over recent weeks. I think the publicity was unfortunate and that the briefings that the Treasurer obviously had were incorrect. I do not blame the Treasurer; he did not personally go out there and sell the clothing factory, wind it up, change the locks on the door and pay people off. The Treasurer was obviously relying on information he was given. He passed on that information to the *Advertiser*, again, quite properly, but the falsehoods and mistakes were repeated.

The basis of the news articles was that the jobs were there for the previous employees and that they chose not to take them. That was the basis of the story in the *Advertiser* and the TV news services. That was absolutely and completely wrong and caused a great deal of hurt to those former employees of the State Clothing Corporation, especially given that we are dealing with a provincial city such as Whyalla, a relatively small community where everybody knows everybody else. After fighting all these years to keep the clothing factory, to have headlines saying that the employees did not want to

work was a great pity, and it damaged their reputations as well as making them very angry. They responded to that *Advertiser* article with a letter to the editor, dated 30 May, as follows:

Dear Sir, I would like to comment on Greg Kelton's article in the *Advertiser* on Tuesday 23 May 1995, about the State Clothing Factory in Whyalla. He stated, 'The lights are on but no-one's staying to do the work.' Maybe he should have asked the staff why! Also the comments from Stephen Baker—'Staff exodus a bit disappointing'. Our shop steward, Mr Steven Brennan (State Secretary of the Allied Clothing and Footwear Trade Union) and myself met with Mr Baker on 23 September 1994, regarding trying to save our jobs. Mr Baker stated in no uncertain terms that the Government did not want a clothing factory, that it was a burden and costing taxpayers money. I wonder what he thinks we are. He told us then that a consortium of three people were vying for the sale of the factory, but could not give us any more information as it was in the hands of Government task force management, who obviously did not keep him fully informed, but that we would be pleased with the outcome.

Then in March 1995 we were told that the factory was being sold to Mr Tony Fraser of Dixon Clothing Adelaide, and the signing would be on 30 June 1995. The big blow came when the sale was rushed through sooner. We were told two weeks before the final date that we were going on 19 May, not 30 June, and guess what, Mr Baker, no jobs. The new owner only wanted three people as that is all he had work for. Two were lucky enough to get jobs in Adelaide. As for myself, I put in for redeployment but was told by State Services that there hadn't been any job advertised in Whyalla for years. So, Mr Baker, it was not an exodus, it was no choice. Speaking for myself, all I want is a job. It is stressful enough to lose your job without these comments and lies. I used to think politicians forgot about people in the country, but I have since changed my mind. They have forgotten about the ordinary people, people who pay taxes, people who vote. Remember, Mr Baker, it was the people who voted you in; they can also vote you out! My prayers are now with other workers and their families who are also going through this stressful period.

It is signed by Mary Ford. Of course, that letter to the *Advertiser* has not been printed. I know Mary Ford well, and I knew all the women at the clothing factory personally. There was not a harder working group of people in South Australia. They fought for more than 15 years to keep that place open. I must say that the management was appalling. During most of that time the management was one State Government department or another, whether it was the Health Commission or whatever, but the clothing factory never had a fair crack of the whip through its management. It was absolutely no fault whatsoever of the work force there, which mainly comprised highly skilled machinists. I would say that, with one exception, the State Services Department, which finished up with the clothing factory under its wing under Bill Cossey and Minister Levy, did a tremendous job of putting the clothing factory on its feet. At the end it was profitable. It is extraordinary that it was kept open for over 15 years when it was unprofitable and that when it finally became profitable this Government sold it.

What concerns me in this sorry saga is that this Government talks about creating employment in the non-metropolitan area, throughout country areas and provincial cities, yet we have women, who particularly find it difficult to obtain employment in provincial cities, put out of work when what they were engaged in was a profitable operation. I think that is an enormous pity. It is paying lip service to decentralisation and talking about jobs for people outside Adelaide because, when the Government has an opportunity, at no cost, to keep employment there, it does not do so, but takes the opportunity to put people out of work.

It is not restricted to Whyalla and this particular factory. This Government is putting people out of work throughout

South Australia while at the same time it is crying crocodile tears about the depopulation of the Eyre Peninsula, for example, and other regional areas. It is no use crying crocodile tears and saying how awful it is outside Adelaide where everybody is struggling when at the same time the Government's actions are creating a great problem. Throughout regional South Australia Government services are being heavily cut. Whyalla is not being singled out and my electorate of Giles is not being singled out. Throughout South Australia, and the Eyre Peninsula in particular, the Government is a major part of the problem.

Taking Government employees out of these country towns and provincial cities means taking children out of schools, the schools cannot then offer the breadth of curriculum, the schools have to close, people send their children away from country towns to Adelaide for their education and by and large many of them do not return. If the Government wants to do that as a matter of policy, that is up to the Government. We have elections every four years when the people can pass judgment on that. However, it is hypocritical in the extreme for the Government to preach about the virtues of regional development whilst at the same time removing Government employees from the same region that it is crying about, and the clothing factory was a very good example of the hypocrisy of this Government.

Again, I congratulate all those employees who were there on their steadfastness over the years. People in Whyalla who know the story know that they wanted to work and would willingly have accepted jobs. It is a great pity that what was a very good factory offering high quality employment to a considerable number of women was forced to close by this Government.

Debate adjourned.

SGIC (SALE) BILL

The Legislative Council intimated that it had withdrawn the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I move:

That the vote on the third reading of the Bill taken in the House on Tuesday 30 May be rescinded.

Motion carried.

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

That the Bill be now read a third time.

By way of explanation, clause 24 of the Bill appropriates revenue of the State. Under section 59 of the Constitution Act it is necessary for a message to be received from Her Excellency the Governor before the Bill can pass this House. That message was received earlier today. It was therefore necessary to again pass the third reading of the Bill to comply with the provisions of the Act.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL 1995

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I rise in support of the Appropriation Bill. Like the rest of this State, Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island are reaping the benefits of having a Liberal State Government, a Government that has undertaken to look after country regions. Even with the tight financial

restraints caused by debts inherited from the Labor years, we have been extremely well treated. Since the election, funds have come into Flinders for roads, school building, repairs, special projects such as museums, tourist development, land care and assistance for business and farming expansion and diversification.

The current budget has not delivered everything we want from our wish list. However, \$3.5 million for stage 2 of the Port Lincoln Hospital redevelopment this year and \$6.1 million in total by the end of 1996 and over \$1 million for a Kangaroo Island health centre and hospital development stage 1 were a very good start. After years of neglect, our country schools are at last getting much needed repairs, and to the people who live in the small community of Wudinna, \$1 million for their new science laboratory and for replacing timbers at the Wudinna Area School is almost unbelievable. Another \$480 000 for Cleve's science laboratory shows a major commitment by this Government to providing quality education to the children attending some of our State's most isolated area schools.

In addition, the annual education allowance for country students has been increased by \$100 on top of the \$100 last year and a commitment for a further \$100 next year, representing an increase of over 40 per cent and taking the allowance to \$1 030 per year by 1996. For the very isolated students, there has been an allocation of \$10 000 to the transport reimbursement scheme. This will be welcomed by those students and their families who find it difficult even to afford the fare to travel home for the long holidays, and who would not consider it an option to come home for long weekends, considering the cost and the travel time of eight to 12 hours on a bus. I understand the loneliness and isolation that can be felt by these students, as I was one of them for several years while studying at Wattle Park Teachers College. I returned to my home at Lock on Eyre Peninsula only very rarely.

The difficulties for country students are exacerbated by the exceedingly tough criteria the Federal Government applies to eligibility for Austudy. I want to compare our Government's compassion to the lack of compassion shown by the Labor Government in the recent Federal budget. The 5 per cent wholesale sales tax on new cars will not only hit South Australian manufacturers and their employees who produce half the new cars built in Australia but it will also mean that because fewer new cars are sold, in addition to the job losses caused, even more old cars will remain on our roads. Most country people cannot afford new cars, but they usually try to upgrade regularly to a newer car to ensure that they and their families are as safe on the roads as they can be, considering the distances they have to travel and the condition of many of the roads.

These roads are at last being sealed by the current Government, and I was pleased to note continuing funding for the Kimba-Cleve road in this budget. I was delighted to be able to announce the \$2 million to seal the South Coast Road on Kangaroo Island when I was there a few weeks ago. There is a whole different attitude on Kangaroo Island since the Brown Government was elected. For years its potential had been overlooked, and with the downturn in farming the people were wondering what their future and that of their children would be. However, with the *Valerie Jane*, *Sealink* and *SuperFlyte* ferries, and the encouragement and assistance by the Government with the necessary infrastructure development, the people on the island are looking with enthusiasm

towards a future in tourism as well as their traditional occupations.

A total of \$10 000 has been allocated in this budget to draw up a regional profile for Kangaroo Island, to help to focus their planning and optimise jobs, while ensuring that development is compatible with the quality of life and the image they want to retain for the island. Another \$150 000 has been allocated for the KI tourism marketing board, and \$6 000 for the KI tourist office. The future of the island and its people is, in my opinion, now assured. No longer will those young people who want to stay home have to leave if they want to gain employment. New opportunities are being put forward by the community, and they are resulting in increased jobs both in tourism and related industries.

With the kind of dedication and tenacity of the island people, I believe they will take control of their future and we can look forward to Kangaroo Island being a world class tourist destination while retaining its charm as a clean and 'green' island with pure island grown products that will not be bettered anywhere else in the world. Eyre Peninsula has not been forgotten by the Government with \$200 000 being allocated for the Eyre Tourism Marketing Board and \$16 000 for the Eyre Peninsula tourist offices. Eyre Peninsula is underestimated as a tourist destination, and I believe that its potential has been barely touched.

For example, I was fortunate to be invited to open the Point Labatt viewing platform near Streaky Bay earlier this year. The land was donated by local identities Ron and Myra Freeman as a conservation park. The platform, funds for which were provided by our Government, give an excellent view of a breeding colony of Australian sea lions, which is one of the rarest species in the world.

Before concluding I want to mention how pleased many of my constituents are at the sale of the State Bank to the Advance Bank. It would have been preferable of course if it had never been necessary in the first place. However, as it had to be, it has been a relief that not only has an excellent price been obtained, which will reduce the State debt considerably, but also that the branch network is likely to be retained. In the country these branches are not just a convenience: they are much more than that. Their staff and their families are an important part of the communities of these towns. Their loss—not just the loss of the service that is provided—would have been a disaster in regional South Australia. Because of the rural crisis, we have already seen too many people leave and services reduced in the electorate of Flinders, so the people there were very concerned that, because of the gross errors of judgment by the former State Labor Government, they would be the losers again.

With the State debt being reduced on schedule, I look forward to an even better budget next year, and I commend the Treasurer on this year's budget, which has been a pleasure to support.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I also rise to support the Appropriation Bill and commend the Treasurer and this Government for getting the State back on track. The state of the economy of South Australia before December 1993 is best illustrated by the following story. A young man was looking for a job and, while filling in the appropriate application forms, he found that he had to provide the name of his mother and father. He wrote on the form that his father was deceased, and he then had to state his cause of death. His father had been hanged and he did not want to put that on the form because he thought he would not get the job, so he went

away and thought about it for a while. When he came back, under the cause of death he wrote 'floor collapsed whilst on an official platform'.

The floor had certainly collapsed under the South Australian economy; the Labor Government at the time no longer had an official platform; and in December 1993 the people of South Australia did not give the Labor Party the job of governing this State. Since that time, this Government has put things in place; it has not fully restored the floor of the South Australian economy, but no-one can expect it to do that in the short time it has been in office. Nevertheless, the planks are being put in place a little at a time.

When this Government was elected, South Australia was overspending by more than \$300 million a year, but in 12 months, with its debt reduction strategy, the Government has slashed this by two thirds, and by 1997-98 it will balance the books. The South Australian economy again will be back on track.

That is not all we have done. We are putting in place many of the things necessary to ensure that South Australia will be where it was before that unfortunate period of the 1980s. Of course, the sale of the State Bank has helped to give South Australians new hope and a new future. It is the previous Government that sold this State; we have sold the bank that forced the State onto its knees and, in doing so, have restored the confidence and the future of all South Australians.

In just three weeks we have secured over \$1 billion worth of investment in South Australia and reduced the debt by the same amount. The major benefits of the sale of the State Bank are, as many members have already stated, the retention of bank jobs; the retention of a regional bank with a distinct South Australian identity and a South Australian head office; and more competition in the banking industry, as has been commented upon in the newspapers and in other media. The South Australian focus in retaining the name, the logo, and so on, has the benefit of getting rid of debt, reducing interest repayments and at the same time giving a new focus for and restoring confidence to South Australia.

With the budget that has been delivered by the Treasurer, we are well down the road to fixing the State's financial problems and heading into the home straight, as this small pamphlet adequately describes. We have slashed overspending, reinforced our commitment to major reform and set South Australia on the path of exciting economic growth. By early next year we will, in the most significant financial turnaround in the history of government in South Australia, have fixed most of the mess in which this State found itself.

Whenever we talk about success we must compare the base from which we were coming. Many people say that we have not reached our full potential, but whenever you assess anyone you must realise where they are coming from. There is no doubt that we came from a very low base and from a time when there was lack of confidence in South Australia. The people were disillusioned and expressed their democratic right in December 1993 when putting their faith in a new Government.

We are cutting State debt and cutting Government spending, and we make no secret of that. What choice do we have when we are in such a situation? We cannot have 28 per cent of gross State product going on interest repayments for debt. No economy can sustain that for too long, and any responsible Government has to wrestle with that and make sure that it deals with it in an effective way to prepare that platform for a future from which all South Australians can benefit.

When this Government came to office the previous Government had been overspending by \$300 million a year, and that was going straight onto our debt. This past year we have come in \$10 million better than budgeted, and with the 1995-96 budget we will have slashed two-thirds of the recurrent deficit in our first two years. And we must do that if we are serious about getting the State on track.

I commend the Treasurer and the Government for being responsible and, of course, all our Ministers for wrestling with the problems in their portfolios for the well-being of the State and, at the same time, for being sensitive in trying to deliver in areas in which we have to deliver for the well-being of the community.

We had no choice and we had to break the negative cycle and mentality. The simple fact is that we either have the choice of cutting expenditure or increasing taxes. This Government made a commitment that it would not increase taxes and has stuck to that. If we increase taxes, what will it do? Eventually it will decrease investment, create more unemployment and we will get on the negative merry-go-round that will lead to nowhere. That circuit has to be broken, and this budget does that. No-one is saying that there is no pain or that everything is hunky-dory: it never has been and never will be, but we can put in place the fundamentals to get this State on track. That is what this Government is about.

We cannot fool ourselves that we can keep on spending. We cannot have the old Keynesian mentality which was to budget for budget deficits. You can do that in the short term, but even John Maynard Keynes will tell us that we cannot keep on doing that for 10 or 15 years because it will not work. It has not worked in other countries or in Australia and it will not work at the State or local level. We must get things into place if we want real improvement for the future.

I have listened carefully to members opposite speaking about how we did not need to make promises. The Leader of the Opposition in his speech clearly outlined that and said that we did not need to make promises and that we would have got into power without having to do so. That is a negative way of looking at things. What does that mean? It means that if we did not make promises, if the South Australian State was so unfortunate as to re-elect the former Government, it would have broken all its promises because it would have kept quiet and then increased taxes once it was re-elected. That is what it is telling us. It did not have to do this. It was giving us the political strategy to win without making commitment or promises.

We have made promises: to impose no new taxes, to reduce the debt and to get this State back on its feet. They are the promises we have made and we have kept to them. We did not promise a rose garden, and no-one would expect, after the greatest financial disaster in South Australia's history, that we would have a rose garden. It does not work and will never work in the future. When we have problems we have to deal with them.

This Government was elected with a mandate to do that and it has done so. It will get this State back on track. We cannot have interest rates at 27 or 28 per cent of gross State product while New South Wales has 15 per cent. That 10 per cent gap tells you everything. We cannot deal with the problems unless we deal with the debt. We have taken those hard decisions.

It is not easy to cut expenditure in Government, and it impacts on people differently. It is a pity that the Federal Government does not learn from that and reduce its expenditure, instead of using blanket statements with interest rates

and monetary policy which put a 1 per cent increase, an \$85 million debt, on South Australia, forcing State Governments to cut debt, while the Federal Government washes its hands like Pontius Pilate. Interest rates have to go up because we are trying to save the Current Account deficit, and so on. It is much more difficult to make 100 decisions than to make a blanket statement and allow everybody else to make it. This Government has not walked away from that, but has made the decisions necessary to ensure that things are put in place.

What are some of the planks of that fundamental platform I referred to earlier? The \$160 million package for economic development includes \$20 million for works associated with upgrading of the runway at Adelaide Airport; \$8.8 million in employment incentives for business; \$8 million for tourism infrastructure and marketing; \$5.4 million in assistance for industry development for smaller business; \$3.3 million for mineral exploration and resource development; \$2.6 million for strategic development for key industries such as wine, aquaculture and manufacturing; \$750 000 for regional development and sport; stamp duty rebates for house and land packages in the central business district; and \$830 000 worth of incentives for film making in South Australia. If that is not looking at the planks or trying to restore the platform, I do not know what is.

In education we are also putting the planks in the platform. The highlights of the budget are a \$29 million increase in education spending and no increases in class sizes. South Australia will still have the lowest student-teacher ratio of all States. I know that members opposite question it, but the reality is that 95 per cent of classes have fewer than 30 students. Members opposite will say, 'Yes, but that is only the average.' The reality is that in many cases the schools themselves decide to have higher numbers in one class because they want to maintain curriculum choices in others. I should know. I was involved in that sort of choice five, six or seven years ago, long before we delivered the budget. So, do not try to put that on us. Of course, we would have liked to increase spending on education and on health, but what do you do when you do not have the resources and when you cannot forgo the opportunity to get things straight so that you can get things on track for the future?

There is an allocation of \$9.6 million for capital works programs, including up to \$12.5 million for the Back-to-School Grants Scheme. That gives schools the authority to tackle backlog maintenance, which has not taken place for a long time. And there was provision for salaries for 406 teachers with special education qualifications—21 higher than required by the formula. We have kept our commitment to the most vulnerable and to those areas in most need. Grants of up to \$8 000 totalling more than \$1 million will be given to schools to assist with the implementation of new curriculum statements and profiles.

In my electorate the budget provides \$895 000 for the Norwood-Morialta High School Drama Department, Stage

2. That will provide excellent facilities for a good school which is a model of excellence in the area. Proposed new works will occur once the redevelopment takes place as a result of the sale of surplus land on the senior campus. That will inject \$3.2 million into the amalgamated school of Norwood-Morialta. Things are happening.

It is those sorts of projects that everybody knows are part of the multiplier effect. When you inject into capital works, it affects not only the schools but also people—the builders, the carpet makers, the desk makers, the producers of overhead projectors. All those things create jobs. A good balance has been created in terms of our trying to maintain, retain and improve for the future by injecting into capital works. I am aware of the refurbishment worth \$30 000 that has taken place at the East Marden Primary School hall. I have been kept in touch with the schools in my area. I talked to the union officials, as did the member for Coles, regarding the Norwood-Morialta campus before the budget was delivered. We faced them. I was in front of Parliament House to face the music.

I know that things are difficult, and I appreciate the hard work that teachers do. I appreciate their extracurricular activities, for example the time outside normal hours they spend on sport. I will not say that teachers do not earn the respect of the community. They do a lot of the things many of us take for granted. These days if it is difficult to be a parent, imagine how much more difficult it is to be a teacher when you are faced with so many students and so many problems. Nevertheless, we cannot move away from the realities we face. For example, we cannot go into Federal awards and expect to maintain all these measures, increasing the cost to the State Government of providing education. Whilst I sympathise with the hard work that teachers do, that is just a fact of life.

I started off with a joke about the plank. It is not a joke: it is reality. That is what it was like in 1993. I believe that this Government is slowly putting into place the planks. It has a vision for the future, and the platform is being visualised. The programs that have been put in place will provide not only a polished floor but the first furnishings, the floor coverings and the comfort that this State deserves. This is what this budget is about. It will provide a future. There is no doubt that we have to monitor and look at some areas. If there is pain in specific areas, we must look at them and be sensitive. It would be irresponsible to not tackle the problem or not deal with the fundamentals. Everybody's business is the business of government, and this is what we have tackled. This is what this budget does: it deals with everybody's business to make sure that South Australia is in business again.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.52 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 7 June at 2 p.m.