

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 30 May 2000

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

## LIBRARY FUNDING

Petitions signed by 1 212 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House ensure government funding of public libraries is maintained, were presented by the Hon. R.G. Kerin and Mr Meier.

Petitions received.

## PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Primary Industries and Resources (Hon. R.G. Kerin)—

Regulations under the following Acts—  
Meat Hygiene—Fees  
Mines and Works Inspection—Fees  
Mining—Fees  
Opal Mining—Fees  
Pastoral Land Management and Conservation—Fees  
Petroleum—Fees  
Seeds—Fees

By the Minister for Human Services (Hon. Dean Brown)—

Metropolitan Adelaide—Significant Tees Control Plan Amendment Report, May 2000  
Regulations under the following Acts—  
Adoption—Fees  
Controlled Substances—  
Regulations 76—Fees  
Schedule 2—Fees  
Schedule D—Fees  
Development—Fees  
Harbors and Navigation—Fees  
Housing Improvement—Regulation 5 Fees  
Local Government—  
Fees  
Prescribed Fees  
Local Government (Implementation)—Fees  
Motor Vehicles—  
Fees  
Schedule 5 Fees  
Passenger Transport—  
Schedule 2 Variation  
Schedule 4 Fees  
Private Parking Areas—Expiation of Offences  
Public and Environmental Health—Council Fees  
Radiation Protection and Control—Fees  
Road Traffic—  
Fees  
Fees for Inspection  
South Australian Health Commission—  
Regulation 8 Fees  
Schedule 3 Fees

By the Minister for Government Enterprises (Hon. M.H. Armitage)—

Remuneration Tribunal—Supplementary Report to Determination No 9 of 1999—Judiciary—Telephone Allowance  
Regulations under the following Acts—  
Dangerous Substance—Fees  
Explosives—Fees  
Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare—Fees  
Roads (Opening and Closing)—Fees  
State Records—Fees  
Valuation of Land—Fees

By the Deputy Premier representing the Minister for Education and Children's Services (Hon. M.R. Buckby)—

RESI Corporation—Charter, May 2000  
Regulations under the following Acts—  
Gaming Machines—Fees  
Land Tax—Certificate Fees  
Lottery and Gaming—Licence Fees  
Petroleum Products Regulation—Licence Fees  
Tobacco Products Regulations—Licence Fees

By the Minister for Environment and Heritage (Hon. I.F. Evans)—

Correctional Services Advisory Council—Report, 1998-99  
Summary Offences Act—Road Block Establishment Authorisations—1 January—31 March 2000  
Regulations under the following Acts—  
Associations Incorporation—Schedule 2 Fees  
Bills of Sale—Fees  
Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration—Fees  
Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium—Services Fees  
Building Work Contractors—Fees  
Business Names—Fees  
Community Titles—Fees  
Conveyancers—Fees  
Co-operatives—Fees  
Cremation—Fees  
Criminal Law (Sentencing)—Fees  
Crown Lands—Fees  
District Court—Fees in Civil Division  
Environment Protection—  
Fees  
Unit and Miscellaneous Fees  
Environment, Resources and Development Court—  
Fees  
General Jurisdiction Fees  
Firearms—Fees  
Historic Shipwrecks—Register Copy Fees  
Land Agents—Fees  
Liquor Licensing—Fees  
Magistrates Court—General, Minor Claims and Criminal Fees  
National Parks and Wildlife—Fees  
Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians—Fees  
Public Trustee—Commission and Fees  
Real Property—  
Fees  
Schedule Fees  
Registration of Deeds—Fees  
Second-and Vehicle Dealers—Fees  
Security and Investigation Agents—Regulation 21 Fees  
Sexual Reassignment—Recognition Certificate Applications  
Sheriff's—Fees  
Strata Titles—Fees  
Supreme Court—  
Number 61 Fees  
Number 62 Fees  
Trade Measurement Administration—Fees  
Travel Agents—Fees  
Worker's Liens—Fees  
Youth Court—Fees

By the Minister for Water Resources (Hon. M.K. Brindal)—

Water Resources—Regulations—Fees.

## GUNN, Hon. GRAHAM

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Today marks the 30th anniversary of the Hon. Graham Gunn's election to the parliament of South Australia. I would like to acknowledge the contribution he has made to his constituents, this House and the wider

South Australian community. Graham was born on 5 September 1942, educated at Scotch College at Torrens Park, and later at the South Australian Institute of Technology before returning to Mount Cooper, south-east of Ceduna, to pursue a life as a farmer and grazier.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier has leave.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Graham joined the party in 1960 at the age of 18. He has held a number of positions including that as a member of state council; previous branch secretary and state electoral committee secretary and President. At the age of 28 he was elected to this House to represent the people in the electorate of Eyre, a seat which he held in that position for 27 years. The seat of Eyre covered an area of 845 000 square kilometres, which equates to around one-sixth of Australia or 84 per cent of South Australia. Its electoral boundaries extended from the Western Australian border to the New South Wales border, north to Queensland and to the Northern Territory. The reason for my relating to the House the sheer size of the former electorate is that it goes a long way to defining Graham as a member of this House and the issues that he has championed on behalf of his constituents throughout that area. He has been valuable and persistent in relating to all members (as ministers can attest to) the issues affecting South Australians in regional and remote areas, and I am sure it has given him a valuable perspective when legislating for South Australians.

As many members would be aware with the boundary redistribution, the seat of Eyre was divided into smaller areas and in 1997 Graham was elected to the seat of Stuart, an area still of more than 373 000 square kilometres. He has served this parliament in a number of capacities, and many would remember him most vividly in his role as Speaker of the House of Assembly. However, he also held various other positions, some of which I would like to relate: Chairman of the Economic and Finance Committee; Chairman of the Industries Development Committee; member of the Joint Parliamentary Service Committee, Standing Orders Committee, the Legislative Review Committee, the Maralinga Lands Parliamentary Committee, the Pitjantjatjara Lands Parliamentary Committee, the CPA Executive Committee and Subordinate Legislation Committee; Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees; member of the Joint House Committee; and shadow minister for agriculture.

Recently I had the pleasure of Graham's company on a visit to the pastoral areas of the state. Indeed, it was an enlightening visit in terms of speaking with people in those areas about issues confronting them, and it was also pleasing to see the high regard in which Graham Gunn is held by his constituents. On behalf of the government, I would like formally to place on record our appreciation of the outstanding dedication and service that the member for Stuart has committed to this parliament, the people of South Australia and his electorate, and just briefly acknowledge his 30 years of service. It certainly shows some determination, commitment and resilience to remain a member of parliament for 30 years.

#### ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I bring up the 39th report of the committee, on environmental protection in South Australia, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier):** I move:

That the report be published.

Motion carried.

### QUESTION TIME

**The SPEAKER:** Before calling for questions, I advise the House that any questions for the Minister for Government Enterprises will be taken by the Deputy Premier.

#### HEALTH BUDGET

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is directed to the Premier. When the Premier announced on 16 May that health would get extra money as a dividend from the sale of ETSA, had cabinet already decided that state spending on health would not be increased in real terms? On 16 May, the Premier was reported as saying there would be extra money for health this year and said:

We are now in a position to deliver some of the dividends from the sale of ETSA for the first time.

The Premier said on a number of occasions there would be an increase in the human services and health budget. The day after the budget, the Minister for Human Services confirmed on radio that, while the human services budget had been increased by 1.7 per cent, this was not enough to keep pace with inflation and that his budget had been cut in real terms. Who is telling the truth about the human services budget, you or your Minister for Health?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The leader knows well enough not to comment at the end of a question.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** This was a predictable question and, on his track record, I could have almost written it out in advance for the Leader of the Opposition. Let me for the record take him back through some of the aspects, some of the statistics and some of the reality of the circumstance. Whilst the total budget for health remains tight—

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The leader has asked his question.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Whilst the total budget for health remains tight for the next year, with an increase in spending of 1.7 per cent, it is worth while noting (and I refer the leader to the Treasurer's speech to the House) that there will be a \$143 million, or 7.7 per cent, increase in spending in health.

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** Is that state or federal—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The leader will remain silent.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** It is commonwealth and state funds.

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** Look at page 4, budget paper—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I caution the leader for interjecting after he has been called to order.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Let me just pick up the theme again. We all acknowledge that the total budget remains tight for next year, with an increase in spending this year of 1.7 per cent. I note that the Treasurer's speech last Thursday indicated that, in fact, there will be a \$143 million increase—commonwealth and state funds—or a 7.7 per cent increase in health spending for the two years 2000 and 2001. That is a statement of fact: an additional \$143 million over two years

equals a 7.7 per cent increase. We also have said that over the last three years recurrent expenditure on health has grown in real terms by almost 4 per cent per annum. Over the same period, capital expenditure in the health sector has approximately doubled. However, whilst funding for health services has continued to grow, so has the demand for services—and this is the point: demand for services continues to grow at a pace.

Far from treating fewer people, as the ALP would have everyone believe, the fact is that we treating more people. For example, there were 275 059 admissions to public hospitals in 1992-93. In 1998-99, that number rose to 334 567, which is a very substantial increase in throughput as a result of proper management efficiency of our health services. The number of casualty patients increased from 371 046 in 1992-93 to 461 240 in 1998-99, once again clearly demonstrating the throughput within the hospital system. Does it remain tight? Yes, it does. Is the demand continuing to grow? Yes, it is. What we are doing about it, as clearly evidenced by the Treasurer's speech, is allocating \$143 million, or 7.7 per cent, over two years additional funding. In addition, the minister has announced a detailed capital works program involving further efficiency gains in the health system to manage the throughput and the demand on the system. I join with the health minister in highlighting the fact that this is not an issue that is confined to South Australia. I point up the circumstances that apply across Australia.

If the leader's next question is, 'Did the minister for health ask for more funds from cabinet?', the answer is, 'Of course he did'—and so did every minister on the front bench. No minister is worth their salt if they do not come in and champion the cause for their portfolio. Every minister has asked for additional funding—and appropriately so. At the end of the day, decisions are made, and those decisions are accepted by the ministry collectively.

The greater demand in health care services has placed considerable pressure on our hospital system, and even the Labor Party cannot deny the fact that we are seeing this very significant growth in demand, placing pressure on the system. With that demand continuing to grow, we have provided additional funding to maintain services at current level. We have also committed ourselves, as a government, to targeting areas of special need—for example, the \$2.5 million for mental health—and added \$8.5 million to support the frail elderly people with disabilities and their carers. In addition, \$82.4 million in funding has been provided to upgrade hospital infrastructure.

These are real issues and pressure points with which all governments in Australia are confronted. We are addressing those issues. The commonwealth government refers funding under the healthcare agreement to the independent arbitrator. However, when that independent arbitrator, whom it appointed, makes a recommendation in favour of the states, and the commonwealth government rejects that independent decision, it is not beyond the wit even of the opposition to understand the pressure that is applied.

We will continue to address the circumstances. We will continue to put in funding as and when we are able to do so. We cannot overnight correct the ills of the past, but we can manage the process and the demand, and do so in an effective way that meets the greater pressure points and demands of individuals in the community. For example, I understand that there has been something like a 30 per cent increase over a short period in the number of hip replacements undertaken in

our hospital system in this state, and I am having that sorted out.

Let not the Labor Party suggest that there has not been increased throughput, because there has been. In addition, as the Treasurer said, there has been \$143 million in additional funding or a 7.7 per cent increase over a two-year time line, and that is how we are attempting to address what is a tight and demanding set of circumstances.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call to order the member for Hart, the leader and some members on my right. The member for Fisher.

### WOODEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** Will the Premier outline the community's response to the government's decision to purchase land adjacent to Woodend Primary School in order to expand that school? I point out that I had the privilege of representing that area some years ago. The government, as we know, purchased land adjacent to the school following extensive feedback from the community that it did not want a tavern built adjacent to the school. However, last week in this chamber the member for Mitchell indicated that the government had paid too high a price to meet the wishes of the community and that it had done so because the developer of the tavern was a significant donor to the Liberal Party.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** I am pleased to respond to this question from the member for Fisher because last week, as members know, the member for Mitchell told this House that the developer of the proposed tavern, the Hickinbotham group, is one of the government's mates, that it is, to quote the member for Mitchell, 'a significant and major donor to the Liberal Party'. The grubby inference is that the government did a backdoor, underhand dirty deal. Weren't the media quick to jump on the story? Weren't they quick to follow the grubby claims of the member for Mitchell, even though with a simple bit of checking they and anybody else would have found out how wrong the member for Mitchell was.

Some simple checking by the media (and the member for Mitchell in the first instance, but that would have destroyed his speech) would have revealed a few interesting facts. I have with me a statement by Michael Hickinbotham of the Hickinbotham group, and it is no surprise what it has to say, as follows:

We are not significant and major contributors to the Liberal Party or any other political party.

He goes on to say:

We have given modest donations over the years to all major political parties, including the ALP and the Australian Democrats. We made a donation to the ALP at the last election as a result of a personal request from the then secretary of the ALP.

And who would that be? The state secretary of the ALP was no less than the member for Kaurua, Mr John Hill. The member for Mitchell walks into this chamber, uses grubby, dirty politics and accuses a key company in this state of being in bed with the government, all for the sake of a few minutes on the TV news services that night.

But it gets worse, and let me explain. The Hickinbotham group has informed us that it does contribute to worthy community groups, which include the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the arts in this state and the Playford and Dunstan foundations. And there is more. For the past six years, the Hon. Greg Crafter (a former Labor minister) has been a

consultant to the Hickinbotham group in South Australia. I believe that the Hickinbotham group deserves a full apology from the member for Mitchell and, if he is not man enough to stand on the steps outside Parliament House and make a full apology—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members on my right will come to order.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I believe that the Leader of the Opposition must do that, especially given his new found interest in ensuring that the business community is aware of his willingness to work with it to make this state a better place in which to live. Either the honourable member means it or he does not; and if the member for Mitchell is not now prepared to apologise publicly to the Hickinbotham group then the responsibility is clearly on the shoulders of the leader to do so.

The member for Mitchell failed to do his homework, all for the chance to score a cheap political point. That is what the honourable member was on about—a cheap political point. The member for Mitchell knows that the mums and dads, the parents, of the district surrounding Woodend really have been driven by not wanting to have a tavern built next to their school. They made representations to the government. We listened, we acted and we responded in the interests of the community—in stark contrast to the utterances of the member for Mitchell who is interested only in scoring cheap political points. I can assure the member for Mitchell that every household in that district will know about his grubby political exercise.

#### HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Premier's reply to my previous question a few moments ago in which he said that his government would be maintaining services at current levels in the health portfolio, and given the Premier's series of statements prior to the release of the budget that health would get extra money this year, was the Minister for Human Services correct when he said that, as a result of this year's budget, hospital waiting lists would increase by another 2 000?

Documents obtained by the opposition under freedom of information show that the number of people on waiting lists for surgery at the major metropolitan hospitals rose from 7 421 in December 1997 to 8 348 in December 1998, and then rose again to 9 729 in December 1999. Every year since this Premier became Premier hospital waiting lists have increased. The Minister for Human Services said on radio last Friday that, as a result of a cut in real terms of funding, the waiting lists for elective surgery would increase 'possibly by another 2 000'. Was the minister right—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —about the cut—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I withdraw leave.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —and was he right about the increase in the waiting lists?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the honourable member continues to speak, as he did then, after I am on my feet, next time I will name him.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** The question is similar to the first question, and if the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask the same question, just framed differently, three or four times he will get the same answer every time.

The answer is contained in the budget papers and the speech of the Treasurer last Thursday. South Australia's situation is no different from the demand growth we are seeing across Australia in hospital services. Importantly, members should note the performance of this government in throughput through the hospital systems in South Australia and the increased number of people we are putting through those systems. In my previous answer to the Leader of the Opposition, I referred to the very significant increase in throughput of individual cases through our public hospital system. I repeat that we have provided \$143 million, or 7.7 per cent, in additional funding over a two-year time line. Even for the Leader of the Opposition—and I am sure the member for Hart would be able to coach him a little on this—that is a real increase in funding over that two-year horizon.

*Members interjecting:*

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

#### ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** Will the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs outline to the House how the South Australian government supports reconciliation?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs):** I thank the honourable member for what is a very important question. At least one other member in another place has today displayed a great degree of ignorance of the process we in this state are taking towards reconciliation. I refer to the Hon. Sandra Kanck, who made some very ill informed comments on ABC radio this morning; in fact, the honourable member suggested that this government has done nothing practical to assist Aborigines in this community towards reconciliation. In itself, that is an absolute display of ignorance. I suggest that the budget papers, on which this government expends a great deal of time and concentrated effort preparing, identify many of the areas in which this state government has led the way throughout Australia towards reconciliation. If any member in this parliament finds it difficult to identify any of these areas through the budget papers, I offer my assistance in terms of briefing them and pointing out exactly where they can find all the comments necessary to support the reconciliation measures being taken by the government.

I took the opportunity to look quickly through the budget papers and to see how easy it was to identify the areas that would highlight not only the achievements of the past financial year but also the targets we are moving towards in 2000-01. Just on a quick glance at the document, three pages can easily be cited on a dot points basis indicating that, for instance, in September 1999, a memorandum of understanding was signed by the Aboriginal Housing Association with Aboriginal hostels to provide short to medium term accommodation for Aboriginal people from remote areas. We have also put into place reform agenda training for Aboriginal Housing and Community Services staff, and that was implemented on 6 March 2000. There is an asset management plan for development within the same area.

There have also been further opportunities provided in rural and remote communities for accredited building, training and employment for Aboriginal people. Planned expenditure on Aboriginal housing for 2000-01 is some \$7.8 million. This will provide for land acquisition, new construction, the upgrade of various properties and the purchase of existing houses. I am sure there is not a person

in this chamber who has not understood that we also established the Council of Aboriginal Elders in South Australia consisting of some 21 members, all 60 years of age and over, elected from regional forums across the state, ensuring that support and input is being given by Aboriginal communities at the local level. We have also provided resources to fund an Aboriginal justice liaison officer to provide community comment on and input into government responses on law and justice issues specific to Aboriginal people.

We have prepared a document, Vision 21—Aboriginal Policy Perspective—Aboriginal Community Justice, and this was supported by an Aboriginal court day at Port Adelaide Magistrates Court which provided the opportunity for Aboriginal people to elect to have their matters heard on this very specific day when government and community Aboriginal justice workers were present to assist Aboriginal defendants. This scheme has been so successful that we have extended it to the area of the Port Augusta courts, with Aboriginal justice workers there to do exactly the same thing.

Through the Aboriginal interdepartmental committee on justice and its working groups, we continue to make progress on initiatives at policy program and legislative reform levels. I could go through and read each of the different areas, but I suggest to members in this House—and indeed to the Hon. Sandra Kanck—that it is quite easy to look at all these issues through the budget papers. There are many ways, as we all know, in which we can further the aims of reconciliation, but they all start with the need for understanding, and certainly a willingness to learn about the culture and heritage of indigenous people.

One giant step taken by this government was the recent Australian Aboriginal Cultures Gallery project at the South Australian Museum. This \$19 million project allows for the display of the largest single collection of Aboriginal artefacts in their appropriate cultural context, and it provides all South Australians and international visitors an opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal people, their culture and traditions.

Another measure towards reconciliation, which this government has recently made with an even bigger commitment, is to ensure that there is a level of service which is comparable with that supplied to all other South Australians. As announced in the state budget, an additional \$800 000 for the maintenance of urgent, essential services works in 18 Aboriginal communities will be provided this year. This additional funding increases the state's allocation to essential services in 2000-01 from \$2.7 million to \$3.5 million. This is more funding than any other South Australian government has invested in Aboriginal communities. It is the process of this government not only to lead the way in reform towards reconciliation but also to continue to urge and support Aboriginal communities to negotiate with governments, organisations and the people of South Australia and to join in that.

I make no apologies for this government because, indeed, we have led the way; we will continue to lead the way in the reconciliation process with the support of Aboriginal communities—which, I can only suggest, is a far sight more than the Hon. Sandra Kanck has ever done.

### PUBLIC HOSPITALS

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** Can the Minister for Human Services explain what impact the government's decision to cut activity targets in our public hospitals will have on patients next year? Activity targets detailed in budget paper

4 show that this year the government plans to cut the number of people admitted to metropolitan hospitals by 4 000, the number of outpatients by 93 000 and the number of emergency services by 10 000, compared with this year's activity levels. The number of services at country hospitals are targeted to fall by 10 000 and emergency services by 3 000.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** First, it must be acknowledged that the Premier has indicated already that we are dealing through our hospitals with a much larger number of patients than we were five years ago, and certainly a lot more than when we came to government. From 1993 through to about 1998-99, the figure is about 90 000 extra emergency patients through our public hospital system every year. That shows the extent to which there has been enormous growth in that period, partly as a result of the ageing of the population and partly as a result of the drop-out from private health insurance, but also, very importantly, because of the dramatic changes in medical technology. Who would have thought of hip replacements five years ago or 10 years ago? Who would have thought of knee replacements to the extent that they occur now?

In terms of this growth in demand, often people do not understand the tremendous effort made by the staff of the hospitals. The doctors, nurses and staff of those hospitals have provided a remarkable change in service to cope with this change in demand and to cope with the change in technology. As a government we are investing additional money to ensure that we adapt our hospitals to enable them to cope with that change in technology. A classic example is the extent to which we are changing our emergency departments. At the Lyell McEwin hospital we have invested money—and I have opened the facility—to enable it to take additional emergency patients. Currently we are investing \$6 million at the Noarlunga Hospital to increase substantially the number of emergency patients that that hospital can treat. We have invested in and opened a new day surgery facility at the repat hospital—and that would be one of the finest you could find anywhere in Australia.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** The facts are that we are dealing with more patients. The demand is increasing, but we are treating more patients. The honourable member has quoted some figures from the budget papers and members have to appreciate that, considering we do not know the level of the flu (which is the major factor driving emergency demand, particularly in winter), we cannot accurately predict what the demand will be for emergency services during this year. I stress it is the winter three months, the winter ill period, where the main demand on accident and emergency department comes from.

However, we have been able to make a projection that we expect that the activity level in our hospitals this year will be about the same as it has been for this past year. Therefore, we will be able to maintain the same level of activity. That is a major commitment, particularly with the increase in costs, because members have to also appreciate you have an increase in the health inflator which tends to be greater than the increase occurring in the normal inflation rate. In other words, the pharmaceuticals and the medical equipment is going up by a greater percentage than the other costs.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I am saying that we are achieving efficiencies within our hospitals because this year we are able to maintain the same level as we have in the past year.

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I am saying that we expect to maintain about the same level of activity as this past year and we have increased efficiency within our hospitals dramatically indeed.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

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

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Hart.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** The honourable member will appreciate that when we came to government we inherited a hospital system where on an equisep cost the costs were about 10 per cent above the national average. We are now the most efficient in Australia. We are on a par with two other states in terms of being the most efficient on an equisep cost within the whole of Australia, which therefore allows us—

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Yes, it does; it has a great deal to do with it because it means that we are treating more patients. As I said on Friday, we expect to treat the same number of patients as we have in this last year, certainly because of the increase in the—

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Elizabeth will remain silent.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** As I said, we expect to treat the same number of patients as we have in this past year. Through the increase in demand we expect that the waiting lists will increase by about 2 000.

#### RIVERBANK PRECINCT

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** Will the Premier outline to the House the progress of the government development to rejuvenate the riverbank precinct?

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** The riverbank precinct, as the House knows, is a Centenary of Federation project in South Australia—and a very significant project. It is an excellent project. It is an area that can be enjoyed by all South Australians with access, and of course it underpins the growth of our convention centre. Yesterday, when attending the Business SA function, Mr Peter van der Hoven mentioned to me that they had forward bookings for the new convention centre—and it is booked out for nine months after construction. That demonstrates the value of that investment, because, in effect, that is a boost to regional tourism. As I have mentioned before, the convention centre is a magnet which brings people to South Australia rather than just the eastern seaboard of Australia. Once we have them here, you can add on regional tourism, such as two days on Kangaroo Island, the Fleurieu, the Barossa Valley, or the Flinders Ranges. In other words, you have them here, and then it can expand.

The Riverbank development is one which has both social and economic benefits, directly and indirectly for all South Australians, in opening up that area for South Australians to enjoy. That is in contrast to the Labor vision for development. We read today that the Leader of the Opposition has a vision. The Leader of the Opposition wants to have another iconic building for South Australia. He says that Labor has been listening and they all want an iconic building, according to the Leader of the Opposition. I will make this concession: the Leader of the Opposition has form when it comes to iconic buildings. I think this is one promise that he might actually keep. The fact that he might send the state broke again in the

process is another matter, but don't worry about that! He will have an iconic building in which to have all his summits, because we know that we have summits every second day. Every day I go—

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** It's a tower of inspiration!

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** He wants a tower of inspiration. He does not have a tower of inspiration. Every day I go to work, I look at the leader's last tower of inspiration, and that was Terrace Towers. That was the last iconic building they actually backed in. Do you remember that? That was in the days when the Leader of the Opposition was Premier Bannon's right hand man. We well remember that they were trying to get the Remm Centre up but they could not get the finance package. No-one would underwrite it—I wonder why! So John called in Tim, and between John and Tim they put together this financing package for the Remm Centre.

I think that in the end that yellow building over there actually cost us \$1.15 billion. It is certainly iconic. Not only that, I think it was at the royal commission into the collapse of the State Bank, after Tim and John had put together the financial package to build the Remm Centre, a senior executive of the bank said, 'I think we bet the bank on that one.' How right he was. They did bet the bank on it, and that is where it collapsed.

What about the other icon, the state's tallest building? We remember Tim being involved with that, including the furniture that was put upstairs in that building. That was the one on which the state taxpayers lost, I think, \$100 million. Then there is the other taxpayer commitment to an icon, Wembley Stadium in London. That was an icon of the Labor government. We put money into that project. The Fishermen's Wharf on the Gold Coast was another investment and icon of the former government. Then we had the other great one, 333 Collins Street, Melbourne. It would seem to me that 333 might stand for \$333 million lost by the opposition.

Here is the leader who wants another inspiration. He cannot develop a policy for anything, but he wants an inspirational building. He has not worked out what he will put in it yet, and I guess it is a bit like their track record and those three buildings I mentioned in South Australia, and those in London and Melbourne. I forgot about the one in the country area. Do you remember the scrimber project in the South-East, where we would glue pieces of timber together to make new timber that we could export? That was about \$50 million—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** Oh, it was \$60 million that we lost on that. But something good did come out of that project down in Mount Gambier. We have this magnificent building that has now been turned into a thriving new business that packages mulch and potting soils. I suppose that might be the fertilisation of some of the ideas that are coming forward from the Leader of the Opposition at the moment. Then, of course, we had the film festival. I think that was announced three times, at the last count.

Let us just contrast the Labor government and its track record. Let us remember what North Terrace was like five or six years ago—derelict, burnt out, closed down buildings. What do we have now? A vibrant North Terrace. Look at the end of Anzac Highway—15 years, five plans and no project. We now have Holdfast Shores there. Look at Technology Park, which was allowed to run down by the then Labor government. We now have Mawson Lakes and the best Technology Park in Australia. And look at what we are doing at the Port Adelaide waterfront with respect to rejuvenation.

We get on with practical projects that are important to underpin the economic development of South Australia and its infrastructure as distinct from, and certainly apart from, the leader's inspiration of another iconic building such as the State Bank, Wembley Stadium, 333 Collins Street and the Myer-Remm Centre.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Has the Minister for Police finished?

### HOSPITALS, PUBLIC

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** Can the Minister for Human Services explain how patients will be affected by the government's decision to reduce the percentage of patients being treated within the recommended time in public hospital emergency departments, and can the minister guarantee that no patient's life will be put at risk by this decision? Budget paper 4 sets out new targets for treating patients at public hospitals in 2000-01. Whereas 72 per cent of emergency cases were treated within the recommended time of 10 minutes this year, the target is to reduce this to 70 per cent. The target is to cut urgent cases needing treatment within 30 minutes from 65 per cent to 60 per cent and semi-urgent cases requiring treatment within 30 minutes from 68 per cent to 65 per cent.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** Mr Speaker—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Can the member for Goyder please move around?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** —can I indicate that the honourable—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Water Resources will come to order.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** The honourable member has highlighted some figures that we have placed in the budget papers about likely treatment times. Let me make it absolutely clear from the outset that we treat as the first priority those who need the treatment most urgently. We have done that and we will continue to do so. Any person who is an emergency patient or a semi-urgent patient will be treated as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** Not within the recommended time.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I do not think there is any state in Australia that is achieving the recommended time as laid down. One reason why we believe there will be a slippage (and a very minor slippage) of that this year is that we are anticipating a very severe winter in terms of the winter influenzas. That is what has occurred already in the northern hemisphere, and we expect that to flow on to the southern hemisphere this year. I want to assure the honourable member and, more importantly, the public (because I am not sure that the honourable member is even interested in listening to this) that we will treat everyone, and especially the urgent and the semi-urgent patients. We have done that in the past and we will continue to do so in the future.

### HEALTH SERVICES BUDGET

**Mr CONDOUS (Colton):** Can the Minister for Human Services advise the House about how the budget is continuing to provide for quality and safety in our health services?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** I appreciate the member for Colton raising this question, because this government is committed to making sure that we reduce the number of adverse incidents that have occurred within our hospitals. This is a major issue around the whole of Australia. Over the past three years, it is estimated is that there have been 42 000 adverse incidents in hospitals around Australia. Here in South Australia I suppose we probably have our fair share. We cannot say exactly the number but we are working very hard indeed to make sure that we have in place appropriate procedures to reduce the number of adverse incidents and, at the same time, to lift the quality of care. In fact, it is one of the reasons why we have set up the clinical reviews throughout our major public hospital system. Out of those clinical reviews we are reviewing the procedures that are in place and, where those procedures are carried out, to make sure that they are carried out at the appropriate place.

If members want a classic example of how effective this can be, let us look at what has occurred with retrievals. The model that we have developed in South Australia for trauma retrievals after a serious car accident is regarded as the best in the whole of Australia. In fact, the Department of Human Services has been requested by other state governments to put on a seminar so that we can pass on to other states in Australia what has come out of the trauma review that occurred 3½ to four years ago, and the excellent trauma service that we are now providing. That shows the commitment to quality and to reducing any adverse incidents that might occur after very serious traumatic injury.

We have all seen the extent to which the road accident toll in South Australia has dropped. Interestingly, while road safety specialists put some of it down to roads, some to the policing effort and some to the design of cars, another significant component in reducing the death toll has been the trauma retrieval system. I use that as an example because we are making a commitment in a number of other areas besides the clinical reviews. Let me give some examples.

We are investing \$3.5 million in this coming year on new angiography equipment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital so that we have the latest cardiac and vascular investigation tools possible. Secondly, we are investing in a new CAT scanner at the Women's and Children's Hospital. Perhaps the most significant investment, one that will have a profound long-term impact, is the investment in OACIS, which is a computerised clinical patient information system. Under that system, all the information on public patients in the major hospitals will be recorded and will be able to be retrieved in a few moments by whoever is treating those patients.

In the past, if a patient went into the Flinders Medical Centre with a chronic illness such as asthma and that patient had previously been treated at the Royal Adelaide Hospital or even the Flinders Medical Centre, the process of retrieving those files would be very slow and difficult. In the case of another hospital, it would be almost impossible. Under the OACIS system, the retrieval will be almost immediate. This year we are investing \$11 million in the first part of a flow-out of the OACIS system right across the state. This state needs to appreciate the extent to which South Australia is leading the whole of Australia in such an information system on patients.

**Ms Key:** Have you had your flu shot?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Yes, I have had my flu shot. We have been trialling it for three years, it has worked very effectively in the renal area, and now we are rolling it out

across the public hospital system for the major hospitals. It will be a total commitment of \$65 million over a six-year period, but this year we are starting with an \$11 million commitment, and that is in the budget papers. We will see the first part of a superb commitment to quality in our public hospital system for better patient care.

### HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. Given the release of figures that show that 42 per cent of people requiring urgent surgery in December 1999 waited longer than the recommended time of 30 days, how will hospitals meet the target of treating 90 per cent of patients on time? Documents obtained by the opposition under freedom of information reveal that in December 1999 a total of 479 people were waiting for urgent surgery and that 201 of those people (or 42 per cent of the list) had waited longer than the recommended time of 30 days. Budget paper 4 sets a target for hospitals to treat 90 per cent of urgent patients on time in 2000-01, even though hospital budgets will be cut in real terms.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** One can take figures and try to distort them to give a false picture, but let me assure the honourable member that 86.4 per cent of all patients who are classed as 'urgent' are treated within the 30-day period. With respect to semi-urgent patients, 86 per cent are treated within the 90-day period. If one looks at adding just a few days to those time limits, one can see that we are treating over 90 per cent of urgent patients within 37 days, and we are treating 88 per cent of the patients within one month after the 90 days. I might add that 97 per cent of non-urgent patients are treated within the appropriate time.

Certainly, it concerns me that there is slippage here as there is around the rest of Australia, as I understand it, in terms of meeting those national standards, but that is not to suggest that the overwhelming majority of the people concerned are treated within the appropriate time. We will carefully monitor the extent to which that period slips. It concerns us, because an ideal system would meet everyone within that period. Sometimes, though, it is not the fault of the hospital or the system: it may be that the patients themselves, for various reasons, are unable to undergo surgery within that period. We get—

**Ms Stevens:** But 42 per cent?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** One must appreciate that, where there is a delay in elective surgery, approximately one-third of those cases involves patients who request that surgery be delayed simply because they are not well enough; they might have the flu, or some other illness, and therefore it is inappropriate for them to undergo major surgery. There needs to be an understanding that the overwhelming majority of patients are treated within the appropriate time limits. There has been some slippage and that is carefully monitored. In fact, every month I receive those figures to ensure that we are trying to minimise any possible factor that might cause a blow-out in any of those delays, for either urgent or semi-urgent patients.

### YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** My question is directed to the Minister for Employment and Training. In view of the recent calls that have been made for the government to

increase spending on employment in the public sector, will the minister tell the House whether he believes that would be the best or most appropriate course of action to reduce youth unemployment?

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Employment and Training):** I thank the member for MacKillop for his question and acknowledge his long-time interest in this area. Unlike the PSA and others, I do not believe that increasing the levels of traineeship in the public sector will help to reduce the level of youth unemployment in this state.

**Ms Ciccarello:** Why not?

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** I will tell you, Vini, at length. The government identified that, should this scheme be allowed to continue or expand in its current form, it would represent no less than a misallocation of resources and a missed opportunity for young unemployed South Australians to gain skills and sustainable employment for their future. The state cannot afford such missed opportunities, and I am mindful of the calls of the Leader of the Opposition and the sometime shadow minister for employment (I presume he is) to get this right. We have seen months and months of continued improvement. We have heard, though, despite the continued improvement, calls from the opposition to do something over and above that which we were doing. This budget proves that the government listens, works in partnership with the community and delivers as is expected, because we are changing the levers.

The government youth traineeship program previously offered 1 200 places to youth aged between 17 and 24 years. The take-up rate—that is, those trainees who were successful in gaining permanent employment after their traineeship was completed—was around 70 per cent, a record of which we are proud. However, in an improving economy, it is imperative that the government review and consider all schemes, policies and programs to see how well they fit, to see what the long-term outcomes will be and, most importantly, to see how it can do better. Now the government will maintain the program of traineeships, offering 500 instead of 12 000. However, the government will increase funding for traineeships and apprenticeships in the private sector, and we believe that will generate up to an extra 5 550 positions. When I was at school, if I added 500 to 5 550 it added up to 6 050, which is well in excess of 1 200. Accordingly, the government will be offering more traineeship/apprenticeship positions next financial year than it has offered in the current one. This is purely a reflection of the growing strength of the economy and the changes that are evident in the demands in the labour market.

The policy is about generating jobs, skilling our work force, and adding value to our work force and to the economy. Now that the economy has changed and there are more opportunities for jobs for our young people in the private sector, the Government is responding to that demand by meeting the skills challenge. Indeed, last week the Premier reported to this House that in the past few weeks job vacancies for South Australia have been at a record all-time high. Therefore, we are allocating resources to a key area of the labour market—an area that has experienced real growth, adds value to the economy, generates wealth for South Australians, and increases investment, confidence and employment.

As the economy improves and demands for labour increase, what effects will that demand have if it cannot be satisfied? It certainly does not translate into jobs. The people of South Australia expect us to make responsible decisions



and take action, not just leave things as they are and hope for the best. We are changing the levers. Through its allocation of \$34 million—a significant \$15 million increase to the provision of trainees and apprenticeships—the government will see up to 5 550 young South Australians gain valuable employable skills. That is above the already 14 000 plus trainees who are currently in place in the work force. That will earn them money, see them make a contribution to society, shorten dole queues and equip South Australians with life-long skills that they can take anywhere with them. For that, I make no apology.

What did the ALP do when it was stuck in double digits with no hope of those coming when the current Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Employment? I looked at the records. I noted—and I hope that the House will be interested in this—that in 1991 then minister Mike Rann abolished six employment programs, replaced them with a renamed single program and called it a \$16 million initiative. In other words, he shuffled the chairs, pretended it was something new—

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** It was such a good scheme that you've have kept it.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** The leader interjects that it was such a good scheme that we have kept it. Well—

**Mr FOLEY:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The honourable member is clearly flouting standing order 98 and debating the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** I ask the Leader of the Opposition why, in 1992, he was criticised by union chief Terry Carroll for his lack of concern over youth unemployment and why the Labor government—

**Mr Foley:** We wear that as a badge of honour!

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** The member for Hart interjects that they wear that as a badge of honour. Why did the Labor government then dismiss a plan for a \$60 to \$80 levy on new homes being built that would have funded a youth training program? We have adopted that program—in fact, Labor adopted it in its dying days. That program, which is called the Construction Industry Training Scheme is hailed by unionists and many people in the building sector as one of the great—

**An honourable member:** A great Labor initiative.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** A great Labor initiative, after the Leader of the Opposition as Minister for Employment dismissed it and rejected it out of hand.

**Mr FOLEY:** I rise on a point of order, sir. The minister is clearly debating the question and I ask that he be called to order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The interpretation of the chair is that, as long as the minister sticks to comparing policies from one side to another and does not get into the political debate surrounding those policies, he will not be brought to order. I suggest that the minister stick to the policy subject only.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** In 1991, the federal Minister of Employment, Education and Training, Mr Dawkins, an ALP minister, accused Mr Rann of holding up federal funds for training young and unemployed people. In addition—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister is now straying out of policy into debate. I insist that the replies stick to policy subjects.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** I take your guidance, sir. The electorate—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:**—I believe, will see in the coming months that this government has taken its responsibility to provide some leadership in the area of employment, to work carefully with other groups and to develop policies. This is a new policy, a new direction that is needed for this time. The electorate is fed up—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister is now starting to debate the issue if he talks about what the electorate thinks.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL:** Sir, this government is recognising its responsibility and is getting on with the job—and it is about time the opposition realised it.

## DENTAL TREATMENT

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** Can the Minister for Human Services tell the House how much will be raised by the introduction of a co-payment of \$10 to be paid by pensioners for dental treatment, and part pensioners who will now pay 15 per cent of the standard cost of treatment; and how many people are now on the waiting list?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** There are three questions there. First, \$1.2 million will be raised from the co-payment system. As a result we will be able to treat an extra 4 000 people a year. I give a commitment that all the money from the co-payments will go into providing additional services. I might add that in the country people have been making co-payments throughout and here in the city, prior to the short period for which there was some federal money for dental services, they were paying a co-payment. We have gone back to the co-payment system. About 100 000 people are on the waiting list at present waiting for non-urgent treatment. Therefore, the 4 000 additional services will go some way towards easing the pressure within the dental service.

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## CORROBOREE 2000

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier):** I move:

That standing orders be suspended as to enable me to move the following motion without notice forthwith.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** I thank the opposition for its support of this motion. I move:

That this House—

- (a) formally acknowledges receipt of the Corroboree 2000: Towards Reconciliation and a Road Map for Reconciliation handed over to state and territory leaders at the Corroboree 2000 event in Sydney at the weekend;
- (b) welcomes ongoing consultation on the development of the reconciliation documents; and
- (c) confirms its commitment to reconciliation between all Australians, acknowledging the importance of reconciliation for a socially harmonious South Australia.

Last weekend, I participated in a significant event for this country. Corroboree 2000, which was held in Sydney, marked the handing over of two reconciliation documents to the governments of Australia. I have moved this motion because it is important that the South Australian parliament, representing the South Australian people, acknowledge receipt of these documents.

Corroboree 2000: Towards Reconciliation and a Road Map for Reconciliation are the next important steps in the

process towards reconciliation for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. This parliament was the first to formally apologise to the stolen generation and I, for one, am proud of having been part of that. It is important that we remember the wrongs of the past, that we learn from them and that we look forward positively to the future. These two documents and the formal acknowledgment of receipt by this parliament are a significant step forward.

South Australia has always been a progressive state when it comes to recognising Aboriginal interest. South Australia was the first state to enact land rights legislation—the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981 of the Tonkin government on preliminary work undertaken by the former Dunstan government. Indeed, the Maralinga land rights legislation was passed by the parliament. So, it is fair to say governments of all political persuasions have moved to establish appropriate land rights in this state. I point out to the House that I think that is something significant for which we have been, in effect, pioneers as a parliament incorporating both major political parties with the support of the parliament of which all members, I think, can be rightly proud.

We are the first and only state to have an alternative right also to negotiate a scheme recognised under the commonwealth Native Title Act—recognition in 1995, incidentally, by the Keating Labor government. This state government has established the leading world-class Aboriginal Cultures Gallery at our museum to recognise the significance of Aboriginal cultures in the history of South Australia. The most significant collection of Aboriginal artefacts in the world is housed on North Terrace and, now appropriately so, in those surroundings. Now we are leading the way in ensuring that South Australian children are educated about our past. The Department of Education in 1998 developed a reconciliation statement for schools and children's services. The key principle of that statement encapsulates the importance of reconciliation. It states:

To recognise our shared past, foster understanding, and work together for a shared future in which all people are treated with respect and dignity.

Since the development of that statement, other states have followed South Australia's lead and developed similar statements. This is in recognition of the importance of education, and of our young people, to the process of reconciliation. Reconciliation is such an important process that it is, in a sense, generational. The generations to come, having learned from the mistakes of the generations of the past, will more likely work together to achieve a shared future with understanding, respect, and dignity.

I am determined that our generation will be remembered for beginning this important process, for recognising past wrongs and for putting in place the fundamentals to move forward together. I would like to recognise the work of the National Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in preparing these documents. I would also like to acknowledge the input of the South Australian Council. I understand that over the coming months these documents are to be further developed. I look forward to the South Australian government's involvement in that process; that we are able to move forward positively, working together with the whole South Australian community to remove divisions and any source of those divisions.

We have established in Centre Hall a canvas of the declaration of reconciliation. This morning Mr Lewis O'Brien, as an elder of the Kurna people and chair of the council, attached his handprint to that, as indeed, together

with two others, I did, and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs joined me in doing so. In bringing it to parliament, I make that canvas available for any members of parliament who would like to join in putting their handprint on it in recognition of the reconciliation process. What I wanted to do was not accept these documents as Premier and put them away in the Premier's office. I thought it appropriate that the South Australian parliament and all members of parliament should be the custodians of these documents. For that reason I now table those documents.

I look forward to the support of members of parliament and I repeat my earlier comments in thanking the opposition for its support and passage of this motion in the House today.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** I am pleased to support the motion. The simple fact remains that the first Australians, the Aboriginal people of this country, still remain the last Australians in terms of education outcomes, health outcomes, employment outcomes and longevity, and that is why it is very important that the reconciliation process proceed. It is important about symbolism. It is also important about setting practical benchmarks to improve and to address Aboriginal disadvantage in this country. Therefore, I hope that, just as each state government and each state parliament responded with a series of targets and time lines to the recommendation of the Aboriginal deaths in custody royal commission, each parliament in Australia not only receives, supports and endorses the document for reconciliation but also, before the Centenary of Federation on 1 January 2001, then goes on to agree in a bipartisan way on a series of time lines and targets to address Aboriginal disadvantage. Obviously, an improvement in retention levels in our schools, an improvement in the health of Aboriginal people and an improvement in employment outcomes should be central to that task.

I, like the Premier, attended the Corroboree ceremony at the Sydney Opera House at the weekend, and I think that everyone present was moved by the event. I think that just as for many years we have had people say, 'Listen to the elders', the message I received from the Corroboree was, 'Listen to our children.' They are showing enormous wisdom in embracing the reconciliation process. Our children know that reconciliation is vital to their future. Just as multiculturalism has been probably Australia's greatest achievement in the past 25 years in terms of social cohesion and the embracing of diversity, it is also important to remember that reconciliation remains Australia's greatest test.

I was greatly impressed by the speech by our Governor-General (Sir William Deane). It was marvellous to see an Aboriginal elder stand up and say, 'Three cheers for the Governor-General', and to have a massive response and a standing ovation for the Governor-General of this country. Perhaps the most moving speech was that by Mick Dodson, who told his family story of massive disadvantage and of a father being imprisoned because he cohabited with Mick Dodson's mother in breach of a Western Australian statute: how he was imprisoned for 18 months for his love of his wife. It was moving to hear Mick Dodson at each step telling the story of his parents, sisters and aunts and then to counterpoint that by telling the story of John Howard's life.

It is important that we in this parliament can embrace reconciliation in a bipartisan way. As the Premier said, we were the first state to endorse land rights, not just the Pitjantjatjara land rights but in fact the passage of legislation, moved and secured in 1965 by a young Attorney-General

(Don Dunstan), to establish the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act, which was the first Aboriginal land rights act in this nation's history. We have a very proud record in this state. The simple fact is that the Prime Minister of this country continues to diminish the process of reconciliation. It is not just his refusal to say, 'Sorry': it is also the fact that he and his ministers have tried to diminish the hurt and impact of the stolen generation by even disputing whether a generation was stolen. Yet the same Prime Minister goes to Gallipoli and in front of the cameras talks about a lost generation of the First World War.

What the Prime Minister did at the weekend diminished him massively not only internationally but in the eyes of the nation. It was his moment of destiny, his moment in terms of history where he could have taken a major step forward. However, it is very important not to be dissuaded by this but to move forward. As Mick Dodson said, perhaps it is not worth the effort about one person's recalcitrance: perhaps it is better to invest in a genuine community and national movement for reconciliation that will not only endure but prevail. Therefore, I believe that it is vitally important that we in South Australia continue to lead.

It concerns me that on this day we are being criticised in editorials in the *Melbourne Age* in which they say that the South Australian government should abandon its court bid to extinguish native title and how this is out of step with the reconciliation movement. It concerns me that we have amendments before this parliament which, if passed, would massively disadvantage Aboriginal people in terms of native title claims. So let us all be bigger, let us all embrace that bipartisanship and let us all support the reconciliation process. I believe that a treaty should be considered: it may not be practical, it may not be achievable but it should be examined and debated. Part of that debate will help advance the process.

In closing, I believe that it is very important for all of us again to recognise that other issues need to be addressed. Languages are the building blocks of any culture, yet we have seen hundreds of Aboriginal languages become extinct in our own state and across the nation. If we are to improve self-esteem and self-confidence, then obviously a national institute for Aboriginal languages is something that we could all support. Let us celebrate the bipartisanship of the past by all means, let us embrace the reconciliation document, but by the end of this year let us also commit ourselves to a major program with bipartisan support to address Aboriginal disadvantage, set clear time lines and benchmarks and ensure that we not only listen to our children but that we honour them as well.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs):** As Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I am very pleased to support this motion. As I have previously stated in this place, Reconciliation Week is certainly a time for all of us to reflect on our history as a state and a nation and to reinforce our commitment to greater levels of understanding and reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. At the national Reconciliation Week celebration in Sydney at the weekend, the National Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation presented two documents—*Corroboree 2000: Towards Reconciliation* and a Road Map for Reconciliation—to the Prime Minister and the Premier, along with other state and territory leaders.

These documents set out strategies for reconciliation by recommending ways to transform our commitment to

reconciliation into actions, so helping the nation put right the legacy of the past, and for this reason, they are an important factor in the reconciliation process which has been recognised by the Premier of this state.

The documents outline a number of key areas of responsibility for state governments, including education, economic development, independence and justice. This government certainly supports the overall directions and intentions of the strategies, and has indeed been particularly active in supporting a number of the initiatives in the areas identified by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

As I have stated previously, reconciliation is based on a sound understanding, and this happens through many different ways, one of which is the acceptance and visualisation of the spoken word. If we can see the pictures that other people paint with their words, and we can read the stories that they speak, then we can understand their culture.

In March this year the state government opened the Aboriginal Cultures Gallery at the South Australian Museum. That was an amazing project which was developed in collaboration with Aboriginal communities right across our state.

The importance of understanding the cultural and spiritual significance of Aboriginal art and artefacts was clearly evident during the official handover of the Aboriginal language sticks at the Yaitya Warra Wodli Language Centre in Prospect last Friday. These language sticks had been located in this parliament for the past 12 months and were part of the journey of healing that we celebrated last year. They were officially handed back to the Aboriginal people by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Eric Neal. The very real significance of the language sticks and the importance of the occasion were certainly evident on the faces of the Aboriginal people, both young and old, who were present.

Following the ceremony, I attended the Pitla Wodli 'Bringing them home sorry day' ceremony, and I can state that on both occasions I was certainly impressed by the growing sense of confidence and appreciation of self-worth of Aboriginal people as they recounted their stories and the importance of their culture.

Whilst we all recognise that there is still a great deal to do in bringing about true reconciliation that will end the disadvantage suffered by many Aboriginal people, we should also reflect on how far we have actually come and what has been achieved by Aboriginal people. Prior to 1966, Aboriginal people did not have a title to significant areas of land and certainly suffered an extremely low rate of economic development. In 1969, fewer than 100 Aboriginal people were enrolled in any kind of formal tertiary higher education or university course anywhere in Australia. Secondary schooling drop-out rates amongst young Aboriginal people were enormous, and the retention rate of Aboriginal secondary students in Australia did not exceed 10 per cent until 1983.

But I suggest that we all know that great advances have been made in the last decade. The participation rate of 16 to 17-year-old Aboriginal people has increased by some 40 per cent in the last 10 years; and the indigenous secondary schooling retention rate has risen by over 50 per cent since 1989, so nearly half of all indigenous secondary students now stay on to complete year 11. An estimated 11.4 per cent of Aboriginal people at the 1996 census reported a post-secondary qualification. Indigenous graduate numbers have been consistently doubling every five or six years, and they now exceed 10 000 nationally. Graduates now comprise some

10 per cent of the indigenous population between the ages of 25 and 50.

In the area of land rights, Aboriginal people in South Australia now hold title to an estimated 26 per cent of the land in the state. The number of Aboriginal people living in South Australia is also on the increase. At the 1996 census, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in South Australia had increased by some 26 per cent on the previous census, and they now make up some 1.4 per cent of the total population of the state.

This government continues to work with Aboriginal communities to develop economic opportunities. One such partnership is the Head of the Bight whale watching facility which is a major tourism venture between the Yalata Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the state government. During my recent visit to the Yalata community, I went out to the Head of the Bight and met two Aboriginal rangers who have been employed as a result of this project, namely, Jeremy Lebois and Ken Burgoyne. Whilst I was there, they were actually investigating the possibility of erecting another viewing platform to further enhance the tourist experience in this truly magnificent part of the state.

Reconciliation provides to all of us an enormous opportunity to advance—socially, culturally and economically. This government endorses the reconciliation council's vision of a united Australia which represents this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and provides justice and equality of opportunity for all.

The state government has an absolute commitment to South Australia's Aboriginal community and the reconciliation process, through measures such as the continued awareness and promotion of the Aboriginal culture, on-the-ground improvements to the standard of living in remote communities, and certainly practical measures to better protect Aboriginal heritage sites. We are employing practical measures to bring about reconciliation and will continue to do so. I commend this motion to the House.

**Ms RANKINE (Wright):** In beginning my address today, I would also like to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and commitment of all members of the Council for Reconciliation. Not only did they work towards the presentation of these documents that have been tabled today but also in a relevant, rational and appropriate way they have raised the consciousness of this nation in relation to a history never before properly recognised, discussed or taught.

The process we have been through has been at times confronting and for many it has been difficult, but it clearly had to be done. If we in any way consider we are a just society, it had to be done. If we are to progress and move forward into our new century, past wrongs must be acknowledged. In doing so, we must acknowledge the effects and impacts of those wrongs. The sufferings of Aboriginal people since white settlement have been enormous. Aboriginal people suffered extermination, displacement, exploitation and the removal of their babies. When non-Aboriginal Australia finally recognised the citizenship of Aboriginal people, the paternalistic restrictions which had been in place until that time were withdrawn, along with the limited protection they afforded. Aboriginal people were expected to compete in a capitalistic and competitive society without any structures, training or support.

At the South Australian Aboriginal Women's Conference held in Crystal Brook in 1993, one of the participants,

Georgina Williams, said, 'They gave us citizenship and rights, but they took away our culture and heritage.' White society rejected Aboriginal people but at the same time we expected them to be just like us. The task imposed on them was monumental and designed to ensure failure, and it is a gross indictment on our ignorance. They have been forced to endure frustration, humiliation, degradation and destruction. Despite all this, Aboriginal Australians continue to hold out their hands in friendship. They continue to want to work towards the creation of a harmonious society which recognises the value and needs of all people.

The march that took place on Sunday was a magnificent event. It was the culmination of an enormous effort, not just in Sydney but across our nation. The concept was embraced in all areas, including local government and local communities. My Salisbury council is one example where real and practical measures have been put in place to ensure reconciliation in that community. When I saw the march on Sunday, I was sad. I was sad that I could not be there. I was sad that our Prime Minister was not there, and I was sad that he has not been able to say 'Sorry' to these people.

There is a sea of goodwill sweeping across Australia. Whether the Prime Minister is part of it or not, it will happen. People, not politicians, will ensure that it happens. We are all on notice. Words are not good enough anymore. This community wants to see recognition of Aboriginal people. This community wants to see issues of basic human rights dealt with. This community wants action. It wants nothing less and it will demand nothing less. The true spirit of this parliament's acceptance of these documents and this motion will be measured in time on real outcomes. I am pleased to support this motion.

**The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources):** I support the motion. While I believe that this generation has kindled the spark, unfortunately, some of what I have heard today leads me to believe that the completion of this task will not be accomplished by this House in our time but, rather, in the time of our youth. We are all victims of our time and we are all victims of our history: no-one is immune from that. Indeed, Emerson described history as the measured shadow of mankind. We will remain fettered by that shadow if we will not learn from its lessons.

I say what I have said because our generation seems obsessed with either denying any sense of responsibility or, alternatively, by indulging in such an orgy of mea culpas as to be unbelievable. The unfortunate thing is that on both sides of the argument there seem to be too many who are willing to point their fingers at the other side simply to engage in some sort of sectional argument to say that they are right and the other side is wrong. This issue is more profound than that and deserves better attention than some people, I believe, are giving it. Reconciliation is not about blame and punishment; it is not about accusation and redress. Reconciliation is not an attitude of mind; it is a state of heart. Until my generation realises that, we will never achieve reconciliation.

I know and count as friends a number of Aboriginal people. By any measure, every person in this House would acknowledge Louis O'Brien and Lowitja O'Donoghue as great Australians, as significant South Australians and as leaders of our community. They are people whose word and worth is not underestimated, I think, by any South Australian. I have also met another Aboriginal man who came from the Murray River, and he told me his story. He said that, in his opinion (these were his words, not mine), reconciliation was

not about saying sorry. He said that reconciliation was about sitting down and listening each to the other to the story that was to be told, acknowledging the story, acknowledging the hurt and feeling that came with the story and then standing up and getting on with the job. He is an advocate of reconciliation. He is one of the great Australians, and he is one of the Australians whom the Catholic archdiocese in this state has featured in its video of a Catholic whose faith is practised in his daily life. I commend that video to members of the House.

It is the ability of each of those who call this land their home to look each other in the eye, to acknowledge each other as equals and then to move forward as equals into a future free of discrimination and free of prejudice that will enable us to say that we have lit this spark today and we have accomplished what reconciliation is about. I can only hope that I live long enough to see that generation, of which I am proud to be the representative in this place, the generation of our youth, complete the task that the parliament has started today. I commend the motion to the House.

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey):** I am also happy to speak to this motion. As I start to speak today I would like to acknowledge that we are on Kurna land, the land of which the Kurna people have been custodians: they have looked after the place where Adelaide stands and where we are now privileged to live and work. In the Premier's motion he talked about formally acknowledging the receipt of the document titled 'Towards Reconciliation and a Road Map for Reconciliation'. It is important to remember that, having started with this road map, we now have several ways in which we can perhaps read the road map and reach our destination.

I think the first step is to acknowledge that we, indeed, have somewhere to go; that there is, in fact, a better place to be. The journey has started, and we are all on that journey together. As others members have said, the momentous scenes from the Sydney Harbour Bridge on the weekend could not help but to highlight the fact that so many Australians are now on this road together looking for the better place. There will be difficult times and terrain on this road together but, if we are united in purpose, I am sure that everything is possible—and that includes a happy ending at the end of the road. Not only should we remember to acknowledge the wrongs of the past but we also have to take steps to right them. There have been many firsts, indeed, in South Australia in the area of indigenous affairs where, as members have said, we have recognised land rights and taken steps to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal people.

Mention has been made today of the new Aboriginal gallery in the museum, which is indeed magnificent. I have had the opportunity to visit the gallery with the people who put the exhibition together and to look at the artefacts. I do now know how anyone could not acknowledge the importance of the Aboriginal culture over the millions of years that it has existed when they see those beautiful artefacts.

There are many ways in which to remedy what some people see as the divisions in our attempts to walk forward on this journey together. But I think the two things which are the most important and which are irrefutable are the issues of the apology and the treaty. The apology is important, because it addresses the stolen generations and all that that brings to mind. Anyone who has been watching the documentaries on SBS at the moment must feel some sense of shame and the need to apologise for what happened. Obviously, we were not there when these things occurred, but to see what those Aboriginal people were subjected to is a journey in itself. It

was also a very moving experience to see the play at the Playhouse earlier this year. I think it is important that we all seek out Aboriginal culture where we can: we can better understand Aboriginal people by spending time with them and speaking with them and seeing how these hurts have inflicted grave injury.

I also was happy to be present with the minister at the Aboriginal Language Centre on Friday when the Governor took part in the ceremony to receive the language sticks. The Aboriginal people were very excited about their involvement in planning that ceremony and the fact that the Governor took part in it. They also were grateful for the Minister attending and representing the Premier, who was unable to attend. The language sticks, of course, as the minister said, were housed here with the help of the Speaker last year. They came to the House during the Journey of Healing and I wonder whether, now that that showcase in centre hall is empty, it would be possible to exhibit the documents which the Premier brought home this weekend so that everyone can see them.

I also would like to acknowledge (as has the member for Wright) the important work being done by the City of Salisbury in our north-eastern area. They are doing some amazingly good things and uniting the community. We are all learning from each other and definitely moving forward together in a very exciting way. I would also like to acknowledge the fact that I have the help of many indigenous people whom I have as constituents from part of the old seat of Torrens. I now have an area in Gilles Plains which has an Aboriginal school, the Wandana School, and I am learning many lessons: every time I visit there is something good and new to see.

I would also like to acknowledge Shirley Peisley, who has been incredibly helpful to me, and Aunty Vi Deuschle, and the many elders they have introduced me to and the work that both Shirley and Father Tony Pearson do at The Otherway Centre and the support, of course, of Archbishop Leonard Faulkner in assisting with the Aboriginal communities there. I know that I am learning an awful lot about Aboriginal culture and, as the journey for reconciliation and the Journey of Healing gathers momentum, I know that I will learn an awful lot more. The lessons that Aboriginal culture has taught us gives us something and enriches our lives, and I am sure that the sooner we embrace some of the really important lessons that they are trying to teach us the sooner we will all be reconciled.

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** In supporting this motion, I commend the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for being part of the reconciliation walk at the weekend. It was unfortunate that the Prime Minister was unable to be there because I think that he missed an opportunity. Indeed, I believe that he continues to miss the opportunity by not saying, 'Sorry'. At least he has a sincerity about his actions, because we do not want people saying, 'Sorry', who do not really mean it. In that respect he is being sincere, but I think that he will in hindsight regret having missed that opportunity. Some people say that we do not have to be sorry for something that we did not do personally. That is a convenient way out, because we are all beneficiaries of the actions of our forebears. It is a bit like accepting the proceeds from something and saying that we had nothing to do with the initial act. The logic is not there, and I have no problem in expressing my sorrow for what happened in the past.

As the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs said, now it is a message of hope because tremendous achievements are taking place in education for Aboriginal people. If members saw the statistics, they would be very impressed, and I refer not only to education but also to sport and business endeavours. We have some millionaire Aboriginal business people—not many but we do not have many millionaire business people in any category—and a lot of progress has been and is being made. We also have Aboriginal magistrates. Unfortunately, we do not have any Aboriginal MPs in this parliament, and hopefully that will happen in the not too distant future.

I have mentioned previously that I had the privilege of experiencing the company of Lois, now Lowitja, O'Donohue when I was a young boy. In the 1950s, she used to visit my family with my sister while they were nursing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and I continue that friendship. I have also mentioned that I went to school with Graham McKenzie, so my experiences with Aboriginal people individually have been very positive, and that is one way of reinforcing the process of reconciliation. My niece, to her credit, currently cares for and fosters two young Aboriginal children, both of whom have significant disabilities. One was found as a newborn baby in a plastic bucket in a public toilet at Murray Bridge. Both children have a harelip and other significant medical problems and, with the encouragement and support of the elders, my niece cares very much for those Aboriginal children.

The concept of a treaty, which has been raised by some people, is dangerous and I urge caution, because it implies a separate nation. The Aboriginal people were never a nation in the sense that we use that term, and people who want us to go down that path should be very careful because it could end up creating a much-divided society rather than one that is reconciled. It would have the opposite effect, so I caution people who see it as a simplistic answer. The answer will come from within people. As the Minister for Employment and Training said, it will come from the heart, not as a result of legislation, not as a result of simply spending more money. The notion of a treaty has many inherent dangers.

Reconciliation is not about mathematics, it is not about numbers: it is about people. We have made great strides and tremendous improvements. If we stop and think of five, 10, 15 or 20 years ago, let alone 50 or 100 years ago, we will see that, as a community, we have moved a long way ahead. I am optimistic about the process of reconciliation but, as part of that, I make the point that at the end of the day Aboriginal people have to accept responsibility for their own activities. We have moved part way from what has been a welfare-type approach to dealing with these problems, but Aboriginal people must own the problems as well as the solutions, and only when that happens will we make real progress.

It is not a matter of throwing dollars into health, education and so on if Aboriginal people do not accept and take responsibility for their own actions. I believe that is happening but I ask the community not to judge the Aboriginal community on the visible presence of a very small percentage who are dysfunctional in many ways as a result of alcohol and whom we often see in the public arena. Too many people in our society judge the whole Aboriginal community on the basis of those people who, sometimes through their own fault and sometimes through other circumstances, have become addicted to alcohol and make it even harder for the rest of the Aboriginal community to advance themselves.

I commend this motion. Carrying motions in parliament does not solve problems but it is an indication of the goodwill that exists. We have a long way to go. We still have strong elements of racism in our society and, if we are all honest, we would all admit, whether Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, that we have a dose of it within ourselves. I commend this motion to the House and I look forward to the day when, as a society, we have genuinely reconciled and this issue no longer warrants attention because the underlying causes and issues have been dealt with in a way that is seen as part of ongoing life in our community.

**Mr HANNA (Mitchell):** I am glad that this House of Assembly today makes a commitment to reconciliation, recognising the problem and heading towards the solution. I recognise this as Kurna land, and that is just as true in a different way as saying that it is Australian land upon which we have this parliament where we deliberate. It is quite legitimate to view the occupation of this country by white settlers as an invasion to the extent that in many areas land was taken by force to the exclusion of the people already here. There was no declared war; there was no treaty; and there was no contract that led to European settlers taking over much of Australian soil. Nonetheless, it happened in an undeclared way. It is a historical issue that has never been resolved. We are just now becoming mature enough as a nation to recognise the past and put it in its true perspective.

It was not just a matter of the land of the indigenous people being sacrificed so that we could have the economy and lifestyle that we enjoy. They lost also their health through the introduction of disease, they lost their sources of food through the economic activity of the settlers, and they lost their culture through the very determined influence of the white religious and educational systems. There is much to acknowledge that, until very recently, has not been acknowledged. I understand reconciliation in this way. It is a matter of calling people to account and of achieving a balance. It is a process that goes two ways.

It means that Australians of European heritage must acknowledge what has happened in the past to those of an indigenous background. That in itself is very hard for many people. As others have wisely said in today's debate, it is not a matter of personally taking responsibility for something that might have happened 20 or 100 years ago but it is a matter of recognising what has happened collectively through the settlement process in this country at the expense of the indigenous people. At the same time in this balancing, in this calling to account, in this reconciliation, on the other side of the ledger, possibly even more difficult than the acknowledgment of wrongs that we must make, is the forgiveness that may come from indigenous people.

Of course, we speak in generalities. Although there are in our community some who are thoroughly committed to reconciliation, a good many people remain ignorant about Aboriginal culture and the history of our nation. At the same time, there are those Aborigines who are working well for themselves and with the rest of the community to achieve independence, as well as the continuation of their heritage and culture; and there are those who are angry and, indeed, with good reason. Of course, we are not assisted in the process by our own national leader (the Prime Minister) who is unable to say 'Sorry' and thereby acknowledge the past in the way that I have explained. As the member for Fisher quite rightly pointed out, at least he is sincere.

I do believe that the Prime Minister (Hon. John Howard) really believes that there is nothing for which he must be sorry. He repeatedly fails to appear to be sorry for what has happened in the past. We can only hope that, although his views reflect the views of a good many Australians, he will be able to see the light and assist us all to move along together for a better future for all Australians. I am pleased to speak today in support of this motion promoting reconciliation.

**Mr HILL (Kaurna):** I am also pleased to speak today in support of this reconciliation motion, particularly as I am the member for Kaurna, the only member in this place representing a seat named after Aboriginal people. At the outset, I must say how disappointed I am that the opposition was not invited to the reconciliation ceremony with which the government was involved this morning.

I believe that all Australians would have been moved by the reconciliation march across the Sydney Harbour Bridge which was shown on our television sets on the weekend. Like many in this place and elsewhere, I was extremely disappointed and saddened by the fact that our Prime Minister, regardless of his political persuasion, was not leading that march. It would have been an absolutely fantastic image for the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to be walking across the bridge in reconciliation with that many Australians. It is a great sadness that the Prime Minister chose not to do that.

My contribution today will be brief, but I would like to read the reconciliation speech that I think John Howard, as Prime Minister, should make to the Australian people. I believe that the Prime Minister should begin his speech by saying, 'Men and women of Australia', because all good political speeches in Australia begin in that way. The Prime Minister should have made the following speech:

Men and women of Australia, I take great pride in the achievement of my ancestors who settled this country over 200 years ago. I take pride in the way they opened up the country to farming and mining. I take pride in the development of our great cities, for the roads and the railways that link those cities and for the schools and hospitals and other institutions which have made Australia a world leader.

Mine is a culture of achievement [the Prime Minister would say]. While I am not personally responsible for these achievements, I take great pride in them. Equally, while I am not responsible for the sins of those early settlers against Aboriginal people, I recognise that my pride in the achievements must be balanced by the recognition of the dark side of my culture; by the mistreatment by my ancestors of Aboriginal people; the killings and the diseases; and, in particular, the removal of children from their families. Therefore, on behalf of my culture, I apologise to Aboriginal people. I say 'Sorry'. Please forgive us and now let us move on and work together to overcome the great disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal people—the disadvantages in terms of health, crime, housing, education and unemployment.

Motion carried.

#### **CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (APPEALS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **YOUNG OFFENDERS (PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **MODBURY HOSPITAL**

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Last week, the member for Torrens asked me a question without notice on the structure of the Modbury Hospital. She asked if I would agree to undertake an audit of the building structure at Modbury because of the concerns expressed about cracking of the outside brickwork around the windows on the southern side of the building. The honourable member claimed that the brickwork appears to be in danger of 'falling away'.

I am advised that the cracking of the outside brickwork around the windows on the southern side of the main building was the subject of an investigation undertaken in February 1996 by consulting engineers, Connell Wagner, and commissioned by architects, Brown Falconer. The results of the investigation concluded that the brickwork of this area suffered from a term called 'brick growth', which is a common fault for bricks manufactured in that era. The report suggests that the structural integrity of the building is not impaired in any way and the risk of falling material is minimal.

I am advised that any materials falling from this vicinity would impact on the solid concrete roof slab of the southern wing directly below and is far removed from any pedestrian traffic area. The worst affected area is around the window of the second floor opening. I believe it would be prudent to reinvestigate the situation to establish if further movement has occurred over the past four years. I have asked for that to occur.

#### **OLYMPIC DAM CALCINER EMISSION**

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services):** I seek leave to make a further ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** On 24 May the member for Kaurna asked a question about leakage of yellowcake dust at Olympic Dam and safety implications. As the Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982 comes under my jurisdiction, I sought a report. I have received the following report from the Radiation Protection Branch of the Department of Human Services.

The Radiation Protection Branch of the department received a verbal report from WMC Olympic Dam Corporation Pty Ltd on Monday 23 May 2000 of an 'emission event', which caused particulate emissions from the original calciner at Olympic Dam. A draft written report was received on 24 May and a final report on 25 May. WMC also put out a media release on 25 May about the emission. The report says that some particular material had been released from the calciner which roasts the ammonium diuranate, or 'yellowcake', to form the final uranium oxide product. This discharge of large flakes was noticed on 18 May. The discharge apparently resulted from build-up of solids inside the stack dislodged as a result of fan maintenance earlier that day. A senior officer of the Radiation Protection Branch inspected the site on 26 May.

The area surrounding the calciner was found to be generally clean with evidence of contaminated soil being removed and replaced with clean fill. Isolated minor contamination was detected on the ground and in some plant areas

nearby but levels were below the standards recommended for work areas. One small area of higher contamination on a roof was found and cleaned up.

Sampling from airborne uranium dust was conducted, but levels were very low, as expected. The large particle size of the emitted material minimises amounts that could be inhaled by workers and also ensures that little would be transported outside the immediate environs of the discharge. It is clear that the residual contamination has no radiological significance. Radiation doses to workers in the area would not be significantly above those from normal operations. Given the short period of this release, overall releases to the environment would not have been significantly larger than those normally occurring from routine operation. Radiation doses from normal operations have been well below relative limits since the start of operations.

WMC holds a licence to mine and mill radioactive ore, granted in 1988 under the Radiation Protection and Control Act. Licensed conditions include compliance with Australian codes of practice on radiation protection in the mining and milling of radioactive ores, and the management of radioactive wastes from the mining and milling of radioactive ores. The 'Waste Code' requires any unplanned events which lead or could lead to a release of radioactive wastes to be reported promptly to the appropriate authorities. The calciner stack, which has been operating since 1988, routinely releases very small amounts of uranium to the atmosphere, typically about .02 kilograms per day.

These discharges are reported in an annual public report. The discharge that was noticed on 18 May was not an 'additional' discharge but was a release over a relatively short time of material which would have been released more gradually under normal operating conditions. Whereas this material would normally be in the form of a fine aerosol, it was emitted as fairly large particles. As required, WMC reported that some particulate material had been released from the calciner in an unplanned manner and took appropriate action to remedy the situation. While any unplanned release is unwelcome, the department considers this emission would not have been hazardous to workers, the public or the environment.

#### NATIVE TITLE

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage):** I table a ministerial statement on native title made by the Attorney-General in another place.

#### LABOR PARTY DONATIONS

**Mr HILL (Kaurua):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Mr HILL:** Earlier today in Question Time, the Premier indicated that prior to the 1997 election I, as state Secretary of the Labor Party, approached Alan Hickinbotham's company Hickinbotham Homes to gain a donation to the Labor Party. It is true that I did approach that company, and I might say I do hold Alan Hickinbotham in high regard. However, my recollection is that Mr Hickinbotham and his company declined to give a donation to the Labor Party, and that is contrary to what the Premier said. I have checked with the current state Secretary of the Labor Party, and he tells me the only contribution to the Labor Party from Hickinbothams was in 1998, after I ceased to be state Secretary and after the

state election. At that time, Mr Hickinbotham's company gave a donation of \$500 to one of our federal candidates for his campaign.

#### LIQUOR LICENSING (REGULATED PREMISES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage):** 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 object of this Bill is to make several amendments in relation to the consumption of liquor on regulated premises. Section 129 of the *Liquor Licensing Act 1997* makes it an offence for a person to consume liquor on regulated premises that are unlicensed.

The *Liquor Licensing Act 1997* extended the definition of 'regulated premises' contained in the repealed 1985 Act to include a public conveyance, which was defined to mean an aeroplane, vessel, bus, train, tram or other vehicle used for public transport or 'available for hire by members of the public'.

The inclusion of public conveyances was to provide control over liquor consumption on public transport, such as 'booze buses'. However, the definition has inadvertently also caught self-drive or rental vehicles, including rental hire cars, houseboats and self-drive mini-buses. These conveyances were never meant to be caught by the legislation and the solution is to exclude all such conveyances, provided that they are hired for a non-commercial purpose, from the definition of 'public conveyance' in the Act.

The definition of 'regulated premises' in the 1997 Act was also widened to cover the consumption of liquor at events such as football matches and large functions generally in public places where liquor is consumed and an entrance fee is involved.

Advice is that informal private events held at places such as Belair Recreation Park (to which admission is now gained by the payment of an entrance fee) are also likely to be caught by the current definition of 'regulated premises', which was never intended.

The Bill makes it clear that it is paid admission to the event itself that is the key rather than admission to the public place in which the event is held. The amendment also allows premises, places or conveyances to be declared by regulation not to be regulated premises.

Section 41 of the Act provides for the grant of limited licences authorising the sale or supply of liquor for a special occasion or special occasions. There are occasions when liquor is not sold or supplied at an organised event but is brought in and consumed by persons attending the event and so it is necessary to broaden section 41 to allow a limited licence to be granted authorising the consumption of liquor on regulated premises.

I commend this bill to honourable members.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title*

This clause is formal.

*Clause 2: Amendment of s. 4—Interpretation*

This clause amends the definition of 'public conveyance' to exclude conveyances that are available for self-drive hire from the ambit of the definition, but only if they are operated on a non-commercial basis. The definition of 'regulated premises' is amended to provide that a public place will only fall within the scope of the definition while it is being used for the purposes of an organised event admission to which involves payment of money, whether directly or indirectly. The same definition is also amended to exclude any premises, place or conveyance that the regulations exclude from the scope of the definition.

*Clause 3: Amendment of s. 41—Limited licence*

This clause provides that a limited licence may also be granted to allow for the consumption of liquor in circumstances when it would otherwise be unlawful (eg, on regulated premises).

**Ms HURLEY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 25 May. Page 1234.)



**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** I am pleased to rise to speak in the budget debate. A budget is about setting priorities. It is about a government sending a clear message as to what it believes is most important for the community that it is elected to represent. I wanted to be positive about this budget. I hoped I would have the opportunity to be a positive about a host of initiatives that had been promised with the sale of ETSA. But, unfortunately, this budget is a clear example of a Liberal government with the wrong priorities. The budget cuts funding to our hospitals at a time when South Australians are worried about having a hospital bed available when they need it or a loved one needs it. The budget cuts funding to our state schools at a time when the percentage of our children completing high school is plummeting. It cuts funding to successful youth job programs, rips rent relief away from battlers, slashes funds to our most pressing environment problem, the River Murray, despite all the hype and photo opportunities for the Premier earlier this year.

South Australians are telling us that this government can always find money for car races but not hospitals, for soccer stadiums but not for quality health care and for consultants but not for our schools, and always has money for public relations gimmicks but not for a decent education for our children. One of this budget's only positives is a welcome increase in police numbers. But even that increase still leaves our police force short of the numbers who served when this government came to power. However, most of all, this budget shatters the con of the ETSA sale 'miracle'. This is the Liberal's seventh budget since coming to office in 1993, and it confirms that, despite all the cuts to essential services in health, education and other community services, despite all the tax hikes—nearly half a billion dollars in the previous two budgets alone, including the emergency services levy—and despite the broken promise sell off of ETSA without the permission of the South Australian people, the Olsen government still cannot balance its books and is still cutting essential services.

This budget is a deficit budget that predicts deficits into the future. It uses income from an asset sale—the casino—to prop up the bottom line instead of reducing debt as promised. However, South Australians will be asking themselves why they have a debt at all. After all, they were promised that, once ETSA was sold, our debt would be gone and that \$2 million a day extra would be freed up to be spent on our schools, hospitals, jobs, and the environment. The lion's share of ETSA has been sold. The \$3.5 billion cheque from Hong Kong was cashed months ago, and South Australians are asking, 'Where is the ETSA bonanza we were promised?' I can tell you where it is not. It is not in our hospitals or our schools. Our hospitals are near crisis. It is a statement based on countless meetings and conversations over the past four or five years with concerned patients and their families, with their hard working doctors and nurses and other dedicated hospital staff.

After all, 9 700 South Australians are on the waiting list for elective surgery at our public hospitals. However, before this budget was delivered, South Australians were assured by the Olsen government that help for our hospitals was on the way. We were told that the sale of ETSA would free up \$2 million a day which could cut 1 000 extra acute hospital procedures a day, 27 000 extra outpatients every day or 11 600 extra community mental health services every day. Just 50 days of the ETSA \$2 million a day would fund a

\$100 million upgrade of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. In March this year, the Premier continued to talk up the ETSA health benefits. He was quoted as saying that in this budget:

South Australians will reap the rewards for years of pain with extra spending on health.

Earlier this month he repeated this claim, even though the budget had already been formulated. Imagine the sense of betrayal felt by our doctors and nurses, and hospital communities in this state when they saw last Thursday's budget. This budget will only make it tougher for this state's public hospitals and for the South Australians who need them and depend upon them. We will see a winter of discontent in our hospitals from patients and from staff pushed too far. You do not need to take my word for it: just look at the budget and listen to the minister. The Minister for Human Services, Dean Brown, was the only minister in this government prepared to tell the truth about his budget. In an unprecedented interview the day after budget day he contradicted the Premier and admitted that this budget was a cut in real terms for our health system; that 'waiting lists for elective surgery will certainly increase by possibly another 2 000'; that a co-payment of at least \$10 for a pensioner is introduced for public dental patients, while there are new co-payments for domiciliary care.

The human services budget will be \$2.678 billion, an increase of just \$45 million or 1.7 per cent against inflation of 2.8 per cent. Of course, with soaring drug and equipment costs, health inflation—the so-called health inflator—is much higher. To match this inflation estimate, the increase would have needed to be \$74 million, and the budget represents a cut in real terms of at least \$29 million. On top of this, are costs of implementing and managing the GST, estimated at \$9.8 million in this budget. While these cuts across the human services budget are bad enough, our public hospitals did even worse. The budget for hospital-based services of \$1.5 billion was increased by just \$5.8 million; that is an increase of 0.38 per cent and a cut in real terms of \$37 million.

Contrary to the promises by the Premier, the government has actually targeted to cut services at our metropolitan and country public hospitals. It plans for fewer admissions, fewer surgical procedures and longer waiting lists. This budget targets reducing the number of people to be admitted to metropolitan hospitals by 4 000; it targets reducing the number of people to be treated in emergency services at metropolitan hospitals by 10 000; it targets—and this is a very significant estimate—reducing the number of outpatients to be treated at our metropolitan hospitals by a staggering 93 000. In a figure that you cannot find in the glossy publication about the government's regional package, it targets reducing the number of outpatients at country hospitals—so hard hit last year—by 10 000.

I must say that country South Australia really has been let down in this budget, and these hospital cuts are but one graphic example. After all the fuss it made about listening to the bush, really all there is to show for it is a glossy publication. After seven years of service and job cuts to rural and regional South Australia, this Liberal government has simply served up more of the same. All the cuts to South Australia's hospital services are taking place at a time when the demand for hospital services is growing. However, that is only half the story. Incredibly, this government is actually planning a reduction in the quality of services. The 72 per cent of emergency patients treated this year within the required time

of 10 minutes has been targeted to fall to 70 per cent. They are aiming to do worse. That is for emergency patients. The 65 per cent of urgent cases treated this year within the required time of 30 minutes have been targeted to fall to 60 per cent. Similarly, the percentage of patients to be treated in a timely way in the semi-urgent and non-urgent categories will also fall.

Even the government's capital works program is a blow for our public hospitals, actually delaying upgrades to our largest hospitals. Just \$10.3 million out of the \$200 million hospitals plan will be spent between 1 July this year and 30 June next year, or about 5 per cent of the total. Once again, we see announcements but not delivery. All the redevelopments included within the plan have been announced at least three times before. The QEH, of course, has been announced seven times before; this was the eighth announcement of that redevelopment. This budget is actually a plan aimed at making our hospitals worse and funding them to ensure that they will be worse.

The situation for our education system is little better. While lives do not depend on our schools' functioning properly, that is, in the short emergency sense, our economic future does—and so does the health of our community. To an even greater degree, our future economic health relies on the health of our education system. Yet, as we enter the information age, we find the Olsen government slashing funds to our state schools. Instead of becoming the smart state in the clever country the Premier has talked about, we are now at risk of 'dumbing down'. Cutting funds to education in the information age makes as much sense as cutting defence spending in wartime: we disarm intellectually at our peril. More than 40 per cent of children in government schools failed to complete high school; only 57 per cent completed secondary school in 1998.

Yet, again, education has been cut in real terms in this latest budget. Again, school communities have the right to expect very different treatment given the ETSA sale and all the promised benefits. The education minister told parliament that the extra \$2 million a day could employ an extra 40 teachers a day, an extra 70 school support officers a day and with just 40 days of the ETSA windfall every state school could be airconditioned. So we were told. A new school could be built every day, we were told, thanks to the influx of ETSA money. Yet, even before the budget dropped, we knew more cuts to our schools were on the way. Documents released to the Industrial Relations Commission show plans to continue the so-called savings plan announced three years ago—savings that mean less money for things such as school buses and TAFE.

This budget makes provision to increase recurrent spending on the education budget by just \$22.6 million, or 1.36 per cent, from \$1 685 million to \$1 708 million. That is a cut in real terms of at least \$24 million. Once again, the capital works budget was littered with reannouncements. One of the new announcements that I welcome is the long awaited maths and science secondary school facility at Flinders University. My party and I have strongly supported this innovation and called some weeks ago for a budget commitment. It is the brainchild of the Flinders Vice Chancellor, Ian Chubb—soon to move to Canberra; it is a positive move and I congratulate the government for including it in this budget. But, given this government's seeming desire for slipping capital works, I can only hope that that facility actually gets built. An announcement by itself is not enough: we want to see action.

Last year's budget allocated \$80 million for education related capital projects including \$32 million worth of work funded by the commonwealth. Budget papers for 2000-01 show expenditure of \$80 million, the same amount allocated, despite the fact that 11 major projects funded in last year's budget, with a combined budget in 1999-2000 of \$6.3 million, have been reannounced in this year's budget as being new works carried forward. Projects carried forward, which should have been started in 1999-2000, include the redevelopment of Adelaide High School, which has been announced at least twice before.

There are re-announced for this year school works from around the state from Fregon to Clare to Cleve to Mount Gambier and to suburban Adelaide that should have been started last year. The education minister's office was reported on Sunday as saying that these schools were not built last year because no money was available. So the whole education capital works budget was spent but 11 major projects did not even get started! If there was no money available, why were they announced in last year's budget? It is a con.

The minister has some explaining to do, but then again he is not alone, because the Premier and his entire cabinet have some explaining to do to the people of South Australia about where the promised ETSA windfall went following all their statements, all their boasting and all their promises to this parliament.

In this House in 1998 the Premier and his ministers detailed what they could do if ETSA was sold. That included the creation of 14 000 jobs, cuts to payroll tax, building a new TAFE campus each week, buying 1 000 school computers a day, performing an extra 1 000 operations in our public hospitals each day, performing an extra 27 000 outpatient procedures a day and upgrading 90 Housing Trust homes a day! None of these have been delivered in this budget. It was the big lie.

It was very interesting to see the Premier the other night in, of course, taxpayer funded television commercials—and can I say that, if it was not for the cost to the taxpayer, I would be urging the Premier to run them every night on television because I know what the reaction will be. The Premier was standing in front of kids with their school computers. He did not mention anything about his promise of an extra 1 000 school computers a day. He would not even do a door stop on Friday to defend his budget because he had been blown apart by the Minister for Human Services. So proud was he of their seventh budget that the Premier ran and hid.

None of these benefits was delivered in this budget. Instead we have cuts to health, education and housing. Of course, those promises were utterly absurd and are now dismissed by the Treasurer—they were not meant seriously. Just when do we take this government seriously? But the Premier repeated them again as late as 3 June last year, as the Hon. Trevor Crothers signalled that he would cross the floor to support the privatisation. The Premier told ABC TV that night that the ETSA privatisation would 'remove the \$2 million a day interest that we are paying'. The next morning the Premier told 5AD news that 'what it will do is take away the \$2 million a day we are paying, dead money, interest on our debt.'

The government said the ETSA sale would wipe out all debt—I repeat 'all debt'—and free up more than \$700 million a year to be spent on schools, hospitals, jobs, the environment and even cutting payroll tax—full stop, full stop, full stop. In an effort to get through the privatisation of ETSA, they

grossly exaggerated the economic impact and benefit of its sale. But I remember quite clearly saying on the night that the ETSA lease passed parliament that all the Liberals' excuses had now disappeared, had now vanished, because they now had to deliver on all the promises made to convince Cameron and Crothers to cross the floor and betray their election promise made before the election.

They had to deliver and the bill fell due last Thursday, but the account remains unpaid. The government has tried to argue that pay day is now the next budget, not this one, and South Australians will have to wait until 2001-02, an election year, for the benefits of the ETSA sale. Why is this so? By 1 July this year more than \$3.8 billion will have been paid to the state government for the vast bulk of our electricity assets which have been sold thus far.

Whether it is earning interest or reducing interest payments, that money is there for the full financial year of 2000-01. Yet at the same time as arguing that the full ETSA money does not arrive until next budget, the Treasurer says that the actual full budget benefit of the ETSA sale is about \$100 million and then claims there is a \$109 million ETSA sale dividend in this budget.

So, the full ETSA benefit is in this budget, according to the government, but it is not at the same time, again according to this government. No wonder South Australians are cynical. No wonder they are asking why, if the sale of ETSA was such a good thing, there is no social dividend as promised? Why is there no more money as promised—in fact, why is there less money—for schools and hospitals? Why is the only benefit a small cut in the rate of the emergency services tax, a new tax devised and introduced by this Premier? Why is there no budget surplus, as promised, after this period of supposedly stronger economic growth? Because the budget is clearly in deficit and basically everyone now acknowledges that—even the Treasurer.

Just look at the interstate coverage of this budget. Do not believe the front page locally: look at what was said in the *Financial Review*, the *Australian*, the *Age* and across the country. Of course, we have seen all this before. In 1998-99 there was supposed to be a \$4 million surplus, which turned into a \$65 million deficit. In 1999-2000, a \$1 million surplus somehow became a \$39 million deficit. In this budget there is supposed to be a minor \$2 million surplus. All the Olsen budgets since the election of 1997 have been deficit budgets, despite the promises made beforehand.

The budget is in deficit to the tune of at least \$84 million because the government has used \$86 million from the sale of the Casino to boost the budget's bottom line. It used this money to pay much of this year's contribution to unfunded state superannuation liabilities. This has allowed the government to reduce its previous allocation to financing of the unfunded superannuation liabilities by a similar amount. On p.2.2 of budget paper 2 it states:

The premium from the sale of the casino complex. . . will provide \$86 million of the government's scheduled contributions towards fully funding the superannuation liability. This has enabled the government to reduce its contribution from the state budget.

The proceeds of this asset sale are used to give the appearance of a \$2 million surplus rather than the reality of an \$84 million deficit. However, something much closer to the truth is provided in the consolidating operating statement (budget paper 2, table 3.4, page 3.7) which refers to an operating deficit of \$89 million for 2000-01, continuing deficits out to and including 2002-03. That means that each of the budgets out to 2002-03 will be adding to the debt. The

Standard and Poors credit rating agency says that the budget is in deficit until fiscal 2004 and has said that it is unlikely to increase our credit rating to AAA as a result of this deficit budget.

This is a deficit budget that helps to rebuild the debt John Olsen said that he would eliminate when he sold ETSA. The Olsen government has sold the house to pay the mortgage—now it is putting the rent on the bankcard. Having sold ETSA and our heritage, the Premier is now mortgaging our future. Despite the cuts to the emergency services tax, taxes remain high in this budget. As far as the EST is concerned, the announced cuts are swamped by the other increases, but at least in the tax area we find out where some of those illusive ETSA sale proceeds have gone. The cut made to bring the emergency services tax down from \$140 to \$76 million is achieved by using part of the assumed ETSA sale proceeds. Now the government claims that the ETSA benefit to this budget is \$109 million. The Olsen government is actually saying that 65 per cent of the assumed ETSA benefit goes on reducing but not eliminating the EST, a tax that this government devised and introduced.

Two thirds of the supposed ETSA dividend will cut a tax that did not even exist when this government first publicly announced that it wanted to sell ETSA. John Olsen sold ETSA to cut a tax he placed on South Australians. No wonder that the public and the Liberal backbenchers are still angry about this tax and cynical about these latest cuts. Politically they know the Premier's folly in giving this levy his name.

I am told that he even commissioned at taxpayers' expense an opinion poll to find out what South Australians thought about this tax. He did not need to waste more taxpayers' money. All he had to do was to ask his own backbench and his own marginal members or listen to talkback shows. But he went ahead and spent more taxpayers' money and was told that the tax was massively unpopular. No surprise, Sherlock. Fewer than 20 per cent of South Australians knew they were paying the previous levy on insurance premiums. So, fewer than 20 per cent of South Australians, in the Premier's own private publicly funded opinion poll, said that they ever knew that they used to pay the levy before bringing in the EST, despite the massive television campaign championed by the Minister for Emergency Services.

All the Premier has done following these cuts is put the EST label on his government and stamped it on the foreheads of each of his nervous backbenchers. That is why the rumours are already circulating that the EST could be either changed or abolished next year. This budget confirms the status of the Olsen government as a high taxing government. Between John Olsen's pre-election 1997-98 budget and 1999-2000, taxes rose by almost \$500 million to \$2.746 billion. I remember the day during the election campaign—and just to remind members opposite, that is the campaign when they lost 13 seats, and there are three more to go—when the Treasurer—

*The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Remember what happened to you? You got dumped straight afterwards. The Treasurer of the state said there would be no increase in the quantum of taxation. In fact, it was increased by almost \$500 million.

The budget papers claim that taxes will fall in 2000-01 to about \$2.1 billion. This comes about largely as a result of the loss of tax equivalents from the privatised ETSA and the new state financial relations accompanied by the introduction of the GST. The GST has become an unwelcome guest in this budget. Almost as much as it underpins the federal budget,

the goods and services tax is a cornerstone of this state budget. But, from reading it, you would not think so. You would never guess that it is a tax that was strongly supported by this Premier and his party.

We all remember the press conference when he said there would be a massive benefit to the state if he signed the deal for the EST—an extra \$47 million. It would be a big increase, a big boost to the state in terms of its finances. That was the deal that the Premier said he struck. He used his clout and his influence with his federal counterparts to extract the very best deal for the state. Well, thanks to the deal struck by this Premier with his colleagues in Canberra, this budget faces massive GST costs. Agencies will have their funding reduced by \$27 million to cover a shortfall in transitional funding from the commonwealth. In addition, there are costs of about \$30 million associated with implementation. What an absurdity. What a waste. There will be some \$30 million in compliance costs for the state for bringing in the GST. The public will be paying the GST and, as the Treasurer's budget speech said so matter-of-factly:

In most cases, relevant government fees and charges will rise by the full 10 per cent of the GST from 1 July 2000.

This from the South Australian Liberal Treasurer while his counterpart, the federal Liberal Treasurer, is making all sorts of threats to private companies if they simply pass on the full 10 per cent. The GST has gone from being the tax every Liberal believed essential to our future to become the tax for which no Liberal government will now accept responsibility or ownership.

In the last federal budget, Howard and Costello claimed to have drastically brought down the commonwealth's tax take because, although the commonwealth collected the GST, this is apparently a state tax because the states receive the revenue. That is why I was simply stunned to read in John Olsen's budget this disclaimer:

... the GST is considered to be a commonwealth tax with the earmarking of revenue raised for the states reflecting a discretionary decision of the commonwealth.

Therefore, we have John Howard saying it is a state tax, and John Olsen saying it is a commonwealth tax. So, will the real supporters of the GST please stand up? At the end of the day, whether it is a state or federal tax, one thing is clear about the GST: it is a Liberal and Democrat tax, and every South Australian knows it.

There is little in this budget for the unemployed and their families, especially the anxious parents of young unemployed people in our community. Disappointingly, the budget indicates that the modest jobs growth South Australia has enjoyed in the past 12 months, as welcome as it is, will slow down markedly. It predicts just 1.5 per cent jobs growth, not enough to make a real impact on our unemployment rate. We just hope that it does not slip backwards.

On top of this news, the budget contains a cut to the successful public sector trainee program. It has been so much heralded, but it has now been cut. Whereas last year 1 200 places were offered, that has been cut by a massive 700 positions down to just 500. Incredibly, the premier's budget TV ad actually promotes the scheme that he has cut in half. It was sandwiched in the middle of the Austin Powers movie. I wondered whether I was watching the ad or a sequence from the movie, in terms of the cynicism of a Premier who believes that he could actually sell the budget and sell the traineeship scheme, but did not actually mention in the ad that he had cut

it from 1 200 places down to just 500. Of course, he does not admit that it is another cut.

How can we bring them back home from other states with job figures like this and the massive jobs loss that we have seen continuing in the manufacturing industry? The cynicism of that announcement: go to New Zealand, let us hope the *Advertiser* will put it on the front page. Helen Clark had done the same press release: Come home, I will give you all a job. I have got a web site. Of course, people are saying, 'Do we have to leave town, get a ticket out of town, catch a Greyhound bus to Melbourne and then apply to come back?'

This is a budget without a social dividend which keeps our schools and hospitals on a starvation diet. But I note with some concern that the government has for the last two years withheld payments of dividends worth \$187 million from the SAAMC—previously known colloquially as the 'bad bank'. This money could be contributing to the budget through debt reduction and hence to our schools and hospitals that are falling apart at the seams, but it appears simply just sitting in one of the Treasurer's accounts. Page 7.7 of the budget states:

The Treasurer can repatriate capital from the SAAMC or determine any surplus of SAAMC from any year to be paid into the Consolidated Account or otherwise dealt with at the Treasurer's discretion.

I simply hope that this money is not being held back for an election budget when it is desperately needed now. If this is the government's tactic, it will not work. I doubt that any backbencher is feeling any more secure. I know that the poll was taken the day after the announcement of the tax cut in order to have a headline, 'Poll boost for Olsen,' but it did not happen. The result was 58 per cent. Just imagine if the poll had been taken on Friday night, after the Minister for Human Services dished the Premier in.

If this is the government's tactic, it will not work. The people of South Australia are drawing the curtains down on this government. They do not believe it any more, and they will not believe grandiose promises in the dying days of this government. Our budget is in deficit. Our schools and hospitals need funds now. At a time when people cannot receive the hospital treatment they need right now—not in a year's time but right now—South Australians would react with anger to the cynical use of this money for an election budget. They will not believe it. The government can announce what it likes: no-one believes it any more. I warn the Premier and the Treasurer that such behaviour would only invite greater retribution from the electorate. If they do not believe me, I say to them: pick up the telephone and call Jeff Kennett.

Labor is currently in the process of developing its policies for the next election, which is 18 months and another budget away. After more than 100 community meetings and many more meetings with interest groups, business people, workers and people from the social services, we are devising strong, positive and detailed policies. They will be announced and costed before the next election—unlike this government which, before the 1997 election, announced that there would be no increase in taxation and whacked it up half a billion dollars afterwards; and which announced that there would be no sale of ETSA before the election and then broke its promise straight after.

However, in a series of directions statements we are already indicating, and will continue to indicate, our priorities. Our priorities are, and will be, the basics—the fundamentals. Put simply, our hospitals and our schools will be priorities, as they should have been this government's

priorities for the past seven years. Labor will put our health and education systems ahead of privatisations, ahead of consultants; we will put jobs growth and jobs security ahead of wasteful projects, designed only to enhance the Premier's image; and we will put the environment ahead of a \$100 million blow-out in radio networks. This budget is simply built upon the sale of ETSA, a sale we opposed before, during and after the last state election. We kept our promise; we told the truth. We would not have sold ETSA, and we certainly did not attempt to con South Australians into thinking that the ETSA sale was a magic cure-all for our economy. The community did not then, and will not now, accept grandiose, unfunded multi-million dollar promises.

Labor, for its part, is committed to balanced budgets. We have said all along that the benefits of the ETSA sale were being grossly oversold by the Olsen government, and this budget has proved us right. To the extent that there are any benefits at all from the ETSA sale in this budget, they have been spent on cutting a Liberal tax that the Premier had only just introduced, with much of the benefit of that cut being wiped out by other increases in taxes and charges.

This budget is also built on the GST, a tax federal Labor opposed all the way, and a tax that a Beazley government would not have imposed on this state with all its massive costs and complexity. This was the Olsen government's last chance to prove to South Australians that it had listened and that it understood what the community wanted. It has sold ETSA and almost everything else—and this was its seventh budget, not its first or second. It was this budget, not next year's election special when all the hollow logs will be raided, that could have shown that the government had reconnected with the people of this state at least in some small way. Unfortunately, it is just more of the same in a budget built on the wrong priorities.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Bragg):** We have heard it all before, but the old whingeing, whining Mike is at it again. Not one single positive issue has been raised; it is purely and simply whingeing and whining. The Leader of the Opposition said that the government had sold ETSA and almost everything else. I wonder why? Why would we possibly have done that? What government would possibly have sold those assets if it did not have to? We have done it for one very basic and simple reason: because the Labor Party left this state in a bigger financial mess than any other state in Australia could ever have had. Not one other state in Australia has been left in the financial mess in which Labor left this state.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about the waste of the soccer stadium, which cost this state about \$25 million. If Labor goes back and examines what the swimming centre and the cycling centre cost us—and they were not a waste but essential for the community, as far as Labor was concerned, and were supported by me when I was in opposition—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I criticised the swimming centre and bowed out of it, and I was involved in the support for the cycling centre. That involved \$25 million to \$30 million worth of infrastructure, which is similar to the figure involving the soccer stadium. This is exactly like the situation 35 years ago, when everyone said Football Park was a white elephant. Let us look—

**Mr Foley:** You tried to stop it—you tried to stop the lights.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** The lights: it had nothing to do with the stadium. Let us look at the white elephant that

was and what Labor is proposing in relation to soccer in the future. I believe that all this nonsense about these stadiums will just disappear in the future and that, particularly after the Olympics, people will recognise the worth of the stadium.

Talking about icons and a waste of money, we heard today about the \$1.2 billion loss on that magnificent icon, the Myer-Remm Centre, and the \$600 million loss on that magnificent building at 333 Collins Street. Anything that this Liberal government might or might not have done pales into insignificance by comparison: it makes members of this government look as though they are absolutely brilliant managers. The Leader of the Opposition has the gall to come in here today and say that he will balance the budget. He would not have a clue how to balance a budget, particularly when he receives advice—

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Scalzi):** Order!

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:**—from the member for Hart. I would recommend to the member for Hart that he read what the Treasurer said in the upper house today about the \$84 million that is the so-called cash part of the budget. The Treasurer has challenged the Hon. Mr Holloway in the other place today to come forward and show where any of that \$84 million is in the balancing of this budget: it is not there. The Treasurer has placed that on the public record today and challenged the Hon. Mr Holloway and the member for Hart in that regard.

The Leader of the Opposition talks about tax hikes: 48 per cent under Liberal and 91 per cent under Labor. In the same number of years—a six-year term—there was twice the amount of increase under Labor that there has been under Liberal.

The most important issue here today, and for the next 18 months, is: what will Labor do? We heard on Friday the member for Hart condemning this budget and, in essence, with the support of the leader, saying that there were insufficient funds for health and education. That means only one thing: if they are going to balance the budget, even if they reorganise the priorities in a significant sense, they will have to tax the community in South Australia higher to get more money for the budget. There is no other way. The only way that this government or any government can increase its income is to increase taxation on the individual community member.

The member for Hart and other members opposite, in particular, have rubbished the emergency services levy, which has been reduced in this budget to what I believe is a reasonable level. What will the member for Hart, as a potential future Treasurer, and the Leader of the Opposition do with that levy? Will they get rid of it? How will they create another \$76 million worth of income, because that is the only way to do so? If they are going to increase income, they will have to increase tax. Will death duties be brought back? Will land tax be applied to one's home? Will all those things be reintroduced by Labor?

The Leader of the Opposition also spoke in this House about the GST. I remember only a couple of weeks ago that, in his reply to the budget, Mr Beazley said that he would not remove the GST: all he would do is wind it back. There is absolutely no doubt that Labor would have introduced a GST because there is no other way to simplify our federal tax system in the long term. Anyone who has had to work for years with wholesale sales tax as I, as a pharmacist, have had to, would know what a mess that is, and any government that believes it ought to continue with wholesale sales tax is not

in the real world. The GST will not be affected in any way whatsoever. We have got it, and this Labor opposition knows that full well, as does the federal government.

The leader commented on SAMIC and mentioned that it has \$180 million. Is it not ironic that the Leader of the Opposition should pick on a fund that results from the sale of all the failed assets of the Labor Party? He highlighted every single asset that we have had to sell to clear up the mess that they were in. It is absolutely ironic that the Leader of the Opposition should pick on that area. Over the years, if my memory serves me correctly, most of that money has flowed back into the budget in some sense, and the member for Hart knows that is the case. If I remember rightly, a lot of that money went straight into paying off superannuation debts. The member for Hart can check that out, but I think I am correct in saying that.

I turn now to the issue of where the money has gone. In the *Advertiser* of Friday, 26 May, that was clearly answered in an article that was written by Cliff Walsh. He is probably one of the few people in this state who understands the difference between an underlying tax-funded debt and a debt of the government business enterprises (GBEs). As the potential future Treasurer would know, our debt is made up of those two areas. For one of them, all the borrowings are funded within the operations of the companies and/or the statutory authorities, and that debt is purely and simply controlled by the running of those businesses. Most of us who have been in business understand that, but I doubt very much that many members on the other side would understand that, when running a business, there are borrowings that are part of running the business alongside normal debt.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** Of course it is. It is an excellent thing to have in general business and general government business, particularly as they can be funded as part of the operational cost. Anyone who does not understand that is an economic drongo. All business in this country is run that way. There is no other way to fund business in the normal trading sense.

Mr Walsh went on to say that he could not understand why we were not heralding the magnificent job that the government has done in reducing the tax-funded debt. That is what this debt and interest payment is all about: we have to reduce and remove the debt in the areas in which taxpayers, in essence, fund the interest debt. Clearly, there has been a very significant reduction in that area, and the debt has fallen from \$5.6 billion early on to just over \$2 billion, a reduction of approximately \$3.1 billion. That is where the long-term effect will be felt by taxpayers, and it will mean having surplus funds available to be spent by whomever is in government in the future. It is the only area in which a government can significantly reduce effective debt. That article by Cliff Walsh in Friday's *Advertiser* is one that every member of parliament, particularly every aspiring Treasurer, should read and comprehend.

I will now deal with the positives in this budget. One extremely important issue is the development of the Riverbank project. The most important single thing for the growth in tourism in this state is the future growth of the Convention Centre. If we do not continue to grow that business as a state, we will be left behind in any future tourism growth, so it is good to see that the government has made available the funds to complete that project, along with a lot of other clean-up issues along the river bank. However, the major project is the Convention Centre, and I was pleased to hear the Premier say

today that, for the first nine months after the completion of the centre, in other words, about October–November next year, the centre is fully booked out. That in itself justifies the government expenditure on the Riverbank project.

The positives that I put on the record involve the \$2 million bottom line surplus. As I said earlier, the argument put forward by the shadow treasurer has been called to task in the other place today and, clearly, the \$84 million of the Casino trust has not been put into the bottom line and the Treasurer—

**Mr Foley:** You shouldn't believe Robert.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** If there is one person in the whole parliament whom I would support before the shadow Treasurer in particular, it is the Hon. Robert Lucas, who is a member in the other place.

The other very important area in which this government is leading is the development of information technology in our state. The government will spend \$18.5 million over the next three years on what is potentially, along with tourism, the best single opportunity for us in developing our state. There is absolutely no doubt that the development of the new economy, the expansion of information technology and the improvement by business in understanding how to communicate in the new era will be the most important growth opportunity for small to medium size businesses. For the government to be involved in this area and to put more money into information technology to encourage all the state's small to medium size businesses to grow and be part of the economy is the most important industrial and trade issue for this government.

As minister, I was involved in the establishment of the Sport and Recreation Fund in relation to the taxation collected from poker machines. The government has put an extra \$1 million into that fund from this budget, and that is an excellent program. That means that a range of small clubs that are looking for minor works programs will receive an extra \$1 million. It is a positive issue as far as the government is concerned because it covers community based, small organisations. All members of parliament, from all sides of this House, will benefit from that recreation, community-based project. That program was established with the support of the opposition when I was minister. It is now being expanded by this minister and it is an excellent project.

One other area about which I think the government needs to be congratulated relates to the continuing removal of waste water from the sea. Particularly as the program relates to Port Adelaide, extensive programs will clean up the Port River. The Bolivar sewage works will be almost completely renovated and completed and further development will occur at Christies Beach. Those three projects are very significant environmental improvement programs. They are programs that must be carried out. They should have been carried out by governments years ago. We are now slowly reaching a stage where some of these very important environmental improvement programs are finally coming to fruition.

The fact that \$100 million is also being spent to complete the water filtration programs in the Hills and in close hill areas that have not previously been covered as part of that program is important. However, the most important single issue for the government in terms of the environment is the removal from the sea of all of the pollutants that historically we have been putting into it. Many governments have been doing it, not just one particular government. It is a major environmental improvement program and I congratulate the government.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** I recognise that Port Adelaide had to be done. It was on the drawing board when I was minister and it has been now completed by this government. I congratulate everyone involved because the Port River is one of the most vital parts of ecological development, particularly the mangroves area. We must stop pushing waste water into the top end of the Port River that could eventually pollute all that area. This program will go a long way to improving that area.

This budget's creation of 113 new police positions is a very important program for this government. The other important factor is back-up for those police officers. It is important that those policemen and policewomen will not have to worry so much about the book work and paperwork that they obviously must do. The positive of another 113 police working in the community is very important.

I congratulate the government for again recognising that tourism is one of the most important marketing projects of which this government can be a part. Much of the promotion of tourism would never take place unless government was making money available to that area. Primarily tourism in our state comprises small and medium-sized businesses and, whilst they contribute to the marketing aspect, the most important issue is for government to be very much up front in terms of the general marketing of tourism in South Australia. I look forward to the extension of the motor races in South Australia, even though the Leader of the Opposition snidely wiped those off as a waste of money. I do not believe that is the case: it is the best possible marketing at the cheapest possible price to sell our state. Anyone who has been involved in the marketing of tourism—

**Mr Foley:** What about the grand prix?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** That is yesterday. The promotion of those races is the best possible marketing for this state. As I said, the environmental clean-up program is one of the best programs this government has proposed and continues to undertake.

Time expired.

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** This is clearly a budget in deficit. I wish to deal with the budget deception that has been met with almost universal derision by commentators of high economic standing: that is the claim that this budget delivers a surplus. That is perhaps the greatest con of all. I am happy to address the challenge put forward by the member for Bragg a little later in my contribution because, clearly, the honourable member foolishly repeats the utterances of the Treasurer in another place without checking the facts.

Of course, we have seen all this before. In 1998-99 there was supposed to be a \$4 million surplus from this government. It turned into a \$65 million deficit. In 1999-2000, a \$1 million surplus somehow became a \$39 million deficit, and I will say a little more about that later. In this budget there is supposed to be a minor \$2 million surplus. Even the results for 1999-2000 of a \$39 million deficit was prevented from being far worse only by reducing capital outlays by \$106 million compared to the budget projection for 1999-2000 (I refer members to budget paper 2, table 5.1, 1999-2000, and budget paper 2, table 4.1 2000-01). As the former adviser to the previous Premier, Professor Dick Blandy, said, 'This is not a policy for a growth economy.'

All the Olsen Liberal budgets since the election of 1997 have been deficit budgets, but even the wafer thin surpluses have been achieved only by illegitimately using the proceeds

of an assets sale to boost the bottom line. Everyone knows that is irresponsible; everyone knows that the proceeds from asset sales should be used to reduce debt and other liabilities. To use a one-off windfall such as this for other purposes than reducing debt and for current spending is unsustainable creative accounting for which former governments have been criticised, indeed, criticised by members opposite.

This is exactly what this budget does: it has used the proceeds from the sale of the Adelaide Casino to provide an artificial and temporary boost to current expenditure. The budget is in deficit to the tune of at least \$84 million because the government has used \$86 million from the sale of the casino to boost the budget's bottom line. It used the money to pay off this year's contribution to unfunded state superannuation liabilities—an issue to which I will return in the closing moments of this contribution. This has allowed the government to reduce its previous allocation to financing of the unfunded superannuation liabilities by a similar amount.

As the budget states, the premium from the sale of the casino complex will provide \$86 million of the government's scheduled contribution towards fully funding the superannuation liability. This has enabled the government to reduce its contributions from the state budget. For the member for Bragg and the Treasurer to suggest that that is not correct is a nonsense. Indeed, for those having difficulty following this issue, the Budget at a Glance document makes it quite clear that the 1999-2000 budget had forecast a contribution to unfunded superannuation liabilities of \$140 million. Actual will indeed be only \$42 million.

The government has simply creamed the \$86 million from the top of the sale of the Adelaide Casino, which therefore gives it a windfall and enables the government not to fund that from general consolidated revenue. As I said, I will cover that a little later when I draw on those comments made from very qualified economic analysts who have picked up the very same point. For the Treasurer to suggest that that is not the case is absolute nonsense.

Something much closer to the truth, of course, is provided in the consolidated operating statement (budget paper 2, table 3.4, page 3.7), which refers to an operating deficit of \$89 million in 2000-01 and continuing deficits out to and including 2002-03. This means that each of the budgets out to 2002-03 will be adding to the debt. John Olsen has boasted that this budget is not adding to the bankcard: that is an untruth. This budget, together with its successive budgets, is in deficit and is adding to the bankcard. That is why the Standard and Poor's credit rating agency has given this budget the thumbs down, saying that it is unlikely to increase our credit rating to AAA as a result of this deficit budget. We will remain at AA+ and, along with Tasmania, we will not be upgraded with the other states, even with the massive asset sales undertaken by this government.

It is a woeful performance and, the closer we look, the more woeful it appears. For the financial year just ending, government recurrent spending will have been \$107 million more than estimated in the original budget (budget paper 2, table 2.4, pages 2.10, 1999-2000; and budget paper 2, table 2.2, page 2.6, 2000-01). This is a government that has lost control of spending and its own budget. In 1999-2000, outlays were to rise by a staggering 5.2 per cent in real terms. However, a very defensive Treasurer told the Estimates Committee of 23 June last year that 5.2 per cent was a one-off increase and we could expect an actual reduction in outlays of 2.7 per cent in 2000-01. This budget shows that the expected fall in outlays has just about been halved. It is

expected to be a fall of only 1.5 per cent (budget paper 2, table 4.1 page 4.2). Yet, over the same year, outlays in the form of interest are expected to fall by over 27 per cent—not the result of good financial management, I hasten to add, but the result of simply selling off ETSA Utilities, with the resulting decline in interest payments.

Yet how is it that, at the time of the last budget, the government predicted a fall in outlays of nearly 3 per cent without the sale of ETSA and without the resulting fall in interest payments and, now that the ETSA lease is largely completed and interest liabilities are falling, the outlays saved are only about half those that the Treasurer was predicting last year? Perhaps part of the answer is provided by going back to table 2.4 of the 1999-2000 budget and comparing it to the corresponding table 2.2 of the latest budget. I said that for this year ending general government recurrent outlays had increased above budget by \$107 million. If we do the same exercise for 2000-01 through to 2001-02, we find current outlays increased by a total of \$96 million in this year's budget compared to the forecasts contained in last year's budget. Outlays are up despite decreasing interest payments. The Olsen government has lost control of its budget and lost sight of its priorities.

Even the parlous budgetary position revealed in these budget papers and tables depends on the achievement of growth rates over the next three years of 3 per cent that may well not be achieved—at least not under an Olsen Liberal government and a federal Howard Liberal government. In anyone's estimation, very courageous growth estimates are factored into this budget. If we do not achieve 3 per cent growth or better, the budget situation will be even worse. After all, John Olsen claims that we are on the up and up economically and that we have been doing well. If he were right about that, a responsible government would be running a surplus that it could use for, as they say, a rainy day, when the economy is less robust. John Olsen seems not to understand that his claims, however ridiculous, about a boon economy merely serve to highlight what a bad financial manager his government really is. I simply repeat: this is a deficit budget that helps to rebuild the debt John Olsen said he would eliminate when he sold ETSA. Having sold ETSA, John Olsen is now about mortgaging our future.

This year's budget is expected to come in with a \$39 million deficit, as I have said. Indeed, more work will be done during the estimates process. However, it appears that that bottom line would have been much worse for this financial year had it not been for the raiding of the cash surpluses held in a number of our electricity entities prior to their privatisation. We have found that entities such as Terragas Trader would appear to have as much as \$20 million in cash surpluses accrued, as would Synergen and, indeed, Flinders Power and Optima Energy, neither of which is forecast to provide dividend to government in this budget year. Through a number of circumstances, it would appear that some healthy profits have been made which will be provided to the government prior to the sale of those entities. Those figures—and we will need to do some more work on this—could be as high as \$70 million. Those cash reserves, taken from the electricity entities, were not used to pay off the outstanding debt of this government but simply to improve the bottom line for this budget. If that is correct, that just goes to show the even more significantly unhealthy state of the this government's fiscal position.

However, as I have said, the government has used the one-off sale of the Adelaide Casino to prop up its budget bottom

line. The member for Bragg has tried to defend that and tried to use some contribution made by the Treasurer in another place. However, the opposition made that analysis as soon as the budget was brought down. We made that point very clearly in the response to the media, in the Parliament and when talking throughout the next day. We saw nothing in the local *Advertiser*. I must say that the local print media's coverage of the budget was most disappointing, given its lack of detailed analysis. We had to turn to reputable papers such as the *Financial Review* and its economic analysts who quickly picked up on it. Alan Mitchell, whom many will regard as a very qualified observer and commentator on financial affairs and, indeed, state budgets, said:

The budget is showing a cash surplus only because of the one-off profit from the sale of the state's casino. And the forward estimates, with their inherently optimistic bias, only show the future budgets to be barely in balance. (When the budgets and forward estimates are presented on an accrual basis, the state is facing a string of deficits.)

That was on the Friday. Also on Friday we saw Standard and Poor's press release headlined 'South Australian budget needs further fiscal repair'. I will quote elements of it, as follows:

South Australia still has some fiscal repair work to do before its budgetary position is sustainable, says Standard and Poor's. Despite the small cash surpluses in the fiscal period 2001-4 shown in the South Australian budget, which was brought down yesterday, the general government accrual net operating balance is in deficit for the entire period to fiscal 2004.

'As the annual expenses of running the government, including depreciation and accruing superannuation obligations, exceed operating revenue, the government's net worth is, in fact, declining over time,' said Rick Shepherd, Director, Public Finance Ratings.

Further, he said:

This is not a sustainable position in the long term.

He goes on to say (and this is particularly good, given that the member for Bragg has just come into the Chamber):

The government's adjustments to its contribution schedule for past superannuation liability have assisted it to achieve the cash surplus position, but they do not affect the operating balance based on accrual accounting.

How is this? The government appears to be spending somewhat more than the ongoing savings from the electricity privatisation. On Friday Standard and Poor's realised that the budget was in deficit, and a one-off payment to the budget bottom line from the sale of the casino was the only way it could get a cash surplus. However, it was not until today's paper—until the *Advertiser* caught onto this—that the latest convert to agree that this budget is in deficit was revealed. It has taken about three or days. The latest convert who has agreed with my analysis is, indeed, none other than the Treasurer himself who is referred to in today's press as follows:

Treasurer Rob Lucas defended the government against the accusations, saying the government openly included two accounting methods in its budgets—

and this is the Treasurer—

The longstanding cash accounting method showed a surplus, while the newer accrual accounting system showed an ongoing but declining deficit.

The Treasurer went on to say:

The government has balanced [the budget] in a cash sense. In an accrual sense we still have a deficit and, while it is declining, it is still a deficit.

The Treasurer himself in print today has said that the budget is in deficit. The budget papers are presented in an accrual format. This government started that format three years ago.



That is the new standard for accounting—for presentation of state budgets—and this government's budget is in deficit for the next three budgets. We have the *Financial Review* saying it; we have Standard and Poors saying it; and we finally have it drawn from the Treasurer. He is now acknowledging that this is a budget of deficit. Indeed, it is a budget of deficit for the next three years.

When the government headed down the road of selling ETSA, we predicted that this government would use the sale of ETSA to reduce debt. We actually had to stiffen up the legislation to ensure that the government could not take away a stack of that cash and pump into the budget, such as it has done with the Casino: that we actually got the money paid from the debt. But, simply paying off debt is not good enough: the government now has to get fiscal discipline. We no longer receive the \$300 million worth of dividends and income from the electricity assets. You must have fiscal discipline when you retire these debts and no longer have the income streams. This government has loosened the fiscal reins of government. 'It is spending more than it is saving from the sale of ETSA'—and that is a direct quote from Standard and Poors. It is racking up more debt and it is leaving the state with an underlying budget deficit, and—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** Well, members on the other side are saying, 'What a joke!' What greater financial irresponsibility is there than your government's selling up to \$8 billion of state assets; to employ 20 000 fewer public servants; and to have a record \$900 million more of taxation receipts. All that, yet it still cannot balance the books. It is financially irresponsible and incompetent. No other government in this state's history has sold \$8 billion worth of state assets, got rid of 20 000 public servants and increased taxation by \$900 million. Yet it still cannot balance the books. It will leave a legacy for a future government as a result of having sold all these state assets and of running deficits. I am increasingly worried about that, but that is the horizon which this government has developed for future governments.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** The member for MacKillop and the hapless Minister for Emergency Services chirp away. The member for Bragg at least is attempting to try to fight for the government but, at the end of the day, they will lose their seats in parliament; they will be defeated at the next state election and they will leave a legacy of debt and of recurrent deficits in this state. They will be swept from office. The Olsen Liberal years, the Brown Liberal years and the Liberal years will be known as the wasted years—the wasted years of government where they were not able to bring a budget into balance; that saw the sacking of 20 000 public servants; nearly \$1 billion of new taxes and charges; and up to \$8 billion worth of public assets sold. Yet they still cannot balance the books. Members opposite should hang their heads in shame.

The reality is that John Olsen is a big spender. Everyone knows that. Treasurer Rob Lucas is not a competent Treasurer. He has not been able to rein in a rampant Premier who spends continuously. He has not been able to balance the books. As was said in the corridors of this parliament after he toppled Dean Brown, 'We have elected a big spending Premier.'

Time expired.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** I want to record 30 May 2000 as the day on which the opposition spokesperson for the Treasury got up and lectured the government on fiscal

responsibility. What a joke! The member for Hart was an adviser for running a deficit of \$300 million a year—an absolute deficit—and leaving South Australia with a debt well in excess of \$7 billion, almost \$3.5 billion of it a direct consequence of the ALP government's incompetence in respect of management of the State Bank.

Members on this side find it absolutely astounding that today we are getting a so-called battering. The member for Hart, the opposition spokesperson for this budget, managed to finish the last three minutes of his address waffling on with irrelevant, inconsequential insults across the chamber because, clearly, he ran out of substance. First, a lot of facts and figures quoted by the member for Hart were a little woolly, to say the least, and certainly lacking substance. How members of the ALP can sit over there, poker faced with the hide of an ox, and criticise this government for the way in which it is managing the state's finances beggars belief.

One of the points made by the member for Hart was that the lack of media professionalism was astonishing on the day after the budget: the media seemed to lack guidance and background in how to critique this government. Well, I thought that was the job of the opposition. Is it not the job of the opposition to critique the government's performance? Is it not the job of the opposition to scrutinise critically what the government has done, to grab the media, and to ensure they are well briefed, to ensure that the next day's media coverage gives the government an absolute bagging?

The member for Hart says that the media are incompetent; that they did not do a very good job reporting the budget; and that the reporting was surprisingly shallow. The only conclusion I can reach, as a result of the member for Hart's observation, is that, clearly, he and his colleagues did not brief the media and explain to them where the potential weaknesses were. And why? Because they are shadows. In fact, it is quite a good budget and it is good news for South Australia. But they are groping around in the dark trying to find things with which to bash us. With what are they bashing us? Let us look at the address of the Leader and that of the member for Hart today.

It is terrible for hospitals; it is such a shock; only about a 1.5 per cent increase; and, not keeping pace with inflation. The Minister for Human Services spent a good period of time this afternoon explaining to the member for Hart and others that the demand on our hospital system has become exponential in recent years: far more people are using the hospital system today than in past years. We are treating far more people now than we were before on the same budget or on a budget that is keeping pace with inflation.

This business about bashing the way in which the government is approaching health care simply beggars belief. Here we are with some of the best run hospitals in the world, treating instantly people who need urgent medical care, virtually at no cost, and treating fairly efficiently people with elective surgery requirements and other demands. There may be waiting lists, but every constituency in the country has waiting lists at its hospitals. How far are we expected to go?

If members want to see a health system in crisis, go and live, as I did in 1993, in Egypt for a year. If members want to see how the rest of the world is managing with its health care, look around. If members want to see a public health system that is not working very well, visit America or the United Kingdom. If members want to see a system where people must pay an exorbitant amount of money for health care, they do not have to look far. The state government is

doing a remarkably good job with health care at present and meeting incredible demand.

As the Minister for Human Services pointed out today, the Government is running an efficient hospital sector, not an inefficient, incompetent hospital sector as was occurring in 1993 under the ALP government. In addition, we had to repair the wreckage created by Labor over years of neglect. Hospitals had leaking roofs and window frames falling in; they looked like vandalised building sites. Over the past seven or eight years, the government has moved remarkably well to fix up what was an absolute disaster zone, that being our hospitals.

In relation to education, here we go again: it is said that there is not enough money spent on education. Members opposite would not even need to know what was in the budget to grizzle about health and education. It is as if the Labor Party has never closed a school or cut a single corner. It is as if this government is some terrible monster that closes schools that are struggling to remain open due to the lack of student numbers. We have absolutely outrageous displays organised by the ALP and the union movement, for example, the Croydon school incident, with Janet Giles, the supposedly concerned parent, up there with a group of children, abusing those children, and having them come into parliament to heckle and scream. What a spectacle!

Whilst those small schools that are struggling to remain viable are being closed, we have new schools being opened and expanded to cater for the need in locations where the children live such as the southern and northern suburbs. In my local area alone, Unley High School has had over \$2 million spent on refurbishment. It was totally neglected under Labor. Mitcham Girls High School is now in stage 2 of a massive redevelopment program. Urrbrae High School has had \$20 million worth of re-investment. Schools right, left and centre are being renovated and repaired, computers are being bought and new facilities are being provided, facilities and renovations that were not completed by Labor. It was too busy throwing good money after bad, investing in lima farms in South America, soccer stadiums in London and fishermen's wharves in Brisbane. To have to put up with this tirade from the Labor Party, this absolute rubbish about how this budget does not go far enough on health and education just beggars belief.

We have the Leader of the Opposition trying to argue that the budget is all about the Brown-Olsen issue and that the Minister for Human Services disagrees with the Premier. We just spent an hour or so here today having all that explained, having the fact that we are making progress on health made apparent to people and any misconceptions being clarified. Yet still we have to keep hearing this line that has been going on for three or four years. People are getting tired and bored with it. It is about time the Labor Party looked at the facts and figures and started to come up with some constructive critique on what the government is doing with its budget. That could start with some alternative policies. Instead of bagging what we are doing, it could start with some constructive suggestions on what it would do.

I would like to spend some time on that point because, if we are not spending enough money on hospitals and education and if we are doing such a terrible job, I would like to know where the money should come from. The member for Hart has told us that, even though we are balanced on a cash basis, on an accrual basis we are running a small deficit due to the cancellation of the Rann tax. From where is the money coming? Could members opposite tell me that? What will

they do—increase the emergency services levy? They have said that they will not get rid of it. Will they increase all other revenues by 5 per cent, 10 per cent? Will they roll up the taxes? Is that from where the money will come or will they cut services? Will they close more schools? Will they cut hospital beds even further? Will they find some other form of economy?

The member for Hart has mentioned that we have cut thousands of public servants off the payroll. Will they rehire them, give them jobs that are no longer there, stop outsourcing—all these things that they cannot stand? From where will the money come? Sooner or later the people of South Australia will ask them to explain that fundamental question. The reality is that, when we took charge of this economy in 1994, members opposite had been running a \$300 million deficit and left this state in chaos.

It is about time we moved on. All the leader and the member for Hart have to waffle on about is the sale of ETSA. I really get a smile up, I really get a bit of ginger on when I hear the opposition talking about the sale of ETSA. If it was not for the obstruction and the incompetence of the opposition, and in particular the Australian Democrats, we would have sold ETSA years ago. We would have made billions more. In fact, if there is one fair criticism that could be made of this government and if there is one question that could be asked, that question would be: 'In 1994 when you were elected to sort out the havoc that Labor had created, why did you not increase taxes? Why did you not then look at new levies and revenue measures? Why did you not then look at selling ETSA as the Victorian Kennett government did and get rid of the debt and raise the revenue?'

I must say that those sorts of questions are interesting questions to ask. I would say the people who should be asked them are the Australian Democrats who sit in the upper house and block, obstruct, get in the way of and ruin the future of this state. If we had had control of the upper house in 1994 the state's finances and this budget might be in a totally different shape. We might have been able to get rid of the debt. We might have been able to raise the revenue measures at a time when people were still shell-shocked as a consequence of the Labor Party's incompetence. But that did not happen. What this government in this term has had the courage to do is tackle the problems that had to be tackled. It made the tough decisions that had to be made. I take my hat off to the Premier, the Treasurer and every minister who has tackled that problem with alacrity, vigour and energy.

All I hear from the Labor Party and the Australian Democrats—sometimes I have trouble telling the difference—is negativity—let us throw the mud around and maybe some of it will stick. The reality is the previous Labor government created the problems. It got us into this mess. We knew that we were not going to get out of it in a hurry. We are working on it. Excuse us if we do not have an accrual accounting based surplus right now because we did away with the Rann ETSA tax; excuse us if we are still working on the problem. You do not deliver nearly \$8 billion worth of wreckage to the taxpayers of South Australia and expect it to vanish overnight, particularly when you have the 'do nothing' Democrats in the upper house saying 'No, no, no' to every new measure the government tries to introduce.

I would like to spend a moment on some of the positives. These are the positives that the ALP seems inclined to ignore. The very fact that we are on a cash basis balanced budget is remarkable enough since the ALP—carefully advised by the member for Hart and the Leader of the Opposition who were

part of that government team—could not even manage anything better than a \$300 million deficit. Services are being maintained to a very high level. Debt as a proportion of GSP has declined from 26 per cent in June 1994 to 7.6 per cent in the year 2004. Now that is what we are doing. We are getting rid of the chaos the Labor Party created. We are getting rid of the requirement to have to pay \$150 million worth of additional interest payments on that debt just because of the 2 per cent increase in interest rates that we have experienced in recent times. That is what we are doing.

What we are doing is fixing up the South Australian economy, and all that in the face of some very serious structural problems. We need more people in this state. We are a long way from markets. We need to recognise that we need to keep our competitive costs down. Meanwhile, we have ALP organised unions clamouring for wage claims and so on for all sorts of private and public work force groupings, wage claims that are patently unreasonable. The government has managed to resist those wage claims by sending them to arbitration and I am sure we will have an outcome which is to the benefit of both the workers and the state taxpayers, who, ultimately, have to foot the bill. But it does not stop the ALP from standing on the steps of Parliament House and saying, 'Yes, go on: ask for ridiculous pay increases; ask for excessive wage rises; make the government suffer; the government is terrible.'

What I would really like to know is how members opposite will pay for those wage rises when they are in government. When someone in the Labor Party gives us an answer, some real policy tissue to start to address some of these questions, maybe we will find out. I cannot wait. I hope it is not like the Labor Party's web site—it is coming. It has been coming an awfully long time.

There is more good news in the budget. There is particularly good news for my constituency of Waite as part of the whole state picture. Money is being spent on upgrading the Belair railway line. Daws Road High School has received over \$1 million towards the \$2.4 million needed for the basketball stadium to be built on the site to revitalise the school. We are getting 113 extra police, and the minister informs me that about 54 of them are being sent out to local support areas. I expect to receive about 16 in the Sturt district. I am consulting with the minister to measure the real benefit for law and order in my constituency, and I expect it to be considerable. The people in my constituency want more patrols on the streets, and that is what this government is delivering. We have even met the expectations of the member for Elder, as the shadow minister for police. He said we needed about 80 more police, and we have exceeded that with 113. I want to thank the minister for that. We have not only met the member for Elder's expectations but exceeded them by recruiting more police than we actually need.

There is plenty of good news in this budget. As to local issues, things that matter for ordinary people, there is money for open space in Heywood Park, in Unley Park. There is money to look at providing facilities such as BMX tracks in the south parklands, delivering tangible outcomes to ordinary constituents. Threaded through this budget are dozens upon dozens of such initiatives, all meant to deliver real things to real people out there where it really counts.

This budget is full of so much good news for ordinary South Australians that it should be applauded, but all the ALP can do is trot out the same old stuff: 'Although you have increased health funding, you have not increased it enough; although you have increased education funding, you have not

increased it enough.' Frankly, it is starting to get extremely boring. Not only that, but I would expect a little more technical alacrity from the Labor Party on the budget.

The technical arguments put forward on the budget by the leader and the member for Hart are a little wanting. We have had the newspaper read out to us. We have heard what various media commentators have had to say. The member for Hart has already explained that they are inadequately and ill informed, which obviously means that they are not getting much from the opposition on the budget in the way of intelligent criticism. What I would like to see is much closer scrutiny of the budget by the opposition. I believe that there are some things we could be doing better.

I would like to hear the ALP make a constructive contribution in the debate as to how we can build a better budget. I would like to see members opposite dig deeply into each portfolio area to see if they can recommend some serious savings. It is easy to talk about motor races. Why do we want to spend money on motor races? Why do we want to expand the Convention Centre? Frankly, as a consequence of the wreckage Labor delivered, South Australia ran the risk of becoming quite boring.

What we are trying to do is revitalise the state by getting back some of the things we used to have. We have the Tour Down Under, the Clipsal 500, the Le Mans race and various other major events. We are revitalising the Adelaide Cup. The Premier has explained the economic benefit to the state associated with the revitalisation of the Convention Centre. We heard today that the Leader of the Opposition is big on icons. He loves icons, yet we are not supposed to be spending money on revitalising the Convention Centre or ensuring that we have some exciting international sporting events in this state that attract media coverage on which you simply could not put a value.

Well, the budget has addressed some of these fundamental issues. The budget is doing something for ordinary South Australian workers and residents. It is looking ahead at the strategic development of the state. The budget is trying to rectify the absolute mess we inherited from the government of which the leader and the member for Hart were members, and it is trying to balance the books and get this state back on its feet. It is doing that in the face of an upper house that it does not control as a consequence of Democrat incompetence.

Time expired.

**Mr CONLON (Elder):** It gives me no pleasure whatever to speak to this budget because, as has been ably pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hart, it is a budget of failure and defeat. It is not a budget of social dividend as we were promised. There is no social dividend in it, and it is certainly not a budget of fiscal consolidation. It falls between two stools.

The member for Hart has ably explained why that is the case. But, if we really want evidence of it, all we have to see is the complete lack of any heart that even the government has in defending this sorry budget. I just ask members to measure who the government has trotted out first to defend its budget. First of all, it was Cabinet Secretary Mr Humphries, alias Graham Ingerson. The only way he can get into cabinet is to take notes.

Then the other great defender of the budget was the member for Waite. Apparently he got the job because he just managed to complete an MBA when he should have been in this place thinking about what goes on in here. But now he

has an MBA, so he is their expert, and he has been sent out to sell this dead fish of a government. He does have the qualifications. He did very well in his MBA, and I congratulate him. It is good to see a Liberal trying to better himself, because they may all be looking for new careers soon, and I am sure it will be very useful to him.

However, you just have to be a bit careful about the qualifications of the member for Waite. We have known him in this place for some time: he is a former colonel in the SAS and he is trained to kill with his bare hands and is very good with weapons. He has all the qualifications of Rambo, and that is why I cannot understand why he always reminds me of Gomer Pyle.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** This budget—

**Mr Hamilton-Smith:** Are you going to say anything about the budget?

**Mr CONLON:** I will say something about the budget, but since the new Liberal member for MacKillop is interjecting I must say I was pleased to read about him in the *South East Times*, his having achieved the lofty position of Acting Speaker. Let me say that it is probably as high as he will ever get.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** I will speak about the budget, although I am well aware that I will be cut short and will have to continue my remarks after dinner. This budget marks the crossroads for this government. This government has been on the nose for some considerable time. It stinks like a dead fish in the electorate. This budget offered the government two possibilities. Either it was going to slide into terminal decline or it was going to climb its way out of it. Well, this is the budget of terminal decline.

Why is the government in that position? Because almost two and a half years ago now, after squandering Dean Brown's massive majority, Premier Olsen came into this place and told us that, despite all the undertakings, he was going to sell ETSA. I have to say that he would have squandered more than the majority if he had told people that before the election, but he told them that after the election. Why was he going to sell ETSA? Because it was our only and last hope: not only that, but it would actually bring back glory days. It was going to save us all.

We heard in this place time after time the pathetic efforts of a pathetic front bench, each telling us what they would do with their \$2 million a day when we sold ETSA. All the schools, all the hospitals, all the police, all the improvements—we heard it in here day after day. Now that we are closer to seeing the benefits of the ETSA sale, they appear to have evaporated.

**Mr Hamilton-Smith:** It's all your fault!

**Mr CONLON:** And the interjection is that it is all our fault. A moment ago the member for Waite explained that it was not quite all our fault: it was also Dean Brown's fault. But it is all our fault again. Why? Because we held up the sale for too long. Let me tell the member for Waite something about the sale of ETSA. Having resisted what was a foolish economic move for a long time, and having it put beyond any consideration that ETSA was going to be leased, it was the Australian Labor Party that moved to remove a political stunt from the ETSA lease to stop you from marking it down by 10 per cent. It was we who saved this state from another of your idiot moves.

*[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]*

**Mr CONLON:** Before the dinner adjournment I was explaining how this budget was, in fact, a crossroads for the government: a crossroads which may have led the government down a terminal decline or which may have given it some hope of climbing back into being held in some sort of regard by the electorate. As far as the electorate is concerned, at the moment, it stinks like a dead fish—and deservedly so.

We have sat through endless sessions of question time in this place where the pathetic group of front benchers that this government has assembled, one after the other, bragged about what they would do with the \$2 million a day that they would receive when they sold ETSA. We were promised a massive social dividend if we allowed the government to betray its word uttered during the election campaign and the people of South Australia and sell ETSA. All those promises have come to absolutely nought.

What was the social dividend in this budget? It certainly was not in health, because we heard the Minister for Health, in a radio interview a few days ago, telling us about the very real cuts in the health budget and that there would be 2 000 extra people this year on the waiting list—2000 extra on the queue. Is that the social dividend that we were promised out of the sale of ETSA? What about education? That is not where we received the social dividend. The member for Hartley, or the very temporary member for Hartley—

**Mr Foley:** Second to last budget for him.

**Mr CONLON:** Yes, the second last budget for him—used to be a school teacher, and very soon he will again be in the education system. Did the education system receive a social dividend from this budget? Was it the education system that received the \$2 million a day that we were to receive from the sale of ETSA? Apparently not: there has been no increase in the education budget, either. That is something that disturbs me, having suffered two school closures in my electorate in a very short time.

Was it in Dean Brown's other portfolio, that of housing? It certainly was not there. What we have seen in that portfolio is one of the meanest and most miserly decisions of a government. It has cut \$3 million out of rent relief for the poorest people in the community. It has taken \$3 million away from those in the community who are on the lowest scale of income. That is the social dividend of this government. That equates to \$17.50 a week. Members on the other side (with respect to whom \$17.50 would not pay for one of their bottles of wine), have taken \$17.50 a week away from the poorest people in the community. I can only assume that the basis on which they have worked on these sorts of cuts is that these people do not have much money, so they are used to doing without it. It is a disgrace.

So, in which area did we receive the social dividend? We received a cut to the government's emergency services tax. That was the best that the government could do. The social dividend that we received can be explained in three words: Newspoll, Morgan poll. That is the explanation for it: a \$23 million cut in a new tax that has been imposed on South Australians.

Was the emergency services tax the social dividend that we were looking for? What did we receive from it? What we received was a tax which was introduced a year ago, supposedly to replace the emergency services levy, and which was to make things fairer for South Australia. And it is said that we voted for it. It might be said that we voted for it, but so did the member for Colton. And what does he want to do now? He wants to abolish it—at least, that is what he has told some people. But I am afraid that the member for Colton's

wanting to abolish the emergency services tax is like the member for Colton's wanting to stop the development at West Beach. Do members remember that? He was going to lie in front of the bulldozers. He wants to abolish the emergency services tax. We will wait and see, because the member for Colton—

*Mr Condous interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Colton to order.

**Mr CONLON:** —will stand up to anything except pressure.

*Mr Condous interjecting:*

**Mr CONLON:** That must have hurt; did it, Steve? Let me explore some of the dodgy numbers that have been done on this emergency services tax—I apologise for calling it a levy. As an aside, I might say that when we were calling it an emergency services tax all year the minister complained; little Robbie complained. He said, 'You are not being fair. This is a levy, not a tax.' They all complained about that. However, I picked up the budget overview. Do members know what the social dividend was described as? Cuts in tax. And one of the cuts in tax listed was a reduction in the emergency services levy. The government has fessed up at last. It has finally given its tax the name it deserves: a tax. What happened? The government received a bad Newspoll, so it cut \$20 million out of the \$140 million that it should never have been raising.

So, what happened after that? Did logic, fairness and justice play a role? No. But then the government received the results of a Morgan poll and saw that it was faring badly, so it cut another \$24 million off it, and now the government is saying that it has finally kept the promise it made when it introduced the emergency services levy and when, as the member for Colton said, we supported it. The promise that the government made at that time, I can tell the member for Colton, is that it would not raise any more than the old system. Now the government says that it has done that, because it has cut it back to \$76 million. Not only is what the government has done no more than a confession that it has been robbing the people of South Australia blind for the last year, but also the government still has not kept its word. The Premier of this state was in here telling us how the government kept its word—

**An honourable member:** And it still gets it wrong.

**Mr CONLON:** And it still gets it wrong. It sends the bill to places where people have not lived for 40 years. Not only did this government lie to us then, but also it is continuing not to tell the truth. What it now has is the component that it collects as a levy from people raising \$76 million, and it says that it is the same as it used to be. Well, it is not. We rarely have the opportunity to explain that in this place, and we will do so on this occasion.

The government used to raise from that component of the old levy \$49 million in an ordinary year. They are not my figures or the shadow treasurer's figures. Those are the figures supplied by a select committee of this parliament on which the Minister for Emergency Services sat, and it is a finding with which he agreed. The defence that the government has offered is that, under the old system, contributions were also made from local government and people paid their rates. However, I can tell the government that people still pay their rates, and they are not paying any less—not a penny less. Can any member name one ratepayer in this state who is paying less in their rates since the introduction of the emergency services tax? I will tell members how many there are: none. And I will tell members what the government tried

to do about it: it did not try to ensure that it achieved savings. Rather, it tried to grab a little more with a clawback from local government.

The government's way of making it fairer was to try to grab a little bit more from local government. It wanted the savings that local government made through not contributing to the emergency services levy paid back into state government coffers. That is how good this mob is. The government grabbed \$140 million under a system that used to charge people \$49 million and their rates, and then it wanted to grab some off local government too. This is a villainous government.

Where is the social dividend in this budget? The one area in which we got something is in extra police, and I find that absolutely fascinating. Before I was elected to this place, I campaigned on the inadequacy of police numbers as a result of this government's policies, and I have spent 2½ years raising that matter inside and outside the parliament. I have been told by a succession of junior ministers that there are enough police, that there is not a problem. In fact, I could be forgiven for thinking that the government has suffered some sort of transformation in the last few months because, despite the fact that we have raised the inadequacy of police numbers for years, we were told that more were not necessary. The government said that it would like to spend more on health and education but it could not do so because it was somebody else's fault, usually ours. One thing it always defended was police numbers, saying that we had enough police.

With the social dividend from the sale of ETSA, the government had the opportunity to spend money on health and education, but it spent it on police. There is something that I am not getting here. The reason that more police have been provided for is that the government has probably done some polling and found out that the issue is hurting it in the electorate. Yet again, how does this government make its policies? In three words, it is Newspoll, Morgan poll. It is very simple.

I have spent 2½ years arguing with a succession of junior ministers that one of the fundamental problems with police in this state is that there is no pool of reserve police to fill vacancies, and that has caused enormous problems. I have mentioned the problems in the bush and at Port Augusta and I mentioned the situation some time ago when the Elizabeth Police Station had a sign hung on its door, saying, 'Sorry, closed due to staff shortage,' because there was no-one to fill in for sick police. Over and over the mealy-mouthed Minister for Police told me that it was not true, that the new flexible rostering took account of it. So 40 of the 130 additional police will go into a reserve pool of police. This government has done nothing with this budget but confess to its wrongdoings, and it has not fixed up the worst of those.

The Treasurer came into this place two years ago and said that this was a bold vision for the future. He said that the government would sell ETSA and put us on the road to recovery. He has come back and told us yet again that it is a bold vision for the future. The government has sold \$8 billion worth of government assets, assets owned by the people of South Australia; it has sold everything we own, but its budget does not deliver a social dividend or fiscal consolidation. It delivers absolutely nothing. People in this state have been taking pain from this mob for seven years and they have been delivered nothing. Nothing now and no hope for the future. That is the message of this budget. However, this budget does deliver one thing.

**Mr Hill:** Ten more seats!

**Mr CONLON:** It delivers government to us, that is for sure! It delivers more than that. It does not deliver fiscal consolidation as I have said, and it certainly delivers no social dividend, and it amazes me that members on the other side care so little about people who have been struggling for six years under their government that they can smile and smirk when they know that they have failed and that they have delivered a budget of failure, despair and disappointment.

With this budget the government has delivered a great message for the people of South Australia. It is telling them that they now have a Premier who is only going through the motions and they have a Treasurer who does not even know what the motions are. Have you seen this bloke? Have you seen him standing anywhere near his emergency services tax? Have you seen him when there is any bad news around? Have you seen him when he has to deliver? No, you have not. Only one thing has been delivered by this budget, and that is a great message for the people of South Australia. That message is this: they have to get rid of this mob from the government benches soon and they have to put people in place who will give them some dividend for their sacrifice.

Time expired.

**Mr WILLIAMS** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### **SUPERANNUATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **NATIONAL TAX REFORM (STATE PROVISIONS) BILL**

Returned from the Legislative Council with the suggested amendments indicated by the schedule, which amendments the Legislative Council desires the House of Assembly to make to the said bill.

Schedule of the suggested amendments made by the  
Legislative Council

No. 1. Page 7, line 4 (clause 5)—Leave out '1 January 2001' and insert:

the relevant date

No. 2. Page 7, line 11 (clause 5)—After '1972' insert:  
but does not include a receipt, ticket or other document issued when or after payment is made

No. 3. Page 7 (clause 5)—After line 13 insert the following:  
'relevant date' means—

(a) for a government account for, or including, a charge for compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance—  
1 July 2003;

(b) for any other government account—1 January 2001.

No. 4. Page 15, lines 5 to 18 (clause 28)—Leave out the definition of 'exempt transaction' and substitute:

'exempt transaction' means a conveyance of a quoted marketable security made after 30 June 2001 (other than one arising out of a sale or purchase of the marketable security before that date);

No. 5. Page 15, line 20 (clause 28)—Leave out 'definition' and insert:

definitions

No. 6. Page 15 (clause 28)—After line 20 insert definition as follows:

'quoted marketable security' means a marketable security that is quoted on a recognised stock exchange;

No. 7. Page 15, lines 23 to 27 (clause 28)—Leave out paragraphs (c) and (d) and insert:

(c) by inserting after section 90AB the following section:  
Exempt transactions

90AC. (1) No duty is payable under this Part in relation to an exempt transaction.

(2) No return is required under this Part in relation to an exempt transaction.

No. 8. Page 15, line 30 (clause 28)—Leave out 'transfer' and insert:

conveyance

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MOTOR SPORT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 May. Page 1181.)

**Mr WRIGHT (Lee):** The opposition acknowledges the importance of this bill. As we understand it, it essentially does three things. It facilitates the second motor sport event during a calendar year, and this one will be held between 29 and 31 December. It also removes the board as the promoter, therefore capping the government's contribution, and the areas of ticketing and marketing will become the responsibility of Panoz Motorsport Australia, but the government will maintain responsibility for the management of the parklands and the roads. I will ask the minister some questions on those issues during committee. Thirdly, it facilitates an arrangement that allows the minister to suspend or restrict to specified areas the unregulated trading hours that presently apply during the prescribed period of the event.

We do not see a problem with any of that. However, we have a general concern about the management of the parklands and the way in which the closure of the roads will be organised. Having received a briefing from Major Events regarding this, I note that a working group is presently working on those matters. Of course, road closures will need to be monitored on an ongoing basis. That working group is perhaps something that the member for Norwood may wish to join, if that is possible, and perhaps the minister could address that in her comments at a later stage. The opposition also notes that the commitment for the taxpayers is about \$7.1 million (this is through the Motor Sport Board, of course), comprising \$5 million for the building of the track (the old Formula One track), capital works amounting to \$1.8 million and the licence fee to the Panoz Motorsport group of \$2.5 million, totalling \$9.3 million.

Mr Panoz is committing \$2.2 million of that amount back to the state, leaving us with a commitment of \$7.1 million. As we understand it, that figure will be capped because, as a result of the passing of this bill, the board will not have the responsibility of making any other financial contribution. This is a one-year contract, which gives a right over future Le Mans events in Australia. It is to be welcomed that Mr Panoz, in a very public sense in various forums and at meetings arranged by the minister for both me and the shadow treasurer, has given a commitment that, provided South Australia wishes to continue with the event, he will guarantee that it is held in South Australia.

There is also positive news in regard to the television coverage. As I understand it, the event will be televised by the NBC in America on the Sunday between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. American time. Also, there will be some cable television coverage of the event throughout Asia and Europe. As part of the briefing, Mr Panoz and Mr Rainsford were able to provide both me and the shadow treasurer with some detail about how Le Mans racing operates. Certainly, Mr Panoz is extremely enthusiastic about this event, and he left us in no doubt that he and his organisation would be doing all they

could ensure that it is successful. Mr Panoz is looking at the event as an opportunity to come to South Australia.

He is very passionate about the race being held on new year's eve. Whether, of course, that timing would be the precise period within which the event would be held in subsequent years would depend upon the success of this year's event. We wish this event every success, as we have done previously with respect to the Sensational 500 (now the Clipsal 500). The opposition supported the passage of those bills through the parliament. Indeed, as this parliament knows, the opposition has been a very strong supporter of motor racing, being the father of motor racing in South Australia in terms of bringing the grand prix to this state. It has been a strong supporter of the motor sport events that this government has subsequently brought to South Australia.

We wish this event well, and we wish Mr Panoz every success in making this event as popular as possible for South Australia. Of course, we see the benefits that can arise from a tourism point of view. We hope that the race is given massive support and, naturally, the television coverage that will be given to South Australia will benefit our state in terms of tourism. I am sure that the member for Norwood, as the local member who is most affected by this bill and who always strongly represents her constituency, will ask a range of questions in committee, as I will, particularly in respect of the parklands and the closure of the roads in question.

Obviously that is something that the government will be taking on board as it works through this process in making sure that this can be the best possible event for South Australia. We wish this event well. We wish the bill a speedy passage through both chambers. We see the benefit of an event of this nature and the need for the introduction of this bill by the minister. The bill comprises those three major components which I have already addressed. The opposition is pleased to support the bill.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** I support the bill and commend the opposition's support for the measure. This event will build on South Australia's success. I do not believe that there is any question that the Formula One grand prix in South Australia was a premier event. In fact, it is widely recognised as having been the principal Formula One event anywhere in the world.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** For once, I agree with the member for Hart that it was a good initiative of the former ALP government to bring the event to South Australia. It is a pity that it lost the plot towards the end and allowed opposition to the event to mount and ultimately to kill it off. It was almost unsavable by the time this government came to power, and a more energetic and dynamic Liberal government in another state managed to grab it. There is no doubt that we are good at running these events. The Clipsal 500 has demonstrated how we can do it and do it well.

A good degree of congratulation should go to the minister who has personally driven this project from its inception to the present time when it is now about to become a reality. In addition, considerable credit should go to the staff of Major Events, all the departmental staff and other South Australians from motor boards, motoring groups and racing bodies who have all pulled on the same rope to bring about this event and make it a success, building, as I have said, on former successes. One aspect about motor racing for South Australia is that it is good for young people: it is good fun; it is loud, noisy and exciting. It is not at all boring. It is a fantastic

event. It is not only a good motor race and a good day out but it is fun for the whole city. It is a party. It is good for business; it is good for restaurants; it is good for tourism. It is good for South Australia. It is a 'feel good' event. This state needs more of that, and that is what this government is providing, not only in the form of this event but also in terms of the Tour Down Under, the Davis Cup, and so on.

I again congratulate the ALP for supporting this bill. I have been fortunate enough to meet Mr Panoz and a number of his team. We are indeed fortunate to have a man of that calibre so excited about South Australia and so determined to make his event in South Australia an international success.

People such as Don get things moving. They are the sort of entrepreneurial people this state needs to attract. There is always some risk with these projects, but nothing ventured, nothing gained. The winners from this event will be the people of South Australia. There will no doubt be some grumbles—there always are. I really hope, having supported this event, that the opposition does not now try to create an atmosphere of negativity. In particular, I want to address the issue of complaints about noise, road closures and inconvenience.

During the Clipsal 500, I was driving to work and had the pleasure of hearing a resident from somewhere absolutely grumbling her heart out on talkback radio because she could not bear hearing the noise of the engines of the cars in the Clipsal 500 race for the few days it was on. I also heard others grumbling that it might have taken them an extra five minutes or so to get to work during the one or two days of the event. All I can say is that, in a community like Adelaide, you will always find one or two people who, frankly, need to get a life.

Something that is clearly in the best interests of the vast majority of South Australians may invariably cause some inconvenience to someone somewhere. However, if the opposition or anyone is going to start making those concerns a pivotal focus of their attention, throw mud around the place and try to create an impression that the Le Mans race on new year's eve is some sort of inconvenience, I will be most disappointed. The vast majority of South Australians who see it is a fantastic thing for South Australia will join me in condemning those few people who want to grumble and whinge simply because something exciting and interesting is happening in South Australia.

We should just have a think about it. We will have an international motor racing event between Christmas and new year. I do not know about other members of the Chamber, but the period between Christmas and new year is probably quite famous for being the most boring time of the year. We have all eaten ourselves silly over Christmas and everyone is thinking of going away for a holiday, but they cannot really go until after new year. Quite often, there is really not a great deal to do between Christmas and new year.

A major exciting event will be happening in the streets of Adelaide that will bring in people from interstate and overseas. There will be noise and excitement, and the restaurants and business will be humming. It will be fabulous. All I can say to the people of South Australia is, 'If you are planning on having a new year's eve party, for heaven's sake, contact the organisers, get yourself a corporate box at this race and share it with your friends. You will have an absolutely fantastic new year's eve party. You can go off to the rock concert afterwards and enjoy the heaven out of it, because this will be an absolutely fabulous new year's eve for South Australia.'

In conclusion, it is a great initiative from this government. It typifies the sort of thing we are trying to do to spark up Adelaide and get it moving. The government is to be congratulated. Mr Panoz is to be congratulated, and the opposition is to be congratulated for supporting the race. All I can say is that, if there are any whingers out there, I am sure organisers of the event will do everything they can to try to accommodate reasonable concerns. I ask people not to drag down the event. Let us have a fantastic event now and in future years, and let us make it a really great thing, particularly for the young people of South Australia who have demonstrated in their tens of thousands that they simply love these sorts of events.

**Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood):** I feel in a somewhat difficult position after listening to the member for Waite. I hope he does not think that I am one of the so-called whingers. I welcome the opportunity to speak to this bill tonight because, as has already been outlined, my constituents are probably the most seriously affected by any of the events that happen in the parklands. Since 1985, when the first grand prix was staged, until recently with the Clipsal 500, there was been a history of not only residents but also the business community of the eastern suburbs—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Norwood has the call.

**Ms CICCARELLO:**—being seriously inconvenienced. However, that is not to say that they are being negative about the events. They have indicated their support for having one event during the year. They have been willing to put up with the inconvenience. However, they have been concerned at the suggestion recently that there will be two major car events in the parklands, bordering our constituency.

Whilst the member for Waite has outlined the positive benefits for people in South Australia, I would like to invite him to my electorate to listen to the tales of some of the business people about what happened during the recent Clipsal 500—how much business they lost during that period because the road closures applied for a longer period than they had previously. Some weeks ago, I asked the minister a question about the road closures, and I was admonished for being negative and whipping up anger about something which was of benefit to the state.

However, I have a responsibility to my constituents and, if asking a question in parliament is being irresponsible, I will continue to be so. Many concerns have been expressed about this matter. Bartels Road and Dequetteville Terrace were closed for 10 days, and this had not happened in previous races. If this event is approved, I hope that the road closures will be kept to a minimum because, as you, Mr Speaker, might know, the Christmas period is the busiest period for most small business. That is when they hope to make up any of the losses that they might have suffered during the year.

At present, concerns are being expressed about when the barriers will be erected. I hope that road closures will be minimised and that they will not happen too far before Christmas. I also hope that the barriers will be removed as quickly as possible after the race, always presuming that this will be approved. Another concern has been expressed by my constituents. They are concerned that, because we will have two races within a couple of months of each other, the argument will be advanced that the barriers should remain between the period of the two races. My constituents are

concerned about the difficulties that would cause for them if that happens.

I am a little disappointed that we are debating this bill, which seeks to allow a second race, when the sale of tickets for the race has already been launched on 28 April. It seems highly irregular that we are selling tickets to an event when we do not yet have parliament's approval to hold the event. I went to a restaurant in Rundle Street a couple of weeks ago, and I was surprised to see some pamphlets advertising the Asian Le Mans series. It listed all the races to be held between 18 March and 31 December, and states, 'Race of 1 000 years—Adelaide, Australia' with ticket prices being shown. I ask myself, 'What contracts have already been entered into? In the unlikely event that this race is not approved by the parliament, what penalties might there be for the community of South Australia?' We would not expect anyone else to behave in this way, and sometimes it is understandable why we parliamentarians are looked on rather cynically by the community, which says that we cannot be trusted.

I have read through some of the briefing papers and noted that Mr Panoz is taking on a lot of the responsibilities with regard to liabilities for the race if there are any losses. I hope that public liability is an issue for which he will be responsible. As we know, these car races are very dangerous events. Last year, in a Le Mans race a Mercedes car took flight, overturned several times, flew many metres and landed 50 or 60 metres from the track itself. I do not know what danger that might pose to the community. In a Le Mans race in the 1950s more than 80 people were killed as a result of an accident. I am not suggesting that this will happen in South Australia. However, I am hoping that sufficient safety measures are put in place to protect our community.

In relation to these races, a lot of other events seem to happen. I am not sure what will happen with this proposed new year's eve race, but it has become part and parcel of these races that we have flyovers by very fast and very powerful planes. I wonder whether any regulations have been relaxed to allow these planes to fly over at what seems to me to be a very low height. I live not very far from the track and I am quite concerned to see these planes flying over. Again, this is something which has certainly caused much consternation to my constituents.

The member for Waite said that he was concerned about people who might complain about their trips to either work or home which might take an extra few minutes. I could show him lots of documentation of representations I received in my office from many people, not only from my electorate but also from the electorates of Bragg, Coles and Hartley, people who live on the eastern side of town. I think the member for Colton also experienced severe difficulties in traversing the eastern suburbs to get to the city and to the other side of town during that period.

When we think of how many people had to traverse the city and were inconvenienced by the road closures, how much productivity was lost by people sitting in their cars? As a cyclist, I know that the attitude of a lot of motorists certainly was affected by the road closures. We see a lot of road rage at normal times and I can assure members that during these periods motorists behave in a much worse fashion than they normally do. Members might say that I am biased because I am a cyclist who does not drive, but I can assure you that it is terrifying when you have people trying to move through the city very quickly and finding the barriers. It is also quite



frightening to have the cement structures by the side of the road when you are trying to move through.

I will not dwell on it much longer, but I hope the minister will be flexible and will be able to answer questions concerning the provisions that will be set in place in relation to the length of time the roads will be closed and other issues in relation to the race. It might be because of my limited experience with legislation, but some of the questions I might like to ask do not fit neatly into some provisions in the clauses. I hope there will be some flexibility there.

I personally feel very concerned about approving a second race because of the impact it will have on my constituents, but I hope that, if the legislation does pass, we will be able to put enough measures in place to benefit South Australia while not inconveniencing a certain section of the community. As I indicated, since 1985 the people on the eastern side of town have had to put up with noise, inconvenience and, in many instances, loss of trade during the period of the events and the road closures.

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Bragg):** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to support this bill. I have been involved with motor sport events since the grand prix and I had the privilege of being the minister during the last two events. As has been pointed out to this House before, I had a lot to say—

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** —about the mismanagement of the previous government in relation to the grand prix. Every single question had a reason because—

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Hart!

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** —the Labor government had a perfect record in running the grand prix: it had a loss every single year. It was only when the Liberals got into power that we ran the event as a profit. That was the difference—and the problem with the shadow Treasurer is that he is very sensitive. One of the problems with the shadow Treasurer is that he has been in opposition for a long time—and he will there a lot longer. That is his biggest single problem. Now that he has left the House we can have a reasonable debate.

One of the major transitions through which this government had to go was the unfortunate loss of the grand prix. We could spend a lot of time this evening talking about how, why, when and where, but in my view it is of no consequence to do that. We lost the grand prix but, as a result of losing the grand prix, we set up in this state a very significant group of people to run the Australian Major Events group. One of the major benefits of the grand prix was that we were able to maintain a lot of young people in this state who had significant qualifications in terms of running events. That is the biggest single plus in the loss of grand prix.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** Kevin, your biggest problem is that you support Port Adelaide and you are bottom of the table; you are getting a bit toey because of that. One of the great pluses of the loss of the grand prix was the formation of Australian Major Events and the maintaining in this state of a whole lot of young people whose skills were developed through the running of the grand prix. The first two V8 events have been very successful and now, because of the management of this government, in particular this minister, we have been able to negotiate with Mr Panoz the

running of the Le Mans event in Adelaide on new year's eve and in future years probably in November or a time around November.

One of the biggest pluses of having the Le Mans race here and Mr Panoz being involved is not only the running of the event but the fact that it gives us tremendous international exposure at a very reasonable price. Those who have been involved with international marketing would know that the dollars we spend on running this event cannot be bought in terms of exposure internationally. In excess of 400 million people around the world will be watching the event on new year's eve. If the Tourism Commission went out to buy that sort of exposure on behalf of our state it would cost unbelievable sums; it would probably be in the order of \$20 million or \$30 million to buy that sort of international exposure.

One of the pluses of having motor events such as the V8 race and, more importantly, international events such as Le Mans is that we can get exposure for South Australia of all the regions and all the tourism products we want to sell. A lot of local issues, which must be considered for the Le Mans event, need not necessarily be considered further in relation to the V8 race. With the Le Mans race we are back to the old grand prix track, the full track versus the three-quarter track that we have for the V8 event. In going to the full track it means that we come right down to Rundle Street and, as a consequence, we will cut off Rundle Street East for a period in terms of shopping. I have been a retailer for a long time and I know that there are only two sessions of the year that are very important in terms of retailing: one is Easter and the other is the Christmas-New Year period. Whatever we do in running this event we have to make sure that the build time and the process of building takes care of the major trading issues as they relate to Rundle Street East, particularly in the few days after Christmas.

Several traders have come to see me, and I would like the minister to consider a proposition which has been put to me. I understand that Christmas Day is on a Tuesday this year; the Thursday is in fact a public holiday; and the Friday is a trading day. The traders have put to me that as a government we ought to look at shifting the holiday to the Friday, and have the two consecutive trading days of Wednesday and Thursday. The event would be on Saturday and Sunday. Whilst that will create some issues in terms of trading throughout the rest of the metropolitan area, it is a matter that we ought to consider seriously, because it will mean that as traders they will not have to open, close and then open again.

The issue of build time is another very significant one when you are talking about the full track, because again you are talking about a whole trading period extending probably from the first week in December through to the time of the race and, if we are building through that period (which, obviously, we will have to do), some issues of access into the city will arise, and clearly that matter needs to be considered. I suggest that as part of this debate we take the opportunity to look at this put-up and pull-down period and seriously consider whether we can leave some long-term infrastructure within Victoria Park. I am not talking about infrastructure within the existing format, but I suggest that we should at least be considering whether there are any possibilities of developing Victoria Park as a long-term motor racing, horse racing track with significant facilities in a more logical location than currently exists.

I noticed a float in the newspaper at the weekend, and I suspect that it has probably come from some well meaning people. It was a good idea and, in my view, it is something

that needs to be looked at in connection with the long-term use of Victoria Park. My electorate borders the track, as does the member for Norwood's, and, whilst the majority of the constituents in Bragg (which is primarily the Burnside area) have very few hassles about the long-term development of the track, many people are disadvantaged and therefore, in developing the track, we need to ensure that there is community consultation which, I might say, has been fantastic as far as the V8 event and the grand prix are concerned. That is a major issue as far as I am concerned, and I am quite sure that the minister and the board who are responsible for the management of this event will take that matter into consideration.

The final issue I bring to the attention of the House is one about which I know many people in the community are concerned—and I notice that the Leader of the Opposition in his usual flippant, whingeing and whining way today brought up the matter of not having any events in South Australia because it is a waste of money. Having been the previous Minister for Tourism—

**Mr Wright:** Is that what he said?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** It is pretty close to what he said.

*Mr Wright interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** You go back and look at what he said. He said that we should not have any events such as the V8 and Le Mans—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** He actually said that we should not have events such as the V8 and Le Mans events because we ought to be putting that money into hospitals.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** That is what he said—put it into hospitals.

**Mr Hamilton-Smith:** Who said that?

**The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:** The Leader of the Opposition; you know, the whingeing, whining Mike. The issue we ought to be considering is the fact that this event has some very significant economic outcomes, as does the V8 event. In my view, the Le Mans race will have more significant economic outcomes because it is an international event and it has long-term private sector sponsorship compared with the V8, which is primarily a government sponsored event. So, I think there is a difference in terms of the economic benefits for this state. I believe that in the long run we will look back on this event and also the cycling race as being the two most significant international events that we as a government have been able to obtain for this state.

I am very much aware that the opposition, in principle, supports this event, and I thank members opposite for that. They have given significant support to the V8 event over the two years that we have run it and, again, I personally thank the opposition for its general support in that regard. The most significant part of this whole event is its economic value and the opportunity it provides for us in the way of tourism development. I support the bill.

**Mr FOLEY (Hart):** I had not intended to speak on this bill tonight because we in our caucus and shadow cabinet had resolved to support the bill in an act of bipartisanship and in an endeavour to ensure that this bill has a speedy passage. However, as someone who, as the member for Bragg quite rightly has said, has spent many years now in opposition, there are only so many times you can cop it from the other

side without wanting to put a little bit of fact and reality back on the table. My colleague the shadow minister made a very considered and a very bipartisan speech in supporting this bill, but happened to make a point—and quite rightly so—that the Labor Party very proudly holds the honour of being the party in government that saw the Formula One grand prix attracted to South Australia, and for a period of government of some many years of which we have—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** It did help us win a number of elections. It was a proud achievement by the former Labor government and, I will put on this record, a very proud achievement for one John Bannon, a man who has been criticised by many, and indeed by some on this side of the House, over issues of financial management. However, on the issue of the grand prix, John Bannon can be rightly proud of bringing to and putting on in this state one of the great events in our state's long history. That really began something in this state that saw our state elevated to a level, in terms of motor sports, that we could have only dreamed of years before.

We have given the Clipsal 500 event our support. We have observed and put under scrutiny some aspects of it as we should as an opposition from time to time, but it could hardly be said that we have scrutinised the Clipsal 500 in an overly aggressive or assertive manner to date, and it could be said that we have been prepared to support and will support this particular race. We will give it the scrutiny that a race and a financial cost to this state deserves, and we will not aggressively or assertively scrutinise the event at this stage.

I think that is a very significant position but, as I indicated at the outset, I will not cop the garbage that the member for Waite came out with and indeed some of the comments of the member for Bragg. At least the member for Bragg puts a bit of it into perspective, because he knows he carries great baggage when it comes to this issue. I will not cop it.

Yes, South Australia lost the grand prix. I happened to work for the Premier of the day, Lynn Arnold, who fought very hard to retain that race and who stared across the table at Bernie Ecclestone in 1993 and was told we had the race. As history has shown, Mr Ecclestone had done a deal with the Liberal Premier in Victoria, Jeff Kennett, and we were criticised, and great—

*The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** Ron Walker; he did a deal with Ron Walker.

**The Hon. G.A. Ingerson:** There's a difference.

**Mr FOLEY:** There might be, but as far as I am concerned a Lib is a Lib. The reality is that that race was lost to this state through no fault of former Premier Arnold or the former Labor Government, but because that is the competitive, ruthless and, indeed, underhand nature of dealings that are conducted within Formula One racing. I do not think any of us in a truthful—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr FOLEY:**—moment could disagree with that.

*Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** Exactly. The member for Waite wants to persist. We were outmanoeuvred and outnegotiated by a Liberal Government in Victoria. That may be his perspective. But let us look at some of the events that occurred during the 1980s and the early 1990s with the grand prix. In the short time available to me—and I wish I had a little longer—I have gone through some *Hansards* in the 1990s to look for questions about the grand prix. I found about 40 questions on the grand prix—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** Well, they are here, and that involved about four volumes of *Hansard*. I can say to the member for Norwood that she need not fear this government getting stuck into her politically because she might raise a question quite rightly about closures of roads and about parklands. I can tell you that the Hon. Legh Davis—I use that word ‘honourable’ very lightly—in another House, and minister Laidlaw, a minister for whom, I might add, I have high regard, for many years, together with Martin Cameron, a retired upper house member and a whole group of them, went on a witch-hunt, a disgraceful political exercise year in, year out over the grand prix.

But one of the greatest critics of the grand prix, who year in year out lost no opportunity to whack the slipper in, was the member for Bragg. I remember being an adviser to the former Labor Government, and if the member for Bragg was not attacking Mal Hemmerling over his salary, he was attacking Mal Hemmerling for his consultancies or Good Sports and some other operations that he had—

*The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:*

**Mr FOLEY:** The member for Bragg says that was the best one. We heard the criticisms. I found some questions in here, including some from Jamie Irwin about the sale of cars. Issues of illegality, corruption, underhanded deals and mates being sacked were raised. But do you know what one of the biggest issues that this mob opposite continually raised? It was the cost of the grand prix. The member for Bragg could not help himself tonight when he said that the Labor Party ran the grand prix at a loss every year. Five minutes later, he was trying to say that you should not balance the thing like that. You have to think about the wider economic debate—the wider economic benefit to your state.

I will tell the honourable member a little secret: his race will run at a loss. The Clipsal 500 runs at a loss. Are we saying that that should not happen? No, we are not. Did you say that about the grand prix? You gave the grand prix an absolute hiding year in, year out, as it could not make a balanced budget, as none of these events are bottom line profitable. Members opposite know that, and we know that. But this mob opposite, led by the member for Bragg, continually attacked the grand prix.

Do you know why we lost the grand prix in the end? Yes, it was because of Ron Walker, but what was just as big an issue was that Bernie Ecclestone said, ‘I have sat back and watched that Liberal opposition tear this race to pieces, year in, year out, and bugged that lot: I will not let them keep that race.’ He rewarded the Liberal opposition, when they came into government, by ripping the grand prix out of this state. The government now knows that their actions for a decade in opposition as much contributed to the loss of the grand prix as did Ron Walker and anything else.

Government members know that to be the truth. Many people have said it. Certainly people within government know that, because of your constant carping, your constant criticism, your undermining, your hundreds upon hundreds of questions and, most importantly, the personal, vicious attacks, year in and year out, on Mal Hemmerling—someone whom Bernie Ecclestone held in high regard. Bernie had had a gutful, and said, ‘Why should I reward this mob with the grand prix?’

Over in Victoria, there was old Ronnie Walker and his deep pockets, Jeff Kennett and a few mates. Who knows what went on behind the scenes and under the table with that deal? We do not know. But what we do know is that this mob, the

Liberal Party in opposition, tore down the grand prix year in, year out. The member for Waite was talking garbage here tonight, and the member for Bragg was rewriting his history, but it will be corrected.

The Adelaide grand prix was a proud achievement of the former Labor Government, something of which everyone on this side of the House can be rightly proud. We will not see it further diminished because of cheap political comments tonight. I will say this: there is one thing we will not do with the Panoz Le Mans race—we will not treat that with the disrespect with which you treat the grand prix. We will treat it, as my colleague did from the very beginning, in a spirit of bipartisanship, but do not push us too hard.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2.

**Mr WRIGHT:** I preface my remarks by echoing briefly what the member for Hart said. This need not have got into a debate about the grand prix. There was never any intention that it do so. I just cannot understand how certain government members react at times. As has already been explained, we came in here in a bipartisan manner, genuinely supporting this bill. For the member for Waite to raise doubt about what we may do in this chamber and what we may not do out of this chamber is quite scurrilous. Do not make accusations to me about what I might say in this House and what I might do out of the House, because you are picking on the wrong bunny when you do that! And do not make accusations against what the opposition will do in this chamber or out of this chamber. If we come into this chamber and say that we are supporting a bill, that is what we are doing.

The member for Bragg had to pick up the cudgels, but every time the member for Bragg gets up in this House, he is making his valedictory speech—no more, no less. This did not have to be a debate about the grand prix at all, but the member for Hart stated quite correctly that it was a very significant and proud achievement by a Labor government. We have come in here time after time—whether it be for the Clipsal 500, the Sensational 500 or the Le Mans—and offered genuine bipartisan support.

Having said that, in the minister’s second reading explanation, quite correctly she referred to the significant work of Major Events. We would also like to acknowledge that. We think their achievements have been nothing short of fabulous. They include a whole range of events, and I will not go through them, although the minister may choose to—

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** On a point of order, Mr Chairman, is the member speaking to the clause, or is this a repeat of the second reading speech?

**The CHAIRMAN:** The chair is showing some flexibility in this matter, but I suggest to the member for Lee that he be cautious about the comments that he makes.

**Mr WRIGHT:** I know it is early in the process, but is there any estimation as to what economic activity may be generated from an event such as this? I note that, in the minister’s second reading speech, she made reference to \$250 million economic activity from a whole range of events. Is there any prediction at this stage as to what that activity will be?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** I appreciate the member for Lee’s considered response in his second reading contribution. I acknowledge that he and his party have been extremely

supportive of the event since the first time it was publicly raised and since the first meeting that the member for Lee, and I think the shadow treasurer had with Mr Don Panoz and the managing director of Panoz Motorsport Australia, Mr Dean Rainsford. I thank him for his bipartisan and genuine support that was given at that time.

In terms of the estimates of economic benefit to the state, in looking at comparisons with similar events, the history of the Formula One grand prix and the examples that we have had from the Clipsal 500, our early guesstimates are in excess of \$30 million. This event is extremely different from most motor sport events because it is being held in a party environment—as the member knows, it being new year's eve, there is a commitment from Don Panoz and his organisation to hold an international concert following the race. So, we think that this event involves special circumstances. As most of us are aware, many people thought that this year was the beginning of the new millennium. Don Panoz, as an individual, and his wife Nancy, happen to believe that the new millennium begins on 1 January 2001. Therefore, they will be putting in an extraordinary effort to make sure that Adelaide, Australia is the place to be on new year's eve watching a car race and also watching a pretty spectacular concert. So, at this stage, our guesstimate is that it will be in excess of \$30 million but, clearly, we will be carrying out more research as we get closer to the event.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** This was to be a one-off event. If subsequent events are approved, or if negotiations are entered into with Mr Panoz, will this act continue to apply or will it need to be further modified?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** It is my understanding that it would not need to be further modified; this act would still apply.

Clause passed.

Clause 3.

**Mr WRIGHT:** If this bill is passed, will it require any subsequent changes when we come back for the Clipsal 500?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** No, it will not.

**Mr WRIGHT:** The opposition notes and welcomes the capping that is occurring as a result of Panoz Motorsport doing the ticketing and promoting of the event. Is the figure of about \$7.1 million that I cited in my second reading contribution the correct figure that we are working on for our state's contribution, and what sort of guarantees can be offered with respect to that being the total figure that the state will be up for?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The figures that the member for Lee has used are about correct. I would divide it into three components—and there is one that is subject to the size of the build as we get to the race. As the member for Lee knows, we have the one-off capital works for the construction of the old Formula One grand prix track, and we are spending about \$2 million, or less, for that work. There is the licence fee, and then there is the build of the temporary infrastructure and the build that is associated with the race. That is the section of the build for which the Panoz organisation has agreed to pay about half. It has its contribution capped at a certain figure and the government's contribution is capped at a certain figure, depending on the size of the build. As we get closer to the race and the ticket sales and the corporate sales are more definite, we will know absolutely. But the figure of about \$7 million is as close at this stage as we can estimate.

**Mr WRIGHT:** What proportion of the expenditure is recurrent? Obviously, some of it is recurrent; presuming that we have the event next year we would have the requirement of paying the licence fee again. Is any of the other expendi-

ture recurrent, and do we have any guarantees with respect to the licence fee in subsequent years? Let us all presume and hope that this will be an ongoing event: what is the situation with regard to discussions that may have taken place in that area?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The one-off is the capital works on the extended track. The licence fee will be ongoing. However, this year is a one-off in a new year's eve environment; there would still need to be negotiations in the future, because at this stage the option for the future is to be resolved by both the government and Don Panoz. As the member for Lee knows, he has said that Adelaide has the race for as long as we want it. But the fee that has been negotiated is for this year's event. The build of all the infrastructure is obviously ongoing, and that will be subject to whatever developments we have in building construction and some of the improvements and modifications that we hope to make between now and the Le Mans race, and maybe from Le Mans to the Clipsal 500 in future years.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** With respect to the infrastructure erection and dismantling for both the Le Mans and the Clipsal 500 races, I have indicated the concerns that have been expressed by my community that possibly some of the infrastructure may stay in place between the two races. Is there a connection between the cost of the infrastructure for the Le Mans and the Clipsal 500 races—is there a set amount for one, and will that carry over to the Clipsal 500?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The build, barriers and construct north of Wakefield Street will be down within three weeks of the Le Mans race. There are two separate budgets for the V8 and Le Mans events. I could not hear the second part of the member for Norwood's question clearly, so I am not sure if that is what she asked.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** I will clarify my question. The issue was whether there might be a cost saving in leaving the structures up rather than taking them down and, with respect to the two races, whether the issue of costs would be paramount in determining whether the structures remain or are taken down between the two races.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** We have essentially budgeted for both in the costs that we have outlined. There is the potential for savings on some of the hire costs from Le Mans. However, the honourable member might be aware that, given the public perception that the road closures after the Clipsal 500 took longer to come down than they have taken in the past, I have asked Mr Andrew Daniels, the General Manager of Motorsport, to convene a series of meetings to look at the timing issue of construct and de-construct for the Clipsal 500 and areas of potential improvement for Clipsal 500 in 2001 and what we may be able to do to make Le Mans more user friendly this year.

This is an important issue that affects a whole range of people, not just the constituents of the member for Norwood. I venture to say that my constituents and those of the member for Bragg, the member for Unley and the member for Adelaide are affected by these issues. We are therefore taking the matter very seriously and we are also taking seriously a whole range of community interests, so it is in everyone's interests to be as user friendly as possible and to make life as easy as possible for all those involved, because there are so many stakeholders.

**Mr FOLEY:** Has any thought been given to running the Clipsal 500 at the same time as Le Mans, spreading it over a carnival period? That was done with the grand prix. It would condense the two events into a week or 10-day period.

I do not mean that the races be held on the same day but during a period of a fortnight, for instance.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** A whole range of issues were canvassed about the staging of a fantastic motor sport festival in South Australia. The fact is that the race of 1 000 years and the big party on new year's eve in Adelaide is a dream that Don Panoz wants to turn into a reality on 31 December 2000-1 January 2001. A whole range of options may be looked at in the future but at this stage there is a general view that two separate races are the way to go because of the reputation in the way Adelaide stages such events.

**Mr FOLEY:** I do not doubt that and obviously this year would not be appropriate, but I was thinking that, in years to come, if we hold both events, if there are some savings to be had and we could bring the two events closer together over a fortnight, it would be worth looking at. However, as I am not a petrol head, I am not the one to be giving advice on that.

I have some questions about the recurrent costs of this particular event. The minister mentioned the licence fee for this year, which is to be negotiated afterwards. One of the realities of the Formula One grand prix licensing arrangement was that it had quite a significant escalator in the cost of the licence each year. In a cooler, calmer environment, all of us would acknowledge that at some stage the Formula One grand prix would have got too expensive to host in Adelaide because the demand to host the race in many places around the world meant that Ecclestone was able to continually ratchet up the licence costs. Has the minister had any thoughts about how the government will enter into negotiations on the ongoing licence and whether it has the potential to run ahead of us and to be very difficult to control in future years?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** I would like to raise a couple of points before I deal specifically with the future of the licence fee. One of the issues that also affects the staging of this race is that it is the view of Mr Panoz and Panoz Motorsport Australia that any future races staged in Adelaide should be the last race of the international series so that the winners and placegetters here have automatic entry into the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race, so that gets to be a factor with the staging of Le Mans and contracts that are already in place with the Clipsal 500 event. That is an issue for the future and I am quite sure that it will be the subject of a lot of discussion. I will put it in that context. The prospect of its being the last race is very important for us.

In terms of the licence fee, the understanding is that future negotiations will take place along similar lines to the negotiations that took place for this year. As the member for Hart and the member for Lee will understand, dealing with Mr Panoz is a very interesting activity because he is extremely straight. He is very devoted to our state and makes no secret of it, and I understand that dealing with Mr Ecclestone was not always so easy. Therefore I suggest that, from our perspective, we have always endeavoured to be extremely straight and open in any dealings with Mr Panoz and his team, and I know that he appreciated the openness with which he was dealt when he discussed these activities with the opposition.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** Given that new year's eve is a busy time, I am interested in the staffing issue with respect to police and others who will be involved in the staging of the event. The fact that it will be new year's eve means that higher wage costs will be incurred. I refer to police, emergency and fire services and all the things that are required to stage the event, given the fact that there will be demands on

those services in other areas of the city for other events that night. Will that be feasible on the night?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** All the security staffing required throughout the event is the responsibility of Panoz Motorsport. Therefore, the police and emergency services personnel who are involved will be operating within a controlled area and will be assisted by security staff who are the responsibility of the Panoz Motorsport organisation. An emergency services committee is currently looking at all issues that will be involved, particularly in light of the fact that it will be new year's eve.

Clause passed.

Clause 4.

**Mr WRIGHT:** In terms of the discussions that have occurred with respect to road closures and the management of the parklands, the minister has already provided me with some information about those matters and I have also had a briefing from Major Events. I am aware of some of this information, but who comprises this working group? I understand that a working group is involved in ongoing discussions with respect to the roads and the parklands. Who comprises the working group? Can the member for Norwood, as the local member most affected by the road closures, join that group? I also noted in a briefing that I received that the SAJC has been consulted. Who from the SAJC has been a part of that process?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** I will take the liberty of reading the names of the people, and the organisations which they represent, who have received the invitation from Mr Daniels to attend the meeting. My understanding is that those individuals who are unable to attend this initial meeting are sending a nominee in their place, remembering the basis upon which I said that this meeting is being convened.

**Mr WRIGHT:** I do not need their names, just the organisations. I am particularly interested in the representation from the SAJC.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The organisations involved are Kinhill, which has been responsible for the construction in the past; Panoz Motorsport; South Australian Police; Adelaide City Council; and the Australian Retailers Association. Mr Matt Benson, Chief Executive Officer of the SAJC, received the invitation. Other organisations involved include the South Australian Taxi Association, Major Projects Group, the Passenger Transport Board and Transport SA. Representatives from those organisations are attending this initial meeting. In addition, we have sought written submissions from the Parklands Preservation Society, the East End Trader Group, Mancorp and Gouger Rugs.

I add those additional organisations because they have taken a more than passing interest in activities and issues as they relate to the Clipsal 500. We are talking about the Le Mans race at this stage. This meeting was convened because I was particularly concerned that there was a perception that the road closures were in place longer this time than they had been in the past. Whilst we will be looking at Le Mans, it is equally important for us to look at some of the experiences and those people who had particular issues as they related to the Clipsal 500.

**Mr Wright:** What about the member for Norwood?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The members for Norwood and Adelaide are two particular members of this chamber who are affected. I understand that the member for Norwood has already spoken with Mr Daniels. I believe that the member for Norwood and Mr Daniels intend to have some early

discussions in terms of how they can best work through some of the issues.

**Mr WRIGHT:** What is the situation with respect to relevant trade unions? Retail is obviously one area which we have discussed and which will be affected by this event. Other unions may be involved, but the one that readily comes to mind is the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association. Has that union been a part of the consultation or is there an intention to involve it? Should that union be involved in this working group in any way or at some subsequent stage?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** I remind the member for Lee that this is the first preliminary meeting, and it related to the Clipsal 500, with some discussions on Le Mans. I am advised that the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association membership normally has its discussions with the relevant contractors and, at this stage, we have not included contractors in these discussions because we are particularly looking at the build and road closures. I am happy to take that matter on board and look at it in the future.

**Mr WRIGHT:** I have a particular interest with respect to the racing industry, as the minister would well understand. I acknowledge and note that the SAJC has been a part of these discussions. The minister referred to Matt Benson, Chief Executive Officer of the SAJC. Obviously, the racing industry has always been supportive of these events but, of course, protective of its own industry, as it is entitled to be. What guarantees of a general nature can be provided to the racing industry? For example, the minister would be aware, no doubt, that the pre-Christmas race meeting is held at Victoria Park on 23 December or thereabouts.

There might not be many race meetings after that date, but that significant meeting comes to mind immediately. Victoria Park enjoys a good crowd. The pre-Christmas meeting is a twilight meeting. What assurances can be offered to the racing industry with respect to that meeting?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** There have already been quite detailed discussions about that twilight race meeting. This year it is to be held on 20 December. We have given a commitment that additional Clipsal screens will be installed. The race meeting will go ahead and any issues that arise between now and then are being worked out on a regular basis. There is a commitment for the race to go ahead. Everyone wants it to go ahead, as there are benefits all around. That very substantial, detailed discussion has already taken place.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** With respect to the composition of the working party, I formally ask the minister whether I could be a part of that group rather than just having discussions with Andrew on an individual basis. Having had experience with the grand prix from 1985, having been a member of various committees for the organisation of that event and also having been chairperson of the council's engineering committee, I am very familiar with the roads, the infrastructure and the issues involved. I believe that I could better represent the community by being a part of the more formal structure.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** At this stage, it would be inappropriate to have just the member for Norwood as a member of this group. I said that the working party was involved in initial discussions on some issues and perhaps to formulate an agenda. A whole process is yet to take place involving a briefing about the Clipsal 500 and some aftermath. I will give an undertaking to look at it and at other members who may be affected, and work in a cooperative sense.

Clause passed.

Clause 5.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** In my speech I did not touch on the whole issue of alcohol consumption during the period of the race and the conflict that could occur. In the city on new year's eve, many areas will be declared dry zones. Although I should not make sweeping statements, a lot of people who attend the race will have consumed alcohol. Family groups in the city will be enjoying the benefits of dry zones, alongside people who will be leaving the race and its surrounds. What provisions can be put in place to safeguard the community against problems such as destruction of property, as has often occurred, and to protect it from the general behaviour of people leaving such events?

**The CHAIRMAN:** This matter could be best dealt with under clause 7. It is up to the minister to respond, but the matter really is better dealt with under clause 7.

Clause passed.

Clause 6 passed.

Clause 7.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The Chair will take the question from the member for Norwood as read.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The number of security personnel operating on the night within a specifically marked out and controlled area will be the number authorised by the Liquor Licensing Commissioner. I am unaware of the dry zones the honourable member talks about. Perhaps she is referring to Victoria Square; I am not sure. The area within which the race itself will be held is a quite different and very controlled environment. I do not think it will be a problem.

**Ms CICCARELLO:** The city council has its event in front of the Town Hall. It cordons off a very large area not only of King William Street but also of the streets adjoining it. The council does not allow alcohol in that area. I am not exactly sure of the perimeters of the race. However, there could be a conflict between people at the race venues and those attending the new year's eve celebrations—and I presume that the Adelaide City Council will continue with its mayoral concert. There could be a conflict between people leaving one event where alcohol is allowed and spilling into an area where alcohol is not allowed.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The Adelaide City Council is involved in the Emergency Services Committee and many of the operating committees for this event. I would not imagine that the party we are talking about in an absolutely controlled environment on the track should in any way conflict with the activities and the plans of the Adelaide City Council and its party activities in King William Street. Certainly, it is an issue I can take up and get the committee to look at.

Clause passed.

Clause 8.

**Mr WRIGHT:** I presume this goes to the Public Works Committee?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** No, I do not believe it will go to the committee, as it is a capital work of less than \$2 million.

**Mr WRIGHT:** What about what is being spent on the track?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** The capital work is actually less than \$2 million.

**Mr WRIGHT:** By way of clarification, with the building of the track and the capital works, does that not qualify it for the Public Works Committee? I should have thought that that would put it in the vicinity of \$6.8 million; therefore, that would qualify it to go to the Public Works Committee.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** Certainly, the capital component is less than \$2 million. Recurrent expenditure does not go to capital works, because that fluctuates, obviously depending on a whole range of factors. However, the actual capital work is less than \$2 million.

**Mr HANNA:** I ask the minister to specify in some detail just what she means by 'capital works' as opposed to 'recurrent works' in that context. As I understand the member for Lee's question, there is a real concern that this matter might be missing the Public Works Committee on the basis of some technicality. Will the minister reassure the committee just what is being spent in which category?

**Mr Lewis:** If it is a total value of more than \$4 million, that is it.

**Mr HANNA:** That is a very considered interjection from the member for Hammond, and I ask the minister to take that into account.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** Some of this terminology is not all that familiar to me. The capital works component of what we are talking about, the construction of Le Mans in 2000-01, is less than \$2 million. That is for the track construction, barriers and physical assets. The other costs involved are hire costs and those relating to putting the material there, the up and down costs. We are talking about \$2 million or less of the actual capital works themselves.

**Mr LEWIS:** That is a curious interpretation. On that basis, you could almost say that the \$250 million required for the government radio network did not have to go to the Public Works Committee, because much of that stuff is hired. In any case, my understanding of what the Crown Law Department has provided as advice to the committee in the past is that if the total value of the work is greater than \$4 million, whether or not it is to hire a toilet to go on site for the use of the workmen or the people who will use it afterwards, it is beside the point. That is part of what is captured. What is not captured is the cost of tickets. The ticketing contract and the publishing of material to promote the event, and so on, is not part of what is to be considered, but anything to be used in a physical sense by the work that is envisaged, if it is in total more than \$4 million, Amen—the act speaks. It is not a matter of discretion for any minister or the government collectively. It is a matter of what parliament has said is the law.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** My understanding is that we are talking about less than \$2 million in capital works which is caught under the Public Works Committee investigation. The other expenditure relates to temporary grandstands, the temporary corporate facilities, the hire of marquees and the hire of temporary power facilities. They are all assets owned by the Motor Sport Board and that is what we are actually talking about. Certainly, my advice is that it does not have to go to public works.

**Mr HANNA:** On that point, the minister keeps repeating that the capital works item is less than \$2 million, but the answer is unsatisfactory. I would refer the minister to the definitions in the Parliamentary Committees Act whereby it is quite clear that public work means any work that is proposed to be constructed where the whole or a part of the cost of construction of the work is to be met from public money. I am paraphrasing the definition of 'public work' there. Looking at the definition of 'construction', we see that it includes:

(a) the making of any repairs or improvements or other physical changes to any building, structure or land; and

(b) the acquisition and installation of fixtures, plant or equipment when carried out as part of or in conjunction with the construction of a work.

When the minister talks about hiring things such as marquees and putting them on land, I suggest to her that that is a structure. When it is acquired, that is a cost, which goes towards meeting that threshold of \$4 million which requires scrutiny by the committee and deals with public works. In light of those definitions, I ask the minister to give a more careful answer.

**Mr LEWIS:** If the minister believes that this is not captured by the public works provisions of the Parliamentary Committees Act, then I think it is appropriate for me to go away immediately and draft a provision ensuring that the House's will is tested on the matter and, if the House so directs, then the bill should contain a provision which refers it. If the House does not so direct, then the matter ought not to be referred. That will put the matter beyond doubt. It is easy to draft a clause simply providing that 'the matter shall be referred to the Public Works Committee'. Amen!

Why was it then that the decision was taken to refer the Clipsal 500 event to the Public Works Committee for its inquiry? Precisely the same facilities and amenities are needed; indeed, the grand prix also. All in all, there is no question about the fact that these amenities have to be erected: they form part of the structures; whether by some esoteric definition, temporary or permanent, is beside the point. That is already covered, quite explicitly, by the provisions to which the member for Mitchell referred. It does not need me to repeat them. Either the House believes that the parliament ought to examine expenditure of over \$4 million or the House believes that its legislation passed to cover those provisions has no reference or relevance whatever, so long as it is not bricks and mortar. That has never been the case in the past. It has always been the case that such works are referred to the committee to ensure efficacy in the contracting and that the structures to be erected are necessary for the purposes for which they are said to be needed.

It is at some considerable expense—and the public has an interest in the matter—that parliament has decided that the threshold of \$4 million in total is the trigger point. It does not matter whether someone else is paying or whether the Crown is paying. It does not matter whether a toot for tomorrow and the next day and then removed thereafter, or a toot forever. If it is more than \$4 million, it goes to the committee. If there is any doubt about it, let us draft the clause and put it in a bill stating what the House wants.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** I refer to 'certain public works referred to the Public Works Committee' and there is a particular set of words with which I am sure the member for Hammond is familiar. It states, '... if the total amount to be applied for the construction of the work will, when all stages of construction are completed, exceed \$4 million'. If the total construction exceeds more than \$4 million, it will of course go to public works.

**Mr HANNA:** It does in this case.

**The Hon. J. HALL:** In that case it will go to public works.

**Mr HANNA:** Did I hear the minister say that, if it is over the threshold, it will go to the Public Works Committee?

**The Hon. J. HALL:** Absolutely.

Clause passed.

Clause 9 passed.

Schedule.

**Mr LEWIS:** I do not mind where I say it, so long as I get the chance to say it. I do not think the council or the government ought to take from the passage of this legislation any heart in the belief that it is legitimate to build any permanent structures on parklands. My sincere belief is that we already have enough permanent structures on our parklands and that any events of this nature ought to have always a sufficient cost built into the assessment of their viability to cover the erection and removal of those things on the parklands. The parklands—as other people before me will agree, going back in history for as long as there has been a parliament in South Australia—are very valuable, indeed so valuable that they are priceless. To simply build them out, cover them up, use them for the purpose of putting permanent structures on them is not what the public wants and not what any government would be well advised to permit either by stealth or by deliberate determination. I make this point under this part of the bill, because I say the same thing yet again to the Adelaide City Council.

I have said these things previously, and they do warrant repetition now, because members of the newly elected council may have a different view from that of previous councils about that matter. It would be very unfortunate indeed for their reputations if they thought they could erect some permanent structures which would reduce the area under parkland as open space upon which plants (whether grass, trees, shrubs or anything else) can grow below what it is now.

Schedule passed.

Title passed.

**The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism):** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a third time.*

In winding up the debate, I thank the opposition for its cooperation during this evening and thank all members who made a contribution to the debate. It is important to pay tribute to Don Panoz and his team, and particularly his chief here, the Managing Director of Panoz Motorsport Australia, Dean Rainsford, for the enormous effort that they have put into bringing this race to South Australia. We all hope that it will be an enormous benefit to this state, and certainly I hope that, as Sydney was the place to be this year in an international environment, Adelaide is the place to be for what will be the race of a thousand years and, I would like to suggest, the party of a thousand years. It is absolutely fantastic that Don Panoz and his team have chosen to support Adelaide and our state in this way.

The member for Waite talked about the opportunity that we have to build on our success, and I do not think there is any doubt whatsoever that Adelaide has a very well deserved reputation for motor sports excellence and for putting on some of the best parties in town. Certainly, our reputation in terms of the motor sport and motor festivals is a very enviable one internationally.

A number of people need to be thanked for getting us to this stage, including members of the Motor Sport Board, all members of AME and the team led by Bill Spurr and his people, as well as officers of Treasury and Crown Law who have helped us draft this legislation and resolve many of the issues in a relatively short space of time. I say, 'Thank you' to the many volunteers who have already been involved in the organisation and the members of South Australia Police and the emergency services units who are certainly going way beyond their charter to assist us to get it in place.

A very considerable consultation process has already taken place. To those stakeholders in this event—and they range

from the various retailers to members of the racing fraternity, the Adelaide City Council and tourism operators throughout this state—I say that it is within everyone's requirements to make this an absolutely spectacular event. I can say that, from our perspective, we are determined to ensure that the consultative process is adhered to.

Certainly, there are many issues on which I believe we will have a very bipartisan approach. The parklands are clearly of interest and concern to a number of people. All I would say in winding up the debate is that we do hold a number of events in the Adelaide parklands, whether they be motor sport, horse racing, the international horse trials, the solar challenge or many picnics. Of course, the parklands are for people to enjoy and we all want to ensure that that continues well into the future. There are many issues which I am determined we will work through.

In closing, I must say that I do understand the issues that have been raised in a genuine manner by the member for Norwood and I am sure a number of her other colleagues on her side and certainly on our side. They will be worked through. I give members my commitment that, at all times, we will try to ensure that it works. There will be an ongoing debate about a whole range of these issues, but I am very grateful for the very cooperative manner in which the member for Lee has led the opposition.

I understand some of the points that have been made by his colleague, but I look forward to working with him in the future. I am sure that all members will be there to enjoy what will be clearly an absolutely fantastic evening on 31 December, but the couple of days lead-up to it will be equally as good.

**Mr LEWIS (Hammond):** As the bill comes out of committee, I must say in my contribution to the third reading how much I commend the minister's energy, enterprise, acumen, commitment, determination, and whatever else it took for her to procure the event for South Australia, because I know those people who like motor sport are really pleased that it will, for the first time ever, be run here on this side of equator. I am sure that it will attract a large number of motor sport enthusiasts from interstate and overseas. It is a long event; there is no doubt about that.

My purpose in making these remarks is to draw attention to what I believe to be the ambiguity that still surrounds it, whether or not it is in the mind of the minister or the government officials advising her; that is, that it is a public work. I suspect the ambiguity arises from the way in which convenient interpretation can be made of the meaning of the word 'construction' or any one of those other words in the bill.

I think that it will be in everyone's political interest in this place right now not to be ambiguous about that and to simply go through the process; otherwise, it will cost some people, if merely just one person in this place, a great deal. I am not referring to the member for Norwood but, if the member for Norwood were to acquiesce and let it happen, I am sure that her constituents would find it pretty unedifying.

There are other members, too, who are directly touched and affected in their constituency by this piece of entertainment. For that reason, I am most anxious that the standing of parliament, and indeed the standing of particular members whose electorates it will directly touch, is not called into question and that controversy does not result over whether or not it was subjected to appropriate and adequate scrutiny. To my mind, if it does not go to the Public Works Committee, it will not be on my head.



Bill read a third time and passed.

**SUMMARY OFFENCES (SEARCHES)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (CONSUMER  
AFFAIRS—PORTFOLIO) BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (SEXUAL  
SERVITUDE) AMENDMENT BILL**

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's amendments.

**SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

**The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism):** I move:

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

Motion carried.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).  
(Continued from page 1268.)

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak on this Appropriation Bill.

*Mr Foley interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Thanks, Kevin. Are you going too, Pat? First up last Thursday in the party room we were given a briefing on what would be presented to the parliament by the Treasurer in the form of this Appropriation Bill. We then came into the parliament and heard the Treasurer's contribution and then had the opportunity to go through some of the papers. Later that afternoon I proceeded to drive back to my electorate. It is quite a lengthy drive, so I thought I would turn on the radio and hear what the reaction of the media was and what some of the commentators around the state were saying about the budget.

There was quite a lengthy discussion on the budget. Some spokespeople from the business community spoke fairly glowingly about the budget. Although they did say it was somewhat boring, they gave it plenty of ticks and said it was doing the right thing. A spokesman from the Association of Chartered Accountants said it was a bit boring. I thought it was a bit rich of him to refer to anything as being a bit boring. He gave it a few ticks also. I thought that this was not too bad. It was fairly positive. What I thought of the budget was on the right track; it was a pretty good budget and was being accepted.

But it was confirmed that it was a good budget when the ABC brought on a spokesman from the union movement who said, 'It is just another miserable Liberal budget.' I thought, 'Hooray, we've got it right.' The union movement thought it was just another miserable Liberal budget, so that means we got it right, because the business community and the accounting community thought it was a pretty good budget—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** —and the union thought it was a miserable budget. The member for Elder contributed either side of the dinner break, and it is a bit of a pity that we had the intervention of the other bill because he was just getting me warmed up. The member for Elder spoke about the contributions from this side, and I think he was trying to make the point that they were a bit lightweight as to their status in the government. But the member for Elder missed the point: it was not the members who were contributing—it was the quality of the contributions.

The member for Elder, having spent half of his allotted time talking about that, did get into a little bit of the substance of what the budget was all about. His biggest problem with the budget was with regard to the emergency services levy. Being the opposition spokesman for emergency services, I am not surprised that he would concentrate on that. His biggest problem was what the government did to the emergency services levy. The budget actually redressed some of those issues which the community had been complaining about. The government had recognised for a long time that there were some anomalies within the emergency services levy.

The member for Elder's biggest complaint about the emergency services levy and the actions taken by the government and the Treasurer with regard to that was all the good things we did. The member for Elder is aware, as is everybody in this chamber, that last year, many months ago, the Premier announced a review into the emergency services levy. A committee was set up to take representations from people in the community and to assess those representations and come back with representations to the government.

The member for Elder tried to suggest that the government was poll driven and was only making amendments to the levy because of something that might have appeared in the polls. Unfortunately, for the member for Elder, a report came back from the review committee and the government assessed the recommendations of the report. It took into account the things that were recommended and made the appropriate amendments and changes. It seems a bit strange to me that the member for Elder would castigate the government for making changes which were called for by the community and which were fair and reasonable. I will run through a few of those.

One of the biggest lobby groups in this state is the RAA. The RAA put forward a fairly compelling case that its members were paying possibly a little more than their fair share to the emergency services levy. So, we have reduced the payment on registered motor vehicles by 25 per cent, from \$32 to \$24. I would ask the member for Elder: does he disagree with that? Did we do the wrong thing or would he be like the member for Ross Smith and suggest that we actually up the ante and get a bit more? That is what some of his colleagues have been saying. We have actually removed the levy on trailers, caravans and recreational boats, again something which the community thought was not a fair cop. We have listened to the community. The member for Elder and his colleagues, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, will stand over there and talk about 'Labor Listens'. The government is not only listening but actually doing something about it. When we do something about it, the member for Elder tries to say we have it all wrong.

A couple of minor things possibly passed the attention of quite a few people in the community because they did not hit the headlines.

*Mr Hanna interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I am still talking about the emergency services levy. They did not hit the headlines with regard to

the emergency services levy, but they are a couple of things that I believe were very important. One was with respect to self-funded retirees. There was a distinct anomaly, where if only one of a couple living in a jointly-owned home was over the age of 60, they could not access the \$40 concession from the government. Neither of them could get that concession which was available to self-funded retirees over 60 unless they were both over 60. That has been corrected, and I hope the member for Elder would acknowledge that that was a good move.

One other matter I was delighted to report to my electorate is that the levy has been waived on parcels of land in rural areas where the value of the parcel of land is less than \$1 000 and is outside a township of a population of 3 000 or more. As many members, certainly those who represent rural and regional electorates, would know, there are quite a few small townships which were laid out many years ago, and people own blocks in those townships, and some of those blocks might have a capital value of only several hundred dollars. Unfortunately, the owners of those blocks of land are not only paying in many cases minimum rates but also they are being charged a \$50 set fee in the emergency services levy. It was a very good move for the minister to take heed of the recommendation and remove that. That has certainly been welcomed by those in my electorate.

**Mr Conlon:** They'll love you for it.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** They will. It was not only the member for Elder whose contribution I do not think gave the community of South Australia much insight into what a Labor government as the alternative government in South Australia (as Labor members call themselves) would do: the opposition spokesman on Treasury matters did not give us much insight into what the alternative Labor government might do if—God forbid—the opposition happened to win an election at some time in the future. Nor did the Leader of the Opposition give us much insight, although I will admit that his comments were, by and large, directed to the matter at hand, the Appropriation Bill, unlike the comments of the opposition Treasury spokesman; I do not know that his comments were even directed to his shadow portfolio.

No wonder the opposition cannot develop any policies, because the leader came in here and devoted all his time to whingeing and whining, as he always does, about how we should be spending more: how we should be putting more and more, hundreds of millions of dollars, into the health budget in particular—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Priorities. He wanted us to spend more on health, education and police. He wanted to put us—

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Just wait for a moment. He wanted us to spend more. I think that, if we took note of what the leader was saying, we would be up for hundreds of millions of dollars. When he had finished his contribution, along came the opposition Treasury spokesman and, lo and behold, what did he say? He said that we are spending far too much; that we have to cut spending here and cut spending there. He said that Olsen is a big spender; that this is a big spending government. Not only that, we all know—

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** The Soccer Federation! Let us just talk about that. We have a world-class stadium at Hindmarsh; about \$25-odd million—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Come down to Mount Gambier; drive down Jubilee Highway West and look at where members opposite spent \$60 million on Scrimber—sticking little bits of wood together. We can go to Hindmarsh Stadium and see soccer being played, but we cannot go to Scrimber and see little bits of wood being stuck together, for \$60 million. I think the temerity of that is absolutely outstanding.

The opposition spokesman on Treasury matters, as we all know, continually reads the *Australian Financial Review* and he did, in fact, quote from an article by Alan Mitchell in last Friday's edition. I happen to have the same article here with me, and I want to quote some of the things that Alan Mitchell said. Members can check *Hansard*: the member for Hart spoke about Alan Mitchell in glowing terms. But, when we talk about the philosophy of what we are trying to achieve by the budgetary process in South Australia, this is what Alan Mitchell said:

The South Australian government began with the right answer when it set out to wind back the ruinous debt left from the State Bank fiasco.

He said that we began with the right answer when we set out to do something about our debt problems. He went on to say:

The best thing the South Australian government can do to attract business to the state is to have a competitive tax regime, strong public finances to remove the threat of future high levels of taxation, and efficient economic and social infrastructure.

That is what he also said. But the member for Hart did not mention any of that. He quoted a couple of lines out of context and made out that all the commentators were not very happy with the budget.

When we look at the philosophy of the budget, what I would refer to as the big picture of the budget, what we have to do is ask: what are we trying to achieve? If we go back to the last election in 1997, the biggest issue before the electorate at that stage was unemployment. All the polls at that time and all the community spokespeople were saying that we have to do something about unemployment. What has this government done? We have set out some strategies over the last six or seven years now, in seven Liberal budgets. We have had a philosophy—

**Mr Hanna:** How many thousands of public servants have you sacked?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Yes, exactly; we have introduced targeted separation packages for public servants.

**Mr Hanna:** You're proud of it.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I am proud of it, because the net result is that there are now more South Australians employed than ever before in the history of this state. That is because we used a philosophy, we used some strategies and we have got the big picture right. We have run down debt, and not just the big long-term debt; we have run down the short term, the recurrent, debt. The Labor government, through the 1980s and into the early 1990s, had no worries about flashing out the bankcard and trying to buy its way out of trouble. It was spending \$301 million a year more than it was receiving. That was in cash terms, not accrual terms, as the shadow treasurer would want us to concentrate on.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I wonder what the accrual accounting figures would have been back in 1993. So, I am proud that I am part of a government that has looked at a philosophy of how to run the finances of this state. I am proud to be part of a government that has created jobs in this state so that more South Australians are employed than ever before. We have the unemployment—

**Mr Hanna:** Because people have left town.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Indeed, that is wrong; again, the member is wrong. All of a sudden, after many years, the population of South Australia has just started to slightly increase. That is another bit of good news that members opposite would not have us put abroad.

I would like to go on and talk about a whole range of positive things contained in this budget. I have spoken briefly about the emergency services levy. I spoke about this matter in this debate last year, and I will speak about it again. I think that one of the good things, one of the other reasons why we have unemployment back on track and why we have more people being employed, is that we are investing money back into infrastructure and capital works. The opposition would have the community believe that we are selling off the farm, particularly with the sale of ETSA and some of the other asset sales that have gone through.

This budget contains, in round figures, about \$1 billion of capital works, as did the last budget and as did the budget before that. In the last three years, the government of South Australia has invested close to \$3 billion in capital works. The previous government did not worry about capital works. Members opposite love talking about education, but we literally had our schools falling down around our ears. If one went out into a school yard five or six years ago one could have cried about the state of our schools: they were unpainted, the timber work around the facias, and so on, was rotting, gutters were literally being taken off because they were leaking and the water was allowed to run off the roofs onto the ground. The schools were literally falling apart. Now we are putting money back into capital works in schools. We are repairing, rebuilding and upgrading schools all the time. Also dealing with education, I mention the initiative to open an Australian science and maths school, a specialist school, at Flinders University, which is—

**Mr Hanna:** That's Mike Rann's proposal.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Mike Rann's proposal! Mike Rann is great at picking up on some initiatives that the government is working on. He is trying to get in front of the crowd and in front of the camera and saying that it is his proposal. He does it every other day of the week. We have a proud record with regard to education. If the opposition got out of the way and stopped trying to hold up Partnerships 21, we would improve on that. The opposition and the AEU are one in South Australia; we know that.

We have had plenty of talk, particularly from the Leader of the Opposition, about health; he keeps talking about it. However, we know that more patients are being treated today in South Australian public hospitals than have ever been treated previously. We have a very good and robust health system. If one had to be ill, if one had to have an accident anywhere in the world, one would be just as well off to be hospitalised right here in South Australia. But what the Leader of the Opposition did not say is what he would do if he had the opportunity.

*Ms Stevens interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I sincerely hope that I and the rest of South Australia do not find out.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Elizabeth and the member for Mitchell will come to order.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I sincerely hope that South Australia does not find out what the opposition would do. We will not find out from the opposition; it will not come out and say what it would do. It is often said that the strength of a

government has a lot to do with the strength of the opposition, which tries to keep the government on track. If this government had to rely on a strong opposition to keep it going, and to keep it coming up with new initiatives, it would be a sad and sorry day for South Australia. This opposition has no policies and it does not have the guts to tell the people of South Australia what it would do. Opposition members whinge, whine and carp all day, every day, and they run down all the good things that have been done in South Australia, but they have never said what they would do. When we do positive things such as reducing the emergency services levy, as the shadow minister has been calling for us to do, they have a go at us about that, too. They are very hard to please over there.

There are many other positive things in this budget. For example, the superannuation liability of South Australia continues to fall, and that is one of the things that nearly broke this state under the previous Labor government.

With regard to regional communities, there is ongoing sealing work on rural arterial roads and the zonal subsidies on unleaded petrol and diesel will continue, despite the debate that it might be cut. Preliminary work will begin on a new gas pipeline from Victoria to provide not only surety of supply but additional supply to South Australia, and that is great news for South Australia. I commend the Appropriation Bill to the House.

**Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens):** Contrary to the efforts of the member for Mackillop—

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Embarrassing as they are.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Yes, indeed—trying to convince us that this is a good budget, he did not succeed because this budget offers no hope and no constructive way forward for the economic development of this state or for the welfare of its less well-off citizens. After selling off the state's electricity industry for \$3.4 billion in a so-called lease arrangement, the government has avoided going into deficit only through the income generated from the Casino and other public utilities such as the Lotteries Commission. When the Lotteries Commission is sold, where will that \$80 million in commission revenue come from to support our public hospitals?

I know that the Minister for Government Enterprises has responded by saying that it will be taken from general revenue. We must ask the minister this question: if the budget was saved from deficit by these revenue-producing, publicly-owned state assets this year, when the time comes that there is no revenue from these sectors to call upon, how will it be found in general revenue? Will the government further increase taxes and charges to make up the shortfall? These are the questions that my constituents are asking the people in my office.

After reading through the budget information, I, and many others, have come to the conclusion that it will do nothing to alleviate unemployment. I believe it will spiral more people into poverty in the coming year because we know that there will be increased taxes, fees and charges and, coupled with the impact of the GST, which as everyone knows the Premier has embraced most enthusiastically, there will be little hope for low and fixed income families. Even sections of the business community who traditionally have supported the government are unimpressed with the budget, declaring it uninspiring and, to quote that sector, 'lighting no fire'.

In a more serious development, unprecedented in the history of the South Australian parliament, a senior minister,

the Minister for Human Services, warned on ABC radio on the evening of 26 May that the cuts to the health budget could endanger life in our public hospitals. It was an astonishing and alarming statement but obviously a true one.

The budget comes at a time when people in South Australia are feeling punch drunk and weary of reductions in essential services inflicted on them by successive Liberal state and federal governments. Perpetuating this is another increase in state taxes and charges of 2.7 per cent, which takes the overall increase since the Liberals were elected in 1993 to over \$900 million. This 2.7 per cent increase means that people on low incomes will be paying a huge slice of their weekly income in taxes, fees and charges.

The Olsen government had a glorious opportunity to set South Australia onto a more exciting, optimistic and objective way forward. It has completely failed that test. The people believed that, after receiving millions of dollars extra in the last year from increased government fees and charges (and the term 'fees and charges' is one that always comes to mind), and the receipt of income from the privatisation of public sector industries such as our state's electricity industry, the resources for essential services would markedly improve.

In fact, John Olsen went out of his way to encourage and lift the public optimism of South Australians in this budget. He trumpeted the rewards promised for essential services in our schools and hospitals from the \$2 million per day that we were constantly told would be available to the 2000-01 budget in savings gained from the privatisation of the state's electricity assets: \$2 million per day for our hospitals and schools was promised by the Premier, and the people are now asking why he has done another backflip on this much-touted promise. We in this chamber listened to it every day: \$2 million a day.

While I welcome the health minister's increased funding to mental health, I point out that the overall allocation of 1.7 per cent by the government to the health sector is totally inadequate and deserves condemnation. The health minister deserves praise for his stand in criticising the meagre rations of a 1.7 per cent allocation in funding for the next financial year. It is a cut in real terms to the health budget—a cut that our health sector cannot afford. Does not the Premier realise that more funding cuts to the public health sector, which has already been cut to the bone, pushes our health sector into greater crisis and punishes the ill even more?

The people in my electorate of Torrens say that they have never seen South Australia so run down in health, particularly our general health resources, hospitals, housing, schools, jobs, policing and the lack of protection against crime generally. They despair for the future. My constituents regularly come into my office in great anguish, concerned that after each visit to the Modbury Hospital they see or hear of another service or resource that has been cut or has ceased.

Comments by the minister that we can expect longer queues for treatment and surgery is appalling news and a terrible indictment of this government. It is totally unacceptable that over 1 000 people had to wait over 12 months for non-elective surgery in the last year. Add another 2 000 or 3 per cent to that, as the health minister has done, and we have a public health system in chronic crisis. In his statement, the health minister reassures us that urgent and semi-urgent patients will still get the highest standard of care. We do not question the skill and dedication of medical staff in giving the highest standard of care because the part played by medical staff in the health system is magnificent. They often perform above and beyond the call of duty, working long hours

because of inadequate staffing levels. In the main, I hear from the public nothing but praise for medical staff. But the question that my constituents and I ask is this: will the minister reassure the public that there will be immediate admittance to hospital for those who need urgent surgery in the future, or will we see waiting lists and delays, as in the case of non-elective surgery?

The now obviously lengthened delays for those who are awaiting elective surgery for hip replacement or knee reconstruction is an outrage. Many constituents have telephoned me in tears because of the ongoing pain they have had to endure. These people say that they have little mobility and that their quality of life is reduced to a misery, affecting the whole family. Constituents quite rightly ask why they must wait in terrible pain for over a year in order to get relief through surgery. Would any members of the government endure agonising physical pain for over 12 months? My guess is that they would be off quick smart to a private hospital for immediate surgery.

This, unfortunately, is not an option for many people who simply cannot afford private medical cover. This Liberal government is conscientiously fostering disadvantage by deliberately creating two distinct tiers in our society. It is driving its ideological agenda by withdrawing resources from the public sector, increasing waiting lists and attempting to force people into private sector services and resources. There is no clearer example of a fostered underclass than in the health sector. Too bad if you cannot afford health care because it certainly appears that the government does not care.

As I have said, the skills and dedication of our medical staff are second to none, but they are not miracle workers and, without the back-up of adequate funds for services, staffing levels and resources, lives will be placed at risk. Staff are not robots. They see the decline in the public health system and this affects their morale and confidence level, both in terms of the quality of care they can give as a result of the declining resources as well as their concerns over job security. One of my constituents, who has a chronic illness and who regularly visits the Modbury Hospital, heard a discussion between two staff members concerning the possible closure of a ward on 3 East.

The dialogue went something like this: 'Have you heard that a ward on 3 East may be closed?' 'Yes, where is it all going to end?'. 'I'll tell you where it's going to end: they will not be satisfied until they have closed the doors entirely.' This is a classic example of staff losing faith in the government to deliver basic health resources to our hospitals. These are comments that patients often hear throughout the system. People have expressed to me a deep despair and feel bitterly let down by this government. Those who need denture repairs and who have had to eat liquid foods because they have been forced to wait three years for repairs now face longer waiting times.

Now even for emergency treatment they will be faced with an up-front payment of \$10 and \$105 for full upper and lower dentures. Some people will not be able to afford it. From where will they get the money?

An article in Saturday's *Advertiser* stated that the government has lost another opportunity to show South Australians that it cares about the health needs of the South Australian people. The article stated:

Once again we see them struggling to save face instead of joining the struggle to save lives.

Incredibly, this was not a statement from any of the members of the opposition but a statement from the South Australian President of the AMA, Michael Rice. The general public have a right to be assured that if they are sick and need hospitalisation there will be a bed for them and that they can have the confidence that the resources will be there to help them overcome their ill health. This vulnerability is even greater for aged pensioners and those on low and fixed incomes. These people are now reeling from increased government fees and charges, the imminent GST, interest rate increases, increased prices in shops and at the petrol pump, and the list goes on.

If this were not bad enough we now hear that the leasing of our electricity assets, which the government said would bring cheaper power, will necessitate a 9 per cent increase in our electricity bills, and this is non-GST related. The proposed government's emergency services tax savings are a smokescreen. Increases in state charges, such as car registrations and the GST on state services, will wipe out these savings. Last year the government allocated \$247.7 million for the emergency services radio network with \$69 million to be spent since July last year. This, we were assured, was to see the emergency services radio network up and running in the summer. South Australians are still waiting for this radio network.

This year a further installation of \$38.8 million is allocated to the emergency radio network and we have been given no commencement date for this service. The non-emergence of the radio network is rapidly being seen as a farce by South Australians, as is the manner in which the emergency services levy is being administered. Some people have still not received their first bill. Many accounts have been sent to addresses of constituents that are 20 to 30 years out of date. One Manningham family have lived at their current address for 40 years. They have not had a problem receiving their gas bills, council rates, water or electricity bills, yet their emergency services tax bill had been sent to the wrong address.

As the administration of this tax is costing the community nearly \$10 million is it any wonder that the community is shaking its head in despair and disbelief. Today another constituent came to see me whose emergency services tax levy was sent to the wrong house. It was sent to his sister's house. This constituent came to Australia 30 years ago and stayed with his sister for two to three weeks before buying his property, yet somehow that account was sent to his sister's address. One must ask the question: what database is the government using? It is just the most extraordinary situation and an absolute waste of money.

People on pensions are already cash strapped with many going into crippling debt because their income does not keep up with the cost of living or the raft of government fees or charges that are constantly imposed upon them. The capital works section is a strategic part of the budget that can add impetus to employment through the development of government infrastructure, yet we have not seen that incentive being taken up. It is bitterly disappointing to see the government this year reduce the capital works budget by \$48 million. This government has failed to use the opportunity to stimulate employment and the necessary social and economic infrastructure.

This is exemplified by the paltry sums allocated to our hospital capital works projects. The 1999-2000 capital works budget has been underspent by \$150 million. Since 1993, successive Liberal state governments have underspent capital

works by \$950 million. During last year's budget address I asked for an explanation of where this money had gone; but, of course, like others who ask the same question, I did not get a response. Nearly \$1 million of unaccounted taxpayers' money is totally unacceptable, so again I ask the government to account for this. The under-utilisation of this capital represents the loss of jobs and wage packets to families in this state.

This is the sort of injection of capital that the public was looking for as a signal for future optimism. I also have major concerns about the government's cutting back the public housing stock by approximately 1 000 dwellings and abolishing rent relief to tenants in the private rental market. Here we have a government that is doing its best to force people away from government housing into private rental. The government does this at a time when private rents are high because of a shortage of private rental housing, yet it cuts rent relief to private renters, which could mean more people becoming homeless.

A major issue for Housing Trust tenants who are on pensions is that the regular quarterly increase in their rent coincides with their quarterly pension increase. I think the state government should look at this matter. We would ask it to call a halt to these increases, as they often amount to one-third or up to 50 per cent of the federal government's meagre pension increases. Pensioners cannot afford to lose this amount of money, particularly in view of the increases in the cost of living.

The government has allocated \$69 million for redundancy packages for 1999-2000 and has allocated a further \$20 million for redundancies for the coming year. I recall that it was the member for MacKillop who touted this as a wonderful cost saving to the state. This cost saving has actually resulted in the shedding of jobs, and the Liberals have now spent well over \$500 million on redundancy packages since 1993. So, that is a loss of jobs and a loss of self-esteem to those workers. Over the past seven years a Liberal Government has presided over the privatisation of efficient and profitable public sector corporations, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs from the state public sector. As I have said, in exchange all we have seen for that is reduced services and resources and ever growing unemployment.

The employment figures for South Australia over the past 12 months have shown a continued pattern of rising unemployment. This is particularly so for our youth. Slight employment rises recorded in the April quarter job figures reflected growth predominantly in the casual and part-time sectors. Full-time jobs have declined, yet it is upon full-time jobs that we build our economy, not casual or part-time jobs. Sadly, this government continues to shed those full-time jobs but, interestingly, re-hires workers through labour hire agencies for government departments. They do the very work that was previously done by full-time public sector workers. The government cannot have it both ways. On the one hand the government says it is concerned about real jobs and job development; then, on the other, the government undermines full-time jobs and job stability by getting rid of full-time workers and their jobs.

I have also raised the issue of the blind and sight impaired being denied Access Cab vouchers to assist them with their travel costs. We see that there is no provision for this in the state budget. I think it is appalling that every other state issues Access Cab vouchers to people who suffer from some form of blindness. I understand that the minister may be looking at this issue, but so far we have not seen anything

forthcoming. Linda, one of my constituents who is vision impaired, certainly has told us that she is too frightened to go out if she has to use public transport, unless she has someone with her. She says that blind people feel very vulnerable and insecure, and simply cannot go out for a walk without facing major safety and security problems. Many are on pensions and cannot afford taxi fares. So, we certainly look forward to the government's having a good look at that issue.

Overall I do not feel very optimistic for the coming year. There is too much uncertainty on the horizon, with clouds hanging over the Mitsubishi car plant and thousands of jobs at risk, the submarine corporation being in limbo and ongoing factory closures, and this has been a consistent activity in the lifetime of this government. My constituents continuously come into my office expressing their concerns about these issues.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I guess the way to describe this budget is 'Good news, good news, good news'. I say that because after the earlier years of 'bad news, bad news, bad news' we have at long last reached a situation where we have not only a balanced budget but also there are many positives on expenditure within this state. I as a regional member would want this House to thank the Treasurer for having at least undone the purse strings to some extent. I was flabbergasted by the Leader of the Opposition's speech this afternoon, when he raved on about apparent savings of \$2 million per day. Where has the Leader of the Opposition been for the past 12 months? He knows only too well that the \$2 million per day referred to our \$9.4 billion debt, which was costing us \$2 million per day. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition was well aware that we have only brought our debt down to \$4.2 billion, plus the latest sales, and obviously therefore we will not be saving \$2 million per day: we will be saving just over \$1 million per day in interest rates.

I was absolutely flabbergasted that the Leader of the Opposition could not comprehend simple economics—simple mathematical figures. I do not wonder that the member for Hart is standing in this chamber tonight waiting for the opportunity to take over from the Leader of the Opposition. I must admit that I for one would say, 'Welcome, member for Hart; it's time you took over,' because your leader does not have it; he is absolutely lost in this economic field. While we criticise the member for Hart for reading the *Financial Review* during Question Time, we recognise that he is at least seeking to keep himself abreast of the economic conditions that apply in this state and this country. Whilst I personally would not give the member for Hart any credence at all as the Leader of the Opposition, he could not be any worse than the present Leader of the Opposition. I want to come back—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr Lewis:** That means it is a double negative. He is negative about negative, so that makes him positive.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Goyder has the call.

**Mr MEIER:** I acknowledge the member for Hammond's comment; it is very appropriate under the circumstances. However, I want to come back to the budget. As I said at the outset, it is a positive budget, and it is very positive for the electorate of Goyder. Certainly, whilst I as the local member have lobbied very hard over several years for positive benefits for the electorate of Goyder, this budget encompasses many of the things that I have been asking for. Without doubt, the key feature is the major upgrade of the Port

Wakefield to Kulpara road, which is to be upgraded at a cost of \$4.5 million over the next few years. And \$1.5 million is to be allocated in this budget for work to be completed by 2002-03. That will be for the total \$4.5 million upgrade of the road.

It is obvious from the comments of members opposite that some of them have been to Yorke Peninsula lately. I invite all members opposite to come to the area, because it is the greatest area in South Australia to visit. The one negative is that we do not have enough accommodation for everyone. If members cannot find accommodation, they can let me know. I am happy for them to stay at my place. I make that invitation openly here. On Yorke Peninsula we have literally everything that the rest of South Australia has to offer. I get a little upset that Kangaroo Island attracts so many overseas visitors simply because of its name. However, if you look at the map of South Australia, you see that Yorke Peninsula is the only leg that Australia has to stand on. In fact, I am working on a map of Australia that looks a little like the kangaroo—

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

**Mr MEIER:** I acknowledge that the Minister for Human Services, the member for Finnis, represents Kangaroo Island, and I can understand his wanting to defend it. Yorke Peninsula is not only the only leg Australia has to stand on. If you turn around the map of Australia to look a little like a kangaroo, then the only leg of the kangaroo would be Yorke Peninsula. Members opposite may laugh, but we are intent on getting more than 1 per cent of the international tourist visitors to Australia to come to Yorke Peninsula. We only have to double it to 2 per cent or quadruple it to 4 per cent and we are gaining enormously, and we will be doing that. The key road to Yorke Peninsula is the Port Wakefield to Kulpara road. At present it is an absolutely diabolical road. Any member who drives on that road in their car whilst pulling a caravan or trailer would find it an exceptionally rough road.

I acknowledge that I have taken it up with the Minister for Transport for quite some years. I have told the minister that we must upgrade the Port Wakefield to Kulpara Road. And what have we had announced in this year's budget but an upgrade of the Port Wakefield to Kulpara Road? The sum of \$4.5 million is a very significant part of the road transport budget. I want publicly to thank the Minister for Transport for having agreed to the upgrade of the road. While I am happy to take some credit for lobbying over a period of years, the most important thing to me is that we are to get it upgraded over the next few years, hopefully over the next two years. Whatever the case, it will be upgraded.

I say to all people visiting Yorke Peninsula that it will be a much smoother ride coming into Yorke Peninsula than it has been in past years. In fact, the road from Adelaide to Port Wakefield is excellent. As a dual highway, it is top notch, but thereafter it is nothing short of disastrous at present. That will improve out of sight. Hopefully, Yorke Peninsula will become the major tourist attraction in South Australia; there is no doubt about that. I say publicly here tonight that we seek to outdo Victor Harbor and the Barossa Valley. I realise that the Barossa Valley has a great international attraction for visitors, but Yorke Peninsula has a lot more to add. Bear with us: we will exceed the rest of South Australia. There is no question at all about that, and I appreciate the support from members opposite.

But it is not only the road that has been upgraded. One of the other key announcements in the budget was the redevelop-

opment of Moonta Area School. There are nearly 30 schools in my electorate, but one secondary school, which has for some time been in great need of redevelopment, is Moonta Area School. I pushed it for some time. I had the former Minister for Education, Rob Lucas, visit some years ago, and I think he acknowledged it at the time. The current minister, Malcolm Buckby, has also visited and he, too, acknowledged it. It is all very well to have ministers visit schools and acknowledge that they are in need of redevelopment, but it is another thing to get the money committed to the redevelopment of the school.

Well, this budget has allocated \$500 000 towards the redevelopment of Moonta Area School, a redevelopment that will be undertaken at a cost of \$3.9 million. The budget papers indicate that it is to be completed by 2002, so it is not far away. Moonta Area School is very pleased with the announcement, and certainly I, as the local member, am very pleased with it. Again, I thank the Minister for Education for his foresight in recognising that Moonta Area School needs the redevelopment and for contributing, in the first instance, \$500 000 and, hopefully, next year the remainder of the \$3.9 million for the upgrade.

Those members who have seen Moonta Area School would appreciate that many areas do not meet current occupational health guidelines and therefore any bandaids measures will be a complete waste of time. I have advocated that for some years; I have said, 'Do not waste money on Moonta Area School. Let us get it redeveloped and redone properly.' I want formally to thank the government. They are two key announcements relating to my electorate.

I also acknowledge that all constituents will benefit from the \$24 million reduction in the emergency services levy. This is an issue that I have taken up for the past 12 months or so. I have lobbied the government and said that there are aspects of the emergency services levy that are very unfair. I am absolutely delighted that the government has agreed to a \$24 million reduction in the amount of money it will take from taxpayers, and certainly the big winners without any doubt at all will be the rural sector of South Australia. I would say 'Hear, hear; it is long overdue', and I believe my constituents will be much more receptive to the emergency services levy than they have been in the past.

In fact, looking at some of the reductions in values for primary producers, I note that for a primary producer in regional area 2, which is in my area, the capital value of \$400 000 currently imposes a levy of \$126. Under the new budget that will drop to \$56, a saving of \$70. If we look at a capital value of \$800 000, that drops from \$203 to \$62, a saving of \$141; a \$1 million property drops from \$241 to \$65, a saving of \$176; a \$3 million property drops from \$624 to \$95, a saving of \$529; or, in an extreme case, a capital value of \$5 million drops from \$1 006 to \$125, a saving of \$881. I applaud the government and thank the government because it is something for which I have lobbied not only in this area but also in respect of the emergency services levy on motor vehicles and in other areas. I would say that we as a government have listened and acted and I believe that it is now a fair and equitable system. I believe that my constituents will acknowledge that as well.

Many other areas in Goyder have benefited as a result of the budget. Unfortunately, certain pockets of my electorate have had an excessive number of break-ins over the past 12 months. I am very disturbed about that. Certainly I have received a lot of correspondence and many phone calls about it. I have taken it up with the minister, and in fact I have

suggested that he have what I call a reserve police force. I worked out a specific formula for the minister that would enable all police officers who went on annual leave or sick leave to be relieved. The minister formally rejected my proposal, but in this budget he has allocated—and the opposition will be pleased to hear this—a reserve pool of 20 police officers to be available for the northern operations service to fill in when police officers are either on annual leave or sick leave.

I believe a lot of Yorke Peninsula's problems will be overcome as a result of that reserve pool. I would hope that certain towns in my electorate benefit as a result because many people have suffered significantly. Another area that I am pleased to see the government taking an active interest in is the aquaculture industry. To say that Yorke Peninsula is developing in aquaculture is an understatement. We are surrounded by the sea and therefore it is not hard to recognise the fact that aquaculture industries are growing at an enormous rate in the electorate of Goyder. I am pleased that an extra \$2 million over two years is to be allocated to further develop the aquaculture industry and to identify new business opportunities in South Australia.

I publicly put on the record my thanks to the Yorke Regional Development Board for its excellent work over the past few years in developing new industries in Goyder. It is rather ironic that the Yorke Regional Development Board covers the whole of the Goyder electorate. I would particularly like to give Mr Warwick Welsh, the Chief Executive Officer, and Mr Graham East, the Chairman, my sincere thanks for the work they have done within the electorate of Goyder to promote industry, which has increased at an enormous rate and which is, perhaps, a springboard for further development. I continue to marvel at the way in which industry is developing in the electorate of Goyder, and I say a very sincere thank you to the government and, in particular, the Yorke Regional Development Board through which the government works to promote industry in my electorate.

The additional \$3 million over three years for the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund will help the Yorke Regional Development Board to generate additional economic development projects for the electorate of Goyder. That goes hand-in-glove with the \$2 million for aquaculture projects because, whilst aquaculture is important, the Regional Industry Development Fund is also important. In tourism, an increase of \$300 000 to \$2.9 million to support new regional tourism marketing strategies and promote events and festivals will help the whole of the electorate.

So, as I said at the beginning of my contribution, this is a good news budget. I hope that every member of this parliament will acknowledge and promote that fact. It is depressing to hear the Leader of the Opposition carping and criticising about aspects of the budget.

Time expired.

**Mr HANNA (Mitchell):** I rise to make some brief comments on the budget in the context of the Appropriation Bill, which is moving through this place. First, this is a deficit budget which shows that this government has not been able to manage its finances well over the past seven years, particularly the past three years. Secondly, the cuts in real terms to health and education are an indictment on this government. Thirdly, despite some amelioration, the emergency services tax falls heavily on people such as pensioners and self-funded retirees who have no leeway in terms of their income.

I turn to my first point of financial mismanagement. It is truly astonishing when one considers the so-called ETSA lease deal, which, on false pretences, has brought in so much money to this government, and the huge tax take from the emergency services levy that this government still cannot produce a balanced budget. That is extraordinary given the extra money that it has sucked out of the people and received as proceeds from the privatisation program.

This privatisation program obviously is ideologically driven; it is not driven by sound financial sense. Day after day, this government criticises the Labor Party—in particular, past labor governments—for financial mismanagement. That needs to be put into context with the cost blow-outs which the government has experienced in various projects over the past few years. I refer to the Hindmarsh soccer stadium, the wine centre, and, in particular, the government radio network—the list goes on.

So, it is with utter hypocrisy that members of the government attack Labor's past record when they themselves are guilty of squandering so much of the taxpayers' money. As I have said, even with those extra income streams and receipts they are not able to balance the budget. The only way they came anywhere near balancing the budget was by soaking money from statutory authorities, and in particular the Adelaide Casino deal contributed substantially to the bottom line.

In terms of health and education cuts, I have to say that the most serious aspect of the budget altogether in terms of state expenditure is the cut to the health budget in real terms. I do not blame the Minister for Human Services personally for this because we all know that, in the Realpolitik of South Australian politics, the Premier has bound Dean Brown's hands and feet and tossed him into a sea full of sharks and told him to run the health budget in that way. Under those constraints, it is not surprising that a future Leader of the Opposition such as Dean Brown could do no better than he has done in trying to balance the books in the health portfolio.

It is not good enough, and the fact is that every dollar that is cut in real terms from the health budget in the coming year will mean a drop in patient care and in the provision of services. It will endanger people's health and in some cases it will endanger people's lives. I have seen that in my local hospitals, the Flinders Medical Centre and the Daw Park hospital. The staff there do excellent work under pressure, and the pressure is increasing day by day. Both those hospitals have gone through extensive cost cutting regimes: they are cut to the bone.

There is no more to give, and when a budget like this cuts health funding in real terms people suffer. They are people who come and see me, and I know that my Labor colleagues have also seen a number of these terrible real life cases where the literal pain and suffering is brought home with graphic stories of lack of treatment and so on. The \$2 million a day and so on from the ETSA deal has failed to materialise. The government has not kept its promises in terms of increasing services, and it has not kept its promises in terms of reducing taxes either. It has proven to be fraudulent on a number of grounds.

I will look at a couple of local issues. To be fair, I will point out one bit of good news in the budget. I am not sure, but this might be the first time in the debate today that a member of the opposition has pointed out some genuine good news in the budget. I refer to the first \$2 million or so paid by the government to the Hickinbotham group for the Woodend Tavern site next to the Woodend Primary School.

That is in the budget, and I am glad it is there. The only problem is that it is part of a contract by means of which the government will be paying the Hickinbotham group \$3.8 million, so there is a certain amount of justifiable, warranted expenditure. Unfortunately it is coupled with a handout, and I have previously explained the mechanics of that deal and how the Hickinbotham group come to walk away with a bonus from the government. My comments in that regard have not been directed against the Hickinbotham group. They are out to make a profit, and if they are offered a spare couple of million dollars of taxpayers' money there is no reason I can imagine why they would not take it.

Next I refer to the development of South Bank, the marketing term for a new housing development on the northern banks of the Field River in Sheidow Park. I am seeing about 100 houses a month go up there. A very high proportion of the families moving in have primary school or younger children, and the nearest schools, the Woodend Primary School (even with the proposed expansion that the contentious acquisition allows) and the Sheidow Park Primary School, will not meet the demand. There is a real question mark about the primary schooling needs of children who will grow up in that part of Sheidow Park: there is nothing in the budget for them.

I turn to another local issue, that is, the money set aside for a study into the feasibility of an O-Bahn for the south. It has been called a proposed O-Bahn to the south but, in fact, the proposal is for the O-Bahn to go between the city and Sturt Road, which is not very far south at all. I question whether there will be any benefit at all for the residents of Clovelly Park, Mitchell Park, Sturt, Trott Park and Sheidow Park—in other words, my constituents—should the proposal go any further ahead.

There is something suspicious about the proposal. There is something secretive about the way the government is proceeding. In October last year, through a freedom of information request, I sought an options study concerning transport in the southern suburbs from the Passenger Transport Board, and that was refused as it was held to be a secret document. That matter is with the Ombudsman at the moment and I am carefully considering whether it is worth taking to the District Court for review.

Meanwhile, the government has acted on that secret options study and proceeded to tender for an engineering study relating to the feasibility of the O-Bahn on a specific route, namely, along the line of the Tonsley railway line, over Sturt Road, onto the triangle known as Warriparinga. I really must question whether the money would be better spent on another area of great need in my electorate, and I refer to the Oaklands railway crossing where, sooner or later, a government will need to bite the bullet and make rapid progress to improve the traffic flow in relation to that intersection of Morphett Road, Diagonal Road and the Brighton railway line.

I also refer briefly to the Flinders Medical Centre. I have a lot of contact with people who attend the medical centre regularly and sometimes with people who have attended there for some urgent reason. People are generally full of praise for the staff who keep up the standards under pressure, but the pressure is becoming too great. We have all heard the stories of people being left in corridors, and so on, when it is totally inappropriate.

There is some seriously bad news in this budget for those who have care and compassion for those with mental illness, because of the retreat from a decision to build a 50 bed psychiatric facility at the Flinders Medical Centre. That is a



great shame, and no amount of spending money in rural areas to shore up the government's vote in country seats will remedy the gap that we have in psychiatric care services in the southern and south-western suburbs.

In relation to the Flinders Medical Centre, I want to highlight one other financial phenomenon as a result of the government's privatisation policies. Members would be aware that a private medical centre has been built immediately adjacent to the Flinders Medical Centre—in other words, a private hospital next to the public hospital—and this is being used as a mechanism for the creeping privatisation of Flinders Medical Centre. I will give one example of that. I know an elderly lady who went to the Flinders Medical Centre as a public patient for day surgery. The operation was to take place in the private medical centre—that is where the surgeon said he would perform the surgery. So, from her ward in the public hospital—the Flinders Medical Centre—this lady was taken across to the private hospital, surgery was performed and then she was left in a waiting area in the private hospital.

However, the people in the private hospital did not have any responsibility, it seems, to care for this elderly lady. They left her there until she made a very insistent demand that she receive some attention. She explained that she needed to go to the toilet—that she needed a bedpan. Initially, that request was refused: she was told that they did not have any bedpans available. When she became more insistent, and quite distressed, the staff eventually produced a bedpan. She then insisted on being taken back to her ward—meaning her ward in the public hospital system. The private hospital staff refused to do that. Eventually, they telephoned the public hospital and, when a nurse from the public hospital was available, she came and took the patient back to her ward in the public hospital. So, we see an example there at ground level of the effects of this creeping privatisation of Flinders Medical Centre. This has happened as a result of the state government's attempt to shift costs back to the commonwealth in a variety of ways, coupled with its ideological commitment to privatisation of all services, including services that have for a century been recognised as government responsibilities.

This is a harsh budget; it is a deficit budget; it is a budget that provides evidence of government mismanagement; and it sets the scene for a pre-election sweetener budget, which we expect to see in 12 months' time—a budget which will again soak money from statutory authorities, such as former state financial institutions, to prop up the budget and allow election spending. Even if nothing is left in the cupboard at the end of it, that is what the government will do in a desperate bid to be returned to office. For now, the news is bad, but I am afraid that it will be worse in 12 months' time, even with a grab bag of supposedly good news announcements. I look forward to being part of the next Labor government, which will be left, I am afraid, a sad legacy of budget deficits which will be very difficult to recoup. However, that will be a challenge that we will face and overcome.

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** It gives me great pleasure to stand in support of this Appropriation Bill, which begins to show the benefits that will gradually become available now that the hard decisions are being made and the debt is being reduced. The budget reductions in the emergency services levy encapsulate the benefits that can flow from at last bringing the debt under control. The emergency services have

developed over more than 50 years into the professional groups that we have today to protect us in times of fire, natural disaster or accident. Most of the participants are volunteers, with few paid staff in country areas.

The metropolitan area has always had a paid fire brigade, so urban residents may not have been so aware of the role that volunteers play in keeping our community safe in the country areas. However, country people certainly are. They not only give their time and skills to the local Country Fire Service or state emergency services group but they also fundraise to buy equipment and undertake training.

There have been more than five inquiries over the past quarter of a century into the funding and administration of emergency services. The Liberal government has acted in contrast with the procrastination of past governments. Those who have criticised the emergency services levy have forgotten a few salient points. One way or another, all taxpayers in South Australia have always contributed towards the cost of emergency services. Emergency services personnel support the levy; they are the people who put their lives on the line for the rest of the community. We all hope that we will never need to use any of the emergency services but I guarantee that, if such a time should come when we need them, each of us wants the best possible service.

As with any new arrangements of this magnitude, amendments were anticipated. The government listened and acted on submissions where an alternative was proposed to overcome what was seen as an anomaly. Concessions on the real estate component of the levy were given for retirees; the levy on vintage vehicles was reduced; and contiguous farming properties in the same country districts were treated as one property.

Now the government has announced reductions in the direct cost component of the levy. In my electorate, of particular interest is the removal of the levy from trailers, caravans and recreational boats; those who have lobbied for this change will be delighted. Those who supported the RAA petition will be pleased that the vehicle levy has been reduced from \$32 to \$24 and, coupled with the removal of the levy from recreational boats, trailers and caravans, this is a significant reduction.

The payment of the one fixed \$50 fee now applies to non-adjointing (non-contiguous) farms in adjoining council districts. Reductions of about 30 per cent on the variable levy rate on houses and vacant land, and about 20 per cent on commercial properties, will apply. A new special low level category has been effectively created that will provide major concessions to groups such as hospitals, community halls, churches and properties used for charitable purposes. This reduction covers an area that has concerned many of my constituents. As several have said, the community paid to build many of the halls, some of which are now seldom used, and continue to pay for their maintenance. Those same people voluntarily man the emergency services.

A high proportion of retirees reside in my electorate, and the concession on the real estate component of the levy to include self-funded retiree couples, where one partner is under 60 years and working less than 20 hours a week, is welcomed. Previously both people needed to be aged over 60.

Other benefits for property owners in rural pastoral areas include the fixed \$50 fee on properties in unincorporated pastoral areas (region area 3) which has been removed. No levy applies to properties with a capital value of less than \$1000 in regional areas 2 (this includes council districts outside of towns with populations over 3000) in regional area

3. Although regional area 3 is not in my electorate I deal with quite a lot of the difficulties that are encountered by the people who live there. Their levy accounts of less than \$20 on properties in regional area 3 will not be issued.

It is a pity, in my mind, that the spoiling tactics and activities of the Labor Party stopped the lease of ETSA so that we could have sold it sooner and more efficiently and then, perhaps, we would have made another \$500 million to \$1 billion more and saved many more millions in interest each year which we could have put in to these areas.

However, the time is now appropriate to review where South Australia is placed. The back of the horrendous state debt has been broken, the state is being positioned for the 21st century, employment and population are increasing, innovative development is occurring, environmental problems are being tackled and rural and regional South Australia are an integral part of the progress that is happening. Compare this with the situation when the Liberal government came to office in December 1993 following more than a decade of Labor rule. State revenues could not meet the interest payments on the debt, let alone reduce the capital. There was no plan for the future, employment and population were falling, development had stagnated, environmental problems were talked about but action was missing and rural and regional South Australia were neglected. Even the superannuation fund was completely unfunded.

The Liberal government's achievements in turning around the finances of this state should always be at the forefront of everybody's thinking. I commend elected members of parliament in both houses who put South Australia and South Australians first when voting for change. It takes time for the effective financial improvement to get down to programs and projects. We see some of the positive improvements in the state's finances in this budget. More will come to South Australia in the years ahead.

The Liberal government's spending on hospitals has increased by 45 per cent over the past five years. Our rural communities have benefited from upgraded hospitals and new state-of-the-art equipment. Some of the government's initiatives to attract general practitioners to rural areas include the rural health education scholarships, an undergraduate support program for rural students to complete their study. The scholarships are \$5 000 per year for three years and require students to work in a rural area for a time equivalent to that for which they receive the funding. There is also the Rural Health Training Unit, which was established in 1996 to fund and support initiatives such as an emergency medical update courses for rural GPs and locums, and there is the formation of rural clubs at universities and special programs to assist country high school students who plan to take up medicine as a career.

The rural health enhancement package has recognised the extra roles that rural GPs play in their communities and provides significant financial reward to country practitioners, at a total annual cost of \$6.5 million. The sound financial management of the Liberal government has enabled the system to expand dramatically on the one that we inherited. Along with all this, the government has looked at implementing change to cope with the 21st century, where older people will make up a significantly higher proportion of the population than in the past. This, in turn, will impact on the health services because of the increased call on them.

We live in a world where change is quicker and more frequent than at any time in history. The Liberal government has adapted to those changes and the challenges they throw

up. Nowhere is this more sharply shown than in the decision over the future of ETSA. Supplying power in a deregulated market is a very different proposition from the state run, privately owned power stations of the past. Just as the late Tom Playford embraced the necessity for state-owned power generation, so the current government recognised the need to remove the government from the financial risk in a deregulated power market. This is just one example of the forward thinking of the Liberal government, compared with the backwardness of the Labor Party.

Positioning South Australia for the 21st century means acknowledging that the world is now a global village with a global economy. International marketing trends are becoming more important than state or national trends. This means that the regions in this state are not competing with each other but with similar regions in the other continents of the world. The lowering of trade barriers has brought with it a growth in the global marketplace and therefore globally integrated operations.

The Liberal government's success in at last getting the Adelaide-Darwin rail link on its way to completion will position South Australia to take advantage of this change. Our primary producers and our manufacturers can use this link to access Asian markets quickly and effectively. The link will also impact positively on a fast growing commodity in the economy, namely, tourism. A train journey through the centre of Australia with side visits to significant sites is a tourist attraction that can be sold on the world market. We have plenty to offer tourists at the end of such a ride: pristine wilderness in the Gawler Ranges; eco-tour experiences, such as swimming with the dolphins in the wild; our world renowned wine producing districts; sailing in the Spencer Gulf; and our top class food, including, of course, our seafood.

The transformation in the global economy is being driven by developments in information and communications technology, which are removing many of the traditional barriers imposed by distance. For the island nation of Australia this is good news, because we have suffered in the past through the tyranny of distance. The Liberal government has placed South Australia well in this new communications age. We have recognised the change in the way much business is conducted and have been successful in making this state the communications hub. This is one of the positive actions of our government that has altered South Australia from a Cinderella state to becoming a national leader.

All of this has meant that people are now more hopeful of finding paid employment. South Australia now has more people employed than ever before. The total number in jobs, 678 100, represents a 7.1 per cent increase since 1993. The unemployment rate in March was 7.9 per cent, on a seasonally adjusted basis, compared with 12.3 per cent, under Mike Rann when Minister for Employment, and now Leader of the Opposition. Under Mr Rann teenage unemployment peaked at around 40 per cent. The number of unemployed South Australians actually grew by almost 35 000 while Mr Rann was in charge.

Under the Liberal government employment has increased for 21 consecutive months. The whole of Australia now sees the state as a place to come to for work, for challenge, and simply as the best place to live. This has seen the population increase for the first time for many years. This is an achievement that makes the present government very proud indeed. We look forward to continued growth in the future.

Renewed confidence in innovative development is a response to the Liberal government's overhauling of systems, infrastructure and bureaucracy. The expansion in the aquaculture industry is just one example of growth. People know that under a Liberal Government their labour will be rewarded. This is evident in the Port Lincoln based South Australian Seahorse Marine Services, whose principals, Tracy and David Warland, have been researching the breeding of seahorses for several years. We were all greatly excited when the company secured its first export order to Japan a few days ago. The work that this company has done has the potential to conserve seahorses world wide. That is a good point to lead into the environment.

The Liberal Government has done more for the environment and to overcome past neglect than has any previous government. Catchment systems in the Adelaide Hills and metropolitan areas are being restored. The Patawalonga at Glenelg is being treated, compared with promises in the past but with little or no action.

I am, of course, more concerned with rural South Australia. I have always been proud of the work done by farmers in overcoming land degradation. The work being done on repairing salinisation of land in my electorate on Eyre Peninsula has attracted national interest. Officers of Primary Industries Research South Australia (PIRSA) are congratulated for their part in these programs that have been so successful.

The South Australian Liberal Government has spotlighted the adverse state of the Murray River and has initiated action to protect and improve the state's water lifeline. It is a feat of considerable significance to get the federal and three eastern states governments to admit the extreme nature of the problem and to get their support. The federal Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Senator Robert Hill, is commended for his strong action on this issue.

The environment is of particular significance in my electorate of Flinders where the major proportion of the state's aquaculture is situated. We are jealous of our clean green environment and the edge it gives producers in national and international markets. We also boast pristine wilderness areas that are becoming a mecca for tourists. I am constantly aware of the advantages for rural and regional South Australia of having a Liberal government in office. The government has a plan to seal all rural arterial roads by 2004 and is implementing a program to seal rural roads of economic importance. Eyre Peninsula has been especially disadvantaged in the past. We are relishing the sealed road between Kimba and Cleve and look forward to the completion of the Lock-Elliston road. These two roads are used by many tourists and visitors who appreciate what the present government is doing, not to mention the locals.

An Office of Regional Development has been set up to assist development in rural regions and to guide clients through the bureaucracy. The Regional Development Council, established to give rural South Australians a direct say on issues affecting them, works with the Office of Regional Development. The council investigates the challenges facing rural and regional communities, including infrastructure developments, planning processes, regional promotion, educational and health services, and information technology and communications. The council has picked up on recommendations made by the regional task force, some of which have already been implemented. The Regional Development Issues Group was created to complement the work of the council and the office and to involve senior

government officials with the authority to commit their agencies to action.

One of the themes that came to the task force as it held meetings across the state was that the frustration of dealing with a number of agencies over the same issue was a major hurdle to development in the regions. Many in rural South Australia are going through an extremely difficult time due to many circumstances, including the low price of commodities on the world market, but there is no doubt that rural and regional South Australia is in better shape under this Liberal Government.

To mention a few of the opportunities in my own electorate of Flinders that have been put forward by this government, it is a pleasure to note that PIRSA and AGSO collaborated in a geoscience program on the Gawler Craton, and that is to get \$240 000 and hopefully will add to the many jobs that will come through Yumberra and other Gawler Craton anomalies.

Of the 72 kilometre length of the Lock to Elliston road, which I previously mentioned, a further 11.75 kilometres will be sealed at a cost of \$1.5 million under this budget, which will leave only 30.5 kilometres to be sealed by June 2004. The Dutton Bay jetty is about to be upgraded, which is just one of 16 jetties that are being upgraded within my electorate. New crossings are being installed at the Elliston Area School, the Cleve Area School and the Port Kenny Primary School. A new pre-school is being established at Cleve with funding of \$590 000 and the Kirton Point Primary School will receive \$550 000 for a new administration and library resource centre.

In respect of the arts, it is particularly pleasing to receive \$80 000 for the subscription season. We have not been on the touring company program in the past because our civic hall was not up to occupational health and safety standards. However, within the next six months we will at last have a hall suitable for the touring program, and it was pleasing to receive that funding. In addition, two additional police have located to the region. From 130 police officer positions to be funded in this year's budget, one will be at Port Lincoln and another at Ceduna.

With respect to emergency services, the Port Lincoln office will receive a new \$400 000 pumper and Wudinna SES will receive a state emergency rescue vehicle worth approximately \$70 000. Yesterday I was pleased to try on the new uniform which the CFS is receiving and which costs \$1 000. Those CFS members believe that the uniforms will make a big difference to their safety in the workplace. It is my pleasure to support the bill.

**Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth):** The Premier promised a social dividend to South Australians, supposedly resulting from the sale of ETSA. As the Leader of the Opposition said earlier today, in February 1998 in this House during Question Time it was said that that dividend could provide \$2 million a day for 50 days for a \$100 million upgrade of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It was also said that it could provide \$2 million a day to fund a substantial number of extra procedures in our hospitals, extra out-patient services and 11 600 more mental health services per day.

The Premier and the government made these promises. Again, they have broken promises and, again, they have proved to South Australians that their assertions, announcements and promises mean nothing at all and that they are fundamentally dishonest. The Premier declared an increase in health spending of \$45 million when the budget was

announced last week. The very next day the human services minister admitted that, in fact, the budget had been cut in real terms. The \$45 million allowed only a 1.7 per cent increase on last year's budget, which does not even take into account inflation at 2.8 per cent let alone other costs, such as enterprise bargaining, fringe benefit tax changes, GST compliance and other unspecified costs.

Even more illuminating, when the budget papers are examined it can be seen that the \$45 million increase has come from the Commonwealth Government. The budget documents indicate that commonwealth receipts will increase this year by \$47 million. The Premier's increase in health spending of \$45 million comes from a \$47 million increase from the commonwealth, with a \$2 million decrease from the state. It is about time we put to bed the excuse that it is the federal government's fault. It is about time we recognised that the real problem in terms of health funding in this state rests with this state government, which has consistently, since it took office in 1993, taken the axe to health services.

So, what is the outlook for our hospitals and the hospitals and the services they provide? We see that in a range of categories the government is aiming to do worse. The state government budget papers reveal an embarrassing set of targets for treating patients in our public hospitals which show that they were aiming to do worse in the next financial year. The new targets are there for all to see, and I suggest that members do not take my word for it. If they look up the papers they will see it all revealed. The papers show that only 72 per cent of those patients being rushed to accident and emergency in our public hospitals as emergency patients were treated within the recommended 10 minute time frame of entering a hospital.

In the 2000-01 year the Olsen government hopes to do worse by reducing to 70 per cent the number of patients receiving emergency treatment on time. Of the patients who needed urgent attention within 30 minutes of entering an emergency department, only 65 per cent were treated on time in this financial year. The Olsen government wants to make that figure worse by reducing to 60 per cent the number of these patients being seen on time. Similarly, of the semi-urgent patients who should be seen within an hour, the government is aiming to do worse by reducing from 68 per cent to 65 per cent the number being seen on time. Of the non-urgent cases that should be seen within 120 minutes, the Olsen government wants to do worse by reducing those being treated from 92 per cent to 90 per cent.

This is in addition to other targets to do worse. For instance, the Olsen government plans to cut by 4 000 the number of patients admitted to metropolitan hospitals. It wants to treat 93 000 fewer outpatients in the new financial year and to reduce by 10 000 the number of patients it treats in emergency departments. In our country hospitals it proposes to cut the number of patients by 10 000 and emergency patients by 3 000. In the meantime, figures we have just obtained under freedom of information provisions show that 42 per cent of people requiring urgent surgery in December 1999 waited longer than the recommended time of 30 days, and that is appalling. Remember that people who require urgent surgery are in category 1, and 42 per cent of them do not get that surgery on time. The Minister for Human Services admitted that hospital waiting lists will grow by another 2 000. This is a signed, sealed and delivered confession that public health has been caught up in a constant frenzy of cuts over nearly seven years.

It was interesting to listen to some of the comments made by members opposite in their contributions to the debate earlier today. The member for Waite was particularly astonishing and quite amusing when he suggested that we should compare our health system with that of Egypt, among other countries. He said we are doing a remarkably good job, meeting incredible demand. It is amazing that people suggest that, because we have more activity, it is okay that we do not do all that we should, that we turn away so many people and that we do not treat people effectively and in a way that we should. Surely, a responsible government recognises increase in demand—and we know it is occurring and the reasons why. It has been said many times: surely a responsible government plans to meet that demand. That is not happening, it has not happened for a number of years, it continues not to happen, and the situation continues to worsen.

Today in Question Time I found it amazing that the minister referred to issues of quality in our health system. He mentioned that last year there were 42 000 adverse events—things that went wrong or mistakes—in hospitals around Australia. He said that we have our fair share. He went on to say that we were taking steps to address that by having clinical reviews and improving our processes. It is very important to do that. What he failed to say was that, when you put the hospitals under stress, when the nurses and the doctors are run off their feet, when they cannot possibly provide a safe, proper and reasonable level of care, the potential for making a mistake increases exponentially.

That is what members of the AMA were saying when they made their comments on Friday—and this was referred to by the member for Torrens—that we would see more mistakes, that patients' lives would be placed at risk in the end and that the chance of mistakes would increase. It is absolutely beyond doubt that that is the result of a constant assault on the health system. It is easy to talk about figures, as I have just done, but we all know that behind those figures is a lot of human suffering. Everyone of us in this House must know that so many people are suffering because they just cannot get the treatment they require and deserve.

The government made great play in respect of health in its capital works program. The facts are these: in human services, there will be a \$192 million capital works program for the coming year—a cut of \$203 million from that spent last year. Again last year there was an under spend in the Department of Human Services, this time of \$5 million. The biggest omission in terms of human services and capital works was the complete disappearance of the 50 bed mental health unit that was supposed to be completed in February this year at Flinders Medical Centre. It is interesting to note that, at a time when mental health services are under incredible pressure and when people have not been able to find a bed in Glenside hospital or in other mental health units, we cancel a 50 bed mental health unit at the Flinders Medical Centre. We are told that all will be revealed, in terms of a new direction for Mental Health Services, on 14 June.

We had a summit that concluded over two years ago. I would have thought that we could have a direction articulated and a strategy in place before now. Two more years of procrastination and committees and we have another summit, another big announcement. I wonder when we will see the changes we require. In the budget I would have liked to see something for adolescents who require treatment in a mental health unit, so that we do not have adolescents inappropriately housed in places such as Glenside. There was no such luck, good planning or care.

We have spoken at length about the issues in relation to capital works at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwen Health Service—very important developments that have been announced and re-announced. This is the eighth time the upgrading of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been announced. We note that only \$1.3 million will be spent in that area this year. In my own area, the upgrading of the Lyell McEwen Health Service, which is badly needed, has been announced for the sixth time. This year, \$3 million will be spent, and it will not be finished until 2004. It is a long way off, and people have been waiting a long time, indeed. So much for the capital works program.

In relation to dental services, the minister himself revealed on Friday that co-payments will be required for pensioners and part pensioners to have access to public dental services. It will cost \$10 for pensioners to have their treatment, and for part pensioners 15 per cent of the standard fee. He said today in answer to a question that these co-payments would raise \$1.2 million which would enable an extra 4 000 people to be seen per year. He also said that at present 100 000 people are on the waiting list. I did a quick check of my own files in relation to dental treatment and I notice that a year ago the waiting list was about 100 000. So, whatever happened over the past year, whatever services were provided, the waiting list did not go down. It was about 100 000 last year; it is 100 000 today; nothing has changed. If we do not do anything more than just co-payments, does this mean it will take 25 years to deal with the backlog?

The point I am making is that we need a comprehensive strategy to attack dental services in this state. The minister has had a review for over 12 months; it may be 18 months since a review was done. It has been completed for a number of months. Where is that review? What will happen? What is the big picture? What is the overall strategy for dental services? Why are we not told? Why can we not see what the real direction is? I wonder if there is a direction, or will we just stagger along as we have over the past few years? In terms of dental treatment, every member in this House would have constituents who have been affected by that. There is no doubt about it. There are 100 000 people involved. Every member knows about this; every member has had to deal with people who have waited—and I have to say will continue to wait in spite of the co-payments.

Co-payments are also in line for domiciliary care services. I have not been able to look at this in detail, but I imagine it is coming out of the need for user pays in terms of home and community care funding, and domiciliary care is now following the Royal District Nursing Service in requiring aged and frail people to pay for the services they receive. I think other members, certainly on this side of the House, have mentioned the burden that is continuing to grow in terms of the transfer of responsibility for paying from the government to the user and for so many people, particularly the elderly and the vulnerable, it is an increasing burden. We have levies, charges and co-payments at a constant rate and people are finding that very hard.

I must say that I was pleased to see some contribution to the gamblers' rehabilitation fund. I hope that will mean, perhaps, some of the BreakEven services will have a longer funding span in order to do proper planning for the future. I was pleased to see \$2.5 million towards community-based mental health services, but I have to say that a lot more than \$2.5 million is required; I guess it will not happen this year, and probably it will not happen until there is a change in

priorities in terms of the commitments of governments to mental health services.

I want to talk briefly about disability services—and I know I do not have much time left to do this. Minister Lawson boasted in his press release that \$6 million of additional money was to be spent this year from the state government. In fact, he was re-announcing the \$1.5 million that was announced earlier this financial year. So, in fact, there is \$4.5 million of new money, and I am pleased that we have at least got \$4.5 million of new money, which, I presume, will be put towards unmet need in the disability sector. Unfortunately, that falls a long way short, too.

I want to briefly outline the facts for people. Unmet need across Australia has been estimated and accepted by all states, territories and the federal government to be at the level of \$300 million. That estimation was provided by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in about 1995. South Australia's agreed share is \$26 million and growing. The commonwealth has agreed to put in \$4 million this year; the state government has put in \$4.5 million this year, plus the \$1.5 million that it put in last year; and the state will put in another \$4 million next year. That comes to a total of \$14 million, which means that there is a shortfall of \$12 million and growing.

The Minister for Disability Services can boast about an additional \$6 million. As I have said, it is pleasing to see something, but I have to say that we have a shortfall of \$12 million and growing, which means almost half of those people who come under the category of requiring this money will not be helped at all at this stage unless there is a much more substantial commitment from both state and commonwealth governments. As all members would know, these are some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in our community and they deserve better.

Time expired.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I would like to thank members of the opposition for pointing out some of the areas that we need to address. I do not doubt the sincerity of the member for Elizabeth with her concerns about health and education. I know that many members on this side would like to see greater emphasis and spending in health, education and social infrastructure. However, it is also the responsibility of the opposition to give us an alternative, an overall picture of how to get the funds to put into the areas of health, education, transport and other social infrastructure. With speaker after speaker the opposition this evening—and I was fortunate to be in the chair when the Leader of the Opposition spoke—has pointed out specific cases which have to be addressed. No doubt, those cases do exist but not to the exaggerated extent that the opposition has put forward for its political purposes.

This is the bottom line of the opposition, instead of applauding this budget and applauding the fact that at last we have got the burden of debt off our backs, which members opposite (not specifically members opposite but their party) helped to bring about. They should applaud the fact that at last we can look forward to some balanced budgets and some budget surpluses. Instead they have spent the whole time this evening discussing whether this is a balanced budget, a surplus budget, or whether the sale of the Casino has skewed the surplus—no doubt, similar to what the opposition federally was doing about the surplus coming out of thin air. It is the same tactic. One would have thought that they would see that we have a budget surplus, and whether or not it is small, the fact is it is there.

The reality is that, if we had not had a Liberal government for the past seven years, we would not be talking about a surplus or a balanced budget. All we would be talking about would be the size of the deficit budget, because without the long-term lease of ETSA there would be no talk of surplus budgets or comments from the opposition, such as 'Where is the \$2 million a day that is being spent on health, education, transport?' and so on. We would not even be able to envisage talking about those things because we would be continuously burdened by the debt that they created, but they are not willing to accept that. As the Treasurer rightly said, if we had not leased ETSA and interest rates had increased by 2 per cent, where would we have found the extra \$150 million in interest?

The opposition is quick to point out that there needs to be more funds for health and education. I agree with the opposition: we need to find more funds for health and education. I emphasise that this government has given those areas top priority. Although in this budget there are not the increases that we want, nevertheless the foundation has been set to ensure that we are able to deliver in those important areas. The government is committed to delivering. Look at what it has done with the opportunity created by the long-term lease of ETSA and with the emergency services levy. That would not have been possible had we not leased ETSA.

Let us not forget that we must thank the Hon. Terry Cameron and the Hon. Trevor Crothers for putting us in this position, because we could not have done it without them. Members opposite still would have been strangers to the words 'balanced and surplus budgets' and would still have been involved in their long tradition of deficit funding: get yourselves into trouble and then borrow. You can do that in the short term, but at the end of the day the chickens will come home to roost and you will have to deal with the deficit.

Some members opposite referred to the wasted seven years of opportunities. I have no doubt that members opposite as well as members on this side have a mortgage. Imagine what we could do if our mortgage were halved: we would be able to increase our everyday expenditure. But if our mortgage were halved what would happen to our personal credit rating? We would be able to borrow more for emergencies, health and education, but our credit rating would not allow us to have the budget deficits that members opposite are used to having. We have been given a new credit rating which gives this government the security to enable it to access funds for the services that this state needs.

Just to give an example, I point out that the net debt as a proportion of gross social product has in nominal terms declined from 26 per cent as at June 1994 to 9.9 per cent as at June 2000. The net proceeds of \$3.7 billion from disposable electricity assets have been directed entirely towards debt reduction. Net debt is projected to fall to \$4.2 billion by June 2000 and will fall further on the completion of the privatisation of the electricity assets. In all the contributions to this debate so far today, I have not heard one reference to the level of unfunded superannuation liability, which, under our government, continues to fall as a result of budgetary policy. It remains on track to be fully funded by 2034. In fact, as at 30 June 2000, it will be \$38 million ahead of schedule.

That is an area that the opposition has not talked about. And when did the level of unfunded superannuation liability rise? Was it under a Liberal government? No, it was under the former Labor government. That is when unfunded superannuation liabilities increased. Unless you deal with those problems, you will not be able to deal with health, education,

transport and so on. No doubt we could have gone on a spending splurge. When we received the money from ETSA, we could have said, 'Here it is', but would that have been responsible? What would we have done? We would have put South Australia at risk again and reduced our credit rating. Therefore, we would have been like the person who reduces his or her mortgage but gets back to the point where the bank will not lend them money if they need it. That is the bottom line.

I did not hear any member opposite talk like that. They just asked about the social dividends. They asked, 'Where is the \$2 million a day?' The reality is that, when we were giving examples of what we would do with the \$2 million a day if ETSA was sold or leased, we were pointing out the lost opportunities in dealing with the debt—the lost opportunities in having the cash in hand to deal with the problems that this state will be facing. That is what it was all about, but members opposite took it on face value. Because they could not add up, now that ETSA has been sold, they ask, 'Where is the \$2 million here and there?'

Surely members opposite have a better understanding of economics than to believe that you could add up all those lots of \$2 million per day and all of a sudden the money would come to you once ETSA had been sold. They were examples of opportunity cost. That is how I understood it. I am sure that many members opposite would have understood the examples likewise, but the Leader of the Opposition would have us believe that he wanted all those dividends. What did he do regarding the social dividends they were talking about? I am just repeating what I heard tonight from members opposite.

*Ms Rankine interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Members opposite ask, 'What could you do with \$2 million a day?' I could ask, 'What could we do with \$3.5 billion?' The reality is that there were two State Banks—one was the State Bank and the other was the unfunded superannuation liabilities. This government has been responsible for dealing with both. That is what the public expects us to deal with. Let us look at what the newspapers have to say about this budget. The editorial from the *Advertiser* reads:

Treasurer Rob Lucas yesterday summed up the qualities he hopes are embraced in the 2000-01 budget: he is buying back the future.

And he has: we have bought back the future. The editorial continues:

He had seen that future mortgaged by the previous Labor government. Now we might just be permitted a modest dollop of credit for enduring the darkest days of recovery. He goes no further than expressing a degree of optimism that is better than past demands for mass belt-tightening and reduced rations. . . Mr Lucas reports a steady downward trend in budget deficits, from \$301 million in 1993-94 to \$39 million for the coming year. After 2001 the budget will be balanced. . .

In other words, we are dealing not just with this year: we are laying a foundation for the future. We know that we are heading in the right direction. Brad Crouch in the *Sunday Mail* stated:

It is only fair to give credit where credit is due. Just over a year ago the Premier, Mr Olsen—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Right. There appeared to be an impasse without the lease of ETSA. But we have come through that. The article states:

It is now history Mr Olsen succeeded in winning Trevor Crothers' vote; and now the government's 'gunnas' are becoming

can-dos. The debt is being wiped and interest payments slashed; the rail link to the north is about to be built. The stand-out shocker is hospital waiting lists, which continue to grow. This aside, whether you agree with the ETSA lease or not, at least their determination deserves credit. Ditto with the budget. The government has stuck to its long-term principles of debt reduction and resisted enormous pressure from within to splurge the ETSA lease funds.

That is a responsible editorial. Looking at education, the Minister for Education, Malcolm Buckby, has announced a series of new capital works projects for the South Australian 2000-01 state budget, including the first steps in creating a leading edge science and mathematics school. I was pleased to see that the Leader of the Opposition had commented on that mathematics school at Flinders University.

The sum of \$2.1 million has been provided for the construction of the school. There is \$4 million to expand literacy and numeracy testing for year 7 classes and \$15 million to continue the computer rollout to schools. In my electorate the schools have been well catered for: I look forward to the independent educational review on Hectorville and Newton and, once this is reported, I know that we can expect the best resources in that area for the education community. I have seen it at East Marden Primary School and Norwood-Morialta school. Also, an extra 113 police officers and support officers are being provided for the state. That is welcome news for the community, which is concerned about safety—and rightly so. We have listened and, within the constraints that we have, we are delivering.

I would now like to talk about the emergency services levy relief that has taken place—the \$24 million cut. I lobbied hard for my constituents, many of them self-funded retirees, for the \$40 rebate, and I was concerned when those constituents came back and said, ‘Mr Scalzi, we thank you for giving recognition to self-funded retirees, but if a spouse or partner is younger than 60 years of age they do not receive any

benefit.’ We listened to our constituents and then went back to the party room and spoke to the Premier. As a result, there has been a review and that \$40 rebate applies also to them. I know how difficult it was and how the emergency services levy was impacting on, for example, the Lutheran homes and the nursing homes at Campbelltown and Montrose.

We have reduced the emergency services levy: it has been reduced to \$76 million. Although some people would say that they are still hurting, the reality is that that raising of revenue by the government is less than what the Labor Party or the Democrats were proposing. And, of course, let us not forget that the emergency services levy was passed by both houses of parliament and with the support of the opposition. But one would not think so, from the way that members opposite are talking.

**Mr Conlon:** Absolute rubbish, Joe. I’ve never heard so much rubbish in my life.

**Mr SCALZI:** Does the member mean to say that it is rubbish to give self-funded retirees a \$40 rebate?

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Does the member think it is rubbish to give recognition to pensioners, self-funded retirees, Housing Trust tenants and the needy who deserve those concessions? Does the member think it is rubbish to reduce the levy on trailers and cars?

*Mr Conlon interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

Time expired.

**Ms KEY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 11.57 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 31 May at 2 p.m.