

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 3 October 1996

The **SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn)** took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 2 October. Page 74.)

Ms GREIG (Reynell): I rise to support the Governor's address and at the same time I wish to congratulate our new Governor on his first address to this Parliament. I wish Sir Eric Neal and his family well and I am sure that Governor Neal will continue to build on the outstanding work of our former Governor, Dame Roma Mitchell. Dame Roma is and always will be remembered as a great South Australian. Many firsts are associated with her name, and even though she has retired from the position of Governor of South Australia she has not retired from life or the community. I envisage that she will be just as busy now as she ever was.

As I mentioned earlier, Dame Roma will be remembered for the many firsts, such as Australia's first Queen's Counsel (1962), Australia's first woman Supreme Court judge (1965), Australia's first Human Rights Commissioner (1981-86), Australia's first woman university Deputy Chancellor (1972), Australia's first woman university Chancellor (1983), and Australia's first woman Governor (1991). I admire Dame Roma for the many little things she did that made a tremendous difference to the lives of everyday people. Many functions did not attract the attention of the media: Dame Roma's visits to schools, Aboriginal communities, women's shelters and children's concerts. Although age was not on Dame Roma's side, her vibrance, her love of people and her passion for this State permeated a radiance that all who came in contact with her could feel, and for this I want to say thank you.

To Sir Eric Neal, I want to say welcome and, like all members in this place, I look forward to sharing with him the many challenges that lie ahead for our State as we prepare to enter the next millennium. Our new Governor is no stranger to our State, and definitely no stranger to challenges and change. With an impressive background in business and a passion for the arts, sport and our culture, the Governor of our State will truly reflect its people and our desire for prosperity.

As a Government we have had to make many changes. They have not all been pleasing and some definitely have not been easy. As a member of this Parliament I have to acknowledge that some pretty tough changes have had to be made and, whilst some criticism is dished out across the Chamber, the fact remains that we inherited a legacy of debt that someone was going to have to sort out. It could not be left any longer. The community gave us the mandate to clean up the mess, restore our State's financial position, regain economic confidence and, most importantly, put faith back into a community that was starting to believe that this State had no future. Now, no matter how much bellowing and negativity echoes across the Chamber or through our media, we know that this State is in recovery mode; we know that we are regaining a stable financial position and regaining an economic confidence and credibility. We know that people do believe in the future of our State. We know it, the media

know it and, if the negativity would stop, all South Australians would be able to share in the good news and the many positive things that are happening.

It does become easy to overlook the great many things that are happening. It is far easier to criticise, but if we open our eyes and take a good look, and stop talking ourselves and others into a state of depression, we would see how some people in this State are getting on with the job and leading the way in the recovery of South Australia. For example, a number of South Australian companies are full of drive and ambition. These companies are focused on success, not only at the local level but also at national and international levels. These companies are important, not only to our reputation as a good place to do business, but also for our wellbeing and for our culture.

I normally tend to focus on local successes with industry and economic development, but today I also want to acknowledge a broader perspective of company successes. For example, there is Lloyd Products, which introduced the world to a whole new style of beverage with the creation of Spritz; then there is the Angas Park Fruit Company, one of the country's top privately owned businesses. It would also be remiss of me not to mention R. McDonald Co, which introduced us to the now national icon, the Weber barbecue; National Jet Systems, the third largest passenger airline in Australia; and, closer to home for me, Norman Wines is gaining a name for itself internationally as a quality winery. As Jan Turbill said in her article, 'Accentuate the positives', these companies are not allowing themselves to be bogged down by the doldrums and all the negative talk about this State going nowhere: these companies are actually doing something about making a future for themselves and for South Australia.

Let us start looking at our achievements in areas such as sport, the arts, our wine industry, vehicle production, tourism and hospitality, innovative education, technology and research—the list is endless. In our schools students are excelling in all areas of curriculum, including the arts and sport, and it would be remiss of me not to mention here the winners of the 1996 Rock'n'roll Eisteddfod, Morphet Vale High School, whose energetic performance, 'Simply Individual', gave the school the Open Division of this year's Eisteddfod and the \$2 000 award for excellence. As a team the school competed against five other finalists in the major category, performing a tightly choreographed dance fest, portraying the power of youth. Performed in satin raincoats at a moving bus stop set, 'Simply Individual' told a story about seeking love, friendship and compassion, but all that was found was isolation. More than 2 000 people were entertained in this, the 11th annual event on Friday 13 September.

Again, in my own area we have seen the completion of Arrow Australia's new premises, with their former premises now being prepared for Seeley International; the new Target store; and the completion of the Reynella Coles Myer development, due for completion in late November. In early November the suburb of Christie Downs will be part of an international focus when the first Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, his All Holiness Bartholomeos I, leader of the All Orthodox Christians will, along with our Premier, open the new Agean Aged Care Complex.

These achievements all have one thing in common. They have created employment, real jobs and work with a future attached to it. This is a boost to local area needs and, believe me, it is welcome. For the past 2½ years I must say that I

have enjoyed the many good news announcements—the many positive economic initiatives that I have had the pleasure of bringing to the attention of this Parliament. Whilst on achievements, I also wish to congratulate all our Paralympians, particularly the 16 South Australian representatives, with 42 gold, 37 silver and 27 bronze medals giving us an outstanding finish of second place. We all have something of which to be proud. I do not think that words can say enough. A fantastic team, a brilliant achievement—they are simply the best.

Before I finish, I want to pay tribute to the many mature aged members of the community. As we are all aware, Seniors' Week was launched on Tuesday and what better way to celebrate this than with a week that lasts 23 days. It is very easy to overlook the valuable contribution that older people make to the community but, for the next few weeks, through a tremendous series of functions, carnivals and events, we will be reminded how important it is to give a little time and thought to the more senior members of our community.

One thing that we can guarantee is that we will all age. I do not think that there is a preventative program for that. But, then again, should there be? With age comes maturity and an appreciation for what you have and what you treasure. With population projections showing that by the year 2006 some 203 000 South Australians will be aged 65 and over, we have a chance in South Australia to show foresight and innovation when dealing with ageing issues. When I talk to community groups on issues regarding ageing, I often tell them to give some thought to an old Joni Mitchell song called *The Big Yellow Taxi*. The line to which I refer is:

Don't it always seem to be that you don't know what you've got till it's gone.

And it is true: we never appreciate our grandparents, uncles, aunts, or that little old man who walks his dog to the shop every day. It is not until they are no longer there that you realise how important they are.

Why not use each living, breathing day to show these older people how much we love them and how important they are to us. For the next few weeks all South Australians have the opportunity to share in a celebration and recognise the valuable role of senior members of our community. We can focus our attention on both past and present achievements and the continuing contribution of seniors in all walks of life.

In my own electorate there will be a number of celebrations in which to participate and I, like many others, will be visiting places such as Elizabeth House, Wakefield House, Hackham West Community Centre and the Morphet Vale RSL sub branch which I should also acknowledge as this year's winner of the Seniors Metropolitan Club of the Year—a truly deserved recognition for the work that my local RSL does in our community.

Our new Governor has highlighted to Parliament the creation of a foundation of economic and financial reforms from which South Australians are now poised to reap benefit. Governor Neal pointed out how these benefits have been targeted to meet the economic and social priorities of our Government and how these priorities reflect mainstream aspirations of South Australians—a quality of life which is second to none.

Reform has not merely been about budget adjustment. More importantly, it has been part of a fundamental shift in the way Government services are delivered. It is about a partnership: government, community and business working together for the betterment of this State. Our Governor has

delivered an exciting message to us all on many broad and diverse issues. He talks our State up and he knows that this is a great place to live and be part of. It is now up to the rest of us to send the same strong message to the rest of the country—in fact, to the rest of the world. I support the motion and I congratulate His Excellency, the Honourable Sir Eric James Neal AC, CVO on the delivery of his maiden address to this Parliament.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): Today I wish to address the issue of privatisation and the devastating effect that the Federal and State Governments' slash and burn approach has had and will have on South Australian urban and regional communities.

Mr Becker interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: No, this is not Peter Duncan if you do not mind. Just listen. Members on both sides of the House are well aware of the devastating impact that tariff reduction and restructuring have had on the vehicle, rail, bus, tram and TC&F industries. The vehicle industry, which is currently in growth mode, is one of the strongest performance industry sectors within our State economy. However, hundreds of workers retrenched from the vehicle component sector since 1991 are still unemployed. The same can be said for workers previously employed in the textile, clothing and footwear and rail industries.

In the late 1980s labour adjustment packages were introduced by the Federal Labor Government to the PMV, rail and TC&F sectors to assist workers from these disadvantaged industries to upgrade their skills and get back into paid jobs. According to DEETYA, thousands of workers enrolled in these LAP training support programs. In South Australia many workers in the PMV, rail, bus, tram and TC&F industries have built up significant work skills limited and tailored to suit the industry in which they were previously employed. Many of these valuable work skills can be transferable. However, new skills acquired through further education and training are necessary to make job seekers more employable. Of the 2 500 AN retrenchees, most accessed internal AN training programs, both prevocational and vocational. South Australian DEETYA has recorded approximately 1 250 course enrolments, with an average participation rate of 700 employees.

Examples of some of the thousands of courses in which they were enrolled include basic literacy, computer literacy, maths, English language, and so on. Major vocational training programs include engineering, hospitality and tourism, computers and electronics. Many enrolled courses covered occupations in industry sectors identified by the State Government to be key growth sectors. Older workers (45-plus) in these restructured industry sectors have demonstrated greater difficulties getting back into work. In fact, according to LAP industry liaison officers and DEETYA reports, many have remained unemployed since retrenchment in 1991.

Significant barriers are insufficient job opportunities and the high rate of unemployment due to retrenchment from industries where workers have comparable work skills. To date, approximate losses in these industries are as follows: 2 600 in PMV; 1 500 in TC&F; and 2 500 in rail (AN). In South Australia, 500 AN jobs have been lost since January 1996, and AN estimates that another 1 000 retrenchments will occur within 12 months. With respect to the PMV sector, approximately 500 retrenchments were retirements—55 per cent of non-retirees are still unemployed. Retrenchments are dated from 1991 to 1996.

The TC&F industry estimates that, of the 1 000 to 1 500 retrenchments, 70 per cent are still out of work. Retrenchment dates are from 1991 to 1996, and companies are still closing and developing offshore. This, added to the thousands of job losses in the State and Federal public sectors, and the scrapping of training programs and institutions, gives one a very bleak picture for the future. The training support programs that have been abolished to assist retrenched workers reads like a casualty war list. For example, PMV LAP, gone; TC&F LAP, gone; AN finishes December 1996; SkillShare, many closed; ITECS, closed; and CES, offices closed.

The labour market programs to be abolished include Jobskills, the Landcare and Environment Action Program, New Work Opportunities in the area of formal training, JobTrain, the Special Intervention Program, Accredited Training for Youth, SkillShare, and the Formal Training Elements of the Training for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders program. Other programs include the Mobility Assistance Scheme, Direct Assistance Elements of TAP, and Non ELT/Regional Intermediaries. When we raise these issues, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education tries to use the gag by referring to the Opposition as 'soothsayers of doom and gloom'.

In other words, it is not politically correct to outline the depressed state of affairs within the employment market. The true facts need to be exposed. The latest Drake survey showed that 63 per cent of jobs in South Australia are now part time. The Drake and Engineering Employees Association surveys released last week indicate that manufacturing employment fell by almost 7 per cent in South Australia over the year to August 1996. More than half the companies surveyed reported an unsatisfactory order book situation; no companies reported a 'very good' order book situation. When the Premier came to office he promised 20 000 new jobs *per annum* and 4 per cent growth. Employment figures in South Australia show 468 000 full-time jobs, compared with 470 000 in December 1993. We have to ask the Premier, 'Where are the promised jobs and growth?' On top of this, we see the Premier encouraging the Federal Government to abolish more jobs in the Commonwealth public sector. We have to ask, 'Did we hear it right at election time?' Maybe the Premier made a Freudian slip and meant to say 'a reduction of 20 000 in employment'.

Regional Australia is facing its most severe crisis to date. Towns such as Peterborough, Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Pirie are bearing the brunt of privatisation. I recall that a little while ago the member for Flinders congratulated some members on this side of the House for their new found interest in rural South Australia. I might just say to the member for Flinders that many members on this side of the House have had a longstanding commitment to rural South Australia, so it is certainly nothing new. An anticipated 550 job losses in the AN workshops and the possible loss of jobs from ETSA—and the power station, given the shadow hanging over its survival—will decimate the town's economy and morale. The ripple effect will see small businesses closing in Port Augusta and in surrounding townships. The unemployment rate will far exceed the 550 jobs originally under threat.

People who will have no alternative but to leave the town and their community neighbourhood support networks are likely to lose substantial sums of money on the sale of their homes because of falling values. This is a common experience when regional centres are drastically torn apart by public

and private sector disinvestment. Where will these unfortunate people go? Will they go to Adelaide and unemployment and a loss of familiar neighbourly support networks?

Capital investment and jobs are needed in regional Australia, yet the regional development organisations (REDOS), which were a local integrated representation of business and community interests, have been closed. These organisations were able to identify local business development and opportunities. Individuals within the REDOS have now been forced to seek capital from the private market in order to carry on local business and development activities. They are now called the Greater Northern Adelaide Regional Development Organisation. I hope that this organisation's initiative can redress the inertia of the State and Federal Governments in regional development matters. State or national Government support structures in the areas of training may not necessarily deliver jobs: only public and private capital investment can do that. But skills development, particularly development of educational-based skills, is essential. This is especially the case in a regional community.

Technological changes occur quickly, so how can a person who is not even computer literate or who has English language or written skills difficulties be expected to get a job? I realise that not all retrenched workers who accessed training courses under previous labour market programs were able to get jobs. Feedback from these workers was that they were supportive of the opportunity to acquire new skills. What was frustrating and annoying to them was that not enough jobs were put around to put their newly acquired skills to use. It was at this point that workers questioned the value of undertaking training. But does this mean that the Government, State or Federal, should abolish training support assistance? To me this is an absurd position and one akin to throwing out the baby with the bath water. To cut training procedures is further to penalise and set back the opportunities for these disadvantaged workers.

Premier Brown hails his Government's efforts in attracting 'smart'—his word—high-tech industries. Yet the Liberal State and Federal Governments deny the opportunity for unemployed workers to get smarter by increasing new work skills. Private contracted case management appears to be the Federal Government's answer in addressing problems faced by the long-term unemployed. However, the training budget allowed for contracted case managers has been substantially decreased compared with previous labour market programs such as Jobskills. Unless the cut to training assistance is overturned, some contracted case managers will be out of work very quickly and the unemployed will simply not get jobs.

Perhaps the question that must be put is: 'Has the State Government, along with its Federal counterpart, taken the view that a generation of people within the employment market will never ever again be able to secure full-time employment because of age and skill factors?' This is the view of some departmental officers in DEETYA, and if this is so we can only look forward to some sad and hungry times.

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): I congratulate Governor Neal on his first official opening of Parliament for South Australia and look forward to his work on behalf of South Australia in future. I am very privileged to have been a member of Parliament during the term of Dame Roma Mitchell as Governor and now in the term of Sir Eric Neal. Both bring to the position of Governor of South Australia

great professionalism and dedication to duty. Dame Roma has been applauded widely for her contributions and Sir Eric Neal has a hard act to follow. He will be highly successful in that act and I wish him and his wife my very best wishes.

I will pick up on four points raised in Governor Neal's address to open the fourth session of the forty-eighth Parliament: first, the budget results, State finances and economic development; secondly, employment and small business; thirdly, infrastructure development in my own electorate; and, fourthly, community issues such as education and public safety. I refer first to budget results, State finances and economic development. I put on record the quote 'Debt doesn't matter,' because it is a quote of Don Dunstan, the phantom leader of the Labor Party. This statement has never been refuted, qualified or denied by any Opposition member, so presumably they all agree that debt does not matter.

I have raised previously the question of the debt management strategy put down by the Liberal Government and each budget has had a strong adherence to that strategy, simply because the debt left to this State by Labor does matter. The Liberal Government's debt reduction strategy is working, has been clearly enunciated and was enunciated prior to the 1993 election. There is evidence in black and white that the Government has taken the budget from a \$350 million underlying deficit when it came to government to a forecasted \$10 million surplus next year. This is a real and sustainable budgetary situation, achieved only by sticking to a complete debt reduction strategy despite wage increases, interest rate movements up and down, and the effect of a Federal Government budget cutting \$83 million in funds to South Australia. These debt reduction programs have worked because asset sales have been targeted to reducing debt, not as with Labor in propping up minority groups and pork barrelling promises prior to each election. Debt reduction thus far represents approximately one-fifth of the total public sector net debt.

Why does debt matter? Contrary to Labor's attitudes, the debt matters simply because all the money wasted on interest payments to service the debt is money not available for real use, such as health and education. Certainly, Governments can continue to borrow to service debt further, and that is exactly what Labor was doing for 11 years. But with the increased debt comes the down-grading of the State's credit rating, hence an increase in the cost of borrowing, but in the true history of Labor that does not matter because eventually you can raise taxes and cut services. I remind the House that Labor's response, while in government, to its rising State debt was simply to cut services to public utilities—something which, day in and day out, we hear members opposite complain is being done by this Government.

I will cite two quick examples of such instances that affected my electorate. The first is the \$1.2 million budget cut to the McLaren Vale Hospital, which devastated that hospital and has meant that it has continued to struggle against the odds ever since. Secondly, the former Government removed totally some bus services and drastically reduced the frequency of other bus services within the southern area. I have little sympathy for the cries of Labor candidates—the born gain carers of the people—who cry out about budget restraint, because they should understand that debt does matter. All the debt reduction has been achieved without increasing taxes and, sensibly, additional revenue raised from poker machine operation has been channelled into debt reduction and also \$2.5 million per annum to a sport and recreation fund, \$3 million to a charitable and social welfare fund and \$19.5 million to a community development fund.

South Australia is moving ahead with major economic development. For example, \$114 million worth of mineral and petroleum exploration is planned for 1996 and \$84 million worth of exploration and investment is planned for onshore petroleum exploration. This represents almost 50 per cent of Australia's total exploration this year in South Australia alone. An upsurge has occurred in mineral exploration, and SANTOS has announced a further \$200 million exploration program in South Australia from 1996 to 1998. In addition, a planned expansion of Olympic Dam at Roxby Downs will inject further positive growth into the South Australian economy.

Over \$20 million in the 1996-97 budget will be used for business assistance programs administered by MISBARD. A funding focus on manufacturing has increased to \$5.1 million funding to the South Australian Centre for Manufacturing to further enhance South Australia's manufacturers in manufacturing technology. Particular support will be targeted to foundry, tooling and water related sectors. The advanced manufacturing facility will assist local manufacturers to produce prototypes and encourage the establishment of tool and die manufacturing in South Australia. MISBARD'S new Division of International Business will allow South Australian companies easy access to international markets and improve links for foreign investors. Also, \$750 000 is available to support regional development boards.

The South Australian Government has achieved major improvements for economic development by having the cheapest port charges per container and the fastest ship turnaround times in Australia, and South Australia has the second lowest index of charges across the range of port, rail, electricity, gas and aviation.

Economic development is boosted by policy decisions to maintain South Australia as one of the lowest taxing States in Australia and, if members recall all the arguments which have ever been put in this place by the Opposition, they will realise that its only solution to the debt is to increase taxes. All that argument would go absolutely against the strategy of this Government, which has increased economic development simply by taking the opposite attitude. Our lowest taxed State in Australia regime puts us 23 per cent below Victoria and 26 per cent below New South Wales. We have the second lowest payroll tax in Australia, and the 50 per cent rebate on payroll tax and new exports will increase that standing in the Australian community even further.

Many major economic development successes have occurred during the Liberal Government's term, and I will name some: a \$1.4 billion expansion of motor vehicles at Elizabeth equals 700 jobs; a \$500 million expansion of Mitsubishi; a \$200 million SANTOS investment in the Cooper Basin; a \$30 million Pasminco expansion at Port Pirie, doubling the capacity of the sodium bicarbonate plant for soda ash to 500 000 tonnes per year; a \$200 million dollar Westfield expansion, which will equal 1 650 jobs; 8 000 hectares of additional vineyards; and the relocation of Westpac Loan Centre, Australis, Telstra MobileNet, Link Communications to Adelaide equalling over 1 000 jobs—and I have already mentioned the Olympic Dam expansion.

It is important to stress the level of economic development not only for the investment it means to South Australia but also for the jobs it is creating. Recently, I had a constituent complain about all the money he perceived was being used to do 'deals' to attract business to South Australia and suggested that all that money should be put into the education system instead. I replied by asking: where would all the

educated children work once they left school and university without new industry in South Australia? People quickly lose sight of the reality that both support for education and for industry must go hand in hand because job growth does not depend on education alone. It depends more heavily on the expansion of business and the supply of jobs. A most important part of the job growth will be achieved also by the growth in the small business sector, often as spin-offs in the regional areas and close city locations.

I would now like to address unemployment and small business, which was mentioned in the Governor's speech. An emphasis on training for jobs that are actually available must be our focus. The Youth Employment Task Force has made a series of recommendations which have been considered by Parliament. Over 400 submissions have been received to the document and they are currently being assessed. A major thrust of this document has been an examination of the successes of the current training programs and it has made proposals for change. The Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education shows a clear understanding of the need to target training to jobs as reflected in the 1996-97 budget initiatives.

There has been a significant enhancement of South Australia's labour market program to take account of the focus on IT, small business and youth. A new employment initiative of \$500 000 is devoted to training 195 extra people in IT. That is on top of the additional 600 IT computing positions in TAFE already. Also, 3 800 additional new student places have been created in TAFE, targeting tourism, hospitality, aquiculture, electronics, IT, viticulture—that is, targeting the growth industries, and putting training where the jobs are.

The very successful Kickstart for Youth program targeting the 15 to 19 year olds is continuing with a budget line of \$1.8 million. There are initiatives to target working people to retrain in computing and IT skills while they are already working, to make absolutely sure that the likelihood of redundancy is reduced. The Self-starter Scheme, about which I am absolutely thrilled, provides youth with the skills and training, and also a \$3 000 grant, to establish a small business. At last, we might be able to say to some of our youth in schools 'There is an alternative to putting your name on the dole queue. There is a way that you can actually get into the growth industries in South Australia.'

I wish to make special mention of the Mature Age Broker Scheme because it is extremely successful. It has been run very successfully in my electorate and I think the support that is being offered will only make that better.

The employment task force has concentrated on the need to pick up the at risk youth in South Australian schools before they drop out of the system. The added resources targeted towards vocational education and training attracting an additional \$850 000 this year will aim to pick up those youth who are disinterested in the school system *per se* and give them a new focus.

In addition, the proven track record of the State Government's traineeship program will result in 1 100 young South Australians being recruited into the public sector this financial year under that scheme; 400 young South Australians have already been offered a range of traineeships in the clerical, laboratory and dental fields and in a range of Government departments. I am pleased that my first trainee has successfully gained full-time employment, and my second trainee has just started in my office. It is a fantastic scheme and it is worthy of the support of all members of this place.

Youth South Australia has additional funding of \$335 000 this year to improve training and support for the youth worker sector and this year will pilot the youth worker in police stations program, where youth workers will operate alongside police to deter young people from crime and encourage them to follow employment and training options.

In the small business area numerous initiatives are operating, but I will concentrate on only a few that the Governor mentioned. First, the payroll tax rebate for 10% for existing exports has attracted 350 applications, totalling \$2.3 million since its introduction in 1994. The further attraction of 50 per cent payroll tax rebate for new exports will be an incentive for new business opportunities as well as for job growth in those areas. The land tax rebate relieving land subdividers of 98% land tax liability on any valuation increase in the year of subdivision should stimulate activity in that sector—a stimulation that is badly needed. The vast majority of fees and charges that have been put in place have been kept to CPI.

The bottom line is that all Government can do is set the climate for business to flourish. We cannot do the business. This Liberal Government has been about keeping business costs down and providing a competitive marketplace. Adelaide's competitive cost structure makes it 20 per cent cheaper to do business in South Australia than in Sydney and Melbourne. Average investment is 30 per cent higher than three years ago and will have a long, sustainable economic and job growth effect, not the boom and bust cycles that we have been used to under previous administrations. Important legislation will be introduced to address further concerns with retail leases for business, and I look forward to contributing on behalf of my retail tenants at Colonnades in Noarlunga and the smaller shopping areas throughout my electorate.

Thirdly, the Governor referred to the key infrastructure developments that will impact on the electorate of Kaurana. One that was noted was the Aldinga waste water treatment plant, which was previously promised by Labor three times and never delivered. The contract has now been let to ERMS. The finalisation of this \$7 million project for our first privately owned and operated waste water treatment plant at Aldinga is a great asset to our area. This new plant will be built, owned and operated by Henry Walker Environmental, and will provide treated water for agricultural reuse in the Willunga Basin. The added advantage of that is that water being made available to that rural area will actually sustain that area to be kept as a rural area into the future. South Australian Water continues to have the responsibility of providing access to the connection of the sewerage scheme and to retain control of prices charged for SA Water services. The new plant will incorporate biological nutrient reduction, resulting in a high quality treatment process.

Finally, I would like to refer to some key community issues noted in the Governor's speech. Law and order and public protection are always a high priority for a Liberal Government. Since my election as the member for Kaurana we have opened and established two community police stations, one at Aldinga Beach and one at the Colonnades Shopping Centre. The Labor Party is constantly questioning the adequacy of our Police Force and, in so doing, questioning its ability to do its job. Christies Beach police complex provides a 24-hour police station and a patrol coverage and counter service.

Patrol functions are centred at Christies Beach, such as CIB, traffic, uniform and youth officers. Foot patrols operate from Colonnades Centre during the business hours, covering

the business, civic and entertainment areas of the centre and the Noarlunga Interchange. A normal rostered coverage per shift per 24 hours is one supervisory patrol and three general patrols. There are also up to three traffic patrols until 11 each night, and until 2.30 a.m. on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, plus CIB response. Additional patrols from the Southern Command Response Division and the Transit Police Division are usually in the area on special operations or as part of a general patrol function.

I would like to mention the relatively new appointment of Senior Constable Adrian Jones as the full-time community liaison officer and commend the excellent work being done in support of Neighbourhood Watch in my electorate. Over the past few months we have launched the Port Noarlunga and Christies North Neighbourhood Watches, and have held meetings for Sellicks Beach, Port Willunga and Aldinga Park. The community participation in crime prevention is very successful, and Neighbourhood Watch works very well in my area.

In the area of education, the Governor refers to the new emphasis on vocational education, which was seen as very important by the Youth Employment Task Force. I quote from that report as follows:

The introduction to the school curriculum of a more focused and structured education-for-work and education-through-work approach will ensure that far greater numbers of young people will have access to the genuine advantage of work experience and on-the-job training.

The other major educational initiative aimed at supporting our youth into jobs for the future is the DECSTech 2001 program, giving extra resources to provide computers and associated high technology to all schools in South Australia. This is particularly relevant to Kaurna because of the new Seaford 6-12 school with its IT emphasis, which should form a basis for IT learning for all southern schools. The DECSTech 2001 funding is very important as a commitment that was lacking in the past, to give all schools funding for purchase of computers and funding to provide cabling infrastructure to link all schools to the network. This is the first serious commitment by a Government to assist parents and schools to purchase computers. Previous Governments have left this responsibility entirely to parents.

Up to \$4 million is to be provided to assist parents fundraising in the purchase of new computers. Of particular concern to me is that, after fighting so hard to have a reinstatement of moneys to schools for SSO time, and after \$3 million in cash grants to support Early Assistance Action plans, which could be used for SSO time in classrooms or speech pathologists, SSOs are now telling me that the money is not being accessed to add time to SSOs in the classroom. This is of concern and needs to be followed up quickly.

It would not have escaped members' attention that I have serious concerns about child abuse. The additional \$300 000 allocation from the community development fund to establish an interagency abuse assessment panel, which is on trial for 12 months, is welcomed. It is a reflection of the work done by the three local members (the member for Mawson, the member for Reynell and me) that Noarlunga is seen as a focus for child abuse measures. The panel will assess all sexual abuse matters related to children under 17 years of age and will operate from the Noarlunga FACS office. Over the next 12 months I look forward to continuing to work closely with the community on a range of issues that have already been on the move, and I intend to start a new range of initiatives within the electorate.

In closing, I take this opportunity to thank those members of the volunteer and paid staff of CFS, SES, Police, Noarlunga council, St John, Salvation Army and FACS for the time and dedicated effort put into the control of flood waters along the Onkaparinga over the last few days. I took time to visit the Christies Beach police station and the command station during the peak flow and, as always, was impressed by the dedication to duty and efficient methods used by our volunteers and paid emergency service staff. Flood damage was kept to a minimum because of their expert work.

On a less positive note I record the community's unrest about the oil spill from the Mobil refinery. The spill was reported to the community and apologised for by the refinery. I have worked closely with people from the Lonsdale refinery in the past and know first-hand how sincerely devastated they would be about this oil spill. But the bottom line is that the community ask for and need assurance that the problem has been rectified and that a repeat cannot be anticipated. Kaurna has some of South Australia's most beautiful beaches. They deserve the respect and protection of all users. We are also extremely lucky to have a major employer such as the refinery in our area. It is absolutely crucial that all possible safety precautions are taken so that the refinery and the beaches can cohabit to everyone's economic and environmental enjoyment.

I put on record my thanks to the following volunteer groups: Port Noarlunga Surf Lifesaving Club, Department of Transport, Environmental Protection Authority, Metropolitan Fire Service, the crew of the fire boat *Gallantry*, the Noarlunga council, Police, South Australian Fisheries Department, Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, State Emergency Service, the Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre, Santos, Brian Wagstaff, who is the environmental consultant to the refinery, Australian Maritime Resources, Councillor Bob Mansfield, and O'Sullivan Beach Neighbourhood Watch. I put that thanks on the record because I believe that, if it had not been for the fact that that team was mobilised so quickly on the day of this oil spill, we would not have had the response we had and the effect would have been much greater.

Mr WADE (Elder): I commend the Governor on his excellent first address to our State. His Excellency delivered a concise and information-packed speech on the progress made by the Liberal Government in bringing this State from the brink of financial ruin to the stepping stone of financial viability. I will not go over the ground that the members for Peake, Coles, Reynell and Kaurna covered. Over the next 12 months the Government will deliver a State surplus. The bottom line will be in the black—a far cry from the \$350 million underlying State deficit we inherited from previous discredited Labor Governments.

When I was employed as a senior training officer for General Motors-Holden's, I spoke to supervisors, general supervisors and leading hands on such similar financial matters, and I watched as their eyes glazed over. GSPs, GNPs and underlying deficits mean nothing to the average person who has not studied economics or business accounting. I studied economics for two years and I must admit it was the most boring, the dullest and driest subject that I ever encountered. It was a standard joke that, if a meteorologist and an economist changed jobs for a year, there would be no change in economic forecasts and no change in the accuracy of the weather forecasts. Neither are exact sciences and tend to hide

their insecurities within their particular incomprehensible jargon.

I learnt very quickly that it was best to explain economic situations in terms of the family budget. For the benefit of those who read *Hansard* and are not of an economic bent, like the member for Unley, but who do know how to handle and manage a family budget, I will explain it this way.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Becker): Order! The member for Unley will come to order.

Mr WADE: We took over the family budget and discovered we were paying out \$350 million more a year than we were earning. Our expenses far exceeded our income.

Mrs Rosenberg interjecting:

Mr WADE: The member for Kaurua has just volunteered to replace the money. The credit card was full, the interest rate was enormous, we were over \$8 billion in debt, and we were about to lose our credit rating. In any family situation, the first step would be to try to spend only as much as we were earning, to cut back on some expenses, to cut out other expenses and to sell some possessions that were more a luxury item than a necessity for survival. The Liberal Government has done exactly that. Non-essential assets have been sold off. In fact, \$1.7 billion of non-essential assets have been sold off, and I do not count the water. The water has not been sold off.

Expenses have been curtailed. Efficiencies have been achieved, and we have been searching around for additional income sources, not for today or for tomorrow but for the next decade to come and the decades following, because you cannot grow wheat if you do not plant the seeds. We did this without introducing new taxes or without raising current ones above the CPI. This State is now in a situation where the worst is nearly over. With prudent management of our expenses and a continuing drive for efficiencies, we will shortly be in a position where our income will be slightly more than our expenses.

We must not forget that, even though we are attempting to reach and will reach this sensible goal, a goal that my household budgeter, my wife, continually tries to achieve, we are still faced with the massive debt that was left to us by the previous Government. That Government worked on the simple principle of spend, then borrow; spend some more, borrow some more; spend even more than that, and borrow even more *ad nauseam*. They told themselves that they would pay it back tomorrow, but tomorrow never came for them. However, it came for us, the people of this great State. The people fired that incompetent management team, but it was almost too late.

I have been asked why the people let it go on for so long. I can only offer two main thoughts, which came from personal chats with my fellow workers at the time. Before 1989, when things were beginning to go bad, the people of this State were told by the Government that the position was not as bad as the then Opposition was saying. We were told that we were entering a recession and that it would all be over soon. We were told that everything would be back to normal.

I think the majority wanted to believe this because the alternative was too distasteful to consider. By 1989 it was clear to us in industry that 'normal' was a dirty word. There was only survival—and many of us did not survive. Many of those who did survive became walking skeletons of their former, vibrant selves, about to collapse from the next ill wind that bore no good. That wind came in a blast that

crippled our farm machinery industry and nearly destroyed our general manufacturing base.

I have been told by many people that the previous Government was re-elected in 1989 because by then the people were saying, 'You caused the problem, so you can set about fixing it up.' But the task was beyond the then Government; it was always beyond it. It failed, and the people steered themselves for that bitter pill of reckoning. That pill they swallowed in 1993 when they elected a Government that was determined to stop the financial rot and set this State on a true course to real prosperity, based on industrial, commercial and social strength; a prosperity that would not be based on the hollow good life of borrowed money that would need to be repaid by our children and by our children's children.

Trust Labor? It erected expensive, monolithic structures as icons to its managerial stupidity and economic incompetence. Trust Labor? It invested our State's money—the people's hard-earned money—in overpriced buildings and shaky investments that came tumbling down like a pack of cheap cards. Trust Labor, when it sent the State broke? Trust Labor, which took our unemployment rate to over 12 per cent? Trust Labor? Not in this lifetime; not when sitting in this Parliament are its former Ministers and advisers who were the architects of our grief, pain and shattered dreams. Were they listening to our cries for help in 1989? Were they listening to us in 1991, when we waited like beggars in the pouring rain for the social security office to open? The same ones who were not listening then are not listening now. It does not matter, though, because no-one is talking to them.

It has been three years since we have been free of this so-called people's blue collar Party—a Party of lawyers, school principals and well paid union officials, most of whom would not know the honest sweat of a hard day's work. I can well remember the day when the Leader of the Opposition suggested to this House, on the record, that we should all go out and spend a week in a factory so that we could get to know what it was like. What a laugh! I spent 20 years on the factory floor, and this Labor politician is telling me I do not know what it is like and thinks one week will be enough for him and his people to represent his constituents effectively. One week on the factory floor! The naivety would be laughable if it did not point to a very real truth.

The truth is that Labor has obviously lost touch with the people; it has lost touch with the very heart of this State. Its members have proven to be silver-tongued confidence tricksters, with callus-free hands and wearing \$100 ties. I come from the people. I have the welfare of the people at heart. I am a Liberal because I believe in the individual, the family, the people and this great State. I say to the Leader of the Opposition, 'Go for your factory tour. Take the other members with you who have not been out to a factory and get a taste of real life.' I wonder how long you would last on an assembly line, where you have to ask permission to go to the loo. I wonder how long you would enjoy the 50° heat surrounding the aluminium smelter. I wonder how long you would last, pounding meaningless data into a computer console eight hours a day.

So get out there, get a taste of queuing up week after week, month after month, to have a faceless clerk sneer at you as he takes the unemployment form. The people want to work. They want a real quality of life. They want job satisfaction and they want job recognition. That is what we, the Liberal Government, are trying to give them, planning to give them and are now giving them. We are doing it against all odds, against the incessant carping and negative criticism

from the Labor Party and its unions—the very people who put us in the dirt in the first place.

This Government is achieving the impossible. It is creating the environment where people can get real jobs. For example, in 1993 in my electorate of Elder 5 200 persons were virtually out of work. In 1996, nearly three years after we came to power, 1 900 fewer people were seeking work. In other words, 3 300 people are virtually out of work. Employment—not unemployment, but employment—in my electorate of Elder is going up. My electorate has seen a massive 37 per cent increase in employment since the Liberal Government came to power in this State. These facts are not complex. They are simple arithmetic which confirm what Labor is too afraid to admit. The Liberals are giving back to the people what Labor took away. We are giving back the jobs, the security, the careers and, most importantly, a hope for the future. We did not create these jobs: we changed the environment which opened up new job opportunities and which continues to open up new career paths for our industries in this State, interstate and towards overseas export markets.

The Liberal Government is restoring to the people a confidence in themselves—a confidence which Labor tore away from them. We are just now on that road to recovery. All we ask is for the people to believe in themselves and together we will grasp firmly the future that rightfully belongs to us and our children. I support the Governor's speech. I support all the advancements which we have made. I know that it is tough—it will be tough for a while yet—but the people knew that when they decided to throw out the incompetent Labor regime in 1993. They knew that they had to take the pill and I commend them because they have taken it with a stoicism that truly reflects Australians. I support the motion.

Mr De LAINE (Price): In this Address in Reply debate I would like to touch on several areas outlined in the first opening of Parliament session by our new Governor. Before I do that, I place on record my congratulations and also welcome our new Governor, Sir Eric Neal AC, CVO, and Lady Neal to South Australia. I hope that their term in office is happy and fulfilling for them both. I have seen and heard Sir Eric in his capacity as Governor on several occasions since his appointment as Governor and I have spoken with Lady Neal at a function. I can tell that they will both do excellent jobs as the first citizens of our State.

I also take the opportunity to recognise and thank our former Governor, Dame Roma Mitchell AC, DBE, for the magnificent manner in which she carried out her duties during the years she was Governor of South Australia. She was always exemplary in her manner, behaviour and dress. She did an excellent job, and I feel that she deserves the tributes paid to her. I certainly wish Dame Roma a long and happy retirement.

Sir Eric, in his opening speech, spoke of the passing of a former longstanding member of the Legislative Council, the Hon. Lance Milne. Lance was a very likeable and sensible man, and I thoroughly enjoyed the chats we had together on a quite wide variety of topics. Lance was a good man and very well liked by members of all political Parties, and I express my condolences to Joan and his family.

I now turn to several areas mentioned by the Governor in his opening speech. Under the heading 'Employment', he said at point 30:

My Government will also continue to improve the services delivered through our training and further education institutions. . .

Yet we are experiencing quite massive cuts to TAFE and other programs. Only last week the Federal Howard Liberal Government slashed training programs in Port Adelaide by a massive 80 per cent. It is an absolute disgrace, and once again demonstrates the further victimisation of the western suburbs of Adelaide. Both State and Federal Governments at the present time seem to be intent on hurting the western suburbs as much as possible in many and varied ways. It is an outrage that they should target these disadvantaged people who live in disadvantaged areas with enormously high unemployment rates, particularly in my electorate.

One very excellent and successful training facility which has been forced to close, due completely to last week's cuts by the Federal Government is the Port Information and Technology Centre (Port ITEC). I was invited to attend a sad gathering last Monday of this excellent Port Adelaide training centre to mark its closure due to these Federal funding cuts. It was only eight years ago that I attended the opening of this wonderful joint venture of the then Federal Hawke Labor Government and the then Port Adelaide City Council. It has been a wonderful institution. It has done a lot in the area of training, especially in the western suburbs.

This State Government says that it is committed to workplace training, so let it put its money where its mouth is and save this training facility for the benefit of not only local job seekers but also for the many businesses who have benefited from this institution, not only in Port Adelaide but in other areas of the State. I would like to mention a few points about the work that Port ITEC has done, and hence voice my outrage at the forced closure of this wonderful facility. As I say, the facility was opened by the Hon. Peter Duncan eight years ago. It does not seem that long but it was opened in 1988.

The facility was jointly funded by the Federal Government and the Port Adelaide City Council, together with some sponsorship from around the State, and particularly around the Port Adelaide area. The facility was set up to provide industry-based hands-on training for long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged job seekers in the computer and electronic fields. It gave access to information and technology training services and expertise for individuals, businesses and community groups. It also provided accommodation, equipment and support services to new and existing businesses within the Port Adelaide business and industrial environment.

That is very important in this day and age to small businesses, which are struggling. This facility was of enormous benefit to disadvantaged people and job seekers—not only to young people but mostly the young. The average age was about 25, with ages ranging from about 16 to 60. It gave an opportunity to those disadvantaged people to receive worthwhile training and to obtain some worthwhile employment. It also gave an opportunity to small businesses, in particular, to participate and benefit immensely from this particular program.

I am glad that the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education is in the Chamber, because I want to appeal to him to see what he can do to try to save this wonderful facility. I know the Minister enough to know that he has a genuine interest in youth and also in employment, training and further education. I have had discussions with him, and I know that he is committed in that regard. I appeal

to him to see what he can do to perhaps pick up the tab left by the Federal Government in this area. It is not a large amount of money. As I said, it was funded by the Federal Government, by the now Port Adelaide Enfield City Council and through sponsorships. It will be a lot less than \$500 000 to pick up the tab to keep this institution running. It has closed down, but the Director (Val Creasey) told me that she will be kept on with a couple of staff for the next few weeks to wind up the place. It is not too late for this Government to have a look at it. I appeal to the Minister to have a look at it. I can give him information if he wishes to see whether something can be done to keep this worthwhile enterprise going for the sake not only of the disadvantaged people out of work seeking jobs but for business in the area.

There are two ways this facility has worked in the past to provide people with training and expertise. The first was to professionally train job seekers in the electronics and computer field before they went out to seek employment. The other way, which was a good and appropriate method, was for businesses to come to the Port ITEC and indicate to the people there what specific training they needed for people to perform jobs for them. Courses were then tailor-made so that, when the people doing the training courses graduated, they went straight into employment and everyone won. To coin a phrase of the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development, it was a win-win situation for everybody.

Over the years, the staff of Port ITEC have been extremely dedicated, working many extra hours, unpaid, to help the young people—and not so young people, in some cases—to undergo training and to better themselves in life. Also, the centre especially targeted migrant job seekers, sole supporting parents, people with disabilities and Aborigines. These disadvantaged groups certainly do not need the sort of kick in the guts they received from the Federal Government only last week. It says that they are no longer important. The Government says, 'This place is no longer needed; we can close it down and spend the money on something else.' It is an outrageous decision. I appeal to the Minister and the Government to consider picking up the tab to enable this enterprise to continue.

The next issue I would like to raise is also in the Governor's speech, and I refer to education. Point 44 of the Governor's speech states:

My Government will ensure there is a new emphasis on vocational education and training opportunities in our schools. Legislation will be introduced to facilitate the new joint development with TAFE at Urrbrae Agricultural College.

This is the very point I want to make. I spoke to the Minister about the outrageous decision to close The Parks High School. I have spoken about this on many occasions, and no doubt members of this place will get sick and tired of hearing me talk about the closure of The Parks High School, because I will not give up on this one. I will not go over that subject again, as I have done so many times, except to say that it is an outrageous and stupid decision.

With the help of the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, there is a good opportunity to make something really worthwhile. The Parks High School, with its large and successful adult re-entry program, to a certain extent, has moved the focus away from year 8 onwards. Now the Minister has taken the decision to close the school, and declining enrolments was one of the reasons given. In reality, from year 10 on the school is very successful with a wide curriculum range and is tailor made to slot into vocational

education in a joint venture with TAFE. This proposal has been put to the Government. I understand that the Minister for Education and Children's Services, as would be expected, has not backed the proposal. However, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education is very interested in this aspect because he is committed to youth and vocational training.

I appeal to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education to speak with his Cabinet colleagues, particularly the Premier, to try to get something up and running on this issue in order to save the high school and give enormous benefit to that area of training in the western suburbs. It would be a good marriage: The Parks High School, with the successful adult re-entry program that has been going for some years, has gone part of the way down this track, and a complete transition through amalgamation with TAFE would be a very worthwhile venture. I ask the Minister to give earnest consideration to this initiative. It is a wonderful opportunity to save the establishment and to set up an excellent educational facility in an area where it is badly needed, especially since last week's decision by the Federal Government to slash training funding in the Port Adelaide area by 80 per cent.

I will touch on a couple of arguments about the closure of The Parks High School before I move off the subject. Two of the main arguments used by the Minister to try to justify the closure of the school was the high cost of educating students there, which I have said at great length is an artificially high figure, inflated because of a rental cross-charging arrangement. There is no reason why it could not be reduced substantially, which would bring down the cost of educating the students, thereby eliminating that argument.

The other argument used by the Minister is that there is a narrow curriculum base at the school. That is entirely untrue. I have not raised the point before as I was not sure of the situation. However, there is a broad curriculum base at the school from year 10 onwards, brought about mainly by the adult re-entry program which is the second most successful in the State. Because of this aspect the curriculum range is broad and goes against the statement by the Minister for Education and Children's Services regarding the curriculum base. This was highlighted to a great extent recently during the transition process. The school, while not giving in on the issue of its closure, nevertheless has a responsibility to students, staff and the school community to go down the track of transition and of transferring students and finding places for them in other schools. It has not given up, but it must go down this track in case the school does close.

Interestingly, during this transition procedure the principal and teachers have visited other schools and other school principals and teachers have visited The Parks to get a handle on things and to see how they can best transfer the students so that their education is not disrupted and they are given every opportunity. In virtually every case the principals and teachers from other schools have said that they cannot match the standards or the choice and breadth of curriculum that The Parks High School provides. That is a major argument to refute what the Minister for Education and Children's Services is saying.

Another argument is that the school should stay open for the benefit of that area. Students will suffer if they have to go to other schools as they will be out of the area. Most students do not have access to public transport or do not have private transport. One of the adult re-entry students said to me that she is going back to improve herself. She has done well at

school and fits in well at The Parks High School. She has a couple of young children and at the moment she can drop off the kids on the way to The Parks High School and do her adult re-entry courses and pick up the kids later. If the school closes, for her to take up the same subjects she has to go to Marden, which will entail leaving home at about 7.15 in the morning and getting home at 4.45 or 5 o'clock at night. What will she do about her two young children attending local schools?

This school closure is outrageous. The school should remain open and, for the second time, I appeal to the Minister now in the House to do what he can to see whether this proposal to change the emphasis of the school to a senior secondary school with a large involvement of TAFE has a chance of being taken up by the Government. In his speech the Governor stated:

Significant additional resources have been provided to introduce computer and information technology into school classrooms. . .

Here we have another example of the bloody mindedness and stupidity of closing The Parks High School because, as I said earlier, we have a high school that gives a higher standard of education in many areas, particularly in computer literacy, and it is a school with excellent facilities. The Parks High School and Community Centre has three separate computer facilities, yet the Government is going to close the school. It is absolutely ridiculous, especially in view of the Government's stated objective to improve information technology and computer coverage for kids at school.

Certainly, this is another matter that I hope the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education will take on board. Despite repeated requests from me, the school community, the school council, the Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Minister for Education and the like, the Premier and the Minister for Education and Children's Services still refuse even to visit this school. They have not even been to visit The Parks High School that they want to close so badly. They have not seen for themselves what the school does, the curriculum choice, the subjects offered and the way the school runs. It is a unique school. I refer to the way the staff work with the students and vice versa; and I refer to the way that the adult re-entry students work with the mainstream students and the way the disabled students work with mainstream students. It is a marvellous school where everyone works together and we want the Premier and the Minister for Education and Children's Services to visit. Knowing the Minister's attitude, nothing much will change his mind, but the Premier should come and look at the school.

I know from my own involvement with the Premier and the Regency Centre that the Premier has had extensive dealings with The Parks Regency Centre over the years and I would have thought that he would be much more responsive to moves to keep this excellent facility going, especially regarding students attending that school from the Regency Centre, and also disabled people in wheelchairs. Nevertheless, the Premier still refuses even to visit the school to see for himself what is being done and what will be done if the school closes. The Premier could discuss the closure and possible options with the school community to see what can be done.

Again, I refer to the proposal to change the emphasis to that of a year 10 school and onwards, a senior secondary high school or other options and perhaps put a 12 month or two year moratorium on the closure in order to see what can be done. I believe there is a dereliction of duty by the Premier

and the Minister against the people of South Australia, particularly the people in this area. In The Parks community area there is enormous disadvantage, unemployment and all sorts of problems. This is one area that needs to be looked after and nurtured because a big percentage of those kids and young adults will drop out of the system and be committed to the scrap heap for the rest of their lives if the school closes, and that is unfair.

Another issue that I would like to raise also concerns my electorate. During the past few weeks I have been absolutely sick and tired of being invited to public meetings called by groups of people who are concerned about what this Government is doing to services in the electorate involving the three main areas of health, education and housing. The education issues involve SSOs and those sorts of matters and they are well documented, but the main gripe that these groups have is about the closure of The Parks High School, with which I have just dealt.

The second issue that they are concerned about is what they see as the possible or probable privatisation of the health system. Their particular concerns in my area involve the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Their concerns are not being answered but they are very real and quite correct. I know the QEH very well. From the time the hospital opened I have seen the way it has been operated and I have had enormous regard for the hospital and its staff. Unfortunately, I lost a close relative at the hospital a few weeks ago. During the long and difficult period preceding her death, I spent many hours at the hospital both day and night to support her. While I was there I was able to see at first hand the way in which the hospital was being run and the enormous problems faced by the staff as a result of the funding cuts that have been inflicted on them by this Government.

I do not hold the Minister for Health entirely responsible. As a doctor, he would know better than anyone what is required of hospitals, and I am sure that he would like to pour a lot more funding into the hospital than he is allowed to. I feel that the problem lies with the Cabinet, particularly with the Premier and the Treasurer, and that the hapless Minister has been forced to make the budgetary cuts that he has made, but they are having a devastating effect on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Wards and beds have been closed, and morale is down. I do not know what has happened to the equipment, of which there is a dire lack in the hospital. Following the closure of wards and beds, I would have thought that they would have equipment running out of their ears, but the equipment is inadequate. There is also an inadequate number of chairs for visitors to sit on. Staff cannot find a simple thing such as a vomit bowl for patients to use. If they get a drip feed ready, they cannot find a stand to put it on. This is outrageous. I do not know what has happened to the equipment; it has just disappeared. I do not know whether it has been put into storage, flogged off or given to private hospitals.

The situation is appalling. The staff are being run off their legs. They work long hours, and I would like to pay tribute to them for their dedication and hard work under enormously difficult circumstances. The only reason the hospital continues to operate is the absolute dedication of the staff. In my view, the nurses should be paid \$2 000 a week, but of course they are not. They work their guts out for long hours, and at the end of their shift they are absolutely exhausted. Visitors and families and friends of patients are asked to help. They are asked to feed not only their own relatives and loved ones but other people because the staff do not have the time to do

it. Some patients cannot be fed. They transport people in wheelchairs from one department to another, and they even do some cleaning jobs. This should not have to be done, but it is done. The hospital continues to operate through the collective efforts of visitors and the friends and relatives of patients and, as I said, the dedicated staff. It is an outrage, and something must be done about it.

In the last few minutes at my disposal I will touch on a couple of other issues relating to health, the first of which is mental health. The need for extra services and resources for rural mental health was mentioned in the Governor's speech, and I certainly agree with that. However, let us not forget urban mental health, which is and has been for many years in a state of crisis. The policy of deinstitutionalisation, which was started by the Government to which I belong some years back was a very good initiative. However, in my view, it was not and is still not adequately resourced, inasmuch as many of these people are capable of living in the community very successfully provided that they have some backup to ensure that they take their medication and someone is available to give them advice and counselling on matters of everyday living. The problem I have in my electorate—and certainly the member for Hart has in his electorate—is that these mentally ill people are not supervised in any way and, when they do not take their medication, they go off the rails and cause all sorts of problems in the community.

I refer briefly to the plight of intellectually disabled people, and in particular I refer to Project 141. I had no idea: I have not known any mentally disabled people in my life, so I did not know about the problems until I attended a public meeting called by Project 141 people 18 months ago. For the first time I became aware of the enormous problems encountered by families who have an intellectually disabled person in the family. Some of these people have had the enormous burden of having to look after their intellectually disabled sons and daughters since birth. Some of these people are in their eighties and nineties, yet they still have adult disabled people living with them. I could not believe the stories I heard regarding how their lives had been absolutely ruined because of the love they have for their kids and the fact that they want to look after them. It destroys these people's lives—and even now younger people do not have the support they need.

It is an area of which I was unaware, but I am aware of it now and I will certainly speak up on this matter at every opportunity because they deserve a much better deal. I know it involves dollars, but the Government must look at this area. Many more than 141 people are involved, but 141 people have been picked for this project to highlight the problems that are experienced by these families. It is an area at which any Government has to look, whether or not we can afford it, and provide much needed respite to the families who are looking after and providing disabled people with care 24 hours a day. With those few remarks, I support the motion.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): It is with pleasure that I support the motion and discuss the current situation in respect of the State of South Australia. Before doing so, I place on record my admiration and appreciation for Dame Roma Mitchell on what was a wonderful term in office as Governor. Certainly, one of the highlights of my time in politics so far has been the occasions at which I was privileged enough to spend time with her. Dame Roma has done herself very proud and made a fantastic contribution to South Australia. I have also had the privilege of meeting Sir Eric Neal and Lady Neal since Sir Eric was sworn in recently as

our new Governor. South Australia has an exciting future under Sir Eric and Lady Neal. I note how active they are out in the general community. They have been visiting schools and senior citizens groups, and they have also been involved in things such as the launch of Child Protection Week recently at which Lady Neal spoke. We have a wonderful couple, who, I hope, will be in the Governor's residence for some time helping to carry out the duties which are so important for South Australia under their governorship.

With respect to the Address in Reply debate, I am pleased to see, when I reflect on what has happened over the last three years in South Australia, that we have been able to create a foundation in this State for continuing economic growth, and we have been able to manage those financial reforms and the other structural reform that was so necessary to make sure that in the future South Australia can be poised to capitalise on every opportunity and reap the benefits that will accrue in the coming years. The benefits on which we have been working have been targeted to meet both the economic and social priorities of South Australia—and during my speech I would like to talk more about the social priorities.

Looking at the legislative program that we are about to encounter during this session, I think it is pleasing to see that much of it is built around further creating an aggressive agenda for the private sector to see further industry development and, subsequently, economic growth in South Australia.

The Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Mr Rann, was critical of the fact that Government forecasts for South Australia were for 3 per cent growth, but we actually achieved 4.7 per cent growth in the last financial year. It was the second highest growth of any State in Australia. Interestingly enough, the Leader of the Opposition has been very conspicuous by his silence when it comes to supporting that real growth in South Australia. I might also add that the Leader of the Opposition did everything in his power to try to pull down that economic growth—and I will speak about that further in my speech.

We are now on track, but we still have a long way to go. Many more jobs need to be created. It will not always be an easy road, but I do not believe that any South Australian who gave the matter any real thought would have expected it to always to be a straight road. When one looks at the State's finances, one sees that there has been a dramatic turnaround. When this Government came to office in 1993, just over 28 per cent of the gross State product was being spent in servicing debt. It is great to see that in this budget year that is now back to around 22 per cent, and by the year 2000 we will see that reduce even further to under 18 per cent. All of us who have studied economics would know that there is always a big danger signal when a State has a figure in excess of around 20 per cent. I believe that by the year 2000 we will have that percentage back to probably the lowest in the history of this State since Federation.

When one talks to people—as I have been this morning—from places such as Canada, one realises that they have major problems over there now, because their figure is getting very close to 30 per cent, and that is why we have seen savage cuts in public sector spending in Canada and other countries like it.

I congratulate our Government for not losing its nerve when the nervous Nellies who listen to the Opposition feel that they are being jeopardised unduly. I do not like to see anybody being jeopardised, but I must say that, if we are not strong as a Government right now and if we start to weaken, those people whom I want to see particularly looked after in

our State, and those who are most vulnerable, will have no real future. I will also talk about that as I get further into my address.

It is pleasing to see that, whilst the recurrent budget was \$350 million in deficit when we first came into office, by the handing down of the next budget in May the Treasurer will be able to clearly spell out that we will experience our first surplus for a very long time. More importantly, that surplus will be real and sustainable: it will not be a phoney paper surplus.

In regard to the sales program of non-core assets, I want to stress that it was non-core assets that were sold. Governments were never elected to get involved in banking and risk management. That is not the job of Government, and now we are seeing a situation right around the world where Governments are realising that they must get back to their core business. We have maintained and looked after all the core business with respect to Government but, through selling off non-core assets, we have been able to reduce the deficit on the core debt by \$1.75 billion. Everyone knows that, when you are paying around 10 per cent, that is a lot of money we can now put into services and the social issues of this State.

I believe that, when you look at economic development, our State has much to offer in terms of resources, enterprise and expertise. When we consider what South Australia is doing, we should be very proud of the way we are headed. One of the great privileges I have as a member of Parliament is to be able to see all the very good things that you do not see on the front page of the *Advertiser*, but if you want to read past the front page, nearly every day on about page 7 or page 9 you will see the good news stories about this State.

It is about time that we got into those pages, had a look at them and saw what was really happening here. We are proud to be South Australian, and we are getting out there and telling people what a great State South Australia is and how much we should be encouraging others to move into our great State. We can look at Silicon Graphics, for example. I heard on the ABC yesterday an interview with Mr Robert Bishop, who now lives in Geneva. He went to Croydon Park Technical High School in Adelaide, and he is now the director of a \$4 billion international company, Silicon Graphics. The one thing that I was very disappointed about with the ABC program was that the presenter forgot to remind the South Australian community that Silicon Graphics now has a base in Adelaide that will develop to become the headquarters for Silicon Graphics for Asia and the Pacific rim. It is a pity that that positive message was not reinforced as well as the fact of the success of that individual.

But that is just one success. We can look at what we have done with our durum wheat, with exporting that durum wheat in a fully value added and processed form to Italy, the home of pasta. Here we are in Adelaide, right in the down under area of the globe, being able to deliver value added pasta to Italy. These are just two examples from an endless list. We know about the motor bike wheel rims we produce for Harley Davidson; we know what is happening with the mirrors at Britax Rainsfords being exported for Mazda, for Korea and the Daewoo, etc. There is so much going on that it is about time that South Australians started to have a good look at what is happening, get behind those good things and make sure they help us to improve this State.

I am delighted to see that there is somewhere very close to \$1 billion of Government spending on capital works going on in South Australia over the next 12 months. Of course, on top of that we have significant spending in the private sector.

That includes places such as Roxby Downs where, under our Government, we have now had an announcement that \$1.2 billion will be spent on further expansion of that mining operation, something of which the Liberal Government was always a strong instigator. Interestingly enough, I understand that the parliamentary Labor Party of the time was opposed to that type of development: opposed to the fact that, as a result of what is now happening in Roxby Downs, there will be directly and indirectly 6 700 new jobs created in South Australia.

We will not hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition getting on the airwaves talking about that sort of thing, because he does not want to get the good news story across. But things are happening in this State, although it is still not easy, I admit. I had the opportunity of going to Sydney for a couple of days recently because 22 businesses in my electorate set up a week in Sydney promoting their businesses, and they asked me to come over one night and speak to the agents and distributors who sell their products in New South Wales. I had the privilege of speaking to 170 of those agents and distributors on that night and was very proud to see those businesses in my electorate that are proactive in getting on with the job, creating jobs and creating economic wealth in my electorate. My job is to help facilitate and support them, and I encourage any other businesses that want my help to give me a call. I will be very happy to help wherever possible.

I found in New South Wales that under the Carr Labor Government things are pretty tight. If the Sydney Olympics were not on in the next few years things would be very difficult in New South Wales right now. I trust that the people of Australia will not forget that the Sydney Olympics were actually won by a Liberal Government. The *City Messenger* has headlines which state that about 20 per cent of the CBD in Adelaide is unoccupied. Surprise, surprise, in Sydney the percentage is about the same. In Sydney they are turning their office blocks into apartments. So, the whole focus is changing. On a *pro rata* basis we in South Australia are doing as well as any State in this country.

I refer to employment. Employment is very dear to me. One of the greatest buzzes in my life, particularly before I entered Parliament, was, with a partner, to employ 15 people. Fifteen people is not a lot of people to employ, but it gave me a very big buzz. Obviously, I am out of that business now, but at home on the farm I have the opportunity to employ one full-time person. I still get an adrenalin pump when I think that by employing someone he is able to spend money, support his family and create further opportunities for South Australia. So, jobs are very important. People who create jobs do it not just because they want economic benefit but because one of the greatest pleasures one gets in life is creating jobs for other people. That is what our Government is about.

It is not easy to create jobs when you have to downsize certain sectors. It is not easy to create jobs at the moment because a big change is occurring and because jobs have not even been invented, for argument's sake, for my children in primary school. Most of the jobs that my children and my constituents' children in primary school will take have not even been invented. But we are setting the foundation whereby sustainable jobs will be created. At the moment, the unemployment problem is still very difficult.

Let me point out that today, under a Brown Liberal Government, more people work in South Australia than ever before in the history of South Australia. That does not mean we have succeeded. We have a long way to go. I would like to see unemployment at zero. I feel very much for my

constituents who do not have jobs. I have to work as hard as I can to create job opportunities for people. The fact is that, if one looks at the positives, job opportunities are on the increase. My last trainee now works for TAFE. She had been unemployed for three years. She spent a year working in my office. She was a great kid. She got on with the work and now has a job. I have another fantastic trainee working for me. I know that that trainee will get a job. That is what it is all about: it is about partnerships and working together with the community.

We have seen a lot in the paper about education and health. Despite the fact that fundamental cuts had to be made because of the debacle under the Labor Government, South Australia still spends more money *per capita* on education and health than any other State. We still have the very best education system in Australia. We have 12 per cent more SSOs than any other State. I know that we have to continue to ensure that we are a smart State and country and that we have to put every possible resource into education. A lot of the information being spread by SAIT at the moment is simply inaccurate. As I said to SAIT, whilst I want to see the very best system of education, as a member of the Government elected by my constituents, I also need to look at the absolute global aspects of running Government.

We have to stop the erosion that I saw over the last 15 years in this State where children were getting very good educations and then, sadly, having to leave South Australia to get work. I do not want to be part of a Government that educates young people and then sees them exported interstate. I want to see them building houses and living with their families in our great State. I say to SAIT that we will do the very best we can at the moment for education, but we have to be prepared to look at the global aspects of running a Government. As we get out of debt and into surplus I as a member of the Government will argue in the Party room that a substantial portion of that money go to education, but we have to get our house in order. Irrespective of what some people in this State say, running the business of Government is no different from running your household.

We have to look at our priorities. We cannot go on spending more money than we earn and we cannot go on borrowing more until we are so hocked to the hilt that the bank says, 'Sorry, you will have to rent your house.' That was the way we were headed, and it is time to remind people of that.

There is a long way to go in health, but we should look at a recent incident in New South Wales where, unfortunately, someone died because they could not get into one hospital and they did not make it to the next. That was in the Labor State of New South Wales. I congratulate everyone involved in health in South Australia, particularly the nurses and doctors who work under pressure. The South Australian health system has done 20 000 more public operations in the last financial year than were done in the last financial year of the Labor Government. There were 20 000 additional operations, \$90 million of additional money has been put into the health budget this year and \$60 million has been put into education, which supports my argument that, as we start to get our debt under control, we will clearly put more money into those priority areas.

I remind members that the Government's priorities are reducing debt, securing a sustainable future, creating a strong economic base so that we can have sustainable jobs, and looking after education, health and family and community services and all those other areas that are also very important.

Let us consider for a moment where we are up to. Over the last three years, we have started to position South Australia for the future, and we have gone for the long haul. It is not very often that politicians do that, because most politicians and Governments are interested in one thing and one thing only, and that is re-election.

The difference between the Brown Liberal Government and any other Government that I have seen in the 39 years that I have been in this State is twofold.

Mr Clarke: It is the most incompetent!

Mr BROKENSHIRE: First, we have the most incompetent Deputy Leader of the Opposition that I have ever seen in all the years that I have been interested in politics. That incompetent Deputy Leader of the Opposition is under threat, as is the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Playford is away counting the numbers, because both the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition know that their days on the Opposition front bench are limited. Given the way they have carried on and the way they have tried to pull South Australia apart, it is no wonder that a member such as the member for Playford is doing the numbers.

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Playford was not in the Cabinet that destroyed this State. He is an honourable member who realises that there must be checks and balances and some honesty, and I look forward to other members of the Opposition counting the numbers with the member for Playford and making sure that, in the next few months, the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are put where they belong. They are not part of the solution for fixing things: they were part of the problem. How can one be part of the solution when one is part of the problem?

We are developing a sustainable future. We are looking at the economic aspects, we are looking at the social structure and we are looking at the environment. Let us look at the environment for a moment. Not too many members want to talk about this issue in the Chamber, but I challenge any member to show me a Government that has done more for the environment in South Australia than has been done in the last three years. No Government in this State has done more.

We are fixing the degradation and we are looking at the responsible sustainability of water in South Australia. We are the driest State in the driest continent, and Premier Brown and Minister Wotton have initiated the Murray-Darling Basin 2001 initiative. They will ensure that that jugular vein, that lifeblood for South Australia—the Murray River—is cleaned up once and for all and that we get decent water. We are also looking at catchment management authorities and we have put litter strategies in place. The list goes on and on.

This Government is about social issues, economic issues and the environment. I have mentioned already that right around the world, for example, in Canada and in the platform on which President Clinton is running, the focus is on reducing debt and developing a sustainable future. The days are gone in this world when you can spend more than you earn. They have finished. We have to realise that we must live within our means. Previous generations gave us opportunities.

Sadly, up to now my generation has destroyed those opportunities. If we want to be responsible citizens and members of Parliament we have to be tough now and hang in there for the long, hard haul to make sure that our children and their children have a future. We have to forget about eating cream and get back for a while to the bread and butter issues. I have heard my family talking about the Depression,

when they lived on dripping and nasturtiums. That is what they lived on, but look at what they created and gave us. What have we done in the past 15 years in this country? We have destroyed the whole lot of it, yet we cannot get the support of the Opposition when we want to fix things. I am confident about the future as long as we hang in here and do not weaken.

In the next few minutes I will talk about my own electorate in the south. I am delighted to see that from today something that I know my constituency has wanted for a long time is now in operation. I am very pleased to see that a local company, MacMahon Constructions, won the tender for that first stage of the Southern Expressway. That first stage of the Southern Expressway will be a win for the south and for the constituents of Mawson, because by Christmas time next year that will hook into the \$28 million road works just completed on the Panatalinga Road. We all know about reports such as the McKenzie report which collected dust for so many years, and that at three elections that I can remember the previous Government got up and stated that it would build a third arterial road, because the McKenzie report clearly identified it as a major contributor if we were to get economic wealth in the south. It did not happen, but it is happening now; the commitment is being met.

Why did Seeley International move into the south? It is the largest evaporative air-conditioner company in the world. It moved into the south and is bringing hundreds of jobs with it, because it knows that the Government and the southern members support it. Those members did not work for the union movement and then jump into a council area because they suddenly wanted to claim they were from the south. We all live in the south. It is our life; those people are our friends and relatives. We want to see things happen in the south; we do not just want a career in politics. I have said before that when I am not doing the job properly I expect my constituency to boot me out of this place, but while I am working hard with and for my constituents I ask them to support me and my other colleagues so that we can continue to do the job for the south. I have confidence in those people and I believe that they would do that, but we have to make sure that we get the scores on the board and are accountable to them.

In the remaining few minutes I will touch on a few things that have happened recently. These include an \$11.4 million upgrade of TAFE at Noarlunga, providing a fantastic opportunity for students. We are developing that tourism and hospitality link in the south and establishing the infrastructure there. Young people in my electorate—boys and girls in year 9—now recognise these opportunities and want to get into tourism and hospitality, and they are already starting to set their sights on that. We are building vocational education and training links between senior secondary schools and TAFE.

We have just heard an announcement that up to \$800 000 will be spent at Wirreanda High School. For seven years, the fantastic principal, staff and school council of the Morphett Vale East Primary School tried to get some fundamental work done, but they could not get a dollar spent on the school. I invite anyone in this Chamber to drive to Morphett Vale East now and look at what has happened with that school under our Government. I give full credit to the council, staff and students for the support they have given that project. Go to Willunga High and look at the \$1.3 million infrastructure facility for science and arts that has just been opened there. Look generally at the back to schools grant that has been spent to catch up on that massive backlog. Look at the brand

new Woodcroft Heights preschool that we are about to open in November, worth \$500 000.

I talked previously about health. We must do a lot more in health, but look at what has happened with the upgrade of the casualty emergency areas in Flinders Medical Centre now and look at the helipad that is there. Look at the budget that has just been given to Noarlunga Health Services, where there has been a significant increase in funding. I want to see more money put into health in our area and I will continue to hammer the Minister on that matter, but at least the Minister is listening and that money is coming forward. ETSA upgrades are now happening through Morphett Vale, McLaren Vale and Willunga.

The tourism project at McLaren Vale is to be opened in November, worth nearly \$2 million, with \$1 million coming from the State Government, \$320 000 from the Federal Government and \$350 000 from the wine industry. That is a partnership of which I want to see more—the Government and the private sector working together. Look at the main street programs; look at the improvement in the roads and the retail sector. Harris Scarfe Ltd is coming into my electorate because people now have confidence to invest and develop. I previously touched on the wine industry but I am very proud of the wine industry which is creating jobs and putting money where their mouth is and we see a great future there. In the Noarlunga hills area of my electorate, a land care group has been set up which wants to capitalise on the opportunities given by Minister Wotton to improve the environment.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I accept that many members of the Opposition are committed and doing their best and I enjoy working with them, but it disappoints me when I see the gutter politics which are put in place day after day by the senior leaders of the Opposition. From 1982 until 1993 this State went from a safe, sound State with a graph that was just on a grade incline—not up and down like a yo-yo, but just on an incline—to a State which was spending over \$2 million a day on interest on debt, debt which we did not have to have. We ended up with \$8 000 million of core debt, and I have already spoken about the recurrent deficit that occurred.

The unfunded superannuation liability for the public sector is \$4 billion. Most South Australians do not know about that, and I am glad about that because they would be going grey like me. What about the Housing Trust? Another \$1.3 billion worth of debt there. If members added it up, they would not sleep at night. We are turning the corner, but we could turn it so much faster if we had support from the Leader of the Opposition. Never in my life have I seen anyone in Opposition as negative as the Leader of the Opposition.

Difficult decisions are being made. It is still not easy, but we did not cause the problems. We are not perfect either and we must work harder, but the light is there now, the tunnel is now opening and the opportunities are there. The South Australian community is getting behind us. I appeal to the Opposition to also get behind us.

Finally, I want to talk about the confidence that we need to work through in this State. I am very confident that there is a great future in this State: I would not be in the House now if I was not confident of that. I want to see my children and my constituents' children having a sustainable opportunity. It is there but we must remain strong as we rebuild that sustainable future. I want to sincerely thank my electorate. I appreciate the support, the letters, the ideas, the issues and the concerns that they put to me and I am very pleased that I am the member for Mawson.

I want to thank the volunteers, the people who do the extra work for nothing because they believe in the south. Without them we would not have the opportunities that are being created. Most importantly, I want to say how pleased I am with the community spirit that is growing day by day in our southern area. We have a great place to live in the south and we have a great State. Opportunities are there, but we still have further to go. Finally, I appeal to the community to continue to work with this Government and that opportunity will be sustainable.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I, too, would like to support the motion and in doing so I congratulate Sir Eric Neal on his appointment as Governor of our State and his wife. I also pay tribute to our former Governor, Dame Roma Mitchell, who is an outstanding South Australian and who performed an excellent task as our Governor for the five years she was in office, as she did in all of her other public service, including a stint on the Supreme Court of South Australia.

There are a few points I want to deal with in respect of my Address in Reply. I want to concentrate on some of the effects of the recent Howard Federal budget on my electorate. In terms of age, my electorate of Ross Smith has some of the oldest persons living in any electorate in South Australia. According to the 1991 census, something like 25 per cent of the electorate are over the age of 60 years, and something like 15 per cent are over the age of 70 years. Also, generally it is a low income area; it is an area with persons on fixed incomes, a lot of superannuates, persons on pensions, as well as unemployment benefits and other Commonwealth Government benefits. It is those people who have been most affected by the cutbacks in the Federal Government budget.

It is very easy for Governments to cut budget deficits by picking on those members of our community who are the least advantaged and who are not in a position to defend themselves as much as others. For example, the cutbacks with respect to unemployment, particularly the toughening of the dole tests, will cause a great deal of anguish to a number of genuine recipients of unemployment benefits who, because of the extra tests and arrangements put in place by the Commonwealth Government, will see themselves thrown off unemployment benefits for six weeks.

Anyone living on unemployment benefits is living on the very edge of financial viability, and to lose any sort of income for a period of six weeks will be devastating to those people. It will mean the difference between putting bread and butter on the table for your family or not eating at all. This is all in the pursuit of alleged 'dole bludgers' who exist in the community. Of course, there are people who take advantage of any system. As we all know, in the corporate world there are very significant numbers—although, fortunately, it is not a majority—who can afford to pay their taxes and who dodge paying their taxes through various ruses, including setting up trusts and the like in tax-free havens overseas.

Those people are not called bludgers on the system. They are lionised, in many instances, throughout society. They are looked up to and have their photographs printed in the various weekly news magazines and are seen as successful business people. Media magnates, such as Kerry Packer, pay absolutely minimal income tax compared with their enormous wealth, but that person is not labelled a bludger or a bloodsucker on society, even though that person can well afford to pay the income tax that legitimately he should pay. But this Government, instead, gets stuck into the people on low or fixed

incomes or unemployment benefits. It gets tough with them and causes a number of those people to fall off unemployment benefits for a period of six weeks to the possible ruination of their families.

Likewise, many people in my electorate needed the long-term unemployed training packages that were put forward under Working Nation by the former Labor Government. There were no schemes for those people previously who, through no fault of their own but through the restructuring of our economy, and who had limited skills in this new age structured economy, found themselves, often in their mid 40s with limited education, displaced from work and with no-one picking them up and helping them out. The Working Nation program provided for an extensive series of training programs to be operated through organisations, such as Skillshare, and the like, to pick up those people and give them another chance.

Yes, in answer to the Liberal Party criticism, it may be seen as expensive, but I weigh up the costs of those labour market training programs and giving people another chance at getting a job and having a productive life and gainful employment (and the benefits that flow onto the general community by having people in gainful employment), and I ask, 'Is that too costly?' One thing that always annoys me is that, in Government, we deal with economists and accountants who come up with balance sheets and say that such and such a program is too expensive, and that such and such a program does not fit the right economic model.

In weighing up these programs, what they never seem to do is weigh up the social cohesion price factor. I remember attending a business lunch, prior to the last Federal election, where Robert Gottlieb from the *Business Review Weekly* appeared as the guest speaker. He talked about the need for a change in Federal Government, to bring in lower taxes, to change the labour market and to make it more flexible—which is a code word for making it cheaper—by driving down wage prices. He said that we had to compete on a global basis. I posed a question to Mr Gottlieb which he could not answer. I asked him, 'In your view of the world, where do you factor-in social cohesion? How do you measure it?' He was absolutely stumped for an answer. He said, 'Well, that's not my responsibility; governments must think about that.' He was right in that part of his answer: it is the responsibility of government to factor in the question of social cohesion when making decisions.

I do not believe any of us in this Parliament wants us to go down the route of the United States, where there is an ever widening gulf between the haves and the have-nots. There is a two class society: those who are in some form of employment and who earn a reasonable income or better and are able to survive quite well, thank you very much; and then there is the ever-growing class of unemployed, welfare benefit recipients or workers who are in employment but who are on such low pay that they are the working stiffs, the working poor. That is making an enormous change to the social fabric of the United States and the United Kingdom, which I visited recently. I do not want to see Australia and in particular South Australia go down that route. It would be disgraceful.

The Howard Federal Liberal Government does not mind picking on Aborigines. The attitude is, 'Let's pick on the unemployed and the other dispossessed, and let's also give the blacks a kick at the same time by cutting back \$400 million in ATSIC funding.' It is all done on the basis that ATSIC has allegedly wasted a lot of money, and so on. I am not saying that there has not been any waste: in any

Government department—and, for that matter, in the private sector—waste occurs. It should be eliminated, and there should be proper accounting controls. No-one argues against that. However, when you knock off \$400 million from ATSI funding, you are talking about the provision of essential services to the most disadvantaged members of our community.

Anyone who has visited some of the Aboriginal settlements in South Australia, the Outback or the Northern Territory would have seen in some areas open sewers running past basically tin sheds where people are expected to live. They would have found poor housing and poor health services. The cost of providing those sorts of services is enormously expensive, because of the sheer distances over which those services have to be provided and the relatively small number of people who need to be taken care of in that area. It is easy meat for a Conservative Government to pick on the unemployed or the blacks and cut their funding, because they are seen as being unable to get into the mainstream Australian consciousness and the mainstream media to make their protests loudly known and to cause electoral consequences to the Government of day.

We also have what I regard as a very mean-spirited Federal Government in that it has knocked off Commonwealth concessions on dental assistance for the elderly. What is an elderly person supposed to do if they do not have the financial resources to acquire dentures or to fix their teeth? Having teeth is an essential part of social living. For a start, you need teeth to eat. You need teeth to enable you to be part of general society, otherwise you are forced to go around totally toothless, if I can describe it that way. It is just part of our society that people need teeth, and they need good teeth and dental health. But, no, this Commonwealth Government knocks over a very worthwhile scheme for the elderly. I applaud the Council on the Ageing for making this a major social and equity issue, particularly for the elderly members of the community, and for campaigning strongly on it.

Likewise, why would a Commonwealth Government want to knock off concessions on hearing aids for the elderly? Why would it want to frighten the daylight out of the elderly with up front nursing home fees that could range anywhere between \$26 000 and \$88 000? The Commonwealth Government says that it has not yet worked out the details and, in any event, people will not be disadvantaged or thrown out of their homes to provide funding if their partner is required to go into a nursing home. If that is the intention of the Commonwealth Government, it should have made it abundantly clear before making the announcement. It should have worked out the details prior to any announcement so as to not frighten the living daylight out of an unfortunately growing number of our citizens who require nursing home attention and so as to not worry their dependants who are trying to provide for them.

There is a whole range of other changes in respect of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement which will result in a transfer of wealth from the public sector to the private sector. It may be tied to market rents, which will eventually force up the price of rental assistance right across the board to public housing tenants and to Government for the benefit of private landlords. After winning office on its pre-election promises, this clown of a Federal Government said that it would give families a \$450 a year rebate if they had private health insurance. However, the private health insurance companies immediately jacked up the price of private health

insurance, which virtually negated any benefit from the Government's \$450 a year rebate.

That is exactly what will happen with housing if the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is changed so that, instead of direct funding to the States to build public housing, it goes towards subsidising private landlords. The private landlords will rub their hands together, they will jack up the rental price, it will be more costly to society as a whole and to the Government; and, as a result, we will find that, because not every person who seeks public housing fits society's norm of who should have a house, private landlords will discriminate against those people, whether they be the mentally ill, the physically handicapped or whatever. We must provide housing for those people—we cannot allow them to live on the streets.

Putting aside the compassion that we should have in providing effective housing for those people, out of sheer selfishness we will also have people who are not socially well adjusted living on the streets and we will see an increase in the crime rate that will affect us all. We will have a further deterioration of our social fabric as has occurred in the United States to the great cost of that society. I do not want to see that occur in our country.

I refer also to regional development, because it is very important to me and to the Labor Party. In the past, the Labor Party has often been accused of being interested in only the metropolitan area. That is far from the truth. It is the Liberal Party that has abandoned regional South Australia outside of Gepps Cross or, in your case, Sir, south of Cross Road or the eastern ranges.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: It is interesting that the Minister should interject about what we are doing. We established the Regional Development Board. A Federal Labor Government established the Federal regional development boards, which the current Federal Government is closing down. We have this appalling position involving Mr Sharp, a National Party member and Federal Minister for Regional Development, who has said, 'It's not the Commonwealth's responsibility, either constitutionally or as a matter of need, to be involved in regional development.' It is a National Party Minister who has abandoned the bush. That is unbelievable but true, and that was in the press statement issued only a fortnight ago.

Looking at regional development in South Australia, we find that the same Federal Minister for Regional Development and Minister for Transport is in the process of gutting the Australian National work force in South Australia. He is in the process of either closing down totally or privatising the Port Augusta AN workshops. If he privatises them, it will be as good as closing them down because, as we all know, private industry has no responsibility to Port Augusta or to providing employment to the people of Port Augusta. Private industry has a responsibility only to its shareholders and, if the Federal Government privatises those workshops, there will be a massive loss of jobs if not the eventual closure of those workshops in any event.

The only way Port Augusta can effectively survive as a city is through direct Government intervention, involving both State and Federal employment initiatives such as a power station, retaining AN in Government ownership and retaining the workshops in Port Augusta. Likewise, it is not just about Port Augusta, because AN employs about 2 500 South Australians. AN has a workshop at Port Lincoln and at various other country centres across South Australia it has workers, just as it does in the metropolitan area in Adelaide

at both the Keswick offices and at Islington, in my electorate. It is essential that both the State and Federal Governments maintain AN in Government ownership and maintain those workshops. Otherwise, it is goodbye Port Augusta.

The people of Port Augusta know that: last week about 1 500 plus workers, residents and community members in Port Augusta rallied and marched in the street. About 80 per cent of main street traders closed their doors for an hour to attend the rally in Gladstone Square and I regret that neither the Prime Minister nor the Federal Minister for Regional Development and Minister for Transport, Mr Sharp, saw fit to make that meeting. I was pleased to see that Simon Crean, the Federal Labor shadow Minister for Regional Development, made sure that he attended the meeting. True, he had other meetings and commitments to attend, but he managed to change his schedule at short notice; he chartered flights and made other arrangements to ensure that he was at the meeting.

Mr Rossi: Who else was there?

Mr CLARKE: The member for Eyre was there representing the Premier. I must say I thought it was just a trifle cheeky for my colleague the Hon. Ron Roberts in another place yesterday to suggest that the member for Eyre and I had been mistaken for one another in Port Augusta: I have been there so frequently of late that Port Augusta residents thought I was actually the member for Eyre, since I was doing the battling for AN workers up there. I will take that as read.

It was interesting that when the Federal member for Adelaide, Trish Worth, representing the Prime Minister, got up to speak, she immediately went on the attack and tried to blame everything about AN on the former Federal Labor Government. Trish Worth dumped on Simon Crean and Mike Rann, who both addressed that meeting. That was wonderful: I could not have wished for a better response, because 1 500 people in that square booed her. They were not interested in the blame scenario, which the Brown and Howard Governments are so much into. They said, 'You are in Government now and we want to know what you are going to do about our jobs.' One thing that AN workers at Islington, Port Augusta and elsewhere admire Laurie Brereton for—they might not have liked him or agreed with the decisions he took—was that he always had the guts to front the workers at the work site and cop it straight from them, and to deliver the message directly to them.

The Federal Labor Government had a commitment to maintain AN in Port Augusta, Islington, Port Lincoln and elsewhere in this State. When you have the Federal Government and the State Government talking about AN being broke, they are so wrong that it is absurd. AN is not broke. Again, this is a question of narrow minded and narrow focused accountants who come up with that type of attitude. Who says that TNT and Mayne Nickless should carry on their books as one of their liabilities millions of dollars for the expense of maintaining and establishing a national road system in Australia? Do we say to TNT, 'You must put on your books your share of the cost of that road'? No, we do not. But we say to AN that the whole of the cost of the rail standardisation between Adelaide and Melbourne must go on its books even though future generations of Australians will continue to use it?

Do we say to AN, 'You can put on the books as one of your assets the hundreds of millions of dollars that an efficient rail network brings to this State by taking our grain from the hinterland to the ports of South Australia for export and for which we get foreign dollars'? Do we say to AN,

'You can include that on your balance sheet as an asset'? No, we do not. We look at the situation very narrowly and, because we do that, we have a Government that is prepared to execute 2 500 South Australians from employment. We cannot afford that in this State. It will destroy centres such as Port Augusta. It is time that this State Government and the people of South Australia drew the line in the sand and said, 'We are not going to accept the further depopulation and deindustrialisation of this State.' AN workshops provide one of the few, if not the only, heavy engineering workshops in this State. If we are to have any industrial base, we must maintain heavy engineering workshops within our State. We must turn around and say to the Liberal Party in Canberra, 'You hold 10 of the 12 Federal seats in this State.'

The only way that Labor can get back into government federally is to win big in States such as Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland—the regional States. We should use that card and play it hard, because those seats should fall back to us in large numbers if this Federal Liberal Government, aided and abetted by a spineless State Government, will not stand up for South Australia and insist that it play a social role in developing this State by demanding that organisations such as AN stay in this State under Government ownership employing South Australians.

We also ought to have a Federal Government that is committed to putting jobs back into South Australia. There is no reason whatsoever why we cannot have Federal Government jobs working out of Adelaide or any other centre of South Australia. With e-mail, faxes, computers and all the rest of it, we can perform many functions as efficiently in Adelaide or in other parts of South Australia as in Sydney. Likewise, State Governments must stop paying lip service to regional development and look at putting more Government jobs back into regional centres. They should start by freezing any further cutbacks in public sector employment in the regions.

I would also like to see Governments looking at the impact of their decisions on regional South Australia. I was told only recently about a decision involving a town on the West Coast a few years ago. This happened under the Labor Administration, but it still happens under the Liberal Party. Each Government agency was required to cut back its staff, which it did. That action cost one little town on the West Coast 22 Government jobs when as a proportion it should have lost only, say, four jobs. But, because every agency did this separately, 22 jobs went down the tube on the West Coast, which it could ill afford. We need more coordination in that area. The State Liberal Government has absolutely abandoned the bush, and I am determined that, when the Labor Party gets back into office, as the Regional Development Minister under Mike Rann I will ensure that we promote the bush and bring back regional prosperity to South Australia.

Mr ROSSI secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

OBSTETRIC INDEMNITY INSURANCE

A petition signed by seven residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to legislate to resolve the issue of obstetric indemnity insurance for medical staff was presented by Mr Andrew.

Petition received.

SHOOTING BANS

A petition signed by 1 259 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to ban the recreational shooting of ducks and quails was presented by Mr De Laine.

Petition received.

EASTERN PARADE AND BEDFORD STREET INTERSECTION

A petition signed by 1 015 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to install traffic lights at the intersection of Eastern Parade and Bedford Street, Wingfield was presented by Ms White.

Petition received.

MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier): I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Yesterday in reply to a question from the member for Spence, I told the House that the name of Mr Abdo Nassar was among those supplied to me through the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission. My staff, who prepared a list from a number of different sources, including the commission, have indicated that Mr Nassar's name was not supplied through the commission.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. S.J. Baker)—

Gaming Supervisory Authority—Inquiry Pursuant to section 13 (1) (a)—Report 1996

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

Patawalonga Catchment Water Management Board—Report, 1995-96

Torrens Catchment Water Management Board—Report, 1995-96.

GAMING SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: The Gaming Supervisory Authority (GSA) was established last year as the main supervisory body with the responsibility for gaming machines and the Casino. After a period of consultation and discussion with other parties within the Casino and gaming machine industry, the GSA resolved to conduct an inquiry into its role and relationship with other regulatory agencies and ascertain whether there should be rationalisation of such agencies. I now table that report. The Gaming Supervisory Authority Act requires the GSA to ensure that an effective system of supervising gaming is in place. The Casino Act and the Gaming Machine Act require the Liquor Licensing Commission (LLC) to carry out this supervision. The GSA would prefer not to be obliged to use the LLC for this purpose but to establish its own system of supervision and leave the LLC with the lesser function of granting approvals and licences.

The GSA acknowledges that this would require a wholesale rewriting of each of the three relevant Acts and a significant expansion of the office of the GSA both in personnel and in funds. Discussions have therefore been held between the GSA and the LLC with a view to ensuring that the LLC acts under direction from the GSA in all relevant areas. This matter is still under consideration. Most of the recommendations of the inquiry are not controversial and will be implemented or resolved by further discussion between the GSA and the LLC.

I will now indicate to the House the more significant recommendations. The GSA recommends that the Lotteries Commission not hold the Casino licence and play no regulatory role in relation to the Casino. The role of the commission as licence holder, which was once seen as a guarantee of probity, has outlived its usefulness. The regulatory arrangements are sufficiently robust without the commission. Furthermore, the commission is very uncomfortable in the role of licence holder, since it has no commercial interest in the Casino (indeed, it is a competitor), yet it feels obliged to take an interest in management decisions.

The GSA recommends that, subject to probity checks, the licence be granted to the current operator, Aitco Pty Ltd. This would be consistent with arrangements elsewhere in Australia, where it is the owner who holds the licence. The Government sees no need for further probity checks to be undertaken by the GSA, since the relevant parties have already been subject to such checks as owners and operators. As mentioned previously, the Government will consider introducing legislation to transfer the licence to Aitco Pty Ltd and providing for full probity checks by the GSA on any potential future licence holder.

The GSA suggests two alternatives for setting the terms and conditions of the licence: that they be determined by the GSA or that they be determined by Parliament in a schedule to the Casino Act, the GSA to have power to add those terms and conditions and vary such additional terms and conditions. The present terms and conditions were determined by the Casino Supervisory Authority. They assume the Lotteries Commission as the licensee and are unsuitable for such a position where the owner and operator is also the licensee.

As mentioned earlier, and as part of the planned sale of the Casino, consideration will be given to transferring the licence to Aitco, but subject to such terms and conditions as the GSA determines. It will be a requirement that the terms and conditions include the licence fee and tax rate currently applying and provision for the Treasurer to subsequently vary the fee and tax rate. The licence will not be transferred until terms and conditions are in place, and the division of responsibilities on this issue will be the subject of further discussions with the GSA.

The GSA recommends that the Casino licence be capable of being suspended or revoked by the Governor on the advice of Executive Council. The proposed legislation will include such a provision. The GSA recommends that consideration be given to having a police presence within the Casino for the purpose of gathering criminal intelligence. The Government has given the matter further consideration and proposes no change in the present arrangements, which are adequate to protect both the public interest and the owners' private commercial interests. The GSA recommends the repeal of section 17 of the Casino Act, which requires gambling chips to be purchased by bank note or coin only, and suggests that authority for regulating gambling on credit rests with the GSA.

Because of the legal complications that have arisen in the past, the Government agrees with the proposal that the GSA regulate non-cash gambling, but under strict controls. The GSA recommends that the gaming machine supplier's licence be abolished and that holders of gaming machine licences be permitted to buy machines directly from holders of gaming machine dealers' licences. The role of the Supply Board would be removed. The Government considers that the Supply Board has played a useful role in ensuring that larger operators do not receive preference over smaller operators in the supply of machines and game upgrades and therefore supports the continued involvement of the board in its present role.

The GSA recommends that the limit on machines be amended to permit licensees to possess 40 operable machines (inoperable machines could be stored on the premises awaiting removal). The Government disagrees with the proposal, because it makes enforcement of the 40-machine limit more difficult. The limit is a cornerstone of the South Australian regime and should not be weakened. The GSA wishes to ensure that where a game malfunctions the licensee does not sue the LLC simply because he is an easier target than the manufacturer. Where the LLC is at fault he should remain liable, but where the manufacturer is at fault the LLC should be protected from vexatious suits. Whether this would be achieved as the GSA suggests by including in every dealer's licence a condition that approvals given under the Act do not derogate from the liabilities of the dealer is open to debate, but the principle of providing this sort of protection will be explored in drafting amending legislation.

The GSA recommends that the LLC have the power to impose monetary penalties for breaches of licence conditions both on the Casino and on holders of gaming machine licences, with a right of appeal to the GSA in the former case and to the Licensing Court in the latter case. It is suggested that sums paid in this way be credited to the Charitable and Social Welfare Fund. This matter is still under consideration. The GSA has produced a most thorough and worthwhile report, which will enable us to simplify the present complex arrangements for regulating the Casino and give the operators much more freedom and flexibility in meeting the demands of their market. This should enable the existing owners and any potential future owners to improve the performance of the Casino by attracting more interstate and overseas visitors, with favourable implications for the State economy. I commend the report to the House.

QUESTION TIME

NASSAR, Mr A.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Does the Premier maintain that he had no knowledge of Mr Abdo Nassar's donation to the Dean Brown Campaign Fund given that he wrote a thank you letter to Mr Nassar three weeks later, including a handwritten note reading, 'My special thanks for your personal support and encouragement'?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: First, let me make it quite clear that I have a standard practice which I follow after elections, and I suspect that every member of the House who has any common courtesy and any sense does this. The first thing that they would do is obtain a list of everyone who has helped, and that is exactly what happened. I obtained a list of people and I sat down and scribbled off notes to them all. It

is a standard letter that I send to them all which says, 'Thank you for your encouragement to run and support.'

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The letter is there, and I can assure members that many other similar letters were written. It was about three weeks after the by-election. It was a standard letter which I wrote to probably dozens of people, if not hundreds, after that by-election. In fact, I did it again after the 1993 State election. On that occasion I think I sent out probably hundreds of letters. It is my standard practice.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As further proof of this, I might also add that I have a standard practice whereby, every time someone invites me to a factory or a lunch, the first thing I do is sign off a letter. I sign quite a few of them every day of the week. There is proof of that all around Adelaide. In fact, evidence of that was given to the media by the honourable member yesterday, showing that I have a standard practice. If I go to a lunch, a dinner or I visit a factory, I show common courtesy. I wonder whether some of the members opposite—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition, who acknowledged that he had obviously—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Leader has acknowledged that he has met Mr Nassar and talked to him.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: What did you say to him? I know that the two former Premiers have met him as well. There is nothing unusual about that whatsoever.

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): Will the Premier advise the House of the most recent available information about the level of employment in South Australia and how current employment and unemployment levels compare with when this Government came to office? Over the past three weeks the Leader of the Opposition has publicly claimed that full-time employment in South Australia has fallen during the term of this Government.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: On Tuesday morning before the opening session of Parliament I heard the Leader of the Opposition on the ABC news saying that he intended to make employment and unemployment the No.1 issue during this parliamentary session. I expected that the Leader would have raised this issue in Question Time on Tuesday. He did not do so on Tuesday, so I expected him to raise it yesterday. Of course, there is a good reason why the Leader of the Opposition is rather coy about raising this issue in the Parliament.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Let us put the facts on the table for everyone in South Australia to see the situation *vis-a-vis* the Leader of the Opposition, as the then Minister responsible for employment, versus where this Government is. Let us examine the Leader of the Opposition's record when he was Minister. In the period that he was Minister, South Australia lost 34 600 jobs at the rate of 34 jobs every day. It is just unbelievable—34 jobs a day! No wonder they nicknamed him '34 jobs a day Mike Rann'. When he started

as Minister, unemployment was 6.8 per cent, and it went up to 12.3 per cent during his tenure as Minister. It was more than double. Not only did the number of unemployed increase by 34 600 but he was not even creating or maintaining jobs for those in the community. The number of people employed in South Australia fell by 7 900 during that period. They are the facts in respect of where the Leader of the Opposition stands in terms of his own record. It was a massive loss of jobs. It was probably the biggest loss of jobs this State has ever seen since the depression.

Let us look at the Liberal Government's record since we were elected. Unlike what the Leader of the Opposition was trying to claiming on air, since coming to Government we have created 26 500 extra jobs in South Australia. There are 26 500 more people employed than was the case in January 1994. The number of full-time jobs in this State has risen by 4 300 in that period, and the number of part-time jobs has risen by 22 200 in that same period. I would like to highlight that this Government has created the highest level of employment in South Australia in the history of this State. There has been—and I am the first to acknowledge this—because of changes in the marital home, employment contracts and so on, a shift from full-time jobs across to part-time jobs. That is because people throughout the whole of Australia and the developed world now like to work shorter hours, and in some cases they share a job with their partner. However, the clear fact is that not only has total employment risen—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—but full-time employment has risen under this Government. Therefore, this Government has a good record, as evidenced by the fact that, when we came to Government, unemployment was 11.3 per cent in South Australia. It is now down to 9.7 per cent—a 17 per cent drop in unemployment. The Government is proud to be out there matching our performance over the past 2½ years with that of the former Labor Government, when the Leader of the Opposition was its Minister responsible for employment. There is a sharp contrast. I invite the honourable member to produce the facts and talk to the public of South Australia about them, because he is the one who cost this State thousands of jobs when he was the responsible Minister. How members opposite can now put him up as their Leader of the Opposition is beyond me. Not only did he stand there and support Marcus Clark and the State Bank but he cost jobs in this State very dearly indeed.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. Members are aware of the requirement of Standing Orders not to interrupt another honourable member.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Given the Premier's statement to the House on 8 March 1995 that Liberal members of Parliament are forbidden to receive donations and the statement by Mr Ted Chapman this morning that the Liberal Party did not pay for election campaigns in the State district of Alexandra (now Finnis), can he say who he thought paid for his 1992 election campaign? On 8 March 1995—

Members interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: Yes.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There will be no more interjections.

Mr ATKINSON: On 8 March 1995, the Premier, who was Treasurer of the South Australian division of the Liberal Party until his victory in the Alexandra by-election in 1992, told the House:

On this side, we cannot receive donations.

This morning the former member for Alexandra, Mr Ted Chapman, said that the Liberal Party had not paid any money for election campaigns in the seat of Alexandra—now Finnis—for 20 years.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am not quite sure what point the honourable member is trying to make.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: What he is clearly acknowledging, first, is the point I made yesterday: in the Liberal Party we have guidelines which say that a member of Parliament should not be out there soliciting funds, running a bank account over which the member has personal control and receiving funds or deciding where the money comes from.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader is interjecting far too much.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That is simply what I put down again: I have not had any bank account over which I have had any control. I have had no part in going out formally soliciting funds for the Liberal Party.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Clearly, I have been absolutely consistent in terms of the standards that apply. They are widely known, because they are in the guidelines put down by the Liberal Party.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. Members are aware of Standing Orders. There appear to be certain members who are disregarding Standing Orders, but I want to tell members that they know the consequences. The Chair does not have to give any further warnings. All members in the House know, if they continue to interrupt, what the consequences will be. I suggest to everyone that they read Standing Orders. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: In terms of the actual organisation of an election campaign, that is up to the Liberal Party and the local committees and so on that run the campaign. They decide that. The important feature here is that the member of Parliament as such is not out there soliciting funds or running bank accounts over which the member has any control. That is the position I put down and I maintain it, because I believe it is a standard that is very important indeed.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Has the Treasurer any information on the economic performance of South Australia as measured against the gross State product?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: South Australians would reflect on the last set of gross State product figures produced for the nation. An important feature of the gross State product figures is that South Australia had an increase year on year

for the June quarter of 4.7 per cent. Of course, a notable feature of that was that we were above the national average, which was some 4.2 per cent. It is important to understand that South Australia did perform better than all the other States. We can look at the important component of the figures because, while our final demand was not as strong as we would have wished, we saw increased income flowing into the pockets of businesses and the rural community of South Australia. With another good season in the rural communities in particular, we would expect some of that to start to flow through into expenditure patterns and localised demand.

There is no doubt that the rural community was a major contributor to that result, but it was also a fact that our export sector was strong. The Premier has made a number of statements to the House and outside about the need for all firms and organisations to turn their eyes outwards to the export market. Certainly, South Australians can be proud that some of those messages are getting through and we are seeing some of those commitments, whether they be in motor vehicles, wine, food or a range of areas that are growing on a daily basis.

While at the beginning of the financial year we did predict that our State product would be about 3¼ per cent, we did outperform that. Times will not get any easier, but after 30 years of lack of administration and change in this State—most of it under the Labor regime—the process of turning around the State's economy and changing the face of the State's economy is under way, and I expect that we will continue to perform in the market sometimes better and sometimes worse than the national average, but certainly in a changed environment, giving this State some hope that it has not had previously. The gross State product figures that were released by the ABS are a reflection of the changes taking place in this State.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): I ask the Premier: since the Premier's statement to the House yesterday that he had no knowledge of the Dean Brown Campaign Fund, has the Premier now established who is authorised to operate the account and is the account still in existence?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is required only to answer questions in relation to his public office. The Chair is of the view that these questions are not relevant to the Premier's duties as Premier of this State. In view of the fact that I have allowed the question, I will allow the Premier to respond, but the Chair is of the view that these questions are now entering into a realm which is nothing to do with the Premier's public role.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Chapman has already indicated publicly that he was responsible for this account, so any questions about the account should be directed, quite rightly, to him. It is not under my control, either privately as a member of Parliament or certainly as Premier of this State. If the honourable member wants to get into the detail of electioneering, let him be up-front: let him reveal to the House the amount of money that the Labor Party gets from the trade union movement.

Mr Atkinson: I do.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Let us know all the other sources of funding.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Members know only too well that there is enormous money being transferred and washed through the union movement—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: —to the Labor Party which is never declared for election purposes whatsoever.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the second time.

EFTPOS FACILITIES

Mr ROSSI (Lee): Is the Treasurer aware of instances where certain licensed premises are flouting laws prohibiting EFTPOS and ATM facilities in gambling areas?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: As members would recall, we undertook an inquiry into gaming machines in this State, and I will not reflect on the outcome of those findings, but they were debated in the form of the legislation that was finally approved by this House. One of the important recommendations of that inquiry was that the cash out facilities—the bankcard and EFTPOS facilities—should not be located within gaming areas. The reason, which was explained at the time and sustained by argument from a number of people, was that, if people were playing a machine and ran out of money, it was very easy for them to rush over to the EFTPOS machine and keep playing rather than determine that they should not be playing at all at that stage, having spent all their cash.

Section 51A(1) of the Gaming Machines Act, which came into effect in July 1996, states that 'the holder of a gaming machine licence must not provide or allow another person to provide a cash facility within a gaming area on the licensed premises'. I have been made aware of the fact that one particular operator has adopted a smart practice, that is, to put the EFTPOS machine outside the gaming area but not cash out the facility there and to provide them with a slip of paper so they have to go back into the gaming machine area to collect the cash. They get them locked into the machines. I can also report that a number of other operators are looking at installation of ATM machines and various other devices to increase the take from the hotel or the licensed club.

I find that this is a blatant breach of the rules that we laid down when we passed that Act, and legal advice has been taken. I give due warning that, if we have many more of these smart practices and if there is any doubt about the law, I intend to bring before this Parliament another amendment which will take EFTPOS right out of hotels and licensed clubs. I will not tolerate people blatantly breaching the spirit of the law that we enacted in this Parliament. So, let everyone in the hotel and licensed clubs area be aware of that. If it is one of their members or friends, make sure that they are aware that they are putting the whole gaming area at risk. I do not intend to tolerate it, and I do not think that anyone else should have to tolerate it.

NASSAR, Mr A.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Has the Premier received a letter from Mr Abdo Nassar in which Mr Nassar claims that the Premier undertook to get him a job? The Opposition has a copy of a letter allegedly sent by Mr Abdo Nassar to the Hon. Dean Brown, Premier of South Australia, which claims:

One year after the election, I went to see you to ask for a job. I was in serious need of work. You said, 'No problem, leave it with me.'

On 22 December 1994, Mr Nassar was appointed to the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission on the recommendation of the Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am somewhat surprised that a letter from Mr Nassar that was personally handed to a member of my staff and marked, 'Confidential and private' has somehow got into the hands of the Labor Party. More than that, it was not just marked 'Confidential and private' but 'Strictly confidential' or something similar right across the top in capital letters. I wonder what sort of political games the Labor Party is playing with this issue. The other interesting thing is that—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Deputy Leader for the last time.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Certainly the letter said that Mr Abdo Nassar had asked for a job. I will tell you what my reply to him was: 'Put in your CV and take it down to the Commissioner for Public Employment, and you will stand alongside all the others who apply for jobs.' That is a standard practice that I have had—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader is warned for the second time.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The letter had written across the top 'Private, personal and strictly confidential'.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Very much indeed.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he understands Standing Orders. What flows from now will be entirely in his hands. He knows the rules; he has been here long enough. To all other members, I suggest that whatever flows from now will be of their own making. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I have a standard that I have put down ever since becoming Premier, and that is that if anyone writes to or approaches me about a job I say to them, 'Put in a CV and an application to the Commissioner for Public Employment. That is the appropriate body.' In fact, that is the standard that I have maintained—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call for the second time the member for Spence, who is also aware.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: —and I have not varied from that. I would have thought that the facts speak for themselves. What standard did I apply? It was up to anyone including Mr Abdo Nassar to put in an application through the Commissioner for Public Employment. The other interesting thing that is revealed in that same letter is that Mr Nassar also approached two previous Premiers and asked them to find him a job.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I find it interesting, Mr Speaker, that the member for Spence did not have the honesty or the courage to stand up and tell this House that the letter reveals that two other previous Premiers, Mr Bannon and Mr Arnold, were also asked to provide jobs. I suggest that the honourable member might like to read out the last or the second to last sentence of that letter which refers very specifically to me and to Mr Arnold—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Spence to order.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: —and Mr Bannon. He refers to all three Premiers in exactly the same light. I presume the previous Premiers, Arnold and Bannon, dealt with the matter in exactly the same way as I did; that is, the application should go to the Commissioner for Public Employment.

UNITED WATER

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is directed to the Minister for Infrastructure. The outsourcing of the operating and maintenance of Adelaide's water and waste water treatment plants has been in operation for nine months. Will the Minister provide a report to the House on how the success of the contract is being measured?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am pleased to advise the House of the performance of United Water in its first six months of operating and maintaining our assets in metropolitan Adelaide with water supply and waste water services. It is important to put on the record that, prior to taking over this contract, we benchmarked the previous three and six month period of SA Water to determine what its performance level was like. That was the benchmark upon which we then established beyond that benchmark the performance requirements of United Water to ensure that under the operation and maintenance of this contract we received a better deal. In the first six months—start-up from 1 January through to 30 June—it is interesting to note that 94 per cent performance of those benchmarks has been achieved by United Water.

That means water quality at water treatment plants; water quality in the water network; levels of service in the water network, including attendance and restoration of burst mains, responses to water quality complaints, extensions, connections and meter replacement; and effluent quality at waste water treatment plants and levels of service in the waste water network, including restoration of service, overflow attendance, overflow clean-up, responses to odour complaints and extension of connections. In all those areas, some 69 performance measures applied on a monthly basis to United Water, and in 94 per cent of those cases it is meeting the performance requirements or surpassing them.

You might ask, Mr Speaker, what about the other 6 per cent: in areas such as water meter replacement United Water is achieving 99 per cent of that particular benchmark, but as it does not meet the 100 per cent it is not included in the total that I have advised to the House. At the time we are getting delivery of service, we are also saving \$1 million a month recurring over the life of this contract. That result can be seen by the financial figures to be tabled in the Parliament and by the Auditor-General, clearly demonstrating that the taxpayers of South Australia are saving \$1 million a month whilst, at the same time, getting a better service from United Water.

Also during that initial start-up period it is interesting to note that, to date, I am advised it has issued orders for up to \$22 million. It has issued orders for goods, services and equipment to go into export market opportunity. It is because of performances such as that that the World Bank invited South Australia to put forward its model. Rather than privatisation, rather than a concession that we see in other locations throughout the world, there is a unique model tailored to South Australia's needs which the World Bank is saying ought to be grafted into other locations throughout the world. I think that is something of which South Australia can be proud. It has put in place a contract to deliver savings, to provide a better service and to obtain export markets, and

even the World Bank is prepared to concede, acknowledge and give a platform for South Australia and what it has achieved in this respect.

MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Given the Premier's ministerial statement to the House earlier today that Mr Abdo Nassar's name was not on a short list of candidates provided by the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, who recommended to the Premier that he appoint Mr Nassar to the commission?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: For board appointments such as this—and in this case it was a commission appointment—the Government gets together, first, a list normally from the Government department but there are always—and if the honourable member does not understand this he does not know much about Government—a very substantial number of requests that come in. In terms of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, many of the various ethnic communities in South Australia constantly send in lists of names. We keep those names on lists as they come up. As I have already indicated to the House today, my staff prepared a list from all those lists that had been received. So, it is as clear as that.

When answering the previous question I should have raised one further pertinent point for the member for Spence: to my knowledge, in searching through all the records, only one person has given a job to Mr Nassar—and this is evidence that has come out in the Supreme Court of South Australia and before the formal transactions of the Equal Opportunity Tribunal—and that was Mr Greg Crafter as a Labor Minister of South Australia. It formally recognises in the transcript of hearings of both the Supreme Court and the Equal Opportunity Tribunal that Mr Nassar was appointed to a job in the Department of Community Welfare under the specific recommendations of the then Minister.

Mr Atkinson: Why did you appoint him?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Well, I am making the point that the only—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has gone beyond the pale. If he wants to remain in the House this afternoon he should remain silent, otherwise if he makes one more interjection I will name him. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The facts are there. To my knowledge, in terms of employment, Mr Nassar has had only one job within the Government and, quite clearly, that appointment was made on the specific recommendations of Mr Greg Crafter as the then Minister of Community Welfare in this State. The facts clearly speak for themselves.

MINING AND EXPLORATION

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Will the Premier outline the progress being made by the Government in encouraging mining exploration in South Australia? Whilst Western Mining has announced its largest ever investment in expanding the Olympic Dam site, a move which will create thousands of jobs, I am aware that a considerable amount of exploratory activity is taking place elsewhere in this State, particularly in the western region.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I want to talk about the significant lift in exploration that has taken place in South Australia. There are now 114 companies engaged in exploration in South Australia with 279 licences covering 39 per cent of the State. So, almost 40 per cent of South Australia currently is under exploration by mining companies. That is an enormous lift. By next year, under this Liberal Government, we will have increased the exploration activity threefold compared with the last year under Labor. That is a huge boost and it speaks volumes for the way in which this Liberal Government has created an air of confidence for the mining companies to come into the State and start exploring.

In particular, I want to talk about two significant potential developments in South Australia. The first is the Gawler Craton region north-west of Tarcoola which is potentially a very significant commercial gold area. It is an area where, in recent months, a great deal of exploration activity has been carried out. I think that nine or 11 companies are exploring in the area at present. A meeting involving those companies is due to be held I think in November, when representatives will come to South Australia to sit down and work through how they might jointly develop that mineral deposit in the Gawler Craton, if it turns out to be commercial. I stress the fact that that is very important indeed. Half the gold mining exploration of South Australia is taking place within that region north-west of Tarcoola.

Another important region is the Yumberra Conservation Park. I know a select committee is sitting at present with the Minister as Chair, and I am in no way trying to pre-empt the findings of the select committee, but I stress to the House the absolute importance of this State knowing about a unique and most significant anomaly from aerial magnetic surveying that has been found in that conservation park. My challenge to the Leader of the Opposition is that I think it is time he came out and told South Australians where he and the Labor Party stand in terms of creating new wealth and new jobs for this State. Where does he stand in terms of the opportunity to at least find out what is in that anomaly?

All this select committee is looking at is whether there should be an opening up to allow exploration. It does not deal with mining at this stage: all it is doing is looking at exploration. The Government believes that it is absolutely vital that South Australians are able to make a choice about whether or not they develop the mineral deposit. However, to make that choice on a rational basis we must know what is there. Therefore, we must get in and explore the region itself. For the Labor Party to deny South Australians that opportunity is a clear message to all young South Australians that the Labor Party does not care about creating wealth and jobs in this State.

Therefore, I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to come out publicly in the next few days and tell us clearly where the Labor Party stands on this. He always runs. When it came to whether he would support the legislation to clean up the City of Adelaide and appoint three commissioners, he ran. When it comes to other crucial pieces of legislation, he runs. As I said yesterday, he is the Leader of the opportunists. Let him come out of hiding and tell us just where he stands in terms of opening up the opportunity to determine exactly what mineral deposits exist at Yumberra park and allow South Australians to make a clear choice on whether or not that deposit is developed.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I seek your guidance: it appears that the Premier is attempting to influence the outcome of a committee finding.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is well aware that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair will give a ruling without any guidance or assistance. The Premier is entitled to make whatever comments he thinks appropriate in responding to a question.

LISTERIOSIS

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Following the leaking of a chicken processing plant operated by Australian Convenience Foods, with five cases of poisoning and the death of one person, will the Minister for Health ask the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider prosecuting the company and its directors under the provisions of the Food Act? On 12 October 1995 the Minister told the House that the Government would pursue breaches of the Food Act to highlight to the industry the importance of public health.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I have made directions already—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, not the DPP; I have asked through the commission whether it is possible in any way to institute proceedings, and those matters are progressing under the Food Act. If there have been specific breaches of the Act, we will prosecute.

ETSA CORPORATION

Mr EVANS (Davenport): I direct my question to the Minister for Infrastructure. This week the 50th annual report of ETSA Corporation shows the best financial performance ever. Will the Minister advise the House what steps ETSA has taken to improve efficiency and record such a result?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is worth noting that, according to ETSA's 50th annual report, tabled in Parliament on Tuesday, it has turned out an outstanding performance. Despite the fact that revenues were down to \$864 million as a result of the mild summer we had, costs were controlled and reduced by a further 5.4 per cent, which reduction enabled a profit before tax of \$178.2 million—an outstanding performance by the Electricity Trust. Let us put the size of the organisation we are talking about in context. ETSA has returned an outstanding profit before tax compared with a number of private sector companies.

In South Australia only SANTOS out-performed ETSA in terms of profit before tax. ETSA out-performed PosGold, Normandy, Southcorp, SA Water, Fauldings, Bridgestone and Elders. That puts into context the performance of the Electricity Trust as a new corporate body in this its fiftieth year. The size of the corporation on an asset basis is not generally understood. As an organisation, in terms of assets controlled, it is bigger than Elders, Southcorp, Mitsubishi, Fauldings, Normandy, PosGold, SANTOS, Bridgestone and SA Water.

That sort of performance of the Electricity Trust in South Australia has produced a 7 per cent return on assets, well above the performance charter and benchmark that was established for the organisation. Its reliability of supply, safety record and other areas clearly demonstrate that it is performing exceptionally well. In fact, it is a company, corporate body, Government business enterprise that is out-performing many of its counterparts interstate. For example, profit before tax was ahead of United Energy, Powercorp,

Eastern Energy, Sydney Electricity, Integral Energy and AGL; but Woodside Petroleum had a better performance. The size of the organisation, the assets controlled and the profits before tax set in some context its performance against many private sector companies in South Australia and what it is delivering for its shareholder, the taxpayers of South Australia.

It is that sort of performance that has enabled ETSA to assist small and medium businesses in South Australia. For example, I have indicated to the House in the past couple of years the reduction in electricity costs for small and medium business. What does that translate to? An average small office is paying \$200 less for electricity than three years ago. It used to pay on average \$835; it is now paying approximately \$630. A business such as a deli is saving \$1 470 per annum in electricity costs compared with three years ago. In 1993 the average deli paid an electricity tariff of \$5 650. On average, that is now down to \$4 180. A business such as a seven day supermarket or a hotel that has a considerable amount of refrigeration equipment used to pay on average \$46 700 a year in electricity; it is now paying \$3 500 less per year than it did three years ago.

So, not only has ETSA's performance improved in terms of profit before tax, it is also delivering to small and medium businesses in South Australia a more conducive business climate. That is one of the key criteria of this Government: reducing the cost of small and medium businesses so they have the capacity to grow, expand, employ more, put in place new plant and equipment and to be internationally competitive, creating an environment for more investment in South Australia. I would certainly like to commend the board, the senior management and the work force of the Electricity Trust who have embraced substantial change over the past three years and in doing so have delivered substantial tangible benefits to all South Australians.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): When did the Premier become aware that the Dean Brown Campaign Fund was used to fund his campaign for the leadership of the Liberal Party, and can he rule out the possibility that it was used to offer inducements to Liberal MPs to vote for the Premier ahead of the now Minister for Infrastructure?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Spence has made improper accusations and has imputed improper motives to another member of Parliament. I ask him to withdraw the imputation as it is contrary to Standing Orders.

Mr CLARKE: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My understanding is that it was a straight question and that there was no imputation whatsoever.

The SPEAKER: Order! When I called the honourable member to order he continued talking knowing full well what my ruling would be. Therefore, I am clearly of the view that there was improper imputation in the question, and I have asked him to withdraw it. He has been in the Chamber long enough and comes from a legal background and clearly knows that the question is out of order.

Mr ATKINSON: I accept the veracity of the Premier's statement—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: The Premier had nothing to do with the fund, and he said so.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member wants to proceed with a particular course of action, it is up to him. The Chair wants him to comply with the Standing Orders in a responsible way. I ask him again to withdraw the imputation.

Mr ATKINSON: The imputation is against Mr Chapman and not the Premier, who has said that he had nothing to do with the fund.

The Hon. M.H. Armitage interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health will not make those comments. I want the member for Spence to clearly understand that there was nothing in his question about Mr Chapman when I called him to order. Therefore, I ask him to withdraw any imputation against the Premier or any other member. He can rephrase his question if he desires at a later stage.

Mr ATKINSON: Sir, I am happy to withdraw any imputation against the Premier.

Mrs Rosenberg interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The member for Spence, who is the alternative Attorney-General of this State, has once again gone over the top. I am sure that all members of this Parliament, including members of his own Party, would have been embarrassed by the way he has carried on this afternoon.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition framed the question, but he has imputed that members of Parliament in this Chamber could be bought. I believe that he should apologise for that. We all know that the member for Spence is trying to grab a headline, and he does not care through which sewer he drags himself. He does not care what muck he throws. All he is interested in—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: —is trying to drag down the whole Parliament in terms of the standards that apply.

Mr CLARKE: Sir, I rise on a point of order. Is the Premier taking a point of order or is he putting an argument?

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr CLARKE: Well, it is.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is answering the question. It is a great pity that members of this House do not conduct themselves as responsibly elected representatives. I believe that the public would be less than impressed with the conduct of members today. Members ought to realise that it is a privilege to be elected to this place and a privilege to hold higher office. They should all remember that.

HEALTH COMMISSION FUNDING

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Does the Health Commission's \$38 million increase in its deposit account represent an opportunity to further invest in health in South Australia?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am delighted to address this matter raised by the member for Morphett—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: —because it gives me the opportunity to describe the poor financial management of the Leader of the Opposition and how little he understands about budgets. Yesterday he implicitly asserted that the Govern-

ment should have avoided staff reductions and bed closures by spending in 1995-96 what turned out to be a \$38 million increase in the deposit account.

In responding to the Leader yesterday I highlighted the fact that health care has moved on and that he has a lack of awareness of these sorts of things. In fact, the Government is now delivering more services into the community. Further, his question indicates that he has a neanderthal understanding of financial matters which is not surprising given that he was a Minister in a previous Government which plunged South Australia into debt.

It is simply the fact that in all budgets there are committed funds—and I emphasise 'committed funds'—that wax and wane from year to year. The Leader of the Opposition says that, if you cannot spend them by the end of the financial year, you should perhaps use them to pay for inefficient practices and inefficient bed management practices. That is crazy. Why should the health taxpayer pay for more beds and more staff when the health consumer is getting more services for less cost?

His question indicates how deeply he misunderstands financial management. The money was not hibernating, waiting to be spent on a whim. The funds were already allocated to pay for major projects in the pipeline. The increase in the reserve related largely to delays in bringing on-stream major building projects and major information technology projects. If the Leader of the Opposition believes that we should have spent the funds in other ways, would he like to tell the people of the north that it is not necessary to expand the Lyell McEwin Hospital—because that is where the money will be spent? Would he like to explain to the people in the western suburbs that they do not need a new acute psychiatric facility at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital—because that is the sort of thing the money will be spent on?

Would he like to tell cancer patients at the Royal Adelaide Hospital Cancer Services that the cancer services will not be upgraded—because that is the sort of thing that the money will be spent on? Would he like to explain to the doctors and nurses that we will not introduce the clinical information system that they are asking for—because that is what the money will be spent on? Would he like to tell the people in Millicent, the South Coast and Port Lincoln that their facilities will not be upgraded—because that is the sort of thing the money will be spent on?

Clearly, the Leader of the Opposition is asserting that, as soon as you know that you cannot complete a project in the current financial year, all of the money should be spent immediately in that financial year. That is sheer financial madness. The Leader is asking why we do not use one-off reserves to fund ongoing services. That is stupid. If we did that, under that type of Labor policy, not only would we have to cancel much needed projects—and I have listed a number of those which will be the beneficiaries of the increase in the funds—but once the money ran out we would have to sack the staff and close the beds which the Leader of the Opposition would have us open on a short-term basis. Clearly, that is crazy. Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition demonstrated absolutely capably and ably when he was in Opposition that he had no financial skills and no financial management expertise whatsoever. Unfortunately, yesterday's question demonstrates that he has learned nothing from his period in Opposition.

NASSAR, Mr A.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Why did the Premier invite Mr Abdo Nassar to join him and a former business partner of the Premier's to a meeting at the State Administration Centre with an official representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation? The Opposition has been informed that in September 1994 the Premier invited Mr Abdo Nassar to join him and the Premier's former business partner, Mr Phillip Young, to a meeting in the Cabinet room, with Mr Adle Sadik as authorised Minister for the State of Palestine. Mr Young was the only South Australian businessman invited.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Nassar had indicated to me that this important person was visiting South Australia, that they wanted to secure a number of services from South Australia, particularly in the agricultural area in terms of agricultural consulting, and also in terms of police services and other services. I think the Police Commissioner came along to the same meeting. There were about 10 people there, if I remember rightly. The Police Commissioner was there or, at least, if it was not the Commissioner, it was one of the senior commissioners, because they were wanting to secure police services for the State of Palestine. This was after the peace accord had been agreed to and the separate setting up of a Palestine State. They were saying that they wanted therefore to buy significant services out of South Australia and, seeing that he was visiting the State to buy things, it was therefore appropriate that I invite various representative groups who were interested in supplying those services, including the police and other Government agencies. I certainly invited AACM, to which I have no connection whatsoever—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Well I was, but I resigned all those duties and positions the day I went back into Parliament. Therefore, it was appropriate that I invite along all the parties who could have supplied that service. I would do it tomorrow. I would do it any day a senior Government representative was visiting our State—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Palestine was being established as a separate State, and the specific objective was, using World Bank funds and other aid funds, to buy aid or services from a range of places. There is nothing unusual about that at all: it goes on every day of Government.

RIVERLAND CROP DAMAGE

Mr ANDREW (Chaffey): Will the Minister for Primary Industries outline what information has been gathered on crop damage caused by severe frost in the Riverland during the past week? Unfortunately, over a period of up to three nights, towards the end of last week, frost caused damage to a range of crops in the Riverland. From my inspections over last weekend and from phone calls to me, it appears that the effect and the impact of the damage may be significant. I also understand that staff from the Department for Primary Industries are busy doing assessment work this week.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: There has been much discussion over the past week and a half, and the member for Chaffey has certainly been following closely what is going on in his electorate. It is unfortunate that the Riverland has just been hit with significant frosts for the second time in two years. PISA staff in the Riverland have been inspecting the damage and talking with growers to assess the situation. The worst

frosts were on the mornings of 25 and 27 September, which is about three weeks later than the frosts which occurred last year.

PISA now reports that damage has occurred right across the Riverland, but it has been most severe in the Loxton North area. Early and mid season wine grapes appear to have been worst affected, with losses recorded for chardonnay, shiraz, chenin blanc, colombard and ruby cabernet, as well as sultanas and currants. The young shoots have been badly damaged and buds have been injured. I am informed that in general there is still time for regrowth, but it is too early to estimate the impact on yield, except to indicate that the potential crop will probably be reduced. Particularly given the importance of the wine industry to the State, we will continue to monitor the situation, and PISA staff will be available to assist growers.

Damage to citrus and stone fruits has also been recorded. Apricots are showing scorching and shrivelling, and some fruit drop is to be expected over the next few days. The impact on citrus yields cannot be assessed this soon after the frost. I should point out that there are no management practices for recovery of losses, although growers are urged to maintain frost protection measures. PISA constantly urges growers especially to maximise the area of clean, compact and moist soil to minimise the likelihood of damage from frosts. Growers can also talk to PISA staff about the opportunities to apply for interest rate subsidies if their situation is serious. As does the member for Chaffey, I sympathise with those farmers affected and hope that seasonal conditions will now be favourable not only to avoid further damage but hopefully to maximise recovery in the badly affected areas.

FOOD QUALITY

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): What action has the Minister for Health taken in response to a report prepared by the Salisbury council which, after inspection of 250 food outlets in the past financial year, showed that more than half were substandard or unclean? A report by the Salisbury council states that council health inspections have taken a back seat because of other demands. The report states:

The section's response to routine inspections has been significantly reduced this year due to an increase in work demands in other fields. Section 28 of the Food Act requires the South Australian Health Commission to ensure that councils are adequately carrying out their duties in relation to food standards.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am not aware of the report. Obviously, I will obtain a copy and get a briefing on it. The important thing to acknowledge is that recently there was a deal of publicity about a number of salad bars and so on. A large study indicated that, although some levels of bacteria were found on some of these things, the exact phraseology was, I believe, 'There was no risk to public health.' Whilst some bacteria may be found on these things, the professionals indicate to me that the levels have to be higher than were found. However, the other important thing to acknowledge is that we are in the middle of one of the largest consultations in relation to the Food Act. We expect to have that input towards the end of this calendar year, and we will be framing new changes to the Food Act in relation to that. We look forward to input from the people. However, I will get a briefing on the specific matter.

COMPLETE PEST CONTROL

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. When will the Government be making a decision regarding the launching of prosecutions against a pest control operator, Complete Pest Control? In February this year, the Minister told the House that the Health Commission was well advanced in its investigations of allegations against a pest control operator. I am advised that a Health Commission report on the matter was forwarded to the Attorney-General's Department for action almost three months ago.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: In the investigation of Complete Pest Control, five residences were sampled with results showing inadequate levels of termiticide being present. Information on the testing was provided to the principal of Complete Pest Control on 2 May, with a request to explain the results. Following the discussion between various parties, it was agreed that an independent investigator should be appointed to adjudicate the matter rather than a South Australian Health Commission officer. Various lawyers and the adjudicators met later, and an independent assessment of the report was provided on the testing as requested by the lawyer representing Complete Pest Control. Further action now depends on action by the investigator and the Legal Services Branch.

As I have said before, if there has been a breach we are keen to press charges, but the dilemma in this matter for the Health Commission—and this does not mean that we will not press charges and we are looking at how we might alter the requirements—is that from a health perspective the fact that there is low termiticide is actually positive. Our role from a public and environmental health perspective relates to concerns if the levels are too high in regard to public health. Clearly, work needs to be done because, if there are low levels, the termites can thrive. As soon as we can get the appropriate advice, we will be taking prosecution, if that is the appropriate step and the advice.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education outline an innovative program in which university students can complete both a degree and a TAFE award concurrently?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: This is an exciting development where TAFE SA has come to an agreement with Flinders University so that students can study both a university degree and a TAFE qualification at the same time. It means that someone can study a generalist degree but also get the vocational skills to make them employable from the minute they graduate. It is also important that what would normally take five years—a three year degree and a two year diploma—will be undertaken in four years, thus saving students HECS and, as I indicated earlier, making them very employable in the labour market.

It is a first for South Australia to have this cooperation and it is indicative of the good relationships between TAFE SA and our universities. TAFE is already delivering university programs for the University of South Australia in rural areas and we are intending to expand that. We are looking to expand the range of joint offerings with Flinders University. Under present arrangements, students will study both on the TAFE campus and also at Flinders University. I commend the staff of both organisations for their input into creating what

is a very innovative program to assist young South Australians to obtain world class training, to save on their HECS fees and to become even more employable as a result of their study program.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): On Saturday and Sunday 21 and 22 September the National Pedal Prix was held at the International Raceway. The event is run over a 24-hour period and the 118 vehicles that entered were mainly pedal powered, some having a limited motor capacity. I am particularly interested in the pedal powered vehicles. This year the students, teachers and supporters of Windsor Gardens High School, which is in my electorate, entered three vehicles with, I must say, outstanding success. In fact, they topped their great achievements of last year. The dedication of the students involved saw them spend hours designing and building the vehicles to the standard required, and that dictates that they take the punishment of 24 hours of constant running. Windsor Gardens High School students have shown that they have the skills and commitment to work in a team situation.

In fact, the students have been given the opportunity to learn skills that will stand them in good stead in their future working lives. I must also commend the teaching staff who so willingly gave much of their time to assist the students. John Haddad and Rob Lane guided the students through endless hours of work and encouraged them to give their best to the project. Other parents and supporters were involved, but I specifically wish to mention these two teachers because I know of their long-standing commitment to this project. I must say that the commitment for the school and the students paid off handsomely and I would like to refer to the awards that they received for the three vehicles.

The Path Line vehicle, a new vehicle entered this year and sponsored by Path Line Australia, a new company investing in South Australia, won four out of five awards in the junior category, namely, the innovation award, the design and construction award, the endurance award—they won the race by 27 kilometres—and the overall trophy. In this category 41 vehicles were entered from private and public schools.

The Windsor Shuttle vehicle was entered as a modified vehicle in the junior secondary section and won the fastest lap time trophy which, I must say, was a superb effort. The Windsor Shuttle came third out of 41 vehicles, winning four awards in 1995. The Windsor Cyclone was entered in the senior secondary section under 18 and came fourth out of 40 vehicles, winning the best presented vehicle and crew award. It also won four awards during 1995.

The school has been able to draw on sponsorship from a wide range of business and of special pride to me are the unions, which I approached for sponsorship. Those unions which sponsored the Windsor Gardens High School pedal team were the Federated Gas Employees' Union, the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, the Australian Manufacturing Union, the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, the CEPU Electrical Division, the

Transport Workers' Union and the Maritime Union of Australia.

Windsor Gardens High School is building on its reputation of high achievement not only in the sporting arena but also in the academic area. The principal, Steven Dowdy, and staff are always supportive of projects that enhance and hone the skills of students in their care. They encourage the students to have faith in themselves and to have the confidence to tackle new and adventurous projects and, most importantly, if the first attempt is not successful, to try again.

Finally, I would again like to congratulate the school, the parents, the teachers and particularly the students. This school has now achieved a total of 17 national awards in the Pedal Prix event over a three year period. Members can see from these results that participation in such an event gives students a great deal of responsibility that they can handle. It motivates them to achieve even greater success. I am sure that the skills they have learned from participation in this event will stand them in good stead in their future working and adult lives.

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

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurua): Today I had the pleasure, as the chair of the Noarlunga Seniors' Week Committee, to host in Parliament House the nominees for the seniors' awards for the Noarlunga area. I thank and pay tribute to the Noarlunga City Council for the initiative of Seniors' Week and for its ongoing financial support to the committee. The Noarlunga City Council Mayor, Ray Gilbert, and his wife, Edith, are tireless workers both in their role as Mayor and Mayoress and also in their role as community members. I would ask Mayor Gilbert to relay to his council the committee's sincere thanks for that support.

This is a particularly important year, being the tenth birthday of the Noarlunga Seniors' Week, and I ask Parliament's indulgence to recognise and thank members of the Seniors' Week Committee: Elizabeth Grocke, the coordinator; Alan and Wendy Loser; Edith Gilbert; Margaret Fraser; Mike and Sylvia Swift, who have taken on the treasurer and secretary positions respectively; Ray Chivell; Betty Franche; Helene Jones; Wendy Turner, who is a council employee; Noela Cromer; Vicki Boman; and Rosalie Greenhalgh. This is a terrific group of volunteers who represent a whole range of seniors' groups within the Noarlunga region.

The committee will be conducting a series of events this year to be held in Ramsey Place, Noarlunga Centre. Some of those events include concerts, the launch of Seniors' Week and a sheep to shawl competition, as well as tours of the Onkaparinga River and historical walks around Port Noarlunga to be led by local historian, Lita Martella. The launch will include the cutting of a 10th birthday cake by Mini Nykamp. Mini was the original brainchild, if you like, of Seniors' Week in Noarlunga, so it is quite fitting that she cuts the 10th birthday cake. There is also, as always, an art and craft exhibition as part of Seniors' Week. This year we have had over 350 entries, and they will be on display at Colonnades Shopping Centre for two weeks. I believe that thanks must go to the Colonnades management for their support in allowing Seniors' Week to put on the display within the shopping centre at no charge. I would also like to place on record the committee's thanks to Mark Brindal, MP, who has been kind enough to make the birthday cake for the

10th birthday celebrations, and also to all the local businesses which always donate whenever asked.

I had the great pleasure in Parliament House today of hosting all the nominees for the Seniors' Week awards and their spouses, along with the committee of Seniors' Week. I would like to place on record the nominees for and winners of the Noarlunga Seniors' Week awards. The nominations for the Sports Award were Thomas Bowden, Luke Heffernan and John Russell. The winner of that section was John Russell. The nominees for the Environment Award were Jean Crouch, Rudi Schuetze and Paul Franche, the winner of that section being Paul Franche. I think that there would be very few people in the Noarlunga region who would not know of the work that Paul and his wife have done on behalf of the Friends of the Onkaparinga over many years and, in particular, the recycling and planting work that has gone on at their instigation.

The nominations for community service were Jean Crouch, Frank Ebrey, Mrs de Jong, Ray Gilbert, Hazel McIntyre, Dulcie Denson, Thomas Bowden, Joan Roberts and Betty Franche, and a most deserved winner, from the community service point of view, was Dulcie Denson. I think Dulcie would be a person who is known to everyone in the Noarlunga community. She has worked tirelessly all her life. She still supports her aged mother. She works for the Old Noarlunga community and for the CWA. She has been a tireless worker for the whole Noarlunga region, but particularly for the Old Noarlunga community in which she lives. I would like to congratulate all the nominees and, most particularly, the winners for 1996.

Ms HURLEY (Napier): I wish to refer today to one of the primary schools in my area. I attended the end of term assembly last week, and I should like to mention some of the achievements of this school. It is a fairly large primary school in a partly growing area of my electorate, and there are nearly 700 children at that school. I was very impressed by the list of achievements that were outlined at that assembly and I would like to mention some of them here today.

First of all, I attended the presentation of certificates to those students who had participated in the Westpac Maths Event. There were 17 students who received credits in that competition, and one of the Craigmore South Primary School students achieved a distinction. On another front, certificates were presented to students who had participated in the Northern Primary Sports Carnival, and Craigmore South was the overall winner of that competition. Many students participated in that event.

Some more certificates were presented to students who had participated in the Festival of Music, an event which I attended and to which the member for Reynell has referred. It involved South Australian public primary school children and was coordinated by the South Australian Public Primary Schools Music Society. The children who participated in that event were presented with a certificate, and they then sang a song for the benefit of the assembly. Once again, they displayed the discipline and talent which have brought them into the choir. It was interesting to see the number of boys from the school who participated in the choir, and I believe that is very encouraging. The school will also participate in a major performance at the local theatre later this year, and mention was made of that. I am sure that the students who participate in that event will also display their talent and ability.

All this activity went on despite difficulties that have been encountered by the school over the past year or so, including two major fires. Throughout the year, the children and their teachers have been working under considerable difficulties in temporary arrangements among a lot of builders. This illustrates the commitment of the staff and the students, and no doubt their parents, to get these events up and running. I was proud to be a part of the activities, because you hear so much about young people, and much of it is depressing: for instance, the rate of suicide, their limited chances of getting employment, and the difficulties that they are about to encounter in getting into tertiary education. However, when you see the way that these children are starting off in this primary school with the help of their parents and teachers, it gives you some faith that these talented young people might be able to find a way to overcome the difficulties under which they are working.

In the brief moments left to me I would like to mention that this morning I attended the launch of Senior Citizens Week in the north. It was a combined event organised by the Salisbury, Elizabeth and Munno Para council areas. A number of senior citizens from those areas attended the event at the Munno Park Community Centre. I met a number of friends from all over the area, and I was pleased to be entertained there by various performers. It was good to see such a large and impressive event being organised in the northern suburbs. All too often we from the northern suburbs have to travel to the city to participate in such activities. I very much appreciated being able to walk around a corner and attend such a well organised and well patronised event to celebrate Senior Citizens Week.

Mr VENNING (Custance): As elected members representing our electors in this State Parliament, we all have in our electorates wonderful people, some with exceptional skills and expertise. Today, I think it is appropriate that I inform the House of one such gentleman whom I have had the honour to represent here. I refer to Mr John Hale of Tanunda. Sadly, John Hale passed away on 23 August. This news came to me when I was away, which added to my grief. John and Margarete are personal friends, and his death was a shock to all who knew him. John's passing has left a huge void in the Barossa Valley. He was a wonderful and friendly man who was active in the community and the best at his craft of silversmithing. He was recognised Australia-wide for his skills as a silversmith and a tutor in his craft.

John was born on 12 November 1927. He was educated at Welland Primary School and later at Croydon Technical School, where he was chosen to train with Stevenson Bros, Jewellers, where his love of working with silver began. He moved to the Barossa Valley in 1985 and married Margarete in 1989. He quickly established himself within the Barossa Valley, and he loved his time there. He was certainly very welcome as a member of that community. Whilst living in Tanunda he continued his involvement in Rotary and the Lodge and was a very active member of the Liberal Party. Margarete and John are well known to members on both sides of this House, particularly the Liberal Party. Several years ago, John joined the Tanunda Liedertafel, where the music and fellowship were of great joy to him.

His skill, passion and commitment to his work have been acknowledged and sought after in what has been a brilliant and marvellous career. Following his apprenticeship he decided to go into business on his own in Elizabeth Street in the city. He studied hard at this time to achieve his diploma

in gemology. He then moved to Hindley Street and later to Pulteney Street where he established a long career in teaching silversmithing. John gained the prestige of being awarded a Churchill Scholarship in 1976, the first given in his field, which took him to London to work at the Sir John Cass School of Art. He gained recognition as a master silversmith, and he has regularly been the only person in Adelaide, probably in Australia, who could meet the demands of specific commission and restoration projects.

The quality of John's work is such that it is represented in the Art Gallery of South Australia and has been presented as gifts by Prime Ministers to dignitaries including the Pope. Among his prominent commissions were: a silver mace for the City of Sydney; a silver chalice for the Philippines; three pieces of silver for President Suharto from Prime Minister Keating; silver pieces for St Peter's Cathedral; the Prime Minister's gift to Turkey at 'Gallipoli Revisited'; a mayoral chain for the Tanunda council; and a silver salver to commemorate the new *HMAS Adelaide* for the Adelaide City Council. The list goes on. His joy and excitement at his first church commission was unbounded, and his work for churches always remained his greatest love. This is something for which he will always be remembered.

The job of a politician can be lonely and thankless. I have held John, together with his lovely wife Margarete, as loyal close friends, always there when I needed them, always fully supportive of me and the Liberal Party, and always encouraging, friendly and optimistic. John Hale would be one of the most genuine men I have ever met, always positive, always friendly, and if the occasion warranted he was always ready for a practical joke as he loved to make people laugh, but he was always forthright in his beliefs. He mixed freely with all, regardless of their status. Whether it was the Premier, the Archbishop or children from an unfortunate background, it made no difference to John. He was an exceedingly generous man, often making and donating valuable jewellery for charities and other organisations. He always thought of others before himself. His work for the Liberal Party will long be remembered.

To John's wife Margarete and the family, I offer our heartfelt condolences. It is often said that no-one is irreplaceable, that someone else will always fill the gap. In this case, I very much doubt it. Vale John Hale.

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Awful things happen when mates fall out, and that is what has happened between the Premier and Mr Abdo Nassar. There is a clear pattern of involvement between the Lord Mayor (Mr Henry Ninio), Mr Abdo Nassar, Mr Ted Chapman (who we all acknowledge is the Premier's mentor), the Premier himself, and the Deputy Premier, of whose Liberal Party branch Mr Nassar is a member. There are many things about the relationship between the Premier and Mr Abdo Nassar which the Parliament and the people are entitled to know. It is the Opposition's job to explore that relationship until such time as those things come out, because they have not all yet come out.

The question is: who recommended Mr Abdo Nassar for his appointment to the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission? The Premier will not say—but he should. Why could not the Deputy Premier, last year when he was asked in the House why Mr Nassar resigned from the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, give us the real reason? He would not. We now have the real reason about a year later—namely, bankruptcy—but the truth could have been made

known at that time. Just before his election for the State District of Alexandra, the Premier was the Treasurer of the Liberal Party. During the Catch Tim and Moriki debate in this House, the Premier said that the Treasurer of the Liberal Party and the President are the two people who know all about campaign donations to the Liberal Party across the whole State. How is it that suddenly the veil comes down when the Premier is elected to the seat of Alexandra and he knows nothing more about donations? Because, as Treasurer of the Liberal Party, the Premier must have known what donations Mr Abdo Nassar made to the Liberal Party before he became the member for Alexandra.

We are not being told what those donations were and why they were made. What we need to know about the Dean Brown Campaign Fund is: who are the signatories and for what purpose was it used? Was it used as a factional fighting fund to promote the Premier against the Minister for Infrastructure in the celebrated leadership battle of 1992? Was it used for that purpose? On ABC radio this morning Mr Chapman appeared to say that that was its purpose: its purpose was to make Dean Brown the Leader of the parliamentary Liberal Party. But whenever we have come close to that admission the shutters have gone up. We cannot get the detail on what this money was used for and the Premier's connection with it. Yesterday in Parliament the Premier denied that the fund existed at all. The Premier very quickly changed his tune: 'Yes, it exists,' the Premier conceded, 'but it is nothing to do with me.' We know Mr Abdo Nassar contributed to the fund. We know the Premier denies knowing about it. But then why did the Premier write to Mr Abdo Nassar in the wake of his election for the State district of Alexandra to thank him for his contribution?

For what was the Premier thanking Mr Abdo Nassar? Does anyone really believe that Mr Abdo Nassar was door-knocking on Hindmarsh Island, down on beacon number 19 at Goolwa or the Inman Valley to get the Premier elected to the State district of Alexandra? Of course, he was not. The only contribution Mr Nassar made was money, and the Premier wrote him a thank you note. I ask: why did the Premier write him a thank you note?

These are questions to which the public and the Parliament ought to know the answers. The Liberal Party ought to stop putting up the shutters and come clean about it. The Labor Party has a difficulty with this topic because, frankly, we do not trust our sources, but we do not particularly trust the Premier's answers, either. I call on the Premier to come clean about his full relationship with his mate Abdo Nassar.

Mr BECKER (Peake): There is no doubt that the standard of the Opposition and the debate in this House has deteriorated to the lowest sleaze I have ever heard—absolute sleaze. Question Time was a disgrace, and the performance of the member for Spence was a disgrace. I remind the honourable member of the ALP's slush fund which Don Dunstan had. Where did all that money come from; where did it all go; and what was it used for? What about the Brian Burke slush fund? What happened to Burke?

Mr FOLEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As a new member I do not know the answer, so I ask you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for a ruling. When a member refers to a former Premier of this State, should he be referred to as a Premier or can he be called by his name?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order to be taken in relation to former members. Former members do not have the protection of the House.

Mr BECKER: It was well known that Don Dunstan, a former Premier, had a slush fund, and it was well known that it was used to gain re-election for and promotion of his Government. We know what Brian Burke did in Western Australia. That is well recorded and part of history. What about David Coombe wanting to borrow money from the Middle East to fund the Federal Labor Party campaign? If Opposition members want to get down into the gutter with the sleaze, some members of the Government will accommodate them and we will dish it back to them as hard as they like. We know what the money is for. We know what is going on at the moment. We know the tactics of the Labor Party in South Australia and that various trade unions are sponsoring their candidates as hard as they can go.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BECKER: You are like Millhouse; I reckon there is something wrong with you. I do not think you are well. You carry on as though you think you have hold of something that is absolutely scandalous. However, it has nothing to do with the affairs of State.

Mr CLARKE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Peake reflected on a sitting member of the Supreme Court of South Australia. Is that in accordance with Standing Orders?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair did not hear the comment of the member for Peake. I would ask the member for Peake to exercise discretion in his comments.

Mr Becker: I would not start reflecting on Millhouse, because he was one of those unusual members in this House—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Several other members were reflecting upon the member for Peake simultaneously.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr BECKER: So what?

Mr Caudell interjecting:

Mr BECKER: No, we could say that, in his time, he was a lovable character of the House. The member for Spence is trying to emulate some of the things that Millhouse was well-known for, one of which was niggling at the Government of the day. I felt that it was a terrible waste of Question Time. It was the Labor Party demonstrating once again that it will use anything and any tactic to blow something way out of proportion when, as I said, there are many examples that we could use against members opposite in respect of the behaviour and the tactics adopted by persons within their own organisation. To stand up in the House and fabricate these types of allegations is absolutely ridiculous.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BECKER: The Deputy Leader has been warned about seven times this week. He has not very far to go before he is tipped out.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member will leave that to the discretion of the Chair.

Mr BECKER: The point is that this is typical of the behaviour of the member for Spence when he carries on in this way. We have seen the honourable member's tactics in the western suburbs where he is now promoting all sorts of scare tactics with the residents concerning the airport curfew, the dental hospital and Barton Road—he is back on that, misleading people as usual. The airport curfew would not be there if it were not for me campaigning for it many years ago. The airport curfew will not be lifted, so why run around and scare people into thinking that it will be? As I said, the sleazy type of questioning and the behaviour of the member for Spence does little credit to the Parliament or to the Opposi-

tion when it tries to fabricate allegations concerning the capacity of the Premier of this State.

TAXI INDUSTRY

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development): On behalf of the Minister in another place, I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In reply to a question asked by the member for Torrens earlier this week, the Minister for Transport has provided the following information. The South Australian Taxi Association Taxi Driver Safety Position Paper was received on 17 July 1996. The Taxi Driver Safety Subcommittee of the Taxi Industry Advisory Panel has been meeting regularly since April this year. Representatives of the Passenger Transport Board (PTB) and the taxi industry met on 1 October 1996 to discuss initiatives to improve the safety of Adelaide's taxi drivers. The meeting has recommended that a \$50 000 study to identify the circumstances in which drivers are attacked be undertaken as a priority. The information provided by the research will help determine what measures should be put in place to improve driver safety.

The Minister for Transport will approve that recommendation for such a study to be undertaken as a priority. The PTB has also agreed to a two stage investigation of measures to improve taxi safety. The first stage, to be considered by the PTB within the next month, is the provision of a report to the PTB and the Minister for Transport on the fitting of all taxi cabs with video surveillance cameras and internal release mechanisms for taxi boots. The second stage of the investigation will look at the viability of mandatory fitting of 'gutter side lights' to all taxis and the call back of all customers booking taxis between midnight and 6 a.m. Stage 2 will address compulsory refresher driver safety training courses and the introduction of counselling. The PTB and the taxi industry will also launch an immediate public education campaign to encourage customers to consider driver safety.

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

A quorum having been formed:

PARLIAMENTARY VIDEO

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that an educational video about Parliament is being produced by the staff of the House. As has been discussed informally with members, it will be necessary for realistic footage to be shot from the floor of the House. Accordingly, during the next sitting week I have approved the following: that the bells be rung at 1.50 p.m. on Tuesday 15 October; that filming be allowed from the floor of members assembling, the Speaker entering the Chamber and taking his place; and the filming of proceedings from the *Hansard* gallery. It is my view that a brief film of the proceedings will also assist the House. I invite members to agree to a suspension of Standing Order 72 to permit filming of part of Question Time from areas adjacent to the table.

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

That Standing Order 72 be so far suspended during the next sitting week as to enable strangers to film proceedings from the vicinity of the table for the purpose of an educational video.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PETROL MULTI SITE FRANCHISING

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): I bring up the report together with the minutes of proceedings and evidence of the select committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr CAUDELL: I move:

That consideration of the report be made an order of the day for Thursday 17 October.

Motion carried.

SUPERANNUATION FUNDS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (LIABILITY TO TAXES, ETC.) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act 1995. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Adherence to the principle of competitive neutrality, as set out in the Competition Principles Agreement signed by members of the Council of Australian Governments, requires commercial statutory bodies to be subject to a tax regime comparable to that faced by their private sector counterparts.

There are large funding implications for the State in honouring commitments made under the Competition Principles Agreement. The Commonwealth has agreed to make additional general purpose payments to the States commencing in 1997-98, to be distributed on a per capita basis, and to extend the real per capita guarantee under the financial assistance grant arrangements on the condition that States make satisfactory progress with implementation of National Competition Policy and related reforms. South Australia's share of Competition Grants is estimated to be \$18 million in 1997-98.

The proposed amendments to the *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act 1995* will give effect to the principle of tax parity with the private sector insofar as the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia (SFMC) is concerned.

As from the commencement date of the amended legislation, SFMC will be made liable as a legal taxpayer for the full range of State taxes and for council rates on property leased to the private sector; in addition, the Treasurer will have authority to make SFMC liable for the *equivalent* of council rates in areas where SFMC currently obtains exemptions because of its status as a Crown instrumentality. SFMC will also be liable for water and sewerage rates on all its property holdings except that, for financial years 1995-96 and 1996-97, liability will be limited to land leased to the private sector. The legislative amendments also give the Treasurer power to levy the equivalent of Commonwealth wholesale sales tax on purchases which qualify for exemption because of SFMC's status as a State statutory corporation. In this way, SFMC will be treated for tax purposes on a basis comparable with its private sector counterparts.

It is not proposed to make SFMC liable for the equivalent of Commonwealth tax on employer contributions and investment earnings since this would introduce a disparity. Although private sector superannuation funds are subject to this tax, the beneficiaries are eligible for a level of concessional tax treatment on superannuation benefits that offsets this tax. SFMC is a "constitutionally

protected" scheme within the terms of section 271A of the Income Tax Assessment Act. If SFMC were subject to the income tax equivalent regime, benefits to members of State superannuation schemes would be reduced without the offsetting concessional personal income tax treatment applying to those members.

From 1 July 1995 to the commencement date of the amended legislation, it is proposed to amend the SFMC Act 1995 to provide continuity in the taxation treatment of SFMC with its predecessor, the South Australian Superannuation Fund Investment Trust (SASFIT). This will make SFMC liable for land tax on all properties, payroll tax, stamp duty on real property transactions, council rates on property leased to the private sector and, for financial years 1995-96 and 1996-97, water and sewerage rates on property leased to the private sector.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Substitution of s. 37

This clause repeals section 37 of the principal Act which exempts the Corporation from liability to State rates, taxes and imposts and substitutes a new section imposing liability.

37. Tax and other liabilities of Corporation

Subsection (1) makes the Corporation liable (except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer) to land tax, pay-roll tax, and to stamp duty on real property transfers in respect of the period that commenced on 1 July 1995 and will end on the expiration of the day before the commencement of this measure.

Subsection (2) makes the Corporation liable (except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer) to water and sewerage rates in respect of the 1995-96 financial year and each succeeding financial year, but in respect of the financial years 1995-96 and 1996-97 that liability is limited to water and sewerage rates in respect of land of the Corporation held or occupied under lease by a person or body other than the Crown or a Crown instrumentality.

Subsection (3) makes the Corporation liable (except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer), in respect of the financial year 1995-96 and each succeeding financial year, to local government rates in respect of land of the Corporation held or occupied under lease by a person or body other than the Crown or a Crown instrumentality.

Subsection (4) makes the Corporation liable (except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer), from the day of commencement of this measure, to all other State rates, duties, taxes and imposts as would apply if the Corporation were not a Crown instrumentality.

Subsection (5) makes the Corporation liable (except as otherwise determined by the Treasurer) to pay to the Treasurer such amounts as the Treasurer from time to time determines to be equivalent to Commonwealth wholesale sales tax and local council rates (other than those referred to above) that the Corporation would be liable to pay if it were not a Crown instrumentality.

Subsection (6) provides for amounts payable under subsection (5) to be paid at the times and in the manner determined by the Treasurer.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOTTERY AND GAMING (SWEEPSTAKES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Lottery and Gaming Act 1936. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The *Lottery and Gaming Act* defines 'lottery' to include any sweepstakes. A key feature of this definition is that the outcome of the lottery must be determined by lot or drawing, i.e., be dependent upon the element of chance.

Sweepstakes is also defined in the Act. However, the definition contains no explicit requirement for there to be a chance outcome. Consequently, there is some question as to whether, as the definitions are structured currently, schemes such as football tipping competitions, which meet the definition of 'sweepstakes', are therefore technically lotteries.

It is desirable to put it beyond doubt that the outcome of lotteries, including sweepstakes, must be dependent wholly or partly upon chance. The proposed amendment will remove the existing definition of 'sweepstakes' and provide a new definition which makes it clear that the outcome must be determined by drawing a chance to win. The proposed definition is entirely consistent with the operation of sweepstakes in practice, and clearly excludes those competitions where the prizes depend solely on the participants' skills in picking the winners of races or other sporting events.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation

This clause replaces the definition of 'sweepstakes' with one that states that the prizes in a sweepstakes must be dependent upon drawing the winning chances, whatever those might be, in relation to a sporting event.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

MFP DEVELOPMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the MFP Development Act 1992. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill proposes amendments to the *MFP Development Act 1992* as a result of the decision by the Commonwealth Government in June not to continue funding for the MFP project.

This decision followed the release of the Bureau of Industry Economics (BIE) evaluation of Commonwealth support for the MFP. The report acknowledged that the MFP has made significant progress and has met the achievement targets agreed by the State and Commonwealth Governments over the past two years.

The BIE report indicated that the benefits are more likely to accrue to South Australia than to the nation as a whole. The Commonwealth Government decided that in view of this it would continue to support the MFP as a State-based project but it would not provide further direct funding.

As announced on 6 June, the State Government intends to refocus the MFP effort to ensure that the organisation is best placed to deliver major benefits for the State.

To facilitate this, the organisation needs to be able to operate in an efficient and business like manner, consistent with the normal and appropriate levels of accountability of a Government statutory body.

The Bill therefore provides for a smaller Corporation which can focus on the key issues. The need to consult with the Commonwealth Government is no longer relevant. It is also intended that appropriate people with relevant expertise will be appointed and it is not necessary to include the specific requirements in the Act. The provision for deputies will also be removed. These changes will result in considerable cost savings and better decision-making.

The Community Advisory Committee has provided input to the Stage 1 economic development project. Now that this project is in the final stages of negotiation, there is no need for the Committee to continue in existence. Removal of the statutory requirement for the Committee will save money on payment of members' fees and the overheads in administering its activities.

The current Act requires the Corporation to report annually to both the Economic and Finance Committee and the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. The Act was amended last year to reduce the requirement to report twice a year. These reporting provisions place an additional cost burden on a small organisation and exceed the normal requirements of similar bodies. In any case,

Parliamentary Committees are able to inquire into the activities of organisations under their standing arrangements.

The opportunity will also be taken to address some housekeeping matters relating to the core site. These will be handled by the regulations under the Act. The key one will be to vest land in core Area C (Pelican Point) in other appropriate agencies as this land can be put to better use by them in the short term and would not be required by the MFP for many years into the future.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

This clause removes the definition of 'Advisory Committee'.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 15—Composition of Corporation

This clause—

- reduces the membership of the Corporation to a maximum of seven members
- removes provision for the appointment of deputies
- removes the requirement that the State Minister consult with the Commonwealth Minister before nominating persons for appointment as members
- removes Commonwealth Government representation in the membership of the Corporation
- removes the requirement for members to have expertise in specified areas and replaces it with a more general requirement that members have expertise in areas relevant to the operations of the Corporation.

Clause 5: Repeal of Part 4

This clause abolishes the MFP Community Advisory Committee.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 33—Reference of Corporation's operations to Parliamentary Committees

This clause removes the requirement for the Corporation to report to the Economic and Finance Committee and the Environment, Resources and Development Committee.

Clause 7: Transitional provision

This clause has the effect of vacating the offices of all members of the Corporation.

Mr FOLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

PULP AND PAPER MILL (HUNDREDS OF MAYURRA AND HINDMARSH) (COUNCIL RATES) AMENDMENT BILL

**The Hon. E.S. ASHENDEN (Minister for Housing,
Urban Development and Local Government Relations):**
I move:

That the Pulp and Paper Mill (Hundreds of Mayurra and Hindmarsh) (Council Rates) Amendment Bill be restored to the Notice Paper as a lapsed Bill pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Consideration in Committee of the Auditor-General's Report and budget results 1995-96.

(Continued from 2 October. Page 64.)

Mr FOLEY: I start by saying that it is totally inadequate and nothing short of a farce that we have 15 minutes to question the Minister for Infrastructure, given the enormous breadth of his ministerial responsibilities. My first question relates to SA Water, and I refer to Volume II. Page 768 makes reference to expenditure of \$82 million by the corporation to restructure its debt portfolio. What is the explanation for that?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is part of SA Water Corporation taking responsibility for its debt and its revaluation of that debt figure. The management of that debt will now be under the auspices and control of the board of SA Water Corporation.

Mr FOLEY: I now turn to executive salaries (page 782 Volume II—remuneration of executives). An executive has been paid between \$200 000 and \$210 000 per year. Who is that executive?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ted Phipps. The reason for the adjustment in salary for Mr Phipps, among other things, is that he is now on a contract. He has forfeited his Public Service tenure rights. He is on a two-year contract with the board of SA Water. Approximately 18 months of that contract has expired. The expiry date will be 30 June next year.

Mr FOLEY: The Chief Executive of SA Water in one year has received an \$80 000 salary increase taking his previous year's salary of between \$130 000 and \$140 000 to between \$200 000 to \$210 000. Given that almost two-thirds of SA Water's business is now being done by a private contractor, I would have thought that there may be less for a Chief Executive Officer to manage. You have, in fact, increased his salary by some 40 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It needs to be put in this context. Mr Phipps has forfeited Public Service tenure and all human resources advice suggests that forfeiture of tenure has a loading factor of 20 to 25 per cent of salary base. That is an adjustment because he no longer has longevity in terms of surety of continued employment until retirement age. That is a risk which Mr Phipps has taken and which I think is commendable. He took the view that, if he was to head up a Government business enterprise that had to embark upon a commercial focus and charter, it was important and incumbent upon him to set an example. That is what he did.

In relation to the adjustment of the salary base, it also needs to be put in the context that the substantial restructuring of SA Water over the past three years, principally under Mr Phipps' guidance, and introduction of the Government's policy has brought about a remarkable change of events. Three years ago, SA Water (EWS as it then was) cost the taxpayer approximately \$48 million a year. This year it will be contributing \$61 million profit. That is a \$100 million plus turnaround in three years. Yet the Opposition intends to quibble about the salary base of the Chief Executive of the organisation. It is a funny way to look at doing business, that is all I can say.

Members opposite should go to any private sector company that had a performance turnaround of that magnitude to see what sort of salary base would be paid. And, incidentally, we have checked the remuneration package of Mr Phipps as to that which might apply in the private sector and it is well below those figures related to private sector performance.

Mr FOLEY: Further on the salaries issue, I now turn to the MISBARD portfolio (page 343 Part B Volume I). One executive has received \$340 000 to \$350 000. We note a small notation which states:

Remuneration includes termination payments other than payments made pursuant to a targeted voluntary separation package. Which executive of the Department of Industry and Small Business received a termination payment of \$350 000?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It certainly was not me. I will obtain the information that the honourable member requires.

Mr FOLEY: Do you not have an adviser to provide that information at present? Will you get back to me on who has received what would have to be the single largest termination payment under your lines? I would have thought you would know who that person was.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: We will obtain the explanation.

Mr FOLEY: I would have thought as Minister you would have to approve a termination payment of \$350 000. I look forward to that information. Could we have that information before the close of business today?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I take it that this is part of a press release that the member for Hart has already distributed to the media. On the basis that he has already distributed this, or that it is so hot that it must go to the media before close of business today—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: You have not put it out yet; that is fine. I will be more than happy to obtain a detailed explanation. It does not matter how many pages I supply the honourable member. Perhaps I will put out a press release and explanation so that in the public arena the full story will be told rather than part of the story which the member for Hart has already developed.

Mr FOLEY: It is hard when you stumble across a \$350 000 pay-out, but I look forward to the explanation. Continuing on the theme of executive salaries, I now turn to the ETSA Corporation (page 207 Part B Volume I). It is indicated that ETSA's spending on executives who are paid in excess of \$100 000 or more has risen from \$2.09 million in the 1995 financial year to \$4.349 million dollars. Will you explain how in one year the amount of money paid to executives earning in excess of \$100 000 can double?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The honourable member knows full well that we have established, as a requirement under the national electricity market, a number of stand alone business units, ring fenced and transparent in their operation.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I will come back to the interjection in a moment. Legislation has been passed through this Parliament establishing the ETSA Corporation, the subsidiary corporations under ETSA and the separation out into the generation corporation which will occur on 1 January 1997. ETSA is meeting a requirement of this Parliament, of legislation passed by this Parliament, to be able to enter the national electricity market so that we are a full participant in the market. If the member for Hart or the Deputy Leader were listening to answers that I gave in Question Time today, they ought to feel intimidated and embarrassed about asking the question. I know that the member for Hart was not here: he was out at lunch.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As was a Government member; the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing was at the lunch too, and appropriately so—the Carbine lunch. I have been to those very good lunches before and I am disappointed that I was not asked on this occasion. However, be that as it may, coming back to the main point, I indicated regarding the annual report of the Electricity Trust, which was tabled on Tuesday, that the Electricity Trust was out performing most corporate bodies in South Australia in return on assets and profitability. It was out performing other electricity generators in Australia in terms of performance and profit before tax. We ought to be looking at how the interests of the taxpayers of South Australia are being preserved. We have the right people driving the right reform agenda, meeting the national requirement and delivering a bottom line which, I remind the House, has achieved for consumers in South Australia a 15 per cent reduction in off-peak hot water services. It has achieved substantial reduction in costs for small and medium business enterprises in South Australia. If

we have the right people driving down costs for business and for consumers, I would say we are spending good, valuable dollars on behalf of the taxpayers of South Australia to get the right return.

Mr FOLEY: May I say that, as long as the Minister for Industry supports West Adelaide, he will not be at a grand final luncheon such as the one I attended today.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am a Port Adelaide supporter, and I did not get an invitation either.

Mr FOLEY: There is room for only one of us, Sir, and I made sure I got the invitation to the luncheon as a Port Adelaide supporter before anybody else got a sniff at it. As members would have noticed, I have some fascination with the issue of executive salaries. I would not mind being one myself one day, with these—

The Hon. J.W. Olsen interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The Minister is accusing me of being press release driven. I find that quite offensive. This is not about press releases but about eliciting important information for taxpayers. If that has to be disseminated via a press release, that is just the way it is done.

I refer to page 207, which indicates that an executive earns between \$240 000 and \$249 000. In the previous year, the highest salary paid to an officer was \$140 000 to \$149 000. I assume that that is the Chief Executive of the Electricity Corporation, Mr Clive Armour, who, given the logic of what the Minister said before about the increase given to Mr Phipps in SA Water, has done decidedly better than Mr Phipps by getting a further \$100 000. I understood that Mr Armour was employed under contract and never had tenure. Will the Minister explain how an executive of ETSA seems to have been rewarded with a \$100 000 per year increase in salary when the tenure argument does not apply?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It is quite simple: the previous figure was not for a full year. This figure is for a full year, so the honourable member should go back and do some homework.

Mr FOLEY: Has an increase been paid to the Chief Executive of the ETSA Corporation during this period?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No.

Mr FOLEY: I refer to Part B, Volume I (page 203). Does the ETSA asset valuation provided on that page accord with the evaluation of ETSA used to derive the unaudited balance sheet of the budget result document and, if not, why not?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I will obtain a detailed reply for the honourable member. However, I understand that the valuations were done only at almost the conclusion of the financial year. We would have included an indicative figure, which has now been established and substantiated. The honourable member has to understand that, in moving to Government business enterprises, in changing valuations from that which applied before to optimised deprival value, to which both SA Water and ETSA have had to go, under Treasury instruction, meeting national requirements and with other States are now moving to the ODV figure, in this financial year there has been substantial restructuring of the debt levels. In fact, members will note that, in relation to SA Water, the directors will highlight the difference between the two, meeting the requirements of Treasury, the Auditor-General being prepared to audit only one set of figures but the directors identifying a responsibility to highlight a business value of those assets in this transitional period. In this transitional period, you will get a substantial variation between the two figures as we move from the past to what

will be required in the future, to have consistency in accounting approach for valuation of assets across Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We have completed the examination of the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption (resumed on motion).

(Continued from page 91.)

Mr ROSSI (Lee): It is with great pleasure that I reply to His Excellency Sir Eric Neal's speech on the opening of the Forty-eighth Parliament. It was fantastic to read his speech and to see that South Australia is in a better state economically and has a greater potential for employing younger people in the future. I would like to say a little about why I became interested in politics and how I gained my position. As a teenager, my father worked for a whitegoods factory. In December 1965, he was sacked for refusing to join a union. Some six months later, having been unable to find a job because of closed shop policies, he joined the union and again was employed. When he attended an industrial dispute meeting to vote, as was his democratic right, to oppose the strike action at the St Clare hall, again he was threatened with violence. Given what had happened, I did not consider South Australia to be a democratic State of Australia, and I became interested in politics.

Of course, there was a problem we had with small business dealings. I approached Don Dunstan, who was Premier at the time, and he gave no support for small business and ethics in small business. In 1973, when I became a public servant, as a correspondence clerk, I received a letter from the Premier (Don Dunstan) who then gave a directive to all permanent heads that all Government agencies were to give preference in promotion to employees who were union members over non-union members. Again, I considered this to be immoral, illegal and undemocratic.

As a teenager, I also remember hearing Don Dunstan threaten some multi-national companies that, if they did not comply with his policies regarding worker democracy and worker participation in workplace decisions, he would take legal action against them. I blame him for the beginning of the deterioration, for multi-national companies leaving the State and causing unemployment in South Australia. In Sir Thomas Playford's era more than 120 multi-national companies were operating in South Australia. At the end of the Dunstan era there were 50. By the time Mr Bannon finished with them we had a mere 27 major companies in South Australia.

We hear members of the Opposition claim that the high unemployment rate for young people between 18 and 35 years is about 30 per cent. Of course, it is not the Liberal Government that has caused this—it is the result of previous Labor Governments.

When I won the seat of Lee in 1993, I did so with an agenda. I believed that I had an obligation to my constituents and myself to reverse the social neglect experienced under Labor. I believe I have an obligation to make a measurable difference. The issue of crime was of particular interest to me and I believed the solutions to be obvious, yet prior to the 1993 Liberal election victory no-one was willing to tackle that issue. After three years as the member for Lee I am even more determined to address the issue of crime control. As a

member of Parliament I have witnessed the uglier face of our society.

On New Year's Day 1994 I was called to a neighbourhood disturbance at Semaphore Park where a security door had been pulled off its hinges and thrown over a neighbour's fence, hitting a car, and where broken glass was thrown over a neighbour's driveway. Tyres of cars were subsequently slashed by the people who threw the door over the fence. The perpetrators turned out to be three unsupervised children, all of whom were under 12 years old. At Woodville West I received complaints about children making home-made bombs, attacking other children with baseball bats, swearing, missing school, disturbing the peace, abusing neighbours and throwing rocks at cars.

When I investigated the complaints I was approached by a very polite four-year-old boy who confirmed the allegations. I was later saddened to hear that the same boy had been burned to death as a result of his mother's negligence when, after a night of drinking with her recently acquired *de facto* partner, she fell asleep with a lit cigarette. On one occasion at Royal Park 18 to 20 people held a bonfire in a backyard. They were throwing burning wood into a neighbour's premises along with kitchen knives. They were terrorising their neighbours. Also, four girls under 15 years old were left unsupervised until 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock the following morning. The youngest was found to be in possession of illegal substances. When I approached statutory authorities and Government departments to see what could be done to rectify the problem, I ascertained that there is no compulsory attendance required of offenders at neighbourhood conferences. This disappointed me.

I feel it is a necessity that people who break the law be forced to attend conferences to sort out the problem. At Semaphore Park I received complaints from residents concerned about the fate of a youngster. This four-year-old child was allowed to roam the streets until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. There were complaints of the child stealing letters from letterboxes, using abusive language, stealing lawn mowers and begging for food. Subsequently, I discovered that this four-year-old was hit by a train, severely injuring his leg, this again due to poor parental supervision. Such children are the victims of neglect. The environment in which they are brought up only serves to influence them in the most negative ways. It is a self-perpetuating cycle and there is a need to break the cycle if we are to offer these victims any chance of a decent and productive life.

Parents must be responsible for their children and themselves. Parents must promote and instil in their children the community values that bind the fabric of our society. If parents are not willing to take responsibility, it is up to people in power to provide whatever incentives are available or necessary to ensure that parents are at least aware of their duties. This is also true of the business world. An environment which allows people to undertake fraudulent activities does nothing but promote such activities and sours the existing initiatives designed to offer assurance or help to people who need it. Fraudulent WorkCover claims, the questionable ethics of some within the legal profession and the situation involving those who are driven to misappropriate funds for their own purposes must be addressed in an effort to set an example and break the cycle of crime.

Any initiative to make South Australia economically competitive would be compromised if dishonesty is allowed to continue. Under current law, three-year gaol terms for misappropriation of vast sums of other people's money is an

inadequate sentence. It does not deter, and the chance of success outweighs the punitive sentences imposed. The trickle-down effect, so often used to describe the economic benefits of various initiatives, would be similar if adequate sentences were imposed to reflect the true nature of the crime committed. Over the past 2½ decades we have witnessed the trickle-down effect where lenient sentencing and loopholes in the public and private advisory service industries have not delivered a freer and more equitable society. However, they have delivered freedom and benefits to those who are not deserving. This has occurred at the expense of those who do deserve.

It seems that those who administer the law and thereby set the legal precedents increasingly do so with limited regard for those for whom the law is designed to protect—the innocent. The only true victims of the irresponsible are the innocent, the children of dysfunctional families, the abused and those who seek to better themselves in our community. Although I am accused of being harsh by the media and the Opposition when I raise issues about crime control, I feel it necessary to make my opinions and those of electors known based on the examples I have just outlined and the ongoing examples of injustice in sentencing portrayed by the media.

I firmly believe that the issues of crime and criminal sentencing need to be addressed, but in conjunction with those systems which promote anti-social behaviour. I have to start somewhere, so why not at the top? Why not start with the most serious of crimes? When I look back and compare society in the middle of this century to the present time, I become increasingly motivated to make a difference whilst I hold the seat of Lee. Before the Dunstan decade there was nowhere near the crime rate experienced today. The changes to the Criminal Law Consolidation Act under Labor in the 1970s have coincided with an increase in the crime rate, culminating in today's levels. The changes to the Criminal Law Consolidation Act under Labor have reduced public confidence in the criminal justice system. Public confidence has waned, and this is evident throughout the media representations of community sentiment regarding the sentencing of criminals.

The public would have a limited sense of security if people were aware of the sentencing criteria set down in the Act. A victim of crime would not be pleased to hear that every effort must be made—and I stress this—not to impose a gaol sentence. I appreciate that a judicial appointment is based on a perceived high cognitive ability which can best serve the public, but even the best mind can make a misjudgment. I believe we require a return to the sentencing criteria set down prior to the Dunstan Government before crime gets out of control. We must protect the innocent from those who seek to gain from criminal activity and who have no regard for community values. We must do everything we can to close any existing loopholes which can perpetuate selfish behaviour.

Aspects of the welfare system also need to be addressed. The system is often open to abuse, particularly by those who have no incentive to better themselves or their circumstances. Those who seek to benefit from the loopholes within the law and the welfare system do so at the expense of those who are genuinely in need. In an era of shrinking revenue, it is important that funds be directed towards those who genuinely require them rather than implementing a system which facilitates negligence and Australia's all too common 'she'll be right mate' attitude. I seek to protect the victims from those who seek to abuse the system.

I congratulate the Premier and his ministry on a job well done. The burden of debt inherited from Labor would be a thorn in the side of any Government. The Brown Government, however, has tackled this problem head on, and we can now predict a budget surplus in the near future. I am proud to be an active part of this Government, which will return South Australia to the prosperity it once enjoyed before Bannon and his ministry forced us into near bankruptcy. South Australia is now a more attractive place to do business and also a safer place, as can be seen by the crime statistics issued by the Police Commissioner in recent weeks.

I believe the benefits that the Brown Government has delivered need to be consolidated through an active program designed to make South Australia not only an ideal place in which to do business but also an ideal place in which to live. We need to ensure that our streets are safe and replace the strong sense of community lost under Labor. We must make this State attractive to those who aspire to reside in a society which does not neglect community values. We must reward those who are committed to improvement and reinstall a true sense of community security.

My willingness to introduce the death penalty is well known by the media, but I consider that, even if I fail in introducing the death penalty, at least there are another two options which I would like the Government to follow. I refer to the Criminal Law Consolidation Act of 1935, and I will give a couple of examples. Section 24, referring to 'Verdict of unlawful wounding', provides that 'he shall be liable to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding five years or, where the victim was at the time of the commission of the offence under the age of 12 years, for a term not exceeding eight years'.

There are two options that could be changed in relation to that particular term. If a minimum fine cannot be set for a first offence, then leave the section as it is; but for a second offence the word 'not' should be deleted. By doing so, the judges would be given the power to impose a fine of a minimum of five years—it could be 10, 20 or 30 years. Judges have been crying out that they are constrained by the Act, by the law passed by this Parliament, with regard to the sentences they impose. Consider that the Government of the day thought that five years was a reasonable punishment for unlawful wounding: judges hardly ever impose the maximum of five years, so we have to persuade them that, if a particular offender comes back a second time for committing a similar offence, the maximum penalty for a first offence then becomes the minimum for a repeat offence. That could apply to all the sections in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935.

Another typical provision is section 40: 'Any person convicted of assault occasioning actual bodily harm shall be liable to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding five years.' A person can commit the same offence half a dozen times, and the judge cannot impose a penalty of more than five years gaol. I consider that this section, as with any other section in that Act, should be changed to provide that a second similar offence should be for a term exceeding five years. That would give the judges the power to determine punishment relative to whether a person can or cannot be rehabilitated. Again, this could apply to section 49(3), which provides:

A person who has sexual intercourse with a person of or above the age of 12 years and under the age of 17 years shall be guilty of an offence and liable to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding seven years.

A person may have sexual intercourse with a child within that age group, whether it be male or female, half a dozen times,

but a judge is constrained to apply a penalty of imprisonment for a period not exceeding seven years. Why not have a second offence and provide a penalty of imprisonment for a term exceeding seven years? By doing so, the judge would be able to lock up the person and throw away the key. I think this is important to give confidence to the people of the State of South Australia. If I were a business person looking toward South Australia as my new home, not only would I look at profits but also I would consider the safety of my partner and my children, not to mention my own safety.

I blame the previous Labor Government for its leniency in terms of the bankruptcy laws for reducing the period during which a person cannot own money or assets from four years to two years and for also saying that people can be rehabilitated. I remember when I was working for the EWS that I visited a depot in an Upper North town where a plumber passed a cheque that bounced. During the following week, he set up a \$2 shelf company and he continued to work under contract with the EWS. It is my understanding that the department had no way of claiming the outstanding money that was owed by the plumber for buying special fittings from the department while working on a subdivision. Yet, the department was obliged to pay the plumber under a different company name his normal salary and future payments in respect of other new subdivisions.

This happened to a Government department, but if it happened to a private business it would not be able to cope with losing thousands of dollars to people who, as far as I am concerned, are corrupt. The Companies Act should make provision so that the individual directors of a company which goes bankrupt cannot set up another \$2 shelf company or some other type of business and continue with normal employment as though nothing had happened. Every time one of these sharks acts dishonestly, it affects hundreds of people who are timid about taking risks. No-one minds taking a risk provided they have only themselves to blame, but when you have unions making unnecessary WorkCover claims, accountants who provide bad information, and lawyers who use clients' assets for their personal gain, and when these individuals get very little punishment for the crimes they commit, that does not instil confidence in future investors to come to this State and feel comfortable in the knowledge that whatever business they undertake is totally theirs and whoever they contact is trustworthy and reliable and will give them best service.

That brings me to another point with which I have problems. I refer to the mega-business of landlords at places such as the Westfield Shopping Centre who conveniently charge excessive rents to small business owners and battlers. They wait until the last minute when the lease is about to expire and say that they must refurbish the building in a way that they stipulate. Sometimes that is not necessary. Sometimes these big landlords shift the small business, whether it be a deli or a smallgoods shop or a hairdresser, from one location to another. By shifting them to another position in the shopping complex, naturally the business and its goodwill suffer until customers get to know of the new location. Many people from the Westfield Shopping Centre at West Lakes have complained to me about these things. If we make South Australia the lowest taxed State, the most competitive and fairest for business, with the best corporate ethics in Australia and the lowest crime, these factors will attract financiers, entrepreneurs and families with a better education. Hopefully this will reduce unemployment and provide a better future for all our children.

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I congratulate His Excellency the Governor, Sir Eric Neal, on the presentation of his first address at the opening of the Fourth Session of the Forty-Eighth Parliament on Tuesday 1 October. In His Excellency's speech, emphasis was given to the economic development which has occurred in this State during the past three years under the Brown Liberal Government. As the Governor stated, South Australia has much to offer in terms of resources, enterprises and expertise.

Employment has already been a top priority, and many jobs have been created in South Australia during the term of the Liberal Government. The Brown Government will continue to build on the foundations of a stronger, more diverse economy—and that is quite obvious. Three of the Government's priorities are: first, developing export focussed and competitive South Australian enterprises which are responsive to changing international markets; secondly, encouraging new investment; and, thirdly, improving productivity and infrastructure.

Under the Brown Liberal Government, a world competitive business climate is being created—a very healthy climate indeed. South Australia has the second fastest rate of improvement in productivity of infrastructure in the Commonwealth. The rate of fall in charges for infrastructure is the fastest in South Australia since 1992 when the then Labor Government left office. South Australia has the second lowest index of charges across a broad range of infrastructure including ports, rail, electricity, gas and aviation. South Australia also has the cheapest port charges per container and the fastest ship turnaround times.

It is also important to point out that the industrial expansion which has occurred in South Australia means jobs and a powerful boost to the State's economy from a financial perspective. The following expansions either have occurred or are occurring under the Brown Liberal Government: the General Motors-Holden's \$1.4 billion automotive expansion at Elizabeth to produce a new mid-sized vehicle, the Vectra, and a major investment for the new Commodore model for release in right and left-hand drive versions; a \$500 million Mitsubishi expansion for the production of a car in Adelaide for world markets; a \$200 million Santos investment which will double petroleum exploration in the Cooper Basin over the next three years; a \$30 million Pasminco expansion of refining operations at Port Pirie; and the Penrice Soda expansion which will double the capacity of the sodium bicarbonate plant and expand soda ash capacity from 350 000 tonnes to 500 000 tonnes per year.

Also included is Westfield, which is creating work for 1 650 people through its redeveloped shopping town at Marion—an exciting concept; also an 8 000 hectare vineyard expansion (and 50 per cent of Australia's new plantings are in South Australia); relocation of office functions back to South Australia including the Westpac Loan Centre, Australis, Telstra MobileNet and Link Telecommunications; and the Olympic Dam expansion, which is constantly mentioned in this House, with a possible doubling of production and investment of \$1 000 million by Western Mining Corporation. With the expansion of Olympic Dam and Roxby Downs, as the Governor stated in his speech, a \$1.25 billion expansion by the private sector will directly and indirectly create up to 6 700 new jobs.

In my electorate of Hanson exciting developments are now well and truly under way, including the Mile End rail yard redevelopment, involving housing, a sports stadium and

netball complex. The upgrading and leasing of Adelaide International Airport, which is an exciting primary infrastructure objective, is also in the seat of Hanson. The present facilities are inadequate and have prevented growth in the key areas of export and tourism. As the Governor stated in his speech:

... inadequate air transport facilities are viewed by investors as a competitive disadvantage.

With funding from the Howard Government, the planned runway extension work will commence in the next few weeks. It is anticipated that the runway extension will inject \$225 million into the economy of this State over the next 10 years. With the upgrade of the passenger terminal at Adelaide Airport our State's national and international profile will indeed be enhanced greatly.

The Governor, Sir Eric Neal, mentioned two key areas of Government which will always be bathed in controversy: health and education. Health is a very difficult portfolio but it is being very well handled under the leadership of Minister Armitage. We are making tremendous progress in many areas of health. Under the Brown Government we have more hospital admissions in 1996-97 than at the end of the Labor debacle which led us to Government in 1993. The waiting lists are shrinking. It is important to note that specific initiatives and health care targets will be pursued over the next year in respect of Aboriginal health services.

As the Governor stated, in conjunction with the private sector, the Brown Government will proceed with initiatives to construct new and improved health facilities at Mount Gambier, Port Augusta and the Flinders Medical Centre. A great boost in health will come when funding of approximately \$3 million will be available to primary health care projects and initiatives in the 1996-97 financial year. It is significant that a large proportion of money has been allocated to projects and initiatives aimed at improving continuity of care and Aboriginal primary health care.

Having been involved in education for 25 years prior to coming into Parliament, I greatly appreciate the leadership given in this demanding ministry and portfolio by the Hon. Rob Lucas. It is a privilege for me to be on the backbench committee where I can appreciate first-hand the issues with which the Minister has to contend on a daily basis. It is important to point out that the Brown Government spends more per student than any other State in the Commonwealth of Australia, and South Australian students enjoy the best student to teacher ratio and lowest class sizes of any State. As the Governor stated in his speech to the Parliament, our schools have 12 per cent more school assistants than the national average. We are ensuring that our young people are ready for tomorrow's South Australia with a new \$15 million computer and technology purchasing program to achieve one computer for every five students.

In the area of education we spend more to overcome learning difficulties among our school beginners and we have provided more speech pathologists. This year alone we will spend \$100 million on providing new schools and upgrades. Our restructured universities and specialist vocational schools and colleges such as the Australian Aviation College at Parafield are creating a new, competitive edge for South Australia.

I have left one significant point until last, one which has caused considerable controversy in the past 18 months among teachers and parents; that is, the successful introduction of the basic skills testing, which I have heavily promoted at every

opportunity. I remember the roar and the groans of disapproval which came from the Opposition and SAIT but, now that the thumbs up has been given by parents to basic skills testing, the opposition has all but gone. The 1995 inaugural basic skills testing, together with the 1996 testing which has just been completed, clearly shows that the Brown Government's significant educational reform has been an outstanding success.

This year the Government has already provided \$2 million in cash grants to schools to provide assistance to students with learning difficulties in the early years of education. This year's budget included \$3 million in cash grants which will be and have been provided to schools for the same purpose. This money can be used to maintain school service officer hours, to provide extra assistance in the classroom and to support students with learning difficulties. It can also be used for the provision of extra training and development for teachers and staff or the purchase of additional curriculum resources. The decision will be left up to the school. The exact allocated mechanism to be used to distribute those funds to the schools next year is soon to be finalised. However, the results of the basic skills test, at the very least, will be one factor which will be taken into consideration in the distribution of funds to schools. It needs to be remembered that every school must have an early assistance action plan, and these cash grants must support the implementation of the early assistance action plan.

In his speech His Excellency spoke on very strategic issues such as community safety, the environment, community services and the Brown Government's program of structural reform to local government in South Australia. The local government boundary reform process will accelerate as councils move to develop and finalise amalgamation options. I am delighted to see the negotiations being undertaken in my electorate of Hanson by the West Torrens and Thebarton councils as they work towards this amalgamation. I especially wish to compliment the mayors of both councils, Mayor George Robertson of West Torrens and Mayor Annette O'Reilly of Thebarton, as they work towards that amalgamation.

We have come a long way since 1993 when Labor's dismal record saw the unemployment level spiral to 12.3 per cent. Successful Government is always measured on job creation and debt reduction. Under the Brown Liberal Government unemployment has fallen to 9.7 per cent. We have switched the jobs focus from the public sector back to the private sector. Jobs are no longer borrowed against tomorrow's taxes. New jobs are springing up in the private sector, which is growing in the new environment created by the Liberals and by the Brown Liberal Government.

We are on schedule to achieve by June next year a cut in 12 400 jobs in the public sector with targeted voluntary separations. New and sustainable private sector jobs mean that increasingly young South Australians can choose to build a life in their home State without having to go interstate for work. Labor was driving them away at a fast rate of knots. Our economy is growing faster than the national average. In 1995 South Australia was the fastest growing State in Australia. Labor gave us 11 years of indecisive Government. The Brown Government has, as His Excellency states, 'created a foundation of economic and financial reforms to public administration from which South Australians are now poised to reap the benefit'. The living standard of South Australia has improved due to the sound administration of the State's economy. It is time to be positive.

We should always remember that the Labor Party remains discredited within the community, particularly in relation to economic and financial management. Quite bluntly, the community does not trust Labor. That is obvious when I go doorknocking in my electorate of Hanson: there is still a complete lack of trust. We should remember that Labor and the Leader of the Opposition are hypocrites when they talk about jobs and community services. For 11 years they put South Australia on the path of ruination. Let us also remember that they sent the State broke. The community has not forgotten and must not be allowed to forget. Labor and the Leader of the Opposition are opportunists: they will jump on any bandwagon. South Australians are sick and tired of gimmicks: they need and have demanded substance. The Brown Government has provided both substance and solidarity.

Labor and the Opposition Leader are captive to the control of others. They do not listen to the community, because it is the Labor union movement and special interest groups that will control their agenda at the end of the day. Just look at how many union officials are now ALP candidates for the next election. I am sure you will agree, Mr Deputy Speaker, that they will never see the inside of this House or the other place. Labor and the Leader of the Opposition are ideologically divided when it comes to policy development, because the unions are ideologically divided on issues such as contracting services to the private sector. In respect of asset sales, let us remember that they wanted to buy back the State Bank and SGIC. In conclusion, I quote a paragraph from His Excellency's speech to the Parliament on Tuesday 1 October, as follows:

The Brown Government's legislative program also recognises the need to protect our citizens with a legal framework of legislation that provides personal and social security, promotes the principles of equity and fair dealing, creates incentives for flair and entrepreneurship and values our unique environment.

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

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker: it is always good to see you in the Chair. I will take this opportunity in my Address in Reply contribution to pay tribute to His Excellency the Governor, Sir Eric Neal. I have had the privilege of meeting Sir Eric Neal at his inauguration on becoming Governor of our State, and I am sure he will conduct his office with great dignity and integrity. I am certainly very pleased to discuss issues with him at any time. I know he will be an excellent Governor, following in the footsteps of Dame Roma Mitchell, for whom all members of this House have a special affection.

Many believe that this will be the last session of the Parliament before an early election. The Premier must be sorely tempted to go early. In his premiership he has delivered little more than a large junkyard full of broken promises. His hold on the leadership is tenuous. Even today and yesterday we received phone calls from members of Parliament with information about the Premier's Libyan connections. So, he must ask himself daily, perhaps hourly, 'If I go soon, can I hold the seats I need to stave off John Olsen?'

That is not a bad question. This Government and the Premier have flattened the South Australian economy. People are tired of the excuses and alibis. The Premier's determination to blame everyone and everything but himself for the faults of his Administration and the fact that South Australia

is going nowhere fools no-one, not even the many business people from whom he claims endorsement. When I go around businesses, I am constantly being told that they would rather have John Olsen as Premier than Dean Brown. In fact, on many occasions they tell me that Olsen has the substance and that the Premier of the State is just a front man—a PR man—who does not know what he is doing.

One thing the Premier does is blame someone else. He is always blaming someone else: he blames the former Government, the Federal Government, the Keating Government, the Howard Government, the City Council, Abdo Nassar or Henry Ninio. There is always someone to blame. Yesterday it was the Auditor-General; today it is his own staff.

It is not a bad question. As I have said, the Government is basically presiding over a State that is going nowhere. Increasingly, this Government is seen absolutely and definitely for what it is: one which is about reducing, not improving, the living standards of ordinary South Australians; one which attacks the basics and delivers control of vital public assets to foreign private companies; one which shuns openness and the right of ordinary South Australians to have a real say in the affairs of Government; and one which fails the basic test of competence. Now, with John Howard at Kirribilli breaking scores of the promises he never intended to keep and laying waste the basic programs that mean the difference between hope and despair for many ordinary South Australians, the Premier must be thinking that his only option is to go to the polls early. He has a world record majority; there will not be any excuse for it, but he will try to seek a mandate in March and April.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is very interesting: the Minister for Emergency Services (is he still Minister for Emergency Services?—he got dumped from most of his portfolios because of incompetence) is actually agreeing with me that there will be an early election. On Tuesday the Auditor-General delivered a damning indictment of the policies of the Brown Government and the incompetence with which it implements those policies. Indeed, this is the second year running in which the Auditor-General has made trenchant criticism of this Government's policy directions—and trenchant criticism of the Premier and Treasurer particularly.

The size and range of the Auditor-General's concerns and warnings about the directions in which Dean Brown's Government is leading us is staggering. On almost every page of his report, the Auditor-General raises serious concerns about the fire sale price at which this Government is selling quantities of South Australia's key assets and the apparent lack of any demonstrable and substantial benefit to the budget bottom line; the ideological mania of this Government for more expensive private financing of infrastructure while our hospitals and schools are left to struggle for want of money and resources; the way in which this Government is contracting out key public services and, in doing so, racking up new public liabilities and exposing the South Australian public to serious risk; the way it is being done without anything like an adequate understanding of the implications; and the way this Government and particularly the Treasurer for the second time in as many years have made use of official budget papers to make misleading or questionable claims about his financial management.

These are just a few of audit's concerns, and the Opposition shares them. Once again, the Premier was in conflict with the Auditor-General. He resorted to not answering those criticisms by abusing the Auditor-General of this State—an

independent officer of this Parliament. He accused Mr MacPherson of being short-sighted; he accused Mr MacPherson of being simplistic; and he accused Mr MacPherson of attempting to write history. That is why today I have given notice that I will move a confidence motion in the integrity, honesty, diligence and professionalism of our Auditor-General in this State. It will be very interesting to see whether the Premier turns up to cast his vote.

We have already heard that this session of Parliament occurs against the backdrop of savage budget cuts by the Howard Government, cuts which, despite all the sophistry and evasion of the Premier and his Treasurer, spell disaster for South Australia's battlers and for essential services. These are the very services that State Governments actually exist to deliver. It is these basic things that determine the quality of life, opportunities and prospects for ordinary South Australians—hospitals, schools, TAFE and higher education systems, policing and community safety, and the basic utilities of water and electricity. They are what we call the fundamentals, what we call essential services.

These are the very things that the Brown State Government has been attacking over the past 2¾ years. Now it seems that South Australians are to be doubly disadvantaged. They must now wear the policies of John Howard as well as those of our Premier following his Government's delivery over its term of a \$45 million real cut to education; a \$79 million cut to health funding in real terms; the cutting of nearly 300 police, leaving police numbers 450 short of the Liberal Party's election promise; and, of course, large TAFE cuts—just to cite a few. The Premier wanted his latest budget to show us his softer, more caring side. To do this he brought down, as I have said before, an entirely phoney State budget, a budget conceived in bad faith—a con. Just as he has attempted to con the Parliament today and yesterday about his relationship with Mr Abdo Nassar.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition, I believe, is reflecting improper motives on behalf of the Premier and consequently I ask him to withdraw the comment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Not at this stage. The Leader has simply referred to a relationship between the Premier and the third party, but the Chair will listen carefully as to whether there are any imputations of impropriety. That is the real test.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Thank you, Sir. I have a further point of order. I distinctly heard the Leader of the Opposition claim that the Premier had conned the Parliament.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Let me repeat my line: to do this he brought down, as I have said before, an entirely phoney State budget, a budget conceived in bad faith—a con.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: That is not what you said.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow the Leader to carry on.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Sir. He brought down a budget regarding which almost all the good news could never be delivered. Almost all the good news was based upon the Brown Government's supposing what no-one else believed, pretending to the public, perhaps pretending to itself, that John Howard would increase rather than cut funding for State programs. The Premier claimed in his latest budget in May that he was caring and compassionate. There was one problem. Even the minuscule increases in funding of schools and hospitals could not be delivered, and the Premier knew that when he delivered his budget. They were

based on the ludicrous assumption that the Howard Government would increase and not cut grants to the States that no economic commentator, that no other Premier in Australia, believed.

It is simply astonishing that, at precisely the time that the Premier was extolling the virtues of his caring budget, he was also urging Mr Howard to make the cuts that the Prime Minister has now made. The Premier advised John Howard to cut 10 per cent from the Federal budget at a cost of 30 000 jobs. He was very direct in advocating to Mr Howard that this must happen. He never once challenged the need for these cuts. Instead, he urged the new Federal Government to go ahead and make them.

The Premier of this State and his Treasurer have spent much of 1994 and 1995 complaining about the fact that the former Keating Government would not make these cuts. They urged South Australians to elect a Coalition Government supposedly to get the nation's finances in order and to get a better deal for the States, particularly small States such as South Australia.

John Howard's first budget is just like those of the Brown Government. Without doubt, it is a federal budget of betrayal. In this budget, John Howard and Peter Costello, like the Premier and this State Government, have broken almost every single election pledge that they made before gaining government. During the election campaign, John Howard proclaimed his conversion to all the things that he had said in previous years he would tear down. During the election campaign he said that workers, the unemployed, the frail and the sick, the public health systems, Aboriginal people, students and all others previously in his sights no longer had anything to fear from a Howard Government. He also proclaimed his devotion to multiculturalism.

He said that thousands of South Australian jobs at Australian National would be maintained. Funding to the States for front line services would also be maintained. He promised that there would be no cuts to labour market programs, no cuts to higher education, no cuts to the ABC, no cuts to Medicare, no cuts to State grants, no cuts beyond 2 500 to Commonwealth public sector employment and so on. He said that we all would be 'comfortable and relaxed'. John Howard said, 'The one group in the community that is not going to be hurt is the most vulnerable.' That is what he said—quoted in the *Age* of 20 April this year.

The truth is that this budget represents a fundamental breach of faith not only with these specific undertakings but also with basic fairness and decency. It was all a tactic, and a dishonest one. John Howard's tactic was the same as that used by conservative State Governments around Australia over the past few years. The script of Howard's election campaign could have been written by a Kennett or a Brown. It runs like this: promise not to make radical changes, and provide minimum policy detail before the election, then concoct a so-called black hole in Government finances after the election and use an audit commission—bodged up with a few of your political mates—to justify slash and burn, and then go ahead and do the slash and burn and do what you intended to do in the first place but blame your opponents.

Mr Howard's justification was the shock-horror discovery of an \$8 billion black hole in the Commonwealth budget. You could almost mime his spiel. He told the people earnestly, 'We could not have known before the election how bad things really were.' Always be sincere, even if you have to fake it: that is the Liberal creed.

As the controlled leaking continued, and the Prime Minister and Treasurer railed about an \$8 billion black hole, John Howard introduced a new term into the Australian political lexicon. He said that he was committed to keeping his promises, as he had said before the election—or at least his core promises. John Howard likes to protest his honesty; he likes to be called Honest John. He is proud of his commitment to honouring his promises. With the introduction of a distinction between core promises and non-core promises, John Howard has introduced another new concept—core honesty and non-core honesty. It was a cynical exercise: the reality is that this tactic was dishonest to the core.

After the Premier's conference in June, the Premier announced what a great victory it had been for the States but not a single promise of substance made by John Howard survived his first budget. John Howard promised no drastic cuts, but the budget cuts almost \$4.5 billion out of budget expenditure this year, and a total of \$7.2 billion over the next two years. He took the Premier's advice and slashed Commonwealth jobs and programs in South Australia. John Howard promised not to target the unemployed and to maintain the Working Nation programs to assist those without jobs. However, in this budget he has cut nearly \$2 billion out of the Working Nation labour market program over the next four years. Did the Premier oppose these cuts and stand up for the unemployed? No he did not.

This is a budget that will create high levels of unemployment, the direct result of the actions of the Howard Government. Despite this and despite John Howard's promise to look after the vulnerable, the Government is blaming its victims. Eligibility for job search and the activity test is to be tightened, so much so that the Government expects to save more than \$370 million over the next four years. In addition, there will be harsher penalties for abuse. The unemployed are not only offered far fewer job opportunities: they are also to be harassed out of receiving Government income support. Did the Premier complain on behalf of the unemployed? He did not. Mr Howard promised to maintain funding for tertiary education but is cutting about \$850 million out of universities over the next four years and over \$100 million this year. Did the Premier fight the slashing of higher education? No, he did not. Mr Howard promised not to increase the Higher Education Contribution Scheme, but HECS has been hiked up by at least 35 per cent and students have to pay back more quickly. Eligibility for Austudy has been tightened. Did the Premier fight the increases in HECS? No, he did not.

Mr Howard promised that schools would be insulated from cuts to State grants. Nevertheless, what do we see happening to funding for public schools? The last Labor budget estimated that funding for Government schools in 1997-98 would be \$1 280 million. However, the Howard budget shows this as \$100 million less. John Howard has cut funding for Government schools—the system that educates everyone regardless of wealth—by around 7.8 per cent. That is how much he cares about being the learning nation, the clever country.

Mr Howard promised to maintain Medicare and hospitals funding, but the cuts to health total around \$800 million over the next four years. Furthermore, the Commonwealth dental scheme has been abolished. This is nearly \$400 million worth of free dental treatment the Government will not provide over the next four years. There are rises in the costs of pharmaceuticals of up to 20 per cent for health care card holders. Did the Premier complain on behalf of the sick and the elderly? No, he did not.

Mr Howard has cut aged and community care by \$568 million over the next four years. He has also imposed entry for all but pensioners for admission to residential aged care. The average entry fee will be \$26 000 but the fee can actually be as high as \$88 000. In addition, depending on their individual circumstances, over one-third of nursing home and hostel residents will be slugged \$12 000 *per annum*. There is the real prospect of elderly couples having to sell the family home to finance the entry into residential aged care of one of the partners. Mr Howard's claim to care about older Australians is a sham. However, did the Premier fight for the elderly? No, he has abandoned them. In fact, he would not even answer questions about the impact on the elderly when I raised these issues in Parliament on opening day. He did not care; he could not be bothered answering the question himself. Mr Howard's claim to care about families is also a sham. By scrapping subsidies for child-care and means testing for the child-care cash rebate, John Howard has taken over \$500 million out of child-care over the next four years. But did the Premier fight for families? No, he did not.

With regard to his claim to care about regional Australia, Mr Howard has taken more than \$180 million out of assistance for struggling regions over the next four years by abolishing the regional development program. Roads funding has also been cut. Does the Premier care about regional South Australia? Certainly not. But there is more bad news. Mr Howard promised to maintain funding to the States to fund hospitals, schools and other essential community services. However, Commonwealth funding for the States has been cut by over \$1.5 billion over the next three years in addition to cuts of 3 per cent in special purpose payments to the States, the bulk of which goes to hospitals funding.

Other programs such as support for industry development have been cut. The DIF scheme, which has supported Australian exports into Asia for major infrastructure development, has been abolished, while the Export Market Development Grant Scheme has been cut severely. The tax concession for industrial research and development has also been cut. But does the Premier care about the bulk of South Australian businesses and industries that need these programs to compete? Apparently not, because he did not bother to complain. This is a Premier whose own companies utilised special assistance schemes and export schemes in order to sell chicken sheds to China. They actually pleaded for the help of a former Labor Premier to change his itinerary to help bail him out of his negotiations. So much for his commercial expertise! It is nice to see that these days he is still keeping in touch with his former business partner.

John Howard's budget gives a little with one hand and takes a lot more with the other. The supposed benefits of the family tax package will be swamped by factors such as massive cuts to States in health and education, likely rises in State taxes and charges as a result of the cuts, cuts to higher education and increases in HECS, increased charges for pharmaceuticals, increased costs for looking after aged family members, cuts to unemployment support and labour market programs and higher child-care costs, just to name a few.

With the family tax package, Mr Howard claims to be putting families first. He claims this is a budget that supports the mainstream of Australian society. However, the only mainstream families that can benefit must be those who do not face the reality of illness, old age, unemployment, the need for primary and secondary education for their children, and the need to give children access to training at TAFEs and universities. Is this what Mr Howard means by mainstream?

Exactly who is he talking about? Before, he was concerned about the vulnerable; now he is concerned about the mainstream but cannot define it. Where has our Premier been while this has happened? Has he raised his voice against all the broken promises? Has he stood up for the unemployed in this State against the attacks on labour market programs? Has he stood up for the sick by opposing fees for residential aged care? Has he opposed the cuts to university funding? Has he opposed rises in HECS, while all the time talking about South Australia being the smart State in the clever country?

I refer to the Adelaide 21 document. The Premier wants us to be the learning city, yet he and his Federal counterparts are cutting back on schools, TAFE and university education. How can you be the learning city, the smart State, if you cut your investment in education? The answer to all those questions is that the Premier has been nowhere to be seen. This Premier has failed the fundamental test of a State Premier in a small State such as ours. He has never gone and fought for this State. He has done deals to dud us. When he has tried to fight, he has always lost. Now that his polling is showing he has to behave more like Jeff Kennett.

That is why he is taking on the Adelaide City Council. He is pretending that he is Jeff Kennett. The pollster went in to see him with the Party President and the Party Secretary and said, 'We are sorry about this Premier, but the people are starting to think you are a dud. They are starting to say that the economy is wallowing. They are saying you are showing no leadership. They are saying that you do not have any guts or vision. So, you have to start somehow using the word 'vision' and get it into press releases and newspaper headlines.' They said, 'Look out for the word "vision". You have to take someone on. People are blaming you, Premier, according to the polls, for not having the guts to drive an economic recovery. They are not now accepting your blaming everything on the Federal Government or the former Government. You have to find someone else to blame. They want you to be like Jeff Kennett. Perhaps you could actually pick a fight with Adelaide City Council—perhaps you could pick a fight with poor old Henry.' So it was all concocted.

The Premier had a shot of testosterone—not that it actually did much—and somehow, somewhere the new Premier was going to be strong as well as having vision. However, it will not work because, when there is competition between Dean Brown and Jeff Kennett fighting for their respective States, we know who wins and it ain't Dean Brown. What we have seen is a Premier who will not put on a real fight, but a Premier who likes to lose and likes to blame someone else. Let me go back to what the Premier said after the June Premiers' Conference when South Australia lost \$83 million in Commonwealth grants for this year alone. In this Parliament on 18 June the Premier said:

That was a great achievement. It was the first time that I have seen State Premiers go to Canberra and win.

He got cut by \$83 million and called it a victory, yet he said it was the first time that he had seen Premiers go to Canberra and win. He must have been the only one around that table who thought he had been a winner. Everyone else thought he was a goose; everyone else thought that he had lost out; everyone else thought that basically he was arguing sitting on his own hands; everyone else thought he had done a backdoor deal with John Howard to go back and proclaim a major loss as a victory, and hopefully someone in the media would try to pump him up as some kind of victor when he had lost and lost badly.

If that was a great achievement, it was certainly not for South Australians, who will not get the public health care they need and deserve; it was certainly not for the thousands of the State's tertiary students who will not be able to afford to begin or continue their studies; and it certainly was not for the school students whose education is already suffering under the impact of school cuts. It was certainly not a great achievement for the elderly, who will have to pay tens of thousands of dollars for admission to aged care and who will have to pay more for pharmaceuticals. It was certainly not a great achievement for the 807 000 unemployed around the nation—nearly 9 per cent of them in South Australia—who are soon to be joined by thousands more whose access to training and job opportunities has been cynically cut. I want to quote the Premier again because I want to do him justice:

If any State won more out of last week [the Premiers' Conference], more than any other State, it was South Australia. I realise that the Leader of the Opposition—

that is me—

is hurt by the fact that I went in fighting and achieved a great victory for South Australia.

Who is this man kidding? We can accept that he is trying to kid his back bench that he is better than John Olsen when he is not; we can accept that he is trying to kid the Opposition and the public, but the thing that is really frightening is that I think he is actually kidding himself. I think that sometimes when the Premier trots out with these lines and pats himself on the head (because no-one else will) he actually believes these things that are written for him. He is told, 'Here we go, Premier, go in and say "I had a big victory," because someone might believe it.' If it was a great victory, the people of South Australia are entitled to be petrified about the Premier's failures. John Howard's broken promises and harmful budget cuts are countersigned 'Dean Brown, Premier, South Australia'.

True, I have to be careful in talking about 'countersigning', because we have seen the cheque butts and things. The Premier is so quick to claim credit for himself, but will he now stand up to take his share of the blame for the cuts to hospitals, the abolition of the Dental Health Scheme, the cuts to support for the unemployed and the new rules that punish rather than help the unemployed, the cuts to universities, the rise in HECS, the charges for aged residential care, increased charges for child-care, the cuts to industry assistance, the cuts to funds for regional development and all the rest? On Tuesday, the Deputy Premier shrugged his shoulders to the Parliament on cuts to special purpose grants, cuts which were the result of the deal, the great victory that the Premier had brokered with John Howard. We heard the Treasurer tell the press that the State Government was 'running in the dark' and that the budget figures were 'an absolute shambles'. We have been saying that for a while. He was right—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: That is right. The Auditor-General is saying so as well, but the Premier rushes in to bash the Auditor-General. It is now three months into the current financial year and yet we do not know where we stand in regard to \$33 million worth of cuts to our budget. It is simply a disgrace. On Tuesday, when the Opposition asked the Premier whether he had protested to the Federal Government on the cuts to child-care, whether he supported the introduction of up-front fees for aged residential care and whether he believed students should have to pay HECS fees that are now

125 per cent higher than they were last year, the Premier did not duck and weave. No, I have to acknowledge that, because he just ran away from it. It was a performance that set new standards for parliamentary cowardice. Each and every question asked of the Premier—remember it was the Federal budget deal for which he claimed credit and which he claimed as a victory—he pushed onto hapless Ministers who did not appreciate it. Members should have seen the Ministers pointing to each other and saying, ‘What, me? Oh, my God, do I have to do it?’

The Premier, who had urged the change of Federal Government, got his wish and, when that Government brought down its first budget and the Opposition sought to question him about its effect on ordinary South Australians, the Premier was struck dumb on the opening day of Parliament and did not answer one single question from the Opposition about his victorious deal done with John Howard. The greatest tragedy of these draconian and unfair cuts is that they are almost completely unnecessary. The Howard Government claims to have found an \$8 billion black hole in Commonwealth finances and a need to bring the budget back into balance in the next two years. But the \$8 billion black hole quite simply is a fraud intended to create a climate of crisis in which to justify draconian cuts to Government spending—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The member for Mawson wants to talk about sand erosion, but we are talking about the budget. We are talking about an \$8 billion phoney budget and it has nothing to do with sand erosion. In March, the new Government revised its budget estimates in a manner intended to exaggerate the size of the projected deficit. Between the 1995 Keating budget and the March 1996 revision by Costello, we have gone from a small surplus to a \$7.6 billion deficit, and this is the \$8 billion so-called black hole. But what does this supposedly turn-around in the Government’s finances consist of and how has it come about? Only \$.5 billion of the difference comes from additional spending decisions made by the Keating Government between the May 1995 budget and the March election. The difference is not, as Costello and Howard allege, due to the previous Government’s profligacy.

Around 90 per cent of the claimed \$8 billion budget blowout comes directly from downgrading the medium term growth forecasts used by the previous Government. The claimed ‘hole’ has little to do with any laxity in budgetary housekeeping or overspending. Most of the alleged deterioration in the budget comes from the new Government’s having revised its figures for assumed future growth down below what most reputable commentators believe can sustain over the next decade. The Howard Government has simply picked an arbitrary set of numbers for economic growth out to the end of the century that are pessimistic and far below the real growth potential of the economy.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Apparently the member for Mawson wants me to talk about Libya. Do not worry, I will be talking about Libya and I will be talking about the Premier at the end of this speech. Just wait for it. These unrealistically low growth projections allow the Howard Government to claim that the financial situation is worse than it actually is. When the economy slows, the deficit is likely to grow as expenditures on social security rise and taxation receipts fall. The budgetary position will tend to improve when growth

improves, as there will be fewer social security claimants and taxation receipts rise from a more fully employed economy.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is interesting that the Minister, the one who was downgraded and lost most of his portfolio—I do not know what he does now, but he must spend about half an hour a week—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: How humiliating. He could not run the Police Force. The Police Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioners went to see the Premier and said, ‘Get rid of this goose, because we need someone more senior and with more clout in the job. He does not like it, and he cannot cope with the job.’

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition is reflecting on me and at the same time telling untruths, and I request that he withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister was offended by the term ‘goose’ and requests that the term be withdrawn.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I must say that there was a case when a member of this Parliament—by way of reflection, because we have both been around a long time—claimed that he was shot by a duck hunter by mistake. I recall that John Trainer said in this Parliament, ‘He was shot by someone who was looking for a duck when really he was a goose’. That is just an example. If the Minister is so sensitive about this, he will not last long even in State Government Services.

In other words, to a large extent, growth will solve the current alleged budgetary problem. There is no budgetary crisis and there is no serious structural deficit. There is no serious enduring imbalance between what the Government collects and what it outlays that would justify either dramatic Federal cuts or large tax increases. The budget predicts growth of just 3.5 per cent in the coming year, when we have averaged 4 per cent for the past four years. The Australian economy grew at 4.5 per cent in the year to June, and most commentators accept that the economy has the potential to grow at this level in the coming years.

A rational Government would be encouraging the economy to grow at least 4 per cent per annum, because it is only once we get to that level that we can make meaningful inroads into Australia’s number one economic and social problem, which is unemployment. The main game is jobs. That is what we were elected to do. That is why it is important that we maintain the training programs that have been slashed. It is also the best way of balancing the Government’s books by getting people off unemployment benefits and into jobs in which they will have to pay tax. If the \$8 billion black hole is a hoax, what is the real position and how concerned should we be? It has been estimated that the actual underlying deficit for this year is about \$3 billion, or .6 per cent of GDP. Even if the deficit were \$10 billion, this is still only 1.7 per cent of the size of the economy—a low deficit by international standards.

When the Hawke-Keating Government came to office in 1983, just after John Howard had been Treasurer of Australia, we were left with a deficit equal in size to 4 per cent of GDP, not .6 per cent of GDP, and that is why what the Federal Liberals are saying is a pack of lies. Contrary to Liberal Party mythology, Australia is already close to the bottom of OECD countries in terms of expenditure on Government as a percentage of GDP. In 1994, the Government’s share of GDP was 36.4 per cent. Only two countries—the United States and Japan—were lower. A recent OECD report shows

Australia performing very well from an international perspective in terms of Government debt and the Government deficit. Australia's public finances are far from being in crisis. There is no credible economic principle requiring a fiscally responsible government to achieve budget balance every year.

There may be a case for some adjustments to be made but none that would justify cuts of \$8 billion over two years. Our true financial position in Australia is hardly the stuff of crisis. The real danger in all this mean-minded slash and burn approach is that the projection of lower growth and fewer jobs may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Although there is no crisis in Commonwealth finances, the Howard Government's policies threaten to create even deeper and more serious problems. This is the real danger in Australia's present political and economic position. It is not that Australia actually faces a crisis in the Commonwealth budget and a spiral of debt, as the Howard Government claims; it is rather that the Howard Government in manufacturing a phoney financial crisis to justify cuts to essential services may well, and almost certainly will, create a real economic crisis for Australia.

We have already seen that, to the small extent that there is a budgetary problem, it will largely be fixed by encouraging higher economic growth and more jobs. Growth creates growth, and we should support growth, but the Howard Government is doing just the opposite: it is cutting Government expenditure at exactly the same time as the economy is slowing. The latest ABS data show that Australia grew by .1 per cent over the June quarter. We have had four years of strong growth under Labor, but nationally the economy is slowing, and slowing sharply. To cut Government expenditure at this point of the economic cycle threatens not just the slowing of the economy but possibly something much worse.

The reduction of Government activity by \$8 billion over two years—equivalent to about 1.6 per cent of GDP—is simply a formula for higher unemployment. A rough and ready calculation—but one supported by several commentators—is that the Howard-Costello cuts will result in the Australian economy being about 200 000 jobs poorer than would otherwise have been the case by the turn of the century. We are looking at an unemployment rate likely to be close to 10 per cent by the year 2000 as opposed to the Keating Government's target of about 5 per cent.

This is exactly the story told in the Howard Government's own budget papers. The budget projects anaemic growth averaging less than 3.5 per cent to the turn of the century. As I said earlier, this is not enough even to hold unemployment steady. Under John Howard, unemployment will rise. For South Australia, which is already trailing the rest of the nation on a range of economic indicators, the consequences are likely to be very bad. We have been under-performing under Dean Brown, but the Howard Government's policies will hit South Australia even harder. South Australia has consistently been posting—

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Yesterday in the Chamber the member for Hart took a point of order when I did not address a member by his seat or as the Leader.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member does have a point of order. The Leader should refer to members by their electorate or their parliamentary title.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Sir. I will repeat that statement for the benefit of *Hansard* and the House. We have been under-performing under the Dean Brown Government,

but the Howard Government policies will hit South Australia even harder. South Australia has consistently—

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition should address the Premier as the Premier or the member for Finnis.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a technicality. The Government is often referred to by the name of the Premier. Strictly speaking, it is not correct, but with common usage it has become acceptable.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Sir. South Australia has consistently been posting the top rates of unemployment on the mainland over the past couple of years. Our rate of creation of new jobs since the election of December 1993 has been a mere 3 per cent (with an actual fall in the number of full-time workers) compared with over 7.6 per cent nationally. On the latest ABS figures, covering the 2½ years between the 1993 election and the June quarter of 1996, the South Australian economy grew by only 5 per cent in trend terms. Over the same period, the national economy grew by 10.1 per cent.

That is the proud achievement of this Premier. That is the great victory of this Premier of which he constantly boasts. In fact, on the ABS's latest estimates, during 1994, the year in which the Premier said there was a boom in South Australia, the South Australian economy actually shrunk by 1.6 per cent. What about all those headlines in the newspapers talking about the Brown Government boom? It actually shrunk by 1.6 per cent—hype and reality eventually must collide. If that were not bad enough, private investment is falling terribly.

In the year to June 1996, South Australia had the largest fall of any State in new private investment. It actually fell for the year by 15.3 per cent. In Australia, private new investment grew by 10.2 per cent over the same period according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which no doubt will be blamed tomorrow as the source of the Premier's latest problems. South Australia's share of the total national private investment for the year to March stands at 4.7 per cent compared with a national population share of 8.3 per cent.

I read in the newspaper the other day that there is a housing boom in South Australia. The Government must be getting different figures from the ABS. Go and speak to any real estate agent or the people who want to sell their home at the moment about the state of the real estate market in this State. Here are the facts. Since September 1994, building approvals have fallen by 55 per cent in South Australia. In fact, building approvals now stand at about half their level during the 1991-92 national recession in this State.

The Brown Government will soon face the people with its record of economic failure and social vandalism. It is a record of promises broken with the utmost cynicism. It is a record of secrecy and arrogance and, with the advantage of a huge parliamentary majority and the cooperation of a responsible and patriotic Opposition, it is a record completely of this Government's own making.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There will be no more interjections on my right.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I will be heard, because I know that the Speaker and other members will want to give me protection and the decency of a fair hearing when I talk about the Premier's Libyan connections. Yesterday—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yesterday, a series of questions were asked by the member for Spence about the Premier's involvement with Mr Abdo Khalil Nassar. It was interesting. The Premier was asked questions about whether he had visited Mr Nassar's home. He would not confirm or deny, he chose to avoid answering the question, as he always does. Again, it came back to his relationship and involvement with Abdo Nassar, his principal fundraiser.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule on the Standing Order regarding the relevance of the Leader's comments to the budget reply.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It is the Address in Reply; it is not the budget reply. Where have you been? You have been in the House for three years. Instead of worrying about sand erosion, read the Standing Orders.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot uphold the point of order.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Time and again the Premier of this State refused to answer questions about his involvement and very deep relationship with Mr Abdo Nassar. He was asked whether there was funding from Mr Nassar. He said he did not know of any funding from Mr Nassar. He said that he was not aware, that he had no knowledge, of any campaign accounts, and then he was dobbed in by his mentor the Hon. Ted Chapman, a former member of this House, who revealed that there was a Dean Brown campaign fund. The Premier expects this Parliament and the public to believe that he did not know who was paying for his campaign expenses when he ran for the by-election. Ted Chapman then revealed that Mr Abdo Nassar, whom the Premier pretended he did not know, was the biggest financial backer of the Premier in terms of donations.

Today, the Premier says that local members of Parliament in the Liberal Party are not allowed to know who gives them a sling—the 1 100 reasons for replying in that letter and thanking Abdo Nassar for his support. The fact is that the Premier cannot have it both ways. During the Catch Tim scandal and the Moriki scandal, when his mate Rob Gerard was tickling the system and laundering money illegally through Hong Kong and Singapore—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: Say that outside.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I will be happy to say it outside any day. His mate Rob Gerard went on 5AA and said he

knew nothing about Catch Tim and Moriki. He lied through his teeth. He is the Premier's other principal backer, because Rob Gerard was found out to be the source of the funds which were laundered through a series of companies.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that he cannot make allegations or impute improper motives. If he wants to do that, he has to do it—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The SPEAKER:—I do not want any assistance—by way of substantive motion. The topic is within order but the Leader cannot impute improper motives to any member of the House.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, Sir. I am quite capable of imputing improper motive on behalf of Rob Gerard, because he is not yet, as I understand, a member of this Parliament even though he is the Liberal Party's principal financial backer and does not have the honesty to declare that he is the source of the funds. He launders it through other sources, through Hong Kong and through business men who now dob him in. So, we now have the two principal backers of the Premier both revealing who is behind the funding of the Premier's election campaigns. It is very interesting though that the Premier, during his defence of the Catch Tim-Moriki episode, said then that local members of Parliament were not allowed to know the details of who were backing them and they were not allowed to have separate campaign funds. The Premier said, 'Only the Treasurer of the Liberal Party was allowed to know the names of people sending the cheques in.' Who was the Treasurer of the Liberal Party in 1992? The current Premier of this State was the Treasurer.

When the Premier told Parliament today that he did not know of the donations as a local member, he very carefully did not say that he did not know the nature of those donations as the Treasurer of the Liberal Party. I know that the Premier of this State has met with Mr Abdo Nassar on a number of occasions and Mr Abdo Nassar is now claiming to have met this Premier in the past week.

Mr VENNING secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 15 October at 2 p.m.