

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 11 October 2000

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

LIBRARY FUNDING

A petition signed by 291 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House ensure government funding of public libraries is maintained, was presented by the Hon. R.G. Kerin.

Petition received.

PROSTITUTION

Petitions signed by 40 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House strengthen the law in relation to prostitution and ban prostitution related advertising, were presented by the Hon. M.R. Buckby and Mr Scalzi.

Petitions received.

BUILDING SITE TOILETS

A petition signed by 47 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House prohibit the use of bore hole long drop toilets at building sites, was presented by Ms Thompson.

Petition received.

MYLOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

A petition signed by 632 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to replace the temporary classrooms at the Mylor Primary School with a permanent building, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Wotton.

Petition received.

SENATE VACANCY

The **SPEAKER**: I lay on the table the minutes of the joint sitting of the two houses for the choosing of a Senator to hold the place rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator Quirke.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Department of Treasury and Finance—Report, 1999-2000
 Distribution Lessor Corporation—Report to 30 June 2000
 ElectraNet SA—Report, 2000
 Electricity Supply Industry Planning Council—Report, 1999-2000
 Flinders Coal Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000
 Funds SA—Report, 1999-2000
 Gaming Supervisory Authority—Report, 1999-2000
 Generation Lessor Corporation—Report to 30 June 2000
 Motor Accident Commission—
 Charter
 Report, 1999-2000
 Office of the Liquor and Gaming Commissioner—Report, 1999-2000
 Office of the South Australian Independent Industry Regulator—Report, 1999-2000
 Report of the Technical Regulator Electricity—Report, 1999-2000
 RESI Capital (No.2) Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000

RESI Corporation—Report, 2000
 RESI Power Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000
 RESI Syn Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000
 RESI Utilities Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000
 South Australian Asset Management Corporation—
 Report, 1999-2000
 South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation—Report, 1999-2000
 South Australian Government Financing Authority—
 Report, 1999-2000
 South Australian Parliamentary Superannuation Scheme—
 Report, 1999-2000
 South Australian Superannuation Board—Report, 1999-2000
 Terra Gas Trader Pty Ltd—Report to 30 June 2000.

QUESTION TIME

CYBER SQUATTING

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I direct my question to the Minister for Information Economy. In the light of the recent hijacking by web site cyber squatters of the domain names of famous South Australian landmarks, tourism destinations and prominent South Australian wineries, what involvement has the minister had with drafting current legislation to outlaw this practice, and does he believe that the legislation should be made retrospective to cover these recent problems? On 11 September it was reported that 15 famous South Australian regions and tourist names such as Tourism SA.com had been registered by Tourism Northern Territory Pty Ltd and had been held by the company for three years unused. Yesterday on the front page of the *Advertiser* it was revealed that up to 25 per cent of Australia's wine makers had fallen victim to cyber squatters, including many leading South Australian wineries. Yesterday the Premier told the House that he believed cyber squatting was an unscrupulous practice and that legislation was now being drafted to outlaw it.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): This is a very important issue, and I am pleased that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has raised it. It is certainly not a practice which has any support in the public domain, I would say, because not only has it afflicted a number of our high profile wineries but also there have been a number of other examples of well-known individuals who have had their names squatted by these so-called cyber squatters. In relation to the specifics of cyber squatting, because of the ubiquitous nature of the legislation and the internet, it is important that there be a federal component to this. I have intended to raise this matter on the online council ministers' meeting, which involves ministers from around Australia, to see whether we can bring pressure on the federal government, and I do not think that will be hard to do. Certainly the question of retrospectivity will be looked at. That is a legal matter, and not one for the information economy, but it is one of the things that we would be looking at, because this practice ought to be stopped in any way possible.

PARTNERSHIPS 21

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services provide the House with details of any evidence he has that supports the government's claims that Partnerships 21 is an outstanding success in educational communities in South Australia?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): Evidence for any judgment must be very well sourced. On the one hand you can have evidence that is reliable and well sourced, or on the other hand you can have evidence that is unreliable or poorly sourced. If evidence was sourced from Partnerships 21, if one asked the Leader of the Opposition he would say that the scheme was flawed but in the very next breath he would say that it should be compulsory. The question is: how confused and poorly conceived is that? I would ask Mr 23 Per Cent exactly how many schools he has visited in his electorate. If he had visited some of his schools he would have found that in his own electorate some 57 per cent of schools have opted into Partnerships 21. The news gets better, because I am advised that more schools will be joining up before 1 February next year. But on what evidence does the member for Taylor call for this inquiry into Partnerships 21?

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Exactly! The member for Stuart says the evidence from the AEU. But what of that evidence? Her press statement calls for an inquiry based on leaked documents, so she says. At the best, incomplete information leads to inaccurate interpretations, especially when, as the member for Stuart says, those interpretations come from the leader of the AEU.

But the citizens of South Australia deserve better evidence than that when one calls for an inquiry. It requires evidence gained through sound academic research such as that provided in a UNESCO report which stated that needs based funding improves equity, or, on the evidence of the South Australian Parents Association, whose President recently said:

The Partnerships 21 framework of local governments and management gives a solid foundation on which to build a world class education service which matches or betters the best anywhere on the planet.

I suggest that the best evidence comes from the school communities themselves, because over the last couple of months we have surveyed school communities, asking them what they think of Partnerships 21 in the first six months. The survey clearly demonstrates that schools say that they have achieved improvements in some, and in most cases many or all, of the issues involved in the questions included in the survey. Most schools and preschools say that they have had increased community participation in their schools since opting into Partnerships 21. They say, in answer to the survey, that accountability, transparency and efficiency have improved in their schools and preschools since they came into Partnerships 21. They say that they have had improved focus on learning outcomes since they joined Partnerships 21.

The jury—the school communities—have come out in support and given their own verdict, and that is one of strong support for Partnerships 21. The opposition and its friends in the AEU executive should take note of the school communities. After all, Labor listens, does it not? But maybe in this case it does not. The school communities are the ones that are talking here, the very people we are supposed to serve. I believe that the union and the opposition should swallow their pride, forget their ulterior motives and support progressive education in this state.

COPE, Mr S.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Has the Premier met, does

he know of or does he have any knowledge of a Simon Cope, who registered the domain name mikerann.com in March this year, and can he assure the House that this is not the same Simon Cope who is a member of his personal staff?

A Simon Cope of Mepsted Crescent, Athelstone, registered the domain name mikerann.com on 31 March this year and will, coincidentally, own that domain name until 31 March 2002. A visit to that site's name indicates that the site has been temporarily 'parked', and announces that the 'future home of your company' is 'under construction' by a US internet design company Jewel Designs, which is based in Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I cannot recall any knowledge of the subject that the Leader is talking about. I am more than happy to make inquiries but I do not know of the substance that he has raised in his question.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am more than happy to make inquiries and to report back to the House.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Can the Deputy Premier elaborate on the government's approach towards regional development and in particular the encouragement of enterprise?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for her question and certainly acknowledge her great interest in regional development. At the moment we see a lot of encouraging regional development occurring throughout South Australia. As I have mentioned previously in the House, unfortunately it is not across all regions and all industries. However, we are experiencing spurts of growth in parts of the state, and that, as I have said, is extremely encouraging. The growth is based on enterprising industry and not the outdated policy of enterprise zones as is continually rolled out by the opposition.

It is important to remember that each industry, and each proposition for a new industry, should be treated separately because their needs are extremely different. If one looks at some that we have had to deal with in the past couple of years—such as the magnesium project, the steel and energy project, wineries, aquaculture, and mining—one sees that each one is different, and there must be flexibility in assisting those companies to set up and get those enterprises going. As I have said, zones are certainly not the answer. Even in regions where zones have been proposed, quite a few of their concerns have not been addressed, and there is a fear in those areas that with the offering of such things as long-term breaks in council rates or whatever, existing businesses feel that they will be subsidising potential businesses which will compete against them.

The area that has been proposed over time is the Upper Spencer Gulf, which has no zones but a flexible system and, if one looks at what has happened there after decades of declining employment levels in bigger industries, one sees that in the past few years, without zones, more projects have been proposed for and are proceeding in those areas than we have seen for a long time. The \$16 million SASE pilot plant at Whyalla is a massive opportunity, and obviously a lot of investment dollars have gone into the project, so there is confidence there that that will go ahead. Whether it is at Whyalla or Cooper Pedy, the tests will tell in time, and it has

major promise, particularly for Whyalla if it was to be established there. The magnesium project, while it still has to get to a bankable stage, is continuing down the line; a lot of deadlines have been met over the past few months, and it is proceeding. What the Alice Springs-Darwin railway will bring to the Upper Spencer Gulf is well worth noting.

What is happening with aquaculture? Of course, there is the hatchery at Port Augusta. And what is happening at Fitzgerald Bay north of Whyalla, with the growing of kingfish and snapper really starting to create jobs in those areas? Having been involved in those projects and having seen what is required, I know that the proposal of zones would not have helped any of those projects. We needed flexible policies to help those projects.

With regional development in general, as I have said, there are some good mining projects which are proceeding at the moment. Aquaculture, in the Eyre Peninsula in particular, but also the Yorke Peninsula and the South-East, has enjoyed major growth. Last week, the Minister for Human Services and I met with the Naracoorte council in relation to a major problem that it is facing at the moment because of the growth of the viticulture industry and the abattoir in that area. That abattoir was closed several years ago, and the government was instrumental in getting it up and running again. We now face a situation in Naracoorte where they need in pretty quick time accommodation for up to a couple of hundred extra people. A lot of houses will need to be built in Naracoorte over the next couple of years. That is what regional development is about. So, many jobs have been created. Exports are going extremely well and increasing, and we are seeing enormous innovation.

Several members joined me at Virginia on Friday, and to hear the stories that are coming out of Virginia and the way in which people have suddenly been focused on exports is excellent. On Monday, I met with two American members of the Oldways Trust who are looking at bringing some of the best food scientists in the world to Adelaide in conjunction with Tasting Australia for a conference. They made the point that they were very impressed with what they had seen here. They gave me a copy of a four-page article from the *New York Times* which compared the decline of a fishing city on Rhode Island with Port Lincoln. That report highlighted that, because of a lack of management and lack of development of fish farming in that area, that community is in major decline. They compared it to Port Lincoln, at one end of the spectrum where, through the development of aquaculture, as well as good management of fisheries, particularly the rock lobster fishery, they saw a town absolutely booming compared with one in absolute decline in America. There is no doubt that regional South Australia needs much more development. We would like to see it wider spread, but that can be best done with flexible policies; the idea of zones is outdated and will not work.

CYBER SQUATTING

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Was the Premier aware or was he informed of any domain name sites of opposition MPs and candidates, including mikerann.dot.com, being registered without those persons' approval earlier this year and, if so, who told him? Does the Premier agree with comments from members of the government such as the Attorney-General who described cyber squatting as unscrupulous; the Minister for Sport and Recreation who described it as a breach of copyright worthy

of federal court action; and by another Liberal MP who called it technological robbery?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): No; and yes.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey): Will the Minister for Employment and Training advise how regional development boards can access employer incentive scheme funding and what is the criterion for program development? During his speech at the opening of parliament, the Governor referred to a \$2 million fund for regional development boards that is anticipated to create 1 656 jobs. This fund was also referred to by the minister during estimates as a replacement for the small business incentives scheme.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Employment and Training): I thank the member for Chaffey for her question and particularly draw the attention of the House to the already strong inroads which some of our regional economies, and particularly her area, the South-East and perhaps parts of Port Lincoln, are already making to lead the recovery in this state. It is really nice to be able to stand up in the parliament and say that, instead of a recovery being led by the city, much of the recovery we are seeing in Australia is led by regional and country South Australia and, of course, we want that to continue. We are not on the sheep's back any more, but we very much depend on our wine industry, horticulture, aquaculture and forestry and they are leading us into a future. This underpins the Premier's Food for the Future strategy and shows how successful that has been.

I would also like to draw the attention of this House to the fact that over on this side of the House we actually do have a strategy, unlike the group opposite, who appear to be without any plans and without cogent direction forward. We have already seen the dearth of ideas from Labor's platform for government, that confidential draft. We have heard in this place about technological fraud: I do not know what you call it when you get a document that has got a clearly identified web page identity on the front—acknowledged—but when you type into that web page you cannot find the document: it is just not there. I do not know the intelligence of a group that would make something publicly available on the bottom of which it writes 'Confidential draft'. It does seem to be a little incongruous to me, but nevertheless, sir, you will rightly remand me if I move from the substance of the question, so I will get back to it.

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: We need to hold the presses because we really need to examine page 18 of this document, which, I would believe, starts with a bald face lie and it is this:

South Australia has recorded low rates of economic growth in recent years, particularly when compared with the nation.

I invite this House, as a matter of fact, to look at state final demand. From memory, it is the June quarter to the June quarter in which this state has outstripped the nation in getting back on the track, yet we have here what purports to be the launching pad for a party to get into government that is based on a tissue of lies. When one analyses the rhetoric, one can see that they are back in the 1970s; they are back at 'Don's party', sitting on—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order. The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: Sir, consistent with your ruling yesterday about relevance to the minister's reply of information and the

ALP's platform, I request that the minister be asked to conclude.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair is very happy to bring the minister back to the subject based on the question he was asked. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I thank you for your guidance, sir. What we are promoting for the member for Chaffey, the member for Gordon and for every member in this House is not hollow rhetoric or a return to the 1970s; it is not statements such as 'consult with key players, including employer and trade union organisations, regional organisations, community groups and local government', because—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the minister to come back to the question, please.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am, sir. This government—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order from the member for Chaffey.

Mrs MAYWALD: Thank you for that interjection, Mr Speaker, because that is exactly the point of order I was about to make.

The SPEAKER: The chair does not interject, I can assure the honourable member. The honourable minister.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: This government has already done so. This government is delighted to have—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

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

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! We do not need the assistance of the member for Elder.

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Nor the member for Stuart.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: This government is delighted that it has fully committed \$1.98 million to regional development boards, and that includes the City of Onkaparinga, as outlined by the Governor last week in his statement; and it is expected that 1 656 jobs will be created as a result. I am sure that the member for Chaffey will be delighted to know that a contract with the Riverland Development Corporation was signed on 10 August 2000 and is expected to create 110 jobs this financial year. In fact, on 17 August the first \$55 000 of the \$110 000 was paid into the corporation's account.

Employment targets for each regional development board, and the regional employment strategy as a whole, have been arrived at by considering the following: predicted employment results submitted by the regional development boards; previous performance in meeting past agreements; regional characteristics, including the current unemployment levels; emerging industries; and the geographical size of the region. The regional employment strategy allocates funding to the 14 development boards in the City of Onkaparinga. The strategy provides regional development boards with a flexibility and autonomy to tailor initiatives to meet the particular demands of employment in their region, and the member for Chaffey knows how important that is. It removes the decision-making process from this chamber and buildings around this area to where it is needed most—in the local areas to drive a local economy.

Each development board enters into a contract with me as minister and an agreed employment target, which they are expected to, and in most cases do, meet. Funding is then tied to the employment target. Within 14 days of signing the contract, 50 per cent of the funding is paid to the regional

development boards. The balance is then paid upon receipt of a report showing proof of the application of 75 per cent of the first payment. Industry bodies, business, government agencies and individuals can seek money from the regional development boards. Finally, if my friend the member for Elder spent more time listening to what the government is doing in this place—

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister is now debating and I ask him to wind up his reply.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Thank you.

PREMIER'S STAFF

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier assure this House that he will take action to ensure that there is no improper use of web sites or emails by his staff in the lead-up to the next state election, and will he dismiss any staffer found to be involved in the unauthorised registering of the web sites of opposition MPs or candidates—

The SPEAKER: Order! The leader will cease. There is a point of order.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the standing order that does not permit the asking of hypothetical questions.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. I believe that the question is relevant to the employment of staff by the Premier.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, sir.

The SPEAKER: Also—

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I understand the sensitivity—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask members not to speak when the chair is speaking, and I also ask the leader to come back to the explanation at the point at which he was interrupted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Will the Premier dismiss any staffer found to be involved in the unauthorised registering of the web sites of opposition MPs or candidates as part of a Liberal Party dirty tricks campaign?

The SPEAKER: Order! The leader is now commenting.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I give the leader and the House an assurance that, as a government, we will act appropriately and properly and above the standards usually applied by the Labor Party.

OPERATION VIKING

The SPEAKER: The member for Waite.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Elder!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Will the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services inform the House of the details of the Viking joint task force, which has resulted in significant arrests and quantities of heroin being seized?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): Having been with the member only this week discussing drug issues and the threat that illicit drugs are to the world, I appreciate his question because I know that he has a genuine concern about the issue of illicit drugs in South Australia and Australia. I am delighted to tell the member what has been happening with Operation Viking. It is a joint agency task force that was established in 1995 by the National Crime Authority with a national reference on primarily South-East

Asian organised crime, particularly with reference to heroin trafficking from organised crime groups in South-East Asia.

Viking has members from SAPOL, the Australian Federal Police and National Crime Authority, and its focus is on investigating and targeting criminal activity, principally involving narcotics and their distribution in South Australia. In the last 15 months, Viking has had some outstanding results. In fact, 54 people have been arrested as a result of the work of that operation, and 13.6 kilograms of heroin has been taken off the streets. In addition, five people have been apprehended since the beginning of this financial year and 4.5 kilograms of heroin has been removed from the streets.

Approximately 95 per cent of all Operation Viking arrests have related specifically to heroin trafficking, with one operation alone leading to the arrest of eight people for heroin offences, including trafficking, supply and possession. Viking will continue in conjunction with the national reference to work as hard as it can with other jurisdictions to ensure that we continue to take heroin and narcotics off the streets.

This comes on top of the significant bust, which was organised by NCA, AFP, customs and the South Australia Police, of 320 kilograms of cocaine in the near northern suburbs around Prospect recently. It was the second largest bust in Australia and indeed the largest bust in the history of this state.

I congratulate the officers involved in Viking and highlight to the House that, although Operation Viking is playing an important role in enforcing the law with respect to illicit drugs, the drug action teams that are on trial in areas such as Elizabeth, Sturt, the Adelaide Hills and Murray Bridge policing districts, together with Operation Mantle and Operation Counteract, are comprehensively sending the message that South Australia Police and this government are doing whatever possible to holistically combat illicit drugs.

What disappoints me—and I raised this in the House the other day—in relation to Operation Viking and illicit drugs, and the damage illicit drugs are doing to the community, is that when you pick up the platform document of the Labor Party and look at policing there is not one element of the small amount of policy in relation to policing which addresses the issue of illicit drugs. When you look at the rest of the policy, it is short on content and substance when it comes to the biggest threat facing the social structure of this state.

I know the member for Elder does not have a lot of interest in the social structure, but the South Australian community, I can assure the member, does have an interest in the social structure, the social fabric and the social wellbeing of society. I can understand that the member for Elder gets a little sensitive on these points because the member for Elder, we recall, when we saw a photograph in the *Advertiser* about 12 months ago, was sent kicking and screaming to make up with the latest shining light candidate of the Leader of the Opposition. He was told that, whether or not he wanted that candidate, he had to build bridges and repair the damage he was doing and encourage a certain candidate to support the Leader of the Opposition, just like Mike the Pieman who purports to spend a lot of time with the community around the pie carts of Adelaide with the Adelaide candidate, Ms Lomax-Smith.

Mr CONLON: I rise on a point of order, sir. The minister is, of course, required to answer the substance of the question, and the debate in which he is engaging does not appear to be connected with any sort of reality, let alone the question.

The SPEAKER: I am not sure what the point of order was, but if the member had made the point of order he probably would have got it upheld.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: These are very relevant points. The point I am making is this: the government has a holistic approach to drugs strategy. It is clear and documented and further development is occurring. Law enforcement is a very important part of the government's holistic drugs strategy. We have not seen a thing in any form at all from the Leader of the Opposition when it comes to Labor Party policy. That which we have seen and which is very concerning to those of us on this side of the House is the statement that the Labor candidate for Adelaide made recently where she claimed that 'a lot of young people have tried marijuana and they know it is not really bad, but we could tell them we accept that but harder drugs are a different story'. What an atrocious comment from someone who purports to try to become a member of parliament one day. Where is the leadership? Where are the messages and support for combating drugs and the damage to the young people, and combating the destruction to society through illicit drugs and those traffickers?

It is time this weekend for the Leader of the Opposition, if he has any policies of substance, to attack the Adelaide Labor candidate and put firmly on the table his support and that of the Labor Party to address the issues and support the government in its holistic approach so that we can make sure we can do whatever we can to get drugs off the streets of Adelaide.

NATIONAL WINE CENTRE

Mr FOLEY (Hart): That is a hard act to follow. Does the Premier support the comments made last Friday by Mr Rick Allert as Chairman of the National Wine Centre in which Mr Allert admitted that he and the board of the wine centre had broken the Premier's own guidelines for the letting of consultancies and that he would do the same thing again; if not, what action has the Premier taken to direct Mr Allert and the wine centre board to follow the Premier's guidelines? The Auditor-General found that the decision by the National Wine Centre board to extend two contracts to Mr Mal Hemmerling—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Schubert!

Mr FOLEY:—and Price Waterhouse Coopers without going to further tender and incurring costs to the taxpayers of more than \$390 000 was done in breach of the government's and Premier's own guidelines. On Friday, while accompanying the Premier, Mr Allert admitted that he had broken the Premier's guidelines and would do it again.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): As I—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Elder will remain silent.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: As I indicated to the House last week, I have sought an explanation from the Chairman. I indicated that I will report to the House, and indeed I will. I will make the point that Mr Allert is particularly concerned about the interpretation of his remarks of last Friday, as I know he expressed to the member for Hart at about 2.30 on Friday afternoon.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: For you to get up here and repeat, after he had indicated to you—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is trying to reply, and the chair would like to hear it.

Mr Foley interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am more than happy to canvass the issues that have been raised today and previously, and I will do so in a report to the House, as I have given an undertaking to do.

WATER PLAN

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Water Resources advise the House whether there is a need to develop a comprehensive state water plan which addresses the issues of water usage in South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources): I thank the member for Schubert for his question and I would like to talk to the House in confidence on a matter, on which I know I have the bipartisan support of the House. I will not refer to the document in which I read it, lest I be accused of straying from the substance of the question, but I know that Labor has recently written in a leaked document that it supports the development of a state water plan. Well, members opposite are a little late, because here it is; and I table in this House—

An honourable member: Can you do that?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I can table in this House the State Water Plan 2000, and commend it to members of the opposition as very good reading. That will enable them, in concert with this government when considering water policy, not to reinvent the wheel and not to go back 10 years—because, indeed, the Hon. David Wotton developed the first comprehensive state water plan five years ago—but to move on from where we are now. My colleague the Minister for Information Economy will be delighted, because it is all here in three volumes and also on a CD ROM. My colleague the Minister for Education and Children's Services will be delighted, because a copy of this plan is already en route to every senior school in South Australia, and indeed we are already receiving inquiries via our web site—on which this document really exists; you can really find it there—from schools and children who are seeking to use this information.

Another matter related to the water plan and integral to the substance of this question is the matter of catchment management boards. I also read that the opposition would seek to establish catchment management boards. Well, I have a secret: we actually have some, and by the time of the next election there will be catchment management boards covering virtually the entire state. So, by the time a future parliament addresses the issue of catchment management boards it will be old hat and not needed, because we have been there and done that. Lest I be thought to be a bit flippant, in addressing the substance of this question, I return to where I was yesterday in saying this. This is not about—

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Hart!

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Elder!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: This is not about some petty argument between either side of the chamber. This is about the future of this state. This water plan is a vital document which has the total and undivided commitment of the government and of the best expertise which the government

can bring to it. It is tabled in a genuine attempt to ensure that every member of this House is fully informed on the most vital issue facing this state today.

It annoyed me when the opposition accused me yesterday of getting excited. I will, and I will continue to do so, as long as there are people in this House who show disregard for our future, our kids and our resources. This is important, and it is about time the opposition stopped treating it as a joke and got ready to prepare themselves to be a loyal and decent opposition.

EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE AND VOCATIONAL BRANCH

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Can the minister provide a detailed cost of air fares, per diem payments and amounts charged to the minister's department as expenses for the Director of Enterprise and Vocational Education, Mr Peter Turner, and any officers who accompanied him on visits to New Zealand, England, Scotland, Ireland and Paris in June and July this year? The opposition has details of Mr Turner's itinerary and a copy of his credit card expenses for the month of June, which exceed \$7 000 without including any of the expenses for the majority of the European destinations on this visit.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): No, I cannot give that to the member at the moment because all documents are currently in the hands of the police. So, while I do not have that documentation to hand at the moment, when those documents are returned I will undertake to seek the information.

RACING INDUSTRY CORPORATISATION

Mr MEIER (Goyder): My question is directed to the Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the corporatisation of the racing industry in South Australia? Can the minister also detail to the House the ongoing government administrative support to the racing industry?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I thank the member for his question. As members would be aware, during the parliamentary break the racing industry was corporatised, with the new corporations taking over from 1 October. During the break I, as Minister for Racing, together with the industry, had the pleasure of being involved in what was a very successful interview process. There were about 80 applications for positions in the two corporations. The industry, both greyhound and harness, was involved in an interview process to set up a corporatised racing industry, which is a first in Australia.

I want to place on record my thanks to David Seymour-Smith, Chairman of RIDA, and to John Barrett, the CEO, for the good work they have done as a board in transitioning the industry to the three corporate structures. It was a complex process and they have done a good job.

I want to clarify the ongoing role of the government in the racing industry. We have established an Office of Racing under the Department of Environment and Heritage. I am the minister for racing as well as environment, and it sits under the Department of Environment and Heritage. John Barrett will head that as Department of Environment and Heritage Executive Director in Business Development. The Office of Racing will report to Mr Barrett.

So, there is an Office of Racing, which is probably a coincidence, because on radio recently the member for Lee, the opposition spokesman for racing, said that the Labor Party promised to establish an Office of Racing. I want to clarify for the member for Lee that one already exists. I also want to clarify for the member for Lee that, when he goes on radio and says that the Labor Party will have a racing minister, the Liberal Party already has, of course, a racing minister.

We established the Office of Racing for a number of reasons. One in particular, of course, is to take up the national issues in relation to the racing industry, because we can see that there are a number of national issues that the racing industry needs to address. I refer to such things as programming, national marketing, sorting out the clashing of racing carnivals and, of course, national stake money schemes (which, as Minister for Racing, I have promoted and will be promoting at the next national racing ministers' conference). So, when the opposition goes on radio, as it did in July, and says that it wants to establish an Office of Racing to take up national issues, I want to clarify for the House that we already have an Office of Racing and we are already addressing the national issues.

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Just to explain for the member for Lee, one of the great benefits of corporatisation—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Lee!

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: —is that the industry has more independence. So, when the opposition goes on radio and tells the racing industry that it will declare a moratorium on venue rationalisation, it may have escaped the opposition's notice that it is not actually in charge of that any more. It does not have charge of venues any more.

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: It cannot deliver that promise. The member for Lee knows that they cannot deliver that promise because, ultimately, the venues are in the control of the clubs—not the government. The opposition cannot deliver that promise, and the member for Lee knows it.

The good thing about corporatisation is that the venues are free of government interference, and it is left to the racing industry. So, when the Labor Party says that it will protect the Cheltenham racecourse, I will make it absolutely clear: the future of Cheltenham is a matter for the racing industry. The only way you can guarantee the future of Cheltenham is by buying it. If it comes up, will you buy it? That is the issue. The benefits of corporatisation—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lee will remain silent. If he wants to ask a question, he can do so.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The benefit of corporatisation is that the racing industry does not have to worry about government—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, I warn the member for Lee for deliberately flouting the chair!

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The racing industry does not have to worry about government interference in its venues because corporatisation means that it is in charge of its own venues and this government believes that that is a good thing.

Another benefit of corporatisation is that the government is not involved in the appointment process. So, when the Labor Party goes on radio, as it did in July, and says that there will be no more Ian McEwen-type appointments, that

is a non-promise because under either government there will be no more appointments to the racing industry because from now on the racing industry appoints itself to the board. I say to the member for Lee that it is not the Ian McEwen-type appointments I am worried about: it is the Tim Marcus Clarke-type appointments. They are the type of appointments that the government is worried about.

When people pick up the confidential draft of the Labor Party platform, what they find in the racing policy is 58 words—4½ lines. I want to clarify something for the member for Lee so that he gets it right on the weekend when they debate the policy. Can he at least correct this so that people are not embarrassed? It is said that Labor believes that the grass roots of the racing industry, which includes the owners, the breeders, the trainers, the jockeys, the drivers and the punters should all fully participate in the decision-making process. The group he has missed out is the 49 clubs. The 49 clubs apparently do not rate a mention. All the volunteers—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: They are not owners.

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: But should they not have a say? They have been left out. So, when the member for Lee goes to his convention on the weekend, I ask that he corrects it. What he has done is snubbed the clubs.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries. Is the minister or any of his officers within the Department of Primary Industries aware of the possibility of genetically modified crops being grown by the United States company Aventis in this state's South-East and, if so, what discussions have taken place; have any approvals been granted for the growing of these crops; and is any land owned by PIRSA involved? Aventis was involved in the growing of genetically modified crops in the South-East and the dumping of dead plants was reported in March this year. It has also been reported that, in the United States, Aventis has been forced to recall this year's harvest of genetically modified maize crops from American farms after the maize was discovered in ingredients used to manufacture taco shells: the maize was intended for use in foods made only for animals.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Minister for Primary Industries and Resources): There are a range of questions, which I will try to answer. Yes, we are aware that genetically modified trials are being conducted pretty much throughout Australia. The federal approval for those is through GMAC, and they will be picked up by the new federal government legislation. Demonstration trials have been conducted under very strict protocols at the Struan Research Centre in the South-East, which is PIRSA-SARDI property. Those trials ensure that all the protocols are taken into account in respect of separation distances and the handling of crops, and those crops have been inspected by various groups of people.

In relation to the issue concerning Aventis last year, it was found that it had not stuck completely to guidelines, but what it had done did not involve issues of enormous risk. However, it is important that it adhere exactly to the guidelines and we look forward to the day when the federal government has more clout to ensure that that happens. Some of the concerns in the South-East were overstated but, if we are to go ahead with this type of technology, it is important that all guidelines

be adhered to. A couple of councils in the South-East had made requests for moratoriums on GM crops within their particular areas. Once again, the regulation of GM crops is a federal issue.

Trying to section off borders, states or council areas going GM free creates a real issue if things are not done nationally. Some areas seem to think that by going GM free they will pick up a trade advantage but, unless the whole of Australia were to go GM free, that trade advantage would be minimised by the fact that overseas countries do not identify even state borders, let alone council borders, for trade purposes. So, we could put ourselves into a lose-lose situation in which a lot of areas are locked out of the technology and do not pick up the trade benefits. On this issue, we look forward to the federal government putting the legislation and the office in place so that the controls are tighter than they have been.

ANTIBIOTICS

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. What will be the short and long-term consequences for all of us as human beings if there is continuing indiscriminate and/or unwarranted intake—that is, dosing of tens of thousands of people (a significant percentage of any group or population in a given location)—of antibiotics such as oxytetracycline (otherwise known as OTC), regardless of whether or not they need it; for them, as individuals and for all of us, as a society?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I am pleased that the member for Hammond has raised this question because it is an issue that has been taken up by the health ministers around Australia for a number of years. In fact, there are real dangers involved, because the constant use of antibiotics by humans alone has encouraged the development of resistance. With the use of antibiotic resistant bacterium in the animal industry, there is clear evidence that those antibiotics are being transferred across to the human population, and that potentially is very serious indeed. In fact, the Joint Expert Technical Advisory Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (JETACAR) reported to the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council in September of last year.

In summary, that report found that there was evidence, first, of antibiotic resistant bacteria emergent in humans and animals as the result of antibiotic use or overuse of antibiotics; secondly, that resistant animal bacteria have now spread to humans; thirdly, that the gene codes for resistance have been moved from animal to human bacterium; and, fourthly, that resistant strains of animal bacteria can cause human disease. So, one can see from that that the ramifications potentially are very serious. JETACAR's conclusions are supported by almost all authorities, both in Australia and overseas. This is rapidly becoming an issue of international concern, particularly in some of the countries in which antibiotics are used much more widely than in Australia; however, there is growing concern in Australia.

JETACAR recommended that industries that currently depend on the blanket use of antibiotics should be assisted to develop alternative strategies. South Australia is cooperating with Australian authorities in implementing JETACAR's recommendations to limit the emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance in both animals and people. I am able to report, though, that as late as this week an international orthopaedic conference is being held in Hobart. That conference has been talking about the development of

antibiotic resistance in people and the extent to which it is spreading.

Orthopaedic surgeons, of course, are involved in surgery deep into various joints of the body, and therefore any infection that can occur can be very serious, particularly if those bacteria that cause the infection are found to be resistant to antibiotics. I am able to report that Dr Sikorsky, the Scientific Secretary of the Australian Orthopaedic Association, reported that it is high time that governments placed restrictions on how antibiotics are used. Dr Sikorsky expressed concern at this international conference and indicated that if, in fact, this resistance to antibiotics continued to spread orthopaedic surgeons would become increasingly reluctant to operate.

Dr Sikorsky indicated that several classes of antibiotics should be reserved only for human use, and therefore people involved in the animal industry should be stopped from being able to use some of those classes of antibiotics. Also, a statement was made by a Professor Nade, who said that the reality is that there are no classes of antibiotics in the pipeline at the moment which may be able to overcome the resistance that is currently building up. It is estimated that it might be as far away as 20 years before the development of new strains and types of antibiotics that may be able to overcome some of the resistance that is now developing.

The matter raised by the member for Hammond is therefore of growing concern, particularly amongst hospital administrators, medical specialists and orthopaedic surgeons. Certainly, the results that have emerged from both the national reviews, some international studies and now a meeting of orthopaedic surgeons in Tasmania would show that it is high time that a much more severe regime was placed on the use of antibiotics, particularly in the animal industry but also within the human field, and that people should be very careful in their use of antibiotics, particularly on an ongoing basis.

SNOWY RIVER

Mr HILL (Kaurna): In relation to the New South Wales/Victorian Snowy River deal, does the Premier agree with Senator Minchin who, on 6 October, said that 'South Australia is a major beneficiary of the proposed environmental flow outcomes for rivers affected by the Snowy Mountain Scheme,' or does the Premier support Senator Hill, who is quoted as saying that 'a \$300 million rescue package for the Snowy River would cause a huge blow-out in the cost of fixing the salinity crisis in the Murray-Darling Basin'?

In December 1999 the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister and said that the deal between New South Wales and Victoria to redirect water to the Snowy River would lead to significant economic and environmental impacts on the Murray; and on 17 January 2000 he announced that he had won the rights to veto 'Victorian plans to take Murray water for the Snowy'. Yesterday the Minister for Water Resources told the House that nothing could be done to stop New South Wales and Victoria redirecting their water allocations.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Water Resources!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): The whole issue of the corporatisation of the Snowy Mountains scheme is an important one as it affects flows into South Australia. It is proposed by Premiers Carr and Bracks that any waters that flow down into the Snowy River or increase flow through the

Snowy should be saved by efficiency and productivity gains in the distribution, management and use of water and therefore they would not be impacting on the ordinary flows down the Murray-Darling system, which I have some difficulty agreeing with at this stage.

Members would be aware that, as it relates to the Snowy scheme, Senator Hill, following this issue being raised by us in South Australia consistently and persistently, sought to put in place an environmental impact assessment as it relates to the Snowy, that is, to look at the environmental impact and the environmental flows through the Murray. That has been the basis of a draft report to which South Australia has responded. I expect that there will be further discussions between the commonwealth government and the South Australian government as to any outcomes that might be agreed to between the other parties.

As I have indicated and as the member mentioned, the fact is that South Australia has been given 'a place' at the table in these discussions, whereas the former agreement had but three parties to it. The commonwealth has assured us that we will have input into the final decision-making process. In my view it would not be satisfactory to have the pristine water of the Snowy redirected down the Snowy River and for us in the Murray to be supplemented by an equal quantity of water out of the Murray-Darling Basin system that is not pristine water. If we are talking about environmental flows, that is equally a consideration. We must ensure that we are able to trade off the best arrangements we can in terms of environmental flow down the River Murray.

I know that the Minister for Water Resources is having a meeting with Senator Minchin in the next week or 10 days at which this issue will be further canvassed. I reassure the member and the House that we have not come this far in arguing the case for South Australia to do any other than to persevere in arguing the case for South Australia to make sure we get the best outcome for our state.

EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE AND VOCATIONAL BRANCH

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yesterday the member for Taylor asked me whether 'the Executive Director of the Enterprise and Vocational Education Branch, Mr Peter Turner, and the General Manager of that branch travelled to the UK in May/June this year'. I could simply answer no and save the member opposite the embarrassment of highlighting to this parliament her abhorrent error but, in the interests of correcting the record, I point out that the member for Taylor has not only got the months wrong and the maths wrong but also the person wrong—wrong, wrong, wrong.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is a personal explanation.

Mr FOLEY: This is not a personal explanation: it is a ministerial statement.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will remain silent and let the chair put its points of view. I ask the minister who has been given leave of the House to make a personal explanation

to make sure that it is a personal explanation and not stray down the path he has taken.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Thank you, sir. The member for Taylor yesterday told the House that she had received a written answer from me.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement, then, sir.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The member for Taylor yesterday asked me whether—and I quote from her question—'the Executive Director of the Enterprise and Vocational Education Branch (Mr Peter Turner) and the General Manager of that branch travelled to the UK in May/June this year'. I could simply answer no and save the member opposite the embarrassment of highlighting to this parliament her abhorrent error. But, in the interests of correcting the record, I must point out that the member for Taylor has not only got the months and the maths wrong but she also has the person wrong—wrong, wrong and wrong again!

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I certainly did listen: you check it. The member for Taylor yesterday told the House that she had received a written answer from me in regard to this question; a written answer in response to a question from the parliamentary estimates which she says states that 'a visit to the UK by the Executive Director of the Enterprise and Vocational Education Branch in May/June cost \$6 024'. The trip to which the member for Taylor is referring was made by Dr Geoff Wood, a respected long-serving member of my department. Dr Wood is the Executive Director of the Office of Vocational Education and Training and has been with my department for 27 years. He does not hold the position of Director, Enterprise and Vocational Education. I quote from my answer to estimates as follows:

The Executive Director, Vocational Education and Training, May-June 2000, \$6 024: UK, Netherlands, France, study tour to investigate training and related issues in the UK and the Netherlands.

In the year since the Enterprise and Vocational Education Unit has existed, its Director has undertaken two overseas trips. As I told this parliament yesterday, a police investigation is currently under way. It would be imprudent of me to further comment during such an inquiry. It is a shame that poor and shabby judgment passes into this place with a member able to impugn without real evidence the name of any individual. First, the member should at least make an attempt to get her facts absolutely straight, and in this instance she has failed to undertake even the basic required reading: the wrong public servant was named in this place by the member. The name of the Director of Enterprise and Vocational Education was quite deliberately supplied by the member for Taylor in an attempt to draw media attention to this matter which, as this place knows, is still the subject of a police investigation.

I can clarify for the House that the Department of Education, Training and Employment, with some 38 000 employees, does send its staff both interstate and overseas. It does so to ensure that our system stays abreast of world-class developments. The Director of Enterprise and Vocational Education and his general manager are but two of the thousands of public servants who travelled on official duties during the last financial year. I am deeply perturbed by the calculated actions of the member for Taylor in this instance. The community expects that all members in this place act

responsibly in these matters, and in this regard the member for Taylor has dismally failed that basic test.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): Today, I rise to talk about the announced retirement of my friend and colleague the member for Colton. I read in the *Advertiser* on Saturday that the member for Colton, Mr Steve Condous, has announced his retirement from state politics at the next election. I remember attending an assembly at Adelaide High School where I was a student when we had the first Greek Australian Lord Mayor of any Australian capital city (if my research is correct) speak to us. On that day, 600 of the 1 000 students present at that assembly were of Greek Australian background. I say to the member for Colton that on that day we were very proud to see that South Australians had embraced a person such as Steve Condous as Lord Mayor, not only because of his ability to do the job but also because of his background.

Steve is the son of Greek immigrants from the island of Kastellorizon, a small island in Greece close to Turkey. This famous little island has produced a huge number of members of parliament in Australia.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: No, I am not, but there must be something in the water. Steve Condous along with other members of parliament, such as Nick Bolkus and lord mayors such as Alfred Huang, have broken barriers for migrants in South Australia and, indeed, Australia. Their contribution has been great, having made it possible for people such as I and other first and second generation Australians to take an active part in public office.

When Steve Condous was starting out, it was at a time when migrants were not readily accepted into positions of public office. Steve did it tough. He did it before it became acceptable, before multiculturalism was accepted as it is today. I do not always agree with Steve's policies within the Liberal Party, but he is a person of integrity. He has fought hard for his electorate and I am glad that he has served in the parliament as the member for Colton. I am sure that being the first member of parliament in this House of Greek origin is a huge honour for him, and the Greek community is entitled to be proud of him—as is the Australian community.

He comes from a good working-class background, growing up around the west end of Adelaide near Sturt Street. While he has been in public office, he and his wife Angela have done a lot of work for charities. I will be sad to see him go. Some members of parliament are probably shocked to hear me making this speech, saying something nice—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: It would be completely different if he renominated. Some members are probably surprised to hear me saying these things about the member for Colton, but it is important that sometimes political opponents come together on common ground. The common ground here is that I wish Steve and Angela Condous all the very best in their retirement. I am sure they will not be out of public life altogether. I am sure that Steve will be working very hard to ensure the election of a Liberal member for Colton at the next election—and I will be working very hard at that time to elect Paul Caica. That is the type of person Steve is: he is very

loyal to his political party, although in this House he stands up for what he believes in. He has fierce principles in which he believes and by which he stands—sometimes right and sometimes wrong in my opinion, but he is never afraid to voice his opinions. That is something in a member of parliament which I respect. Now that he is retiring, we can say nice things about the member for Colton. I wish him well. I wish Angela and his daughter all the very best, and I hope that he enjoys his retirement.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): It is good to hear nice things being said about the member for Colton, especially as it is coming from the opposition. Today we had a historic meeting: a joint sitting of the two houses for the purpose of choosing a Senate replacement as a result of the sudden retirement of Senator John Quirke. A choice was made by a joint sitting of both the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly. According to convention, the joint sitting chose a member of the Labor Party—and rightly so. We all know what happened in 1975 when that convention was not followed. Today, there was only one nomination and, according to convention, Mr Geoffrey Frederick Buckland was chosen to represent this state in the federal parliament as a Senator for South Australia.

I certainly support that convention, as well as the choice of the joint sitting of this parliament. I cannot say I know Mr Buckland, but I do know that he is well respected in the labour movement and as a union official. Obviously the Labor Party regards him as a worthy choice, and I respect that. What surprises me is that that joint sitting took only four minutes to fill a Senate vacancy for South Australia. I applaud the member for Peake for coming up and saying nice things about the retirement of my friend Steve Condous, but I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition and the present member for Playford could say something about the Hon. John Quirke. I have been a member of this place since 1994, and I knew John Quirke before that, but not one opposition member said a word about Senator John Quirke.

Ms Key: He's in Canberra!

Mr SCALZI: He is in Canberra, but opposition members have spoken about other members in Canberra. I understand that the member for Hart supported him; I would have expected him to come up today and say a few words about someone who was so close to being Deputy Leader of the Labor Party but, no, that did not happen.

I knew John Quirke when he was the member for Playford after Terry McRae, but I also knew him before I became a member, when I was a teacher at Ingle Farm High School. During the amalgamation I know how hard he fought to make sure that the students in that area got the best resources possible for their school at Valley View. I know he had the respect of the community. I would have thought that the member for Playford would say that. I was therefore surprised that no-one felt it sufficiently important to say a few words about John Quirke. I certainly wish him well in his retirement with his family, and I wish Geoffrey Buckland well.

I want to bring to the attention of the House another matter, which is no reflection on John Quirke or Geoff Buckland. As we move towards the celebration of the centenary of Federation—100 years of one of the most successful democracies in the modern era—perhaps we could also reflect that we have two different sets of laws for members of parliament at state and federal level. At a state level the laws allow members of both the House of Assembly

and the Legislative Council to hold more than one citizenship, whilst members at a federal level are prohibited from so doing by section 44 of the Australian Constitution. Surely, whether they be state or federal, members of parliament should have the same obligations under the Constitution of Australia. It appears to me inconsistent, if not hypocritical, for many members of both chambers to demand it of the replacement but not of themselves.

Time expired.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I want to speak today about the issue of expiation fees that have been imposed, it seems only on a number of young people, in relation to failure to carry concession cards or failure to purchase a ticket on a train. I might be wrong in pointing out that this applies to young people particularly but, having talked with a number of my colleagues, I know that all of them have had representations made to them only from young people, who have been fined in what they consider to be very inappropriate circumstances.

I think we all recognise that people will avoid paying fares. Someone from Melbourne on the radio last night said that he had not paid any fares since there had been no 'connies' on the trams, and he thought that 80 per cent of other people did not, either. However, my constituents are well aware that recently there has been a major campaign cracking down on people not carrying their concession cards or not paying their fares on public transport, and this is quite appropriate. They told me that they have therefore been very careful to do the right thing, but circumstances have conspired against three people who have come to me with a problem.

Tanya Christopher had only a \$5 note when she got on the train. She had not realised that the machines did not take notes, so when she arrived at Adelaide station she approached a transit guard and asked whether, although she only had a note, she could pay her fare then. He asked to see her purse to verify her story, found that that was correct and directed her to the transit police, who issued an expiation fee of \$160 plus the \$7 victims of crime levy.

Then, there was Samantha O'Neil, who is only 15 years of age. She was going to visit her grandparents. She got to the Noarlunga central station, which is a large station where a ticket box is usually operating, to find that the box was closed. She had a \$5 note but did not have time to race quite some distance upstairs to the interchange, where a bus driver may have been able to sell her a ticket. She was aware that her grandparents were waiting for her, did not want to cause them concern, and therefore got on the train. Again, she approached an inspector and said that she only had a \$5 note and asked whether she could buy a ticket. She also was issued with an expiation fee. In both cases when a review has been requested of the Passenger Transport Board it has been declined.

Kristen Hynes from Hackham West, who is 16, was a little more fortunate in terms of the outcome of the review. She had problems with a machine malfunctioning. She was able to demonstrate this to the transit guard, but she still got a notice. Fortunately, that one was withdrawn.

All my constituents who have approached me about this have been very angry, and they have particularly raised the issue of the messages that are being sent to young people about what is important in their our society and whether they are treated fairly. They point out that, if a driver of a car fails to carry a licence, they have 24 hours to produce it. They ask

why students and other concession holders should not also have 24 hours to produce the necessary documentation.

They also pointed out the inequity of some of the fines that have been imposed. The father of Kristen Hynes pointed out that he had been issued with a speeding ticket which was only slightly more than the cost of her not being able to purchase a ticket on the train. So, I had a look at some of the expiation fees under the Road Traffic Act, and I discovered that failing to comply with a direction of a member of the Police Force under various regulations of the Road Traffic Act incurs a fine of \$120. A dangerous practice such as driving a motor vehicle that is not equipped with a seat belt incurs a fine of \$130. Failing to stop for a red traffic light attracts a \$200 fine. There is no equity in the scale of expiation fees.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): This morning I had the honour of attending the memorial ceremony for the Hon. David Tonkin, Premier of South Australia from 1979 to 1982. I must say that I was very pleased to be able to attend the ceremony. In fact, it was a state celebration of David's life and achievements. At the outset, in the period prior to the commencement of the ceremony, the Zephyr String Quartet played a variety of numbers from Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. It was during the ceremony that we learnt that David had a great love of music, and he was always very much to the fore in attending orchestral performances. Obviously these were some of the numbers that the family chose to indicate David's particular likes in the classical music field.

The ceremony was led by David's brother-in-law (the brother of Mrs Prue Tonkin), Dr Christopher Juttner. It was interesting to hear how Dr Juttner first met David when he was courting Prue. David apparently had a cycle that was partly motor-powered but it took him some 2½ hours to travel from Adelaide to the Barossa to visit Prue. As Dr Juttner said, the trip took only an hour by train and, as a four or five year old, he could never work out why David did not catch the train. But I guess there was something in true love way back then.

The Premier, John Olsen, spoke about David's outstanding contribution to politics, and I guess it does not hurt us to be reminded of some of the things that we will always remember Dr Tonkin for. It was under his administration that we got the O-Bahn; we also got the international air terminal; we got the new Moores law courts. We also had the abolition of death duties during Dr Tonkin's time and the abolition of land tax on the principal place of residence, as well as a multitude of other achievements during those three years. Certainly I remember when David Tonkin highlighted South Australia as the central state and, by golly, we advanced significantly during that time.

Dr Charles Akkermans spoke on David's outstanding contribution to the ophthalmological profession, and he was a fellow ophthalmologist with Dr Tonkin in earlier years. Again, it was very interesting to hear some of the reports on how David had a great love for his patients and looked after them in a way that only he could.

The former Deputy Premier of South Australia, the Hon. Roger Goldsworthy, also spoke about David's outstanding contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and, in fact, Roger read a letter from a member of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara, and that letter certainly praised David Tonkin for the work that he did in helping to set up the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands. That will be a lasting memorial to Dr Tonkin.

In addition to that, there was a performance by his daughter-in-law, Rosalind Martin. She sang an excellent cantata entitled *Die Seele ruht in Jesu Handen*. Certainly again it highlighted David's great love of music.

Then the Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, gave a dissertation on his experiences with David Tonkin, both when David was Premier and when he was Treasurer, and during another time when John Howard had to stay in South Australia for a period of time to recover from an ear operation and he stayed with David and Prue Tonkin. Certainly he spoke very much from the heart.

Finally, Dr Christopher Juttner summarised thoughts from all members of David Tonkin's family, and that was wonderful.

I want to say a very big thank you to David Tonkin for all that he did for South Australia.

Mr HILL (Kaurua): Over the last couple of years the government has, and its ministers in particular have, taken a great deal of pleasure, I suppose, in saying that the Labor Party has no policy. Over the last couple of days it is now saying we have bad policy, and on some occasions, and particularly in the case of the Minister for Water Resources, he said we have Liberal policy. I want to say to the government front benchers that they should work out what their attack lines are—we have no policy, we have bad policy or we have Liberal policy. It may well be that we have Liberal policy and it is also bad policy—I would agree with that—but you cannot say that we have no policy and that we have bad policy at the same time.

The fact is that this weekend the Labor Party will be having its four yearly policy convention, which will lay down a platform for the party over the next four years. It is a process we have been going through for a long time indeed, and we will be making decisions about what our base platform is. It will not give all the detail, it will not give all the intricacies and it will not give all the funding measures, but it will give the general state of the Labor Party's policy and the direction we are heading.

Clearly there will be times when what we say will replicate things that the government is doing because there are areas of overlap. There is a reasonable amount of consensus in our community about certain things. The Minister for Water Resources attacked the Labor Party because we agree with water catchment areas, water catchment authorities and having a water plan. So what? I said in a radio interview, in response to a question from a journalist, 'Yes, there is consensus in South Australia about these things.' Of all the issues, we need consensus on one issue, and that is to do with water. I said, 'That is particularly so in relation to the River Murray.'

I point out to the House, as I did to the journalist and to the public generally, that the Select Committee on the Murray River has been working on a consensus basis trying to get a strategy and a clear understanding about the issues to do with the River Murray so that we can move ahead as South Australia—not as Labor or Liberal or National Party, but as a collective group. So it is not unusual that our policy would have elements in it which are equivalent to the policy ideas that the government has been working on over the last few years. I think that is quite sensible.

However, because we have a consensus attitude to issues like the River Murray does not mean we should not be asking questions. It does not mean we should not be putting the government's approach under scrutiny. So I think there are

a number of issues that have come out of the last couple of days' announcements to do with the Snowy Mountains diversion scheme and Prime Minister Howard's announcement about salinity and other water-related issues; a range of questions needs to be asked and the government needs to give the answers not only to the opposition but to the community.

The first question I pose to the government is: does the government support the diminution of the role of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission by the establishment of a commonwealth natural resources commission, as reported in the press over the last couple of days? I have already asked in question time today what the government's view is in relation to the New South Wales-Victoria Snowy River deal. Does the government support what Senator Minchin said, which is that South Australia will be a beneficiary, or does it support what Senator Hill said, which is that he has reservations about what the agreement will do in terms of water availability for the Murray in South Australia? What is its attitude to that? Does it still support the position that was put when the Premier said that he had a veto over that issue? The *Advertiser* of 17 January this year stated:

Premier John Olsen said yesterday the state government had been given the right to block Victorian plans to take Murray water for the Snowy River.

Yesterday, when I raised that proposition in the media, Minister Brindal accused me of not knowing what I was talking about and offered to give me a lecture on the issue.

Does Deputy Premier Rob Kerin still agree that the move is one of madness and is dangerous? That is what he is quoted as saying on 21 December 1999 as follows:

SA Deputy Premier Rob Kerin described the move as madness and dangerous.

That is the issue of diverting water into the Snowy scheme. So what is the position of the government in relation to the Snowy-Darling scheme? It has had every possible position you can imagine on that matter.

Thirdly, what undertakings in relation to the River Murray have been given to the South Australian government in return for its agreement to corporatise the Snowy Mountains Authority? In the press on the weekend the Premier indicated that he would support that corporatisation.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am pleased to briefly participate and I, like the member for Goyder, attended the memorial today for the late David Tonkin and I thought it was an excellent function to attend. It was very pleasing that due recognition has been given to the outstanding public contribution that he made to the advancement of South Australia.

The matter which I want to talk about today is the great deal of debate and discussion about good environmental practices and the protection of the environment and, of course, we are spending a lot of money on land care across Australia, and in particular in South Australia. The issue has attracted the support of a great number of well meaning and dedicated people.

One of the things that concerns me is that we have the ability today to encourage people to use the latest technology in dry land farming practices, with minimum tillage and stubble retention and, of course, with the improvement to water systems in the pastoral country. However, one of the things that is impeding the greater implementation of those processes is the lack of resources of the people involved in agriculture.

I believe the time has come when some of the money used in Landcare should be made more directly available to the actual practitioners in the agricultural sector, that is, the dry land farmers. I suggest that they be given the ability to purchase some of this equipment. It is pretty expensive and the benefits of it are still being assessed in some circles, but it has a great deal of potential to assist, particularly in areas involving short growing periods and the need to retain stubble.

I had the pleasure recently whilst in Saskatchewan—a large agricultural province in Canada—to look at two examples of this minimum tillage system and the new machinery being used. I was pleased to be taken there by a member of the legislature in Saskatchewan, who was also a farmer and was aware of my interest in agricultural practices. Having discussions with those people, visiting the factories and seeing the farmers applying the technology reinforced my view that some of the Landcare money should be used to help with the purchase of this machinery so that farmers are able to utilise this new technology far sooner than they could without financial assistance. At the end of the day, we want to protect the resource for the next generation and to ensure that productivity is at maximum level.

Of course, the same thing applies to the pastoral areas. If we could assist the pastoralists and others with greater taxation concessions and grants from the Heritage Fund with a view to improving their water systems and providing adequate fencing for the industry, I believe that we would be acting very responsibly in an environmental fashion. I believe that these two issues need to be addressed quickly and efficiently. There is also an urgent need to give greater protection to the pastoralists to engage in other activities, as well as a need for them to have greater security over the tenure of their leases. I believe that pastoral leases should be continuous and should not expire.

Last Friday, while driving around my electorate, I was listening to the ABC as I normally do (I normally listen to 639, which covers my constituency) and I was amazed at the comments made by Randall Ashbourne. I thought that the ABC, as a publicly funded organisation, was supposed to give a balanced view: to be fair, accurate, and to be informed. The information that Mr Ashbourne gave over the radio that day was absolutely untrue; it was mischievous, it was inaccurate, and it was biased to the Labor Party.

Time expired.

ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS BILL

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to make provisions relating to the safety, performance, energy efficiency and labelling of electrical products; to repeal the Electrical Products Act 1988; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: 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 purpose of this Bill is to replace the *Electrical Products Act 1988* with a new, updated Act, that reforms requirements for the labelling of electrical products and makes necessary administrative changes.

The Bill enables Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) to be introduced for electrical products sold in South Australia. The introduction of MEPS has been agreed to by the

Australian and New Zealand Minerals and Energy Council (ANZMEC), and is also needed in order for Australia to meet greenhouse gas emission targets set out in the Kyoto Protocol to which it is a signatory.

The Bill provides that a standard, or part of a standard, may, by proclamation, be declared to be a safety and performance standard or an energy performance standard. Once this has been done, a trader must not sell an electrical product to which a safety and performance standard applies unless it has been labelled so as to indicate compliance with that standard. Additionally, a trader must not sell certain electrical products unless they are labelled so as to indicate their energy efficiency. These requirements are largely equivalent to those found in the *Electrical Products Act 1988*.

The Bill introduces an obligation on a trader not to sell an electrical product to which an energy performance standard applies unless it has been registered so as to indicate compliance with that standard.

The Bill creates various offences concerning the attachment of labels to electrical products without proper authority, and the provision of information conflicting with that under the Act, or which is likely to mislead a purchaser or prospective purchaser.

The Bill enables the Technical Regulator to prohibit the sale or use, or both sale and use, of electrical products that are, or are likely to become, unsafe in use and to require traders to recall such products and render them safe or, if this is not practicable, to refund the purchase price on return of the product. Such a prohibition has the effect of temporarily exempting the electrical product from the operation of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* of the Commonwealth and the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997* of the Commonwealth. The provisions of the Bill reflect certain regulations made under the South Australian mutual recognition legislation on 23 September 1999. They are included in the Bill as assistance to those affected by the Bill. By providing for this, the Bill aims to ensure that the best practicable procedures to deal with unsafe electrical products are in place while, at the same time, honouring obligations arising from mutual recognition legislation.

Another aim of the Bill is to achieve administrative efficiencies and bring the *Electrical Products Act* into closer alignment with the *Electricity Act 1996*. It is proposed to transfer various administrative powers from the Minister to the Technical Regulator established under the *Electricity Act 1996*. These powers were originally exercised by ETSA and transferred to the Minister in 1995, following changes in the functions and structure of ETSA. These powers include the authorisation of the labelling of electrical products, the prohibition of the sale or use of unsafe electrical products and arrangements for the testing of electrical products.

It is also proposed to update the Act by incorporating administrative, reporting, enforcement and evidentiary provisions typically found in comparable legislation. These include clarification of the powers of authorised persons appointed by the Technical Regulator to perform functions on behalf of the Technical Regulator and power for the Technical Regulator to delegate powers and exempt persons from the Act or specified provisions of the Act.

I commend the bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

PART 1: PRELIMINARY

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Interpretation

Subclause (1) contains the definitions of words and phrases proposed for the purposes of the Bill. Included in the definitions is the definition of an electrical product. An electrical product is—

- an appliance operated by electricity; or
- a wire, cable, insulator or fitting designed for use in connection with the conveyance of electricity; or
- a meter or instrument for measuring the consumption of electricity, potential difference, or any other characteristic of an electrical circuit.

This definition is the same as the definition of an electrical product under the *Electrical Products Act 1988* (the repealed Act).

The following definitions are also carried over from the repealed Act:

- corresponding law
- label
- public notice
- to sell
- trader.

Clause 4: Standards—availability to public

This clause provides that a copy of a standard referred to or incorporated in a proclamation or regulation must be kept available for inspection by members of the public (without charge and during normal office hours) at the office of the Technical Regulator.

PART 2: SAFETY, PERFORMANCE AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS

Clauses 6 to 8 contain the provisions that set out the regulatory scheme relating to electrical products.

Clause 5: Declarations for purposes of this Part

This clause provides that the Governor may, by proclamation, declare for the purposes of proposed Part 2—

- that a provision of clause applies to a class of electrical products;
- that a standard or part of a standard is (with or without modification) a safety and performance standard or an energy performance standard applicable to a class of electrical products (a safety and performance standard or an energy performance standard).

Clause 6: Trader must not sell declared electrical products unless labelled or registered

This clause provides for offences that a trader may commit in relation to the sale of declared electrical products not labelled or registered in accordance with the regulatory requirements. The maximum penalty that may be imposed for any such offence is a fine of \$5 000.

It is an offence for a trader to sell an electrical product of a class to which subclause (1) applies unless it is labelled so as to indicate its compliance with applicable safety and performance standards—

- under the authority of the Technical Regulator in accordance with the regulations; or
- under an authority conferred by a corresponding law in accordance with that corresponding law.

It is an offence for a trader to sell an electrical product of a class to which subclause (2) applies unless it is registered so as to indicate its compliance with applicable energy performance standards—

- in accordance with the regulations; or
- in accordance with a corresponding law.

It is an offence for a trader to sell an electrical product of a class to which subclause (3) applies unless it is labelled so as to indicate its energy efficiency—

- under the authority of the Technical Regulator in accordance with the regulations; or
- under an authority conferred by a corresponding law in accordance with that corresponding law.

No offence is committed—

- under subclause (1), (2) or (3) if the sale takes place within six months after the making of the proclamation declaring the subclause to apply to the relevant class of electrical products;
- against subclause (1) or (3) if the sale takes place within six months after a change in the requirements as to the form or contents of the label occurs and the electrical product is labelled in accordance with the requirements formerly applicable to it.

Clause 6 does not apply to the sale of second-hand goods.

Clause 7: Offences relating to labels

This clause provides for offences that persons (including traders) may commit in relation to labels and electrical products.

It is an offence for a person to—

- affix, without proper authority, a label to which clause (1) or (3) applies (or which could reasonably be taken to be such a label) to an electrical product;
- sell an electrical product to which such a label has been affixed knowing that the label was affixed without proper authority.

The maximum penalty for such an offence is a fine of \$10 000.

It is an offence for a trader to display on or near an electrical product that is being offered or exposed for sale by the trader a sign, label or notice that—

- contains information conflicting with the information contained in a label affixed to the electrical product for the purposes of this Bill or a corresponding law; or
- is likely to mislead a purchaser or prospective purchaser as to matters to which information contained in any such label relates.

The maximum penalty for such an offence is a fine of \$5 000.

It is an offence for a person, while an electrical product is being offered or exposed for sale by a trader, to alter, interfere with or obscure from view a label affixed to the electrical product for the purposes of this Bill or a corresponding law. The maximum penalty for such an offence is a fine of \$2 500, expiable on payment of a fee of \$210.

It is an offence for a trader to offer or expose for sale an electrical product if a label affixed to the electrical product for the purposes of this Bill or a corresponding law is not readily legible by a purchaser or prospective purchaser. The maximum penalty for such an offence is a fine of \$2 500, expiable on payment of a fee of \$210.

This clause does not apply to the sale of second-hand goods.

Clause 8: Prohibition of sale or use of unsafe electrical products
If, in the opinion of the Technical Regulator, an electrical product of a particular class is or is likely to become unsafe in use, the Technical Regulator may—

- prohibit the sale or use (or both sale and use) of electrical products of that class; and
- require traders who have sold the product in the State to take specified action to recall the product from use and take specified action to render the product safe or refund the purchase price on return of the product.

A person who contravenes or fails to comply with any such prohibition or requirement is guilty of an offence (maximum penalty—\$10 000).

Clause 9: Mutual recognition

The purpose of this clause is to prevent clause 8 from operating contrary to mutual recognition principles.

An electrical product, the sale of which is prohibited by public notice given at any time under clause on the ground that the product is or is likely to become unsafe in use, is declared—

- to be goods to which section 15 of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* of the Commonwealth applies; and
- to be exempt from the operation of the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997* of the Commonwealth.

The exemption from the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* of the Commonwealth and the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997* of the Commonwealth of an electrical product pursuant to this clause has effect for a period beginning on the day on which the public notice imposing the prohibition is published and ending 12 months later or on the revocation of the prohibition, whichever occurs first.

PART 3: ENFORCEMENT

Clause 10: Appointment of authorised persons

This clause provides for the appointment of authorised officers by the Technical Regulator for the purposes of the proposed Act.

Clause 11: General powers

This clause provides for general powers of authorised persons for the purposes of the proposed Act. A person is not required to give information or produce a document under this clause if the answer to the question or the contents of the document would tend to incriminate the person of an offence.

Clause 12: Power to seize electrical products

An authorised person who reasonably suspects that a trader has, on particular premises, stocks of an electrical product prohibited from sale under clause may enter and search the premises and seize and remove any stocks of the electrical product found on the premises. Entry to a place of residence for the purposes of this clause may only be made in pursuance of a warrant issued by a magistrate.

The Magistrates Court may, on application by the Technical Regulator, order that electrical products seized under this clause be forfeited to the Crown and disposed of as the Technical Regulator thinks fit.

Clause 13: Hindering or obstructing authorised person

It is an offence for a person to hinder or obstruct an authorised person or anyone else engaged in the administration of this proposed Act or the exercise of powers under this proposed Act (maximum penalty—\$5 000).

PART 4: MISCELLANEOUS

Clause 14: Power of exemption

The Technical Regulator may exempt a person or class of persons from this proposed Act on terms and conditions the Technical Regulator considers appropriate. It is an offence for a person or class of persons in whose favour an exemption is given to fail to comply with the conditions of the exemption (maximum penalty—\$5 000).

Clause 15: Statutory declarations

A person may be required by the Technical Regulator to verify information required to be furnished to the Technical Regulator by statutory declaration.

Clause 16: False or misleading information

It is an offence for a person to make a statement that is false or misleading in a material particular in information furnished under this proposed Act. There is a variable penalty for such an offence. If the person made the statement knowing that it was false or misleading, there is a maximum fine of \$10 000 but, in any other case, the maximum fine is \$5 000.

Clause 17: General defence

It is a defence to a charge of an offence against this proposed Act if the defendant proves that the offence was not committed intentionally and did not result from any failure on the part of the defendant to take reasonable care to avoid the commission of the offence.

Clause 18: Offences by bodies corporate

If a body corporate is guilty of an offence against this proposed Act, each director (within the meaning of the *Corporations Law*) of the body corporate is, subject to the above general defence, guilty of an offence and liable to the same penalty as may be imposed for the principal offence.

Clause 19: Continuing offence

A person convicted of an offence against a provision of this proposed Act in respect of a continuing act or omission is liable to an additional penalty for each day during which the act or omission continued of not more than one-tenth of the maximum penalty prescribed for that offence. If the act or omission continues after the conviction, the person is guilty of a further offence against the provision and liable to a further additional penalty for each day during which the act or omission continued after the conviction of not more than one-tenth of the maximum penalty prescribed for the offence.

Clause 20: Evidence

In any legal proceedings, a certificate executed by the Technical Regulator certifying as to a matter relating to a delegation, the appointment of an authorised person or a notice given or published under this proposed Act constitutes proof, in the absence of proof to the contrary, of the matters so certified.

Evidence of the contents of a standard referred to or incorporated in a proclamation or regulation may be given in any legal proceedings by production of a document apparently certified by the Technical Regulator to be a true copy of the standard.

Clause 21: Service

This clause provides for the service of notices or other documents under this proposed Act.

Clause 22: Delegation

The Technical Regulator may delegate his or her powers under this proposed Act to a person or body of persons that is, in the Technical Regulator's opinion, competent to exercise the relevant powers.

Clause 23: Confidential information

It is an offence for a person to intentionally divulge, or use for the person's own gain, information of a commercially sensitive or private confidential nature obtained by the person in the course of administering or enforcing this proposed Act unless—

- the person is authorised or required to do so by law; or
- the person has the consent of the person from whom the information was obtained or to whom the information relates; or
- it is in connection with the administration or enforcement of this proposed Act or of a corresponding law.

The maximum penalty for such an offence is a fine of \$5 000.

Clause 24: Immunity from personal liability for Technical Regulator, authorised person, etc.

No personal liability attaches to the Technical Regulator, a delegate of the Technical Regulator, an authorised person or any officer or employee of the Crown engaged in the administration or enforcement of this Act for an act or omission in good faith in the exercise or discharge, or purported exercise or discharge, of a power or function under this Act. A liability that would, but for this clause lie against a person, lies instead against the Crown.

Clause 25: Annual report

The Technical Regulator must, within three months after the end of each financial year, deliver to the Minister a report on the Technical Regulator's administration of this Act during that financial year. The Minister must cause a copy of the report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament within 12 sitting days after receipt of the report.

Clause 26: Regulations

The Governor may make such regulations as are contemplated by, or necessary or expedient for, the purposes of this proposed Act.

SCHEDULE: Repeal and Transitional Provisions

The *Electrical Products Act 1988* is repealed.

The Schedule also provides for transitional matters.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

RACING (TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Racing (Controlling Authorities) Amendment Act 2000. Read a first time.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: 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 *Racing (Controlling Authorities) Amendment Act 2000* came into operation on 1 October 2000. Functions previously assigned to the Racing Industry Development Authority (RIDA) were reassigned by that Act to the Gaming Supervisory Authority (GSA) and the Liquor and Gaming Commissioner.

In accordance with Rules under Part 4 of the Racing Act bookmakers have lodged bonds with RIDA and its predecessors, the Bookmakers Licensing Board and the Betting Control Board.

This Bill overcomes a transitional problem with the bonds. It is necessary for the GSA to be a party to the bonds if they are to remain effective. The amendment achieves that result and avoids the alternative of requiring the lodging of new bonds.

Explanation of Clauses

*Clause 1: Short title**Clause 2: Commencement*

This clause provides for the amendment to commence on the day on which the *Racing (Controlling Authorities) Amendment Act* came into operation (1 October 2000).

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 50—Transitional provisions—RIDA

A new subsection is added to the transitional provisions included in the *Racing (Controlling Authorities) Amendment Act* relating to RIDA. The new subsection provides that bonds lodged under the rules relating to bookmakers will be taken to have been lodged with the Gaming Supervisory Authority.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 10 October. Page 110.)

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): As with my colleagues who have spoken before me in this debate, I am also delighted to support this motion. Indeed, during the opening address by His Excellency the Governor I felt a great sense of pride in both the achievements of South Australia over the past few years and in the vision for the immediate and medium term future for the people of this state. However, before I move into the detail of the Governor's address, along with many of my colleagues I also express my gratitude on the way in which our Governor and Lady Neal perform their duties throughout the state. They regularly travel to regional areas, and their ability to project their vast experience and positive attitude into every community which they visit is outstanding. I have had the pleasure of sharing their company on quite a few occasions within my electorate and am looking forward to their next visit in the near future. Indeed, I believe they will be visiting as part of the 150th celebrations for the town of Naracoorte within the next few weeks.

His Excellency's address last Wednesday was wide ranging and certainly highlighted a better future for South Australia than our immediate past. Indeed, for me, the theme of his address was that we have climbed the mountain, as difficult as that has been, and now we have greater opportunities before us for having done so. Let us not forget that, by the time the South Australian electorate passed judgment on the previous Labor government in 1993, that administration

had blocked the path to the future of South Australia with that mountain—that mountain of debt. There was no going around it, and there was no going back.

And what was the Labor Party's response at that time? It continued to spend at a rate of a third of a billion dollars a year more than its income. It had created a state debt of \$9 billion, and that did not include the unfunded WorkCover liability of \$276 million or the unfunded superannuation liability of \$4.5 billion, yet it continued to build the mountain at the rate of a third of a billion dollars a year through its profligate spending. The sad reality is that members of the opposition have not learnt from that experience. They come into this chamber time and again and argue that the government of South Australia should be spending more; not just a little more, a lot more—more on teachers, hospital beds, nurses, police, the environment and anything else which takes their fancy from time to time.

However, this week we read that they have an answer. They say they will impose a fair tax; they will tax the rich. That is what they will do: they will tax the rich. I ask them: are they about to remove the emergency services levy and replace it with a tax on the rich—a wealth tax? The flexibility of their economic gymnastics is fascinating. As irrational and illogical as it might be, the mere fact that they suggest such nonsense with a straight face is fascinating. I do not wish to dwell too long on the past. However, it is worth noting that history is one of the best teachers available to us and, even though we quip that it is easy to have 2020 vision in hindsight, we can indeed use the past to direct us away from mistakes of the future, so long as we do not ignore or deny the past.

The Governor acknowledged our response to the past. He acknowledged the lease of our electricity assets and highlighted the fact that this financial year not only will that single action have had the effect of removing the shackles of debt but also it will give a direct net benefit of more than \$100 million to the State's budget. That is, when the loss of income is deducted from the interest savings, \$100 million is left in credit to be used for other government purposes. I emphasise that that \$100 million plus annual benefit to South Australia is merely the quantifiable benefits to the government's budgetary position. It in no way takes into account the intangible benefits to the wider South Australian economy and the general public.

I would argue that the real benefits to South Australia are flowing because of our new found debt situation, our increased credit rating up to AA+, and the new confidence which investors (both local and offshore) have in our economy. Potential investors used to look at South Australia and say, 'Someone, somehow, some day has to repay that debt and, if I invest there, it could be me; sorry, I will invest somewhere else where that debt does not occur.' It is quite simple: it is a competitive world and the flow of information is universal.

Just as we were seen as a poor investment option, we are now seen as a good option. This is one of the reasons why South Australia has outperformed the rest of the nation in recent times. It is thanks to the bold initiatives of this government that now more South Australians are in employment than at any time in our history. As the Governor stated, in August 2000 a total of 683 300 South Australians were in employment. In percentage terms, we now enjoy the lowest rate of unemployment since July 1990.

The opposition and the Democrats worked as hard as they could to block the initiative to reduce the debt burden. They

continually lamented that it was flawed policy and that we would be worse off financially. I ask where are those doomsayers now who were telling the community that leasing the power assets would cost the budget? Where are those who would have us believe that 'sorry' is an easy word to say with their apologies for the misleading claptrap which they were only too happy to peddle around for nothing but base political opportunism? Is it not time that they were honest with the South Australian public, especially those thousands of South Australians who now have jobs and an opportunity to share in the future of this state?

The \$5.3 billion return from the electricity asset disposals has turned around our economy; that is indisputable. Now we have a chance to build a better South Australia where all can share and enjoy the fruits of that success. There are many other positives in the employment arena also as a result of the initiatives taken by this government. One which stands out to me is the turning around of the unfunded WorkCover liability which, as I stated, was \$276 million in 1993 to a position where from 1 July this year WorkCover premiums were reduced by about 7.5 per cent. Not only has this already provided an impetus to employment growth but also there is an expectation of being able to have further reductions in the future. This compares with the occurrence of blow-outs in similar schemes in some of the eastern states. As I have said, it is a competitive world and we stand to increase significantly our relative competitiveness as a result of careful management of our WorkCover scheme, whilst still providing for injured workers and their families.

Unemployment was cited as one of the major concerns at the last election, and it is indeed gratifying to see that our policies have had such a positive effect on the unemployment figures in South Australia. Future employment opportunities will also hinge upon the standards attained by our education system. Whilst the Australian Education Union continues its campaign based on inputs, principally salaries, the government seeks to address the needs of the new century by ensuring that our schools meet output standards. Unfortunately, output indicators are anathema to the AEU because they highlight deficiencies. Students and their parents have a right to know that the delivery of schooling will prepare them for their future. They need to be assured that, as they progress through the schooling system, the skills across the range of the curriculum are of at least a benchmark standard.

The Australian Education Union continues to play politics with little regard to measurable educational outcomes. The Governor spoke of the imminent introduction of the South Australian curriculum standards and accountability framework. This will, hopefully, guarantee those rights of students and their parents to know exactly the outcomes that they can expect. Again, as we stride ahead, focusing on primary educational skills, as well as the new IT studies, the opposition tries to sabotage our efforts by calling for a return to the policies that deliver high retention rates but nothing else.

One of the disasters of Labor's education policies was the demise of technical training and the misguided belief that a clever country was formed by keeping every student in high school until year 12. With the rebuilding of vocational education and apprenticeship training, at least we have now returned to the situation where young people are able to train for real jobs, which help to build industry in the real economy. This has been achieved at the same time as we have recognised the imperatives of the information age and the importance which information technology will play in all of our futures.

Our schools are now better equipped than ever to deliver information technology training to our young people. Importantly, we have also recognised the opportunities that await our more mature citizens in the field of information technology. The recent release of the Information Economy—Delivering the Future information technology plan for South Australia highlighted the government's commitment to embrace all South Australians in the information technology age. This will allow the cost effective delivery of government and other services to all. I particularly look forward to the time, which I believe is near, when the people of my electorate, no matter how remote, can, via their computer terminal, access the whole range of government services.

In rural areas we have lamented the withdrawal of services, both government and private, over recent years. The most visible example is probably that of banking. Today, many of my constituents do their banking electronically without leaving their office chair. On a daily basis they log onto their local bank and perform virtually all of the functions that are required of them. I had the opportunity during the winter recess to travel. I found it very easy to travel without having to do anything more than walk up to an automatic teller machine anywhere in the world and withdraw cash. Those who think that you need a bank down the street with a plethora of staff to attend to every whim are adopting yesterday's thinking. It was a delivery model that is untenable and unviable in today's environment.

It is essential that more and more South Australians attain the skills to utilise this technology, and I am buoyed, as I travel around my own electorate, to see and hear of this skilling taking place through programs such as Networks for You. A huge range of government services can be delivered by this technology and, for the first time in history, remote will merely be a state of mind, not a state of reality. Rural people previously embraced the telephone as a means of bringing themselves closer to the rest of society. This technology promises so much more.

The Governor talked of our world class health system and I wish to concur with his comments. We continue to provide a health system second to none. We have highly trained health professionals in a full range of disciplines, operating with the latest equipment and medicines to ensure that our communities enjoy the best health care available. An ongoing commitment to capital works has also meant that our hospitals are being refurbished or rebuilt, as the need be, following years of neglect.

We often talk about the cash debt legacy left to the state by Labor, but we should also remember the infrastructure debt left by its lack of concern for our public assets. The opposition makes plenty of noise about the retention of public assets but did little to maintain them whilst in office. Our schools and hospitals, in particular, suffered greatly from the lack of basic maintenance and it will take some years yet to recover from the backlog. In spite of this, as I have just stated, we are able to deliver the services to the public at a world class standard. I do not believe that the public deserves to be misinformed as they are about the state of our health system. Many people, particularly older citizens, worry that the health system will fail them in their time of need and, as we know, this just is not the case. Modern medical practice does not revolve around the long hospitalisations of yesterday, and consequently it is now more important to resource modern equipment than to maintain the numbers of beds which we previously had. This has enabled the delivery of a

greater service to the community, both in quantity and quality terms, than ever before.

Just to illustrate the thoughts of the community, recently in Naracoorte, in my electorate, an unfortunate accident occurred. A bus carrying 20 elderly citizens was involved in a relatively minor accident with a truck. As a result of that accident I understand that 20 occupants of the bus attended at the Naracoorte Hospital and several were admitted to the hospital. The hospital coped admirably with this rather large influx of patients. Most of the patients were treated in the emergency section. However, in a radio interview the next morning with the hospital's Director of Nursing, it was suggested that the hospital might have been under-staffed that morning as a result of the heavy workload it had experienced the day before in having to call in extra staff.

It is just ludicrous that people in our community have so little faith in our emergency systems and our hospital and health system to think that a situation such as that would put such a strain as to impinge on the hospital over the next few days. In fact, it was gratifying to note that the reply to the question from the radio interviewer was, 'No, it was just part of the service that we deliver and things are going along normally.' Even though there might be a perception that our health system is rather lacking we do, in my opinion, provide the best level of care that anyone could receive anywhere in the world.

The Governor said that 'the greatest asset of this state is its people and, in particular, the large number of volunteers.' The Governor noted that next year has been designated as the International Year of the Volunteer. This government has put much stead on the value of volunteerism in the community, and none more so than the Minister for Emergency Services as he often is heard praising the approximately 30 000 volunteers who give of their time in providing emergency cover in the fields of the CFS, SES, the Ambulance Service, Sea Rescue, etc.

The emergency services levy, which has been a matter of some controversy as it has matured from its first inception, does provide a huge benefit to those emergency services and the volunteers who operate in them. Some people would complain about the change in that taxation measure but it is supporting an emergency services system that is delivering high quality service to the people of South Australia at a minimum cost. I certainly commend the work of all the volunteers in the emergency services. I have great pleasure, as I go about my electorate, meeting with members of the various emergency services, particularly when I have the opportunity to present cheques so that they can buy extra equipment and support for their members to use in their very valuable work in the community.

There are a lot of other volunteers in our community who, in some instances, do not get quite the same publicity as the volunteers whom I have just mentioned. Last weekend I had the pleasure of attending the Friends of the Parks forum along with 240 other delegates in my home town of Millicent. A lot of volunteers give many thousands of hours to our parks and, in an address to that forum, the minister noted that it is estimated that about \$6 million worth of volunteer labour a year is given to our national parks system in the form of weed management, trail rehabilitation, signposting walks, etc. That is invaluable.

Volunteers work in our schools and I am aware of a group of retired teachers who provide a volunteer service in outback areas. They travel individually, in small groups or as couples to outback stations and volunteer their time for a few weeks

to help with the teaching of children who live on stations. I know that a lot of parents and grandparents, more particularly, give many hours of volunteer labour to schools, helping to hear children read and with other work in schools. We know that many thousands of hours of volunteer labour goes into our hospitals, providing visitations to people who are unfortunately in hospital.

Of course, one of the great volunteer organisations in this state, and I believe this is where it started, is Meals on Wheels. Every aspect of our society includes volunteerism and it is encouraging that the Governor highlighted that the government will be introducing in this session of parliament the Volunteers Protection Bill to help and protect volunteers as they go about their important work in our community.

I want to talk about the government's environmental record, particularly with reference to waste water. This issue has been fairly topical in recent times and it has long been recognised that the problem of seagrass degradation along metropolitan beaches has been associated significantly with waste water discharge into Gulf St Vincent and, in today's *City Messenger*, quite a few articles touch on that very issue. One of the articles states that a 1997 EPA survey identified that at least 25 per cent of the dieback adjacent to our metropolitan beaches during the last 50 years has been attributed to waste water discharge.

About 90 000 megalitres of waste water is discharged into Gulf St Vincent annually, but the government is part way through a \$210 million environmental improvement program. Among other things, the program is designed to cut that discharge in half and cut the level of discharge of nitrogenous nutrients, which are the specific pollutants that cause the problem with seagrass beds, by a factor of 80 per cent. The government should be commended for its environmental record in turning vast volumes of water to productive use as in Virginia-Two Wells and also in the private system that is piping water from Christies Beach to the Willunga area to be used for horticultural production.

The Governor touched briefly on transport infrastructure and this subject is fairly important to me and to people in my electorate. Today, in answer to a question in the House, the Minister for Employment and Training spoke about the rural or regional areas of South Australia leading the recovery in South Australia in recent years. Everybody knows about the vast increase in the viticulture industry, particularly in my electorate and in a couple of other electorates around the state. There has been a huge increase in production and, as late as last week, an announcement was made of another \$20 million winery to be constructed adjacent to or virtually in the Coonawarra region to crush 7 000 tonnes of grapes per year.

My electorate also has increasing rates of meat processing, and the Deputy Premier, also in answer to a question today, said that one of the problems in the South-East is a shortage of housing. That is a very real problem and it could restrict the rate of growth of some of these industries at the moment and into the future. Even more dramatic in the South-East will be the impact on transport networks and transport infrastructure in the future.

Probably the largest investment occurring in the South-East at the moment and in the entire Greater Green Triangle, which covers the South-East of South Australia and the western district of Victoria, is in forestry, and that is in line with the commonwealth government's 2020 forestry vision statement of a couple of years ago. It called on Australia to increase its production of plantation forest timber by a factor

of three. Prior to the recent increase in afforestation in that region, the South-East of South Australia had about 100 000 hectares of forest, virtually all softwood or pinus timber, but it is estimated that, over the next 10 years, the Greater Green Triangle will be host to another 100 000 to 150 000 hectares, principally blue gum.

It is estimated from discussions that I have had recently with some of the bigger players in the industry that, within 10 years, the Greater Green Triangle area will be producing 3 million tonnes per year of timber, principally for woodchip for export. It is worth noting that, if the object is to ship out 3 million tonnes of timber a year via Portland, one semitrailer would have to pass through to the port of Portland every minute and a half, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I travelled up to Adelaide on Monday evening along the Dukes Highway, which is probably one of the busiest times for traffic travelling backwards and forwards between Adelaide and Melbourne, and I noted that a truck passed me about every minute or less. Consequently, I suggest that, if I were standing still, a truck would pass me less than every two minutes.

I ask members to imagine that number of trucks going into Portland carrying export chips at that rate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. The pressure on our road infrastructure would be such that the infrastructure would fail, and the government has to address our road infrastructure and the future of the rail infrastructure in the South-East over the next few years. That production will come on stream in about 10 years' time and, if we do not plan for it very shortly, we will not be ready when those millions of tonnes of chip start to be moved around.

Another issue which was raised by the Governor and which I would like to talk about is the sale of our power assets. One of the benefits that have come out of the changes to power generation and distribution in Australia is the creation of the national electricity market. It has now opened up that market to private players, and, indeed, it was my pleasure about eight weeks ago to attend the opening of the Ladbroke Grove power station which has been built by Origin Energy (formerly Boral) and which is utilising gas out of the Ladbroke Grove gas field. That site has two gas turbine generators, which are basically aeroplane engines bolted onto the ground to drive the generators and which are producing 40 megawatts of power each. The original proposal was to put in one generator but that was increased to build two generators, and we were told at the opening that the two generators, which have been running for nearly six months, were designed as what are called peaking plants to come on stream when there was a requirement for extra power. They have been running virtually nonstop since they were commissioned.

Also, quite a few proponents wish to install wind farms in the South-East, the South-East being identified as an ideal place not because of the strength of the wind but, rather, because of the consistency of the wind. It does not have to be the windiest place in order to build a wind farm but, rather, it needs constant winds. A briefing of members will be held later this afternoon on this subject, and I am indeed keen to attend it. The proponents of the wind farms do have a problem inasmuch as the power lines between the South-East and the major market here in Adelaide are running to capacity virtually all the time because of the Victorian interconnector; and we will have to address that situation if we are to produce green power in South Australia.

Time expired; debate adjourned.

COPE, Mr S.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In relation to claims in the House earlier today regarding a member of the Premier's office, I can now inform the House that I have since been advised that Simon Cope has registered a web site as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. However, this site has been inactive. Mr Cope, in his enthusiasm, made a personal decision to do this without my knowledge. I have also been advised that he paid for the registration costs out of his own pocket. He has been admonished for his actions, and I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that Simon is well aware that his actions were unacceptable. I have also sought an assurance that no other member of the Premier's office has engaged in any similar activity—and I am advised they have not. As an aside, if anyone can tell me who Rod Ashcroft is and why he has registered johnolsen.com, I would be very interested to know.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Ms RANKINE (Wright): We have heard a lot about this government's economic boasts, and there are some issues which I would like to address but which I do not have time to address today but, during the Governor's address during the opening of parliament, he said:

It is against this economic backdrop that we are enabled to improve our social wellbeing in areas such as education, health and safety.

In my address today I want to address a couple of issues in relation to the health and safety of our community. I believe it is the responsibility of any government to ensure the protection of its work force, and to ensure that it is paid its legal entitlements. It is the responsibility of any government to ensure that our community is safe.

During the estimates debate, I raised the issue of the provision of police uniforms with the Minister for Police. I told the minister as part of an explanation that I had been advised that outworkers are used by a company for the manufacture of police uniform items and that the only work undertaken at the factory premises is the final finishing. More specifically, I asked the minister:

What, if any, checks are made to ensure that companies that are granted contracts to supply police uniform items provide their employees with their legal entitlements as far as wages and conditions are concerned?

The minister said that it was not his responsibility and that he could not comment. He said that he could not comment at the moment but that he would refer it to the relevant minister. He also said:

If any issues need to be dealt with in respect of industrial relations and the like, I will ask the relevant minister to look at the matter.

That was on 14 June. Quite frankly, I was deafened by the silence, and it was not until this issue was raised in an article in the *Age* on 5 September that we got any response at all from the government in relation to it. That is not surprising, bearing in mind the tardiness of the responses to questions raised during estimates, but, again, that is another issue.

In response to the media article, the Minister for Industrial Relations said that if people have any genuine complaints about any industrial issue they can contact Workplace Services and the matter will be resolved. He also said:

The fact that no complaints have been lodged on this issue shows that the 'story' is simply part of a campaign against employers and the state government.

Well, excuse me: talk about 'see no evil, hear no evil.' What about taking some action to ensure no evil? Well, not if you are relying on this government. Let me reiterate what I asked in the first place. I asked:

What checks are made to ensure that companies that are granted contracts to supply police uniforms provide their employees with their legal entitlements?

It would seem, when looking past all the argy-bargy, that there are no checks. It seems that they wait for complaints. Let us get real about this issue. We are talking about an industry with a history of taking advantage of the most vulnerable section of our work force. In the main, they are women; they are migrants; they have little or no English; and, generally, they have no knowledge of their entitlements, let alone be able to make contact with the Office of Workplace Relations.

I do not want to be unfair on this. When the minister on 5 September in his media release said that Dixon Clothing pays its workers in accordance with the Clothing Trades Award, he was right: the union has confirmed that. But there are only four employees. In addition, it has four contractors, two of whom have been confirmed to make police garments. What about their employees? Before I get into that, let me give some background into this whole saga.

In 1994, the State Clothing Company, which was a government owned factory in Whyalla, was sold to State Apparel and Dixon Clothing under an agreement with the government that it would maintain employment. In 1998, the company closed the Whyalla factory and sacked all the employees. The operation was then moved to Adelaide.

I understand that a range of companies is now involved in the provision of police uniforms. I understand also that the state government purchases items through State Apparel but that there is a range of other contractors including Can't Tear 'Em in Queensland, Dixon Clothing in South Australia, Tony Tailoring in South Australia, Silver Fleece in South Australia, Broad Hats in Queensland, Kosno Leather in South Australia and Embroidery Balsylon in New South Wales.

I do not want to suggest in any way, shape or form that all these companies use outworkers. What I am saying is that there would appear to be absolutely no checks for some of these workers. Some of these subcontractors that have been identified as being home based companies are clearly not checked. For example, we also know that one woman works from home in Whyalla and another company contracted to Dixons is also a residential address. There were some quite curious responses when the union visited some of these organisations, and they were less than forthcoming in their responses, and this raises some questions. However you look at this, the government has a responsibility. It is just not good enough to bury its head in the sand and say it has not received any complaints. This is the second time I have raised my concerns in the parliament. Why is the government not checking out the situation? I think that is a valid question. Why can it not give an assurance beyond the four employees of Dixon Clothing?

Other state governments recognise they have a responsibility. Private enterprise recognises that it has a responsibility.

ty, and companies here in South Australia such as Sheridan, R.M. Williams, Target, Sportsgirl and so on have signed a code of practice agreement. They recognise the mutual benefit and were prepared to take some action. Other states have also recognised their responsibility in this area, to ensure that workers in this industry are protected to the degree that they receive their legal entitlements. It is estimated that for every legitimately paid worker we have in this state we would have one outworker.

The New South Wales government has had a code of practice in place since 1998, and all indications are that it is working well. The code established the standards of behaviour relating to employees and outworkers which must be observed by all contractors, subcontractors, agents, suppliers and employers in the TCF industry seeking government business. This seems eminently reasonable to me. The objectives of the code are to eliminate unsatisfactory work practices in relation to the employment and management of outworkers; to ensure compliance with all laws, applicable industry awards and approved enterprise and workplace agreements; to achieve high standards in occupational health and safety, workers' compensation and rehabilitation; and to ensure that obligations relating to training and skill formation, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action are being met.

Tenderers must provide evidence of compliance with applicable industrial awards and statutory obligations relating to employees and outworkers. Unless the information is provided in a statutory declaration at tender time, a tender will not be considered. Contractors must ensure that their subcontractors, agents, suppliers and employers engaged on government contracts comply with their legal obligations regarding their employees, such as employment conditions, training, annual holidays and long service leave, occupational health and safety and rehabilitation, workers' compensation, discrimination, legal age of employment, superannuation and taxation.

Anyone who engages outworkers either as subcontractors or employees must inform them about their employment entitlements each time work is given out, so each worker, whether or not they are home based, has to be informed about their entitlements. This information must be provided in the form required by the relevant schedule of the award, and must include information about the hours of work, overtime entitlements, wages, annual leave and public holiday entitlements, superannuation, workers' compensation entitlements, records of the work given out and work done, and delivery and collection arrangements which the employer must arrange free of charge to the outworker. Awards also require that materials, trimmings and sewing threads for the work must be provided free of charge to the outworker.

Basically, the principal contractor is held liable for the pay of all employees involved in the provision of government items. Each agency provides a quarterly compliance report to the relevant department, and the New South Wales Department of Industrial Relations has responsibility for the enforcement of laws relating to the employment, occupational health and safety, rehabilitation and workers' compensation provisions. The government, employer and industry associations and the unions all have a valid and recognised role in the New South Wales code of practice. Rather than rhetoric and ducking and weaving, this government should be proactive in the protection of workers employed via government contracts.

I am also raising another matter of concern in my electorate, and I am sure it will be a matter of concern within the general community as people become aware of the circumstances. Last July an explosion occurred in Cafe Grove. This cafe is located in the Village shopping centre at Golden Grove and in fact is directly under my office. Repairs were being undertaken to the under-counter refrigerator. The cafe and repair man both sustained significant burns as a result of this explosion, with the repair man being particularly severely injured and requiring quite a lengthy stay in hospital. The explosion occurred at approximately 10.45 a.m. Cafe Grove is a popular and busy cafe. During the morning it is often full of young mums who have dropped off their children at school and are catching up with one another. There are often large numbers of older residents gathering for a chat. We were really fortunate on that morning that the cafe was not busy. This explosion could very well have resulted in a large number of people being hurt.

The explosion was the subject of a workplace services investigation, and I have recently seen a copy of this report. Basically, the report concluded that the explosion occurred because Care 50, a flammable gas, ignited. This gas was being used to recharge the refrigeration unit. The investigating officer's report concludes:

From my investigation into this accident, including observations, witness statements and interviews, I have concluded that Con Argy, the owner of Cafe Grove, and Trevor Hanlon, employee of Contract Refrigeration Services, received first, second and third degree burns to their bodies as a result of charging the counter refrigeration unit, 'the beer fridge' with a hydrocarbon flammable gas.

It also found that the actions of the workmen cannot in any way be proved to have contributed to the rupture of the return bend, resulting in the explosion.

The report went on to find that there were some quite significant and important inadequacies in the Elgas training manual in relation to the use of this gas. It also identified that there are many sources of ignition in a refrigerator, for example, so it is quite hazardous to use this gas in an appliance not made to take it. The report goes on to recommend and note that this incident has ramifications throughout the refrigeration industry as a whole, including (and this is very important) air conditioning, the commercial, industrial and private sector and also the motor vehicle industry.

The report explains the different sorts of definitions used in relation to refrigerants: there are add-in refrigerants, which can be added to equipment without removing the original refrigerant; drop-in refrigerant, which can be added after the removal of a refrigerant; and retro refrigerant, which can be used after significant modifications to equipment. This report recommends that drop-in charging of hydrocarbon refrigerant gases such as the Care range and the Esanty range of gases and any other brand name be restricted to that of charging those systems that have been identified through an assessment process by a suitably qualified person as being suitable for this type of charging. That is, the Department of Workplace Services recommends that the gas used in Cafe Grove on that morning should not be used unless a thorough assessment has been made and it is deemed suitable.

The department also recommended that retro-refrigerant charging of hydrocarbon refrigerant gases—and they are flammable—such as the Care Range, again, the Esanty range of gases, and any other brand name, be restricted to that of charging only those systems that have been fully converted to eliminate all sources of ignition; and that it be a requirement to consult with the manufacturer for their recommenda-

tions, which are to be heeded at all times. These are important and significant recommendations.

As I have said, the report highlights the implications for the refrigeration industry as a whole and, as I have also said, this particular incident had the potential to be quite catastrophic. So, what is the government doing about it? What can we expect? Again, I am concerned that the answer is, 'Very little.' This report is dated 18 January this year, but that is not the first the government knew of this problem of the potential for serious accidents to occur in the use of these flammable hydrocarbon gases. The Association of Fluorocarbon Consumers and Manufacturers has been in contact with this government about this very issue since October 1995. Let me run through the series of correspondence. On 1 November 1995 the senior administrative officer for the Minister for Industrial Relations acknowledged receipt of a letter stating:

Your correspondence is receiving attention and the minister will respond as soon as possible.

On 28 November 1995 the then Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. Graham Ingerson, wrote as follows:

Staff of the South Australian Department for Industrial Affairs are aware of the issue and are reviewing the matter in order to provide a recommendation to the state government for consideration. In the development of a proposal there will need to be appropriate consultation with relevant government agencies and interested bodies. In this regard the information referred by your association will be given full consideration. Interstate developments are being carefully monitored, and options regarding possible regulatory methods fully canvassed. The department and I are committed to public and workplace safety and this matter is receiving serious attention.

Then in July 1997 the Chief Executive Officer of the Department for Industrial Relations wrote to the association, saying:

Recently the Minister for Industrial Relations introduced into state cabinet a submission proposing controls over the use of flammable hydrocarbon refrigerants in automotive air conditioners.

That is, in our cars. The letter went on to refer to a series of recommendations and stated:

The amendment to the regulations will require that equipment used with flammable hydrocarbon refrigerants must be:

1. specifically designed for the use of those refrigerants; or
2. approved for that use by either the manufacturer of the system; or
3. certified as safe for use by a third party competent person. . . ; or
4. assessed as safe to do so after presentation acceptance of a full and comprehensive safety report.

In 1998 there was another letter from the then Minister for Government Enterprises, the Hon. Dr Michael Armitage, who said, 'There are some problems: we have to reconsider where we are going.' Then back in August this year, guess what, the government is still looking at it. So, despite this bundle of correspondence over a five-year period and despite the workplace services report, it appears still nothing is happening. This lack of action is quite scandalous and, clearly, while the government stalls, people's lives are being put at risk. Other governments have taken action. They have not shied away from their responsibilities.

In the ACT, liquefied flammable gas in motor vehicle airconditioning systems may be used as a refrigerant but must be in purpose-built equipment or equipment where the manufacturer authorises its use. The Northern Territory has similar sorts of provisions. New South Wales again has similar sorts of provisions. In Queensland it may be used in motor vehicle airconditioning systems only if written authorisation is obtained from the original equipment manufacturer and the manufacturer of the motor vehicle,

unless the refrigeration or airconditioning system was originally designed to use hydrocarbon gas. That is really what is important. In South Australia there are no specific restrictions or controls on the use of liquefied flammable gas in motor vehicle airconditioning units.

This is really concerning. In the United States of America, according to a WorkCover NSW Assessment Report in New South Wales, the following states have prohibited the use of flammable refrigerants in motor vehicle airconditioning systems: Arkansas, Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia. The WorkCover NSW Assessment Report of clause 242 of the Dangerous Goods (General) Regulation 1999, dated 29 March this year, made the following point:

In summary, it appears that there is a significant possibility that leaks of flammable refrigerant may create a flammable atmosphere in the passenger cabin—

that is, of a motor vehicle—

particularly if the leaking gas is not immediately dispersed throughout the cabin.

The South Australian government has been repeatedly warned about these dangers and the risks involved in using flammable hydrocarbon refrigerants in existing refrigeration and airconditioning equipment. I believe the government has a clear duty of care. Cafe Grove is not the only example of a flammable hydrocarbon being put into an appliance not designed for it, resulting in a fire. I understand that very shortly after that incident a domestic refrigerator in Salisbury caught fire as a result of a flammable gas also being used, and I understand there are other examples.

I wonder how many people know that they have it in their cars—cars in which they transport their children—a flammable gas used in airconditioning systems not made to take it, and that the government has known about the dangers for five years. These flammable hydrocarbon gases, I understand, are more environmentally friendly. But let us make it really clear: there is no choice when it comes to the safety of my family or an environmental issue. I know that parents in South Australia would feel the same way. There is absolutely no contest.

When people go to have airconditioning units recharged, they expect that it will be done in a safe manner and that when they drive away their cars will be safe to transport their families. I am not suggesting that these gases be banned, but I am suggesting that the government should take heed and act on the recommendation of its own regulating authority and introduce sensible controls to protect workers and the community generally.

These controls will need to ensure that manufacturers' recommendations on the use of these flammable and potentially hazardous gases are followed. Rather than talk about improving social wellbeing, health and safety, it is time this government did something about it. What will happen otherwise? Do we have to wait for another Cafe Grove incident? Do we have to wait for another example of something going wrong in a busy hotel or a busy restaurant full of people, when part of an appliance sparks and we have a major disaster while this government sits on its hands?

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I hope that this is the last time I rise in this place to participate—

Members interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: Can I finish my remarks?—in an Address in Reply debate. I know that some of you wish that I would never speak in this place on any other issue, either. But, Acting Madam Deputy Speaker, cast your eyes around the chamber and look at the audience present to hear this debate. It is absolutely pointless standing to deliver a speech, anyway. Here we are approaching dinner time on the penultimate night of the second week of sittings. We have not yet anywhere near concluded this charade. We have not yet commenced considering any relevant business on behalf of the people of this state. We have had some interesting speeches, such as the one from the member for Lee and, I might add—

Ms Rankine interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: Right, my apologies—absolutely no reference whatsoever to the Governor's speech. The topic itself is fascinating. We know a lot about flammable hydrocarbons.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: The lady herself is flammable.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Ciccarello): Order, the member for Wright! The member for Goyder has the call.

Mr McEWEN: I am making the point that it really is a pointless exercise, and an absolute charade. If members are actually interested in what is being said, they will focus on the written word in *Hansard*. So, all we need to do is get into *Hansard* our thoughts on the Governor's speech and other relevant—or irrelevant—matters and simply get it into print. We should not waste hours of time standing here so that someone else records it and puts it into print. One has to feel sorry for the *Hansard* staff, who have to sit here day after day listening to absolute trivia and people purporting to claim that it has some relevance in relation to the Address in Reply debate.

I will now refer very briefly to the Governor's speech because hopefully at some stage during the next few weeks we will actually return to our actual purpose in this place, that is, to focus on some legislation. We might actually spend a few minutes on the Construction Industry Training Fund Amendment Bill because we need to do some work there. We are delighted to see the Water Resources Act return to this place for another patch-up job. We have got it wrong about six times in a row! We are delighted to see it come back, and hopefully we will get it right this time. I note that we are to debate a Volunteers Protection Bill. Interestingly, we have had legislation on and off the books to protect children from door-to-door sales. I might add that we have not actually got around to doing anything about it but, again, maybe under the Volunteers Protection Bill we can do something about this issue.

However, why we are still here on the penultimate sitting day of the second week, one after another, contributing to the Address in Reply debate, when we ought to be conducting some relevant business, I do not understand. The sooner we decide to do this in a different way, the better for all of us.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): First, I want to congratulate all Australians who competed in the 2000 Olympic Games. To those South Australians who took part, we thank you for your courage and endeavour and for the exemplary way in which you represented the state and the nation. I particularly want to congratulate those South Australians who achieved medal honours. We are grateful to all South Australians who took part, particularly the volun-

teers, officials, coaches and family members who have made sacrifices in much the same way as the athletes themselves. They have made an outstanding contribution in presenting Australia's best face to the world.

We thank Simon Fairweather, Brett Aitken, Juliet Haslam, Alison Peek, Katie Allen, Tatiana Grigorieva, Rachel Sporn, Carla Boyd, Jo Hill, Kate Slatter, Ryan Mitchell, Sara Ryan, Mark Woodforde, Robert Newbery, Craig Victory, Simone Morrow and Selina Follas, all of whom achieved medal honours.

I believe the most significant aspect of the games was the impact that it had, not only on national pride but also on progress towards reconciliation. I refer also to the magnificence of Cathy Freeman's contribution in all aspects—from the women's 400 metres to the lighting of the Olympic cauldron. She honoured indigenous Australians and, indeed, all Australians. I think her role in the games was emblematic of the heartfelt desire of the overwhelming majority of Australians for reconciliation with the original owners of this land, and to right the wrongs of the past and present and move on.

I think it should be noted that this and other parliaments around the country have had the decency and the integrity to say sorry, and I regret the fact that national leadership on this issue, or even any measure of goodwill, has been so lacking. I also regret that the strong statement in favour of reconciliation made at the Olympics has been partly blighted at least by some of the recent remarks made by our so-called Minister for Reconciliation in France and the United States.

Today is the third anniversary of the last election campaign in which the Liberal Party lost 13 seats. I know it is a day that they do not particularly want to celebrate.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Apparently the minister opposite thinks that he does want to celebrate the fact that they went to the people on a pledge never to sell ETSA but then broke that pledge after the election. It is interesting that on this third anniversary of the election we now see the Liberal's plans emerging for the next election.

Today I raised concerns during question time about a dirty tricks campaign being planned and run out of the Premier's office. There were a number of matters that I could have raised but have not. However, the recent tendency towards personal abuse in this House, and reports from within the government, have persuaded me that it was timely to reveal that a staffer in the Premier's office had registered my web domain site for a period of two years until the end of March 2002—the last possible date that an election could be held constitutionally, although politically it should be held 12 months from today.

In fact, if any attempt is made to somehow wrest a further five months in terms of that election, there will be a taxi meter running on the superannuation and pay of those members of parliament whose time has run out but who, in fact, do not have the gumption or the integrity to put their fate at the hands of the people.

We were informed that via the internet, through e-mail and through bogus web sites, the Liberal Party would engage in political dirty pool. I was told of a small group involving both some Premier's staffers and Liberal staffers whose job it was to mount personal attacks against individual candidates. Indeed, some mention was made of this in the media recently when it was highlighted that personal attacks would be made on the former Lord Mayor, Dr Jane Lomax-Smith, who is a

candidate against the Minister for Government Enterprises at the next election.

The state political reporter, Greg Kelton, reported that 'Libs mark Jane as top target'. So, we will see dirty tricks again being used by the Premier's office. We understand that this group is not only involved in planning electronic politics in terms of spreading their poison via bogus web sites, through e-mail or via the internet but will also be involved in 'black ops', something that was identified in the recent federal election campaign. We are told that the group is laughingly referred to as the Campaign to re-elect the Premier (CREEP). I think it is important to ask the Premier today to ascertain whether any taxpayers' money was being used and whether the Premier had authorised the setting up of improper and unscrupulous web sites, given that a series of ministers in the government had, in fact, recently denounced as an important issue the fact that web sites were being established to make it difficult for a range of South Australian companies and enterprises to do business internationally through e-commerce. Of course, we have seen front page coverage in the *Advertiser* about the impact on about 25 per cent of the wine industry in this state. We have also seen a range of other businesses, including real estate companies, tourism operators and others, who, in fact, have had their web sites improperly registered so that they could gain some favour or influence by having to buy them back from those whose ethics can only be described as fraudulent.

Given the condemnation by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Government Enterprises and the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing of this practice, I wondered where the Premier would stand on this issue. I understand that he has made a ministerial statement this afternoon and that he does regard it as a serious matter; that the officer involved has been admonished; and indeed that the site will be relinquished. Certainly straight after Question Time, and before the Premier told this House that he regarded the matter as unacceptable, the Premier's staff went into spin overdrive telling journalists that the registration of the mikerann.com domain name by Simon Cope (who is apparently involved with this dirty tricks group) was done 'as a bit of a joke'. That was the spin, you know, the Vicki Thompson—she hired him apparently; I think he reports to her; she is involved in all this carry on. They were briefing the journalists, it was all a bit of a joke, nothing serious was involved.

Suddenly, days after ministers have repeatedly condemned the practice, according to the Premier's staff and media spin doctors, cyber squatting has become a bit of a joke. Does the Premier want to explain that to prominent South Australian wineries that have had their names hijacked by cyber squatters? Does the Premier want to explain that it is just a joke to the tourism operators who have had their names cyber squatted by Northern Territory Tourism Pty Ltd? Is the Premier aware that something he regards as serious and unacceptable his own staff have tried to spin to the more gullible journalists that it was all a joke, just a prank?

I have been told that Simon Cope is a ministerial adviser in the Premier's office in charge of setting up web sites and information technology. I think more will come out about Mr Cope at a later stage. This is a member of the Premier's staff who, we are now told, conveniently of his own volition went out and not only registered my name as a domain site for two years up to and including March 2002 but also apparently employed a United States web site design company located in Michigan to construct my site. It is just a joke, we are told—obviously he went to a considerable

amount of trouble. One certainly hopes that not one cent of taxpayers' money was or was intended to be used in the construction of this domain site.

What we want to know is: who knew about it; who authorised it? We understand that he did not act alone, and in fact a senior officer of the Premier's office was absolutely aware of his activities and his intentions. What was he going to put on the site? How was he going to mischievously misuse the site in a fraudulent way? Was that going to be a joke, too—just happened to be at the time of the election campaign—or was it really all to be part of this Liberal Party dirty tricks campaign that has gone wrong because today they have been caught out? Let me just make it clear to this House: if it had been mikerannmp.com, then I believe Mr Cope would have been hauled before a privileges committee of this parliament. We are watching what you are up to. There have been some other matters which I know the government is aware of and which I do not intend to raise, but I can tell you that, if the slippery slope of standards of personal abuse and attack that we have seen in recent times continues, there will be more and much more.

As I mentioned, it is three years since the last election; in two days it will be the seventh anniversary of the election of this South Australian state government. In 1993, the Liberals under the leadership of the member for Finnis (the Minister for Human Services these days) won in a landslide. The Liberal government had a majority of historic proportions. In 1997, under the leadership of the member for Kavel, the Liberals nearly lost the election. The Premier lost the Liberal Party 13 seats. All that it had achieved after years and years in opposition up until 1993 was thrown away on the basis of one man's vanity. As I say, the Premier lost the Liberal Party 13 seats and transformed that record majority to a minority government, dependent on the support of three conservative Independent members.

Labor recorded the largest swing in Australian electoral history of 9.4 per cent, all in the space of less than four years. Yet on any objective assessment, the Brown government came to office with an enormous amount of goodwill from the South Australian public. That goodwill evaporated in a very short time. Why was that so? For so many reasons, but here are just a few. South Australians resented and resent the government's ideologically motivated attack on the public school system. Believe it or not, South Australians want to see the public school system strengthened and improved, not undermined and deprecated. South Australians are demanding relief from the crisis in our public hospital system caused by years of Liberal cuts—state Liberal cuts now compounded by the divisive and wasteful health policies of John Howard and Mr Wooldridge.

South Australians have seen their assets and their heritage sold from under them without their having any opportunity to express their overwhelming opposition to the Olsen government's privatisation of ETSA—and this from a Premier who had promised that ETSA would never ever be sold. While huge income earning assets have been sold behind the backs of South Australians, and despite record taxes and charges and all the cuts to essential services, this government is running up more debt on the bankcard with deficit budgets forecast for years to come. Having sold off the farm, the Liberals are now mortgaging our future. Whilst South Australians want the policies to create jobs and keep our young people from having to move interstate for work, what we have seen is a government whose main policy is privatisation and flim-flam disguised as policy such as

slogans like 'Bringing them back home' which, of course, followed 'Going all the way'.

We all hope for good news tomorrow in the ABS job figures, but I am concerned by what has happened to the building industry. The trend estimates for dwelling approvals for August are almost exactly half their level at the beginning of the year, and house starts are tumbling and have halved since January. This raises real concerns about jobs in South Australia, which is what we really need if people are going to stay here, much less return from Melbourne, Sydney, Perth or Brisbane. However, the key to the slide in support for the government is the Premier. This is a government South Australians will never again believe or trust because this is a Premier who did not tell them the truth at the last election about the privatisation of their assets, and they will not forget that at the next election.

Look at the broken ETSA promises. I will not go over all the breaking of promises made before and after the election when secret plans were being laid for the sale while the existence of those plans was denied in public, all the outrageous claims made about the purported financial benefits of the sale, or all the other ways in which the public were misled by the government over those two years after the state election. I have already put those instances of the misleading of the public on the parliamentary record, but the closing chapter of the ETSA privatisation with the sale recently of ElectraNet has brought to light yet more of this Liberal Government's misleading on the ETSA issue.

The first is the nonsense that the transmission business was too risky for South Australian taxpayers to own. That went up in smoke the day that ElectraNet was sold because 40 per cent of ElectraNet was sold to Powerlink. What is Powerlink: a public company fully owned by the Queensland government. The Queensland Treasury and the Department of Mines and Energy in that state assessed ElectraNet and decided that it was a good commercial enterprise for the public of Queensland to be involved with—not risky, but a good, commercial enterprise with which the public, the taxpayers of Queensland, could be proud to be involved. So, they did the due diligence and considered that ElectraNet was worth owning. Why is it that ElectraNet was too risky for South Australians to own but not too risky for Queenslanders to own? Now, whenever South Australians turn on a light, the money that would have come back to the South Australian taxpayer will go outside the state to, among others, China, the United States and now the Queensland government.

The second canard revealed by the sale of ElectraNet was the promise that the sale program would leave South Australia free of debt. It was said time and again that the privatisation would free up an additional \$2 million for spending on schools, hospitals, police, jobs and just about everything else. That was always a nonsense because it factored in only savings in public debt interest and ignored completely the fact that once you sell the asset you lose the income stream it generated for the state. But a few business people from the white shoe end of town decided to pile in and go political—we refer to them as the 'dirty dozen' and always will. It will be interesting to hear what they say these days about the claims they made then.

By claiming that the sale would eliminate the need to spend \$2 million a day in public debt interest in eliminating the debt, the Premier and Treasurer were putting a sale price on ETSA of \$7.5 billion—the equivalent of the actual level of public debt. The actual final sale proceeds of \$5.3 billion fell more than \$2 billion short; and, when asked about the

remaining debt, the Treasurer replied glibly that he would not be around when that was finally paid off. Either he is considering a change of life or does not believe that the Liberals can win the next election with John Olsen as leader, or perhaps both.

There is no bonanza from the ETSA sale and, contrary to claims made by the government that the Auditor-General has found the privatisation to be financially positive for the state, I say this: actually read the Auditor-General's Report and you will see that the Auditor-General has had to rely on information provided to him by the government. For this reason he has not been able to verify some of this data independently and he has been very guarded on some of these matters. The whole story of privatisation and financial management by this government raises a number of questions. When the Liberal government came to office debt was around \$8.3 billion in nominal terms.

Since that time more than \$7.5 billion worth of assets have been sold. Our debt should now be much lower than the more than \$2 billion remaining. Of course, \$1 billion has been spent in getting rid of public servants in order to get recurrent costs down. As the shadow treasurer made clear in this House yesterday, the Olsen government has run a string of deficit budgets that have added to the credit card. As the recent Bank SA Trends report pointed out, government outlays as a proportion of state output have been rising since 1998. The shadow treasurer quoted both the Auditor-General and the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies analysis, which show that there has been a major increase in government outlays since the present Premier came to office.

There has also been major slippage by the government in meeting its own financial targets. Despite the asset sales, the government continues to run budget deficits and continues to add to the debt. We will be debating the Auditor-General's Report at a later time, but his report bears out the centre's claim in large measure. The Auditor-General states that, since the current Premier took office, government outlays have risen in real terms and will continue to rise by nearly 20 per cent, or over \$500 million, in real terms between 1997-98 and 2003-04, and that the budget will continue to be in deficit until 2003-04 and will therefore have added to debt.

Some of the reasons for this financial indiscipline are the subject of particular criticism by the Auditor-General, such as the failure to develop performance standards in the contracts of chief executive officers, blow-outs in the cost of consultancies, and so on. Of course, we all await with interest the Auditor-General's Report on the cost overruns in the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. We hope that his inquiries have not been in any way impeded by the loss of documents—the strange, disturbing and coincidental loss of documents—from the Minister for Tourism's car. When the Premier was asked on 5 October about the Auditor-General's analysis of the government's poor financial management, he said that he would make no apology for spending more on education and health. I can only say that he must have been talking about some other government, not the Olsen government, because health and education are being cut by this government.

Let us look at education. Like Labor, the Centre for Economic Studies' July report is critical of the government's priorities, and at page 95 states:

... what degree of priority should be given to (say) health services and spectator sporting stadiums when both call on the budget?

Labor's priorities are different. For Labor, education is not just a cost but an investment. For Labor, education is not only

a vital key to greater opportunity and equality: it is also central to any strategy for economic growth and more jobs. Education is a key economic driver in the contemporary economy. It makes about as much sense to cut education and research as it would be to cut defence spending in wartime. We must view education much more as an essential investment in our future. The future of our community and the strength of our economy depend on the health of our schools. Ignorance and prosperity never go hand in hand. I have been distressed to see the disastrous fall in the number of South Australians completing year 12—a school retention rate of over 90 per cent 10 years ago falling to 58 per cent today is simply disgraceful.

How can we be economically competitive if that is our performance in education? In the long term the health of our economy, as I said before, will ultimately depend on where our schools are positioned now. I am committed to ensuring that, in future, more of our kids either complete high school or can find post-school training. A falling year 12 retention rate is the legacy of having the public system run by a Liberal government that does not believe in the public education system. It is time to end the cuts and get on with the job.

Instead of schools being consumed by dealing with the latest plan from head office to cut funding and staff or to close another school, it is time to get on with the job of teaching our kids. We must ensure that when our children leave school for further education, training or employment they all have the best start possible. Labor believes in greater local school management—it should be part of building community commitment to our public schools. Instead, the Liberal government's Partnerships 21 is a smokescreen for further eventual funding cuts. It is dividing our schools, with carrots being dangled before schools to get them into the scheme.

Labor understands why a minority of schools (just 16 in the metropolitan area) have joined up. It promised them, for a time at least, some relief from years of cuts to their operating grants. That is before those schools found themselves with less funding support from the government. Backward looking budget agendas, the secret development of new funding formulas, the transfer of cost to parents and the casualisation of jobs should not drive local management. In government Labor will work with the education community to develop genuine partnerships based on trust, growth and belief in the public education system and a commitment to excellence and equity.

Labor has moved a motion in the other place to hold an inquiry into Partnerships 21. If the system is working well and equitably, as the minister claims, the government should have nothing to hide from such an inquiry. The minister has said:

Partnerships 21 is the most significant reform of South Australia's schooling and preschooling system yet undertaken.

But the minister is attempting to stymie an inquiry into whether Partnerships 21 is delivering decent outcomes, and that can only mean that he has something to hide.

Let us turn to health and hospitals. Both federally and here in South Australia the Liberals have been destroying our public health system by putting profits and private interests ahead of people and patients. In the process, health care in both our metropolitan and regional areas has suffered badly. Labor's aim is to stop the cuts, halt the privatisation of public hospitals and introduce a 10-year strategic plan to improve our health services.

Unlike the Liberals, Labor believes that access to quality health care should be a right, not a privilege. A decent public health system and policy should be about keeping people healthy and out of hospital but, when they are sick, helping them get back to good health through quality care. It is about providing a hospital bed and quality care for people who need it when they need it. It is about early intervention, enhancing the quality of life of the frail and those with disabilities.

Labor believes in a genuine partnership between the government, the community and the private sector to improve the quality of care and the development of a coherent framework managing, monitoring and improving the quality of health care. The same sense of partnership is needed in supporting older South Australians. There is a growing desire on the part of the elderly to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. That requires partnerships and services involving government, community organisations, non-government organisations and local government that support the care of older South Australians in our community. This applies especially to people living in regional and remote areas.

Labor supports community-based health and welfare programs, combining prevention, early intervention, personal management plans and home-based services right across the spectrum of human services, and that is why in 1997 Labor committed itself to a community mentor plan to promote funding and support for trained carers to assist the frail elderly in their own homes. The Liberals want to copy the worst aspects of the American system by treating those who can pay rather than those who most need the care.

Let us look now to the environment. Along with the Murray River, the greatest environmental challenge facing South Australia is not only the threat of salinity but also the threat to this state's environmental image by becoming a national repository for long-lived medium nuclear waste. The opposition has written a submission to the Senate select committee inquiring into a new reactor at Lucas Heights. That submission makes clear that Labor's position is to oppose the commonwealth's proposal for collocation of intermediate level long-lived nuclear waste with low-level waste here in South Australia. Approximately 95 per cent of South Australians are opposed to any such facility being located in South Australia.

The proposed dump, supported by South Australian Senator Nick Minchin, is causing great concerns amongst Aboriginal South Australians. For example, the Kupa Pita Tjuta Aboriginal Corporation from Coober Pedy wrote:

We are Aboriginal women from Coober Pedy—Yankunytjatjara, Antikirinya and Kokatha. We know the country. The poison the government is talking about will poison the land. We say, 'No radioactive dump in our ngura, in our country. It's strictly poison—we don't want it.'

South Australia has already paid its way in accepting radioactive waste supposedly in the national interest. South Australia was chosen in the national interest as the site for the British nuclear testing in the 1950s and 1960s, and huge areas of traditional lands of the Maralinga people were contaminated. There have also been terrible social consequences for the Aboriginal people affected who lived at Yalata. It has taken a royal commission and decades of negotiations with British and federal governments to secure a clean-up of the contaminated areas, and South Australians now believe that they have been asked to bear an unfair burden of national responsibility in terms of nuclear waste.

For South Australians, the processes that led to this state's being the commonwealth government's preferred location for intermediate long-lived waste has been far from open. Records of a meeting held by the Commonwealth-State consultative committee on 25 November 1997, and obtained under freedom of information legislation, indicate that the consultative committee was told by the commonwealth that collocation of category S waste was important for the commonwealth. The commonwealth told the committee that it was looking for collocation support when the low-level repository was announced.

The opposition also obtained under freedom of information legislation a copy of a letter written on 23 February 1998 by the Prime Minister to the Premier of South Australia, informing him that the Billa Kalina region of South Australia had been chosen for site selection for a national repository for low-level and short-lived intermediate waste. The Prime Minister told the Premier:

I also wish to advise you that the Commonwealth-State Consultative Committee on Radioactive Waste Management recently supported collocation of a store for long-lived intermediate waste with the repository as a first siting option.

While the commonwealth government was pushing for collocation, neither the South Australian parliament nor the public was informed about these negotiations or told about the nature or extent of what the commonwealth wanted to store here. It is now clear that the commonwealth had a strong preference for collocation and had been pushing for such a result as far back as 1997. It was then that the Premier should have made clear that the storage of intermediate level waste was not acceptable to South Australia. Instead, he allowed discussions to continue and commonwealth momentum to build for the siting of an intermediate level nuclear waste dump in the north of our state.

No state in Australia has paid a higher price for nuclear waste than South Australia. Thousands of square kilometres of South Australia were poisoned as a result of the British atomic tests of the 1950s, and tens of millions of dollars have been spent trying to repair that damage. South Australia will not accept becoming the nuclear dump state, but where has the Premier been all this time? This government has not even put in a submission to the Senate committee on the Lucas Heights reactor, even though as part of its terms of reference the final repository for the waste in terms of the spent fuel rods needed to be addressed, and that is simply a disgrace.

South Australians will not accept the environmental and health risks associated with such a proposal. South Australians do not want waste shipped through our ports, trucked through our communities and carried along our roads. We will not allow our reputation for ecotourism and the best wine and clean food in the world to be damaged.

The Governor's speech, which was prepared as it always is by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Premier's Office, stated that the Olsen government's priorities would be health and education. These are Labor's priorities: they are certainly not the real priorities of the Olsen government. This government's record proves clearly that its only priority for education is to cut public school funding and place extra burdens on families in meeting the costs of sending their children to school. Its only priority for health is to place public hospitals on budgets that are inadequate and fail to live up to that which the community has every right to expect.

Whether it is schools, hospitals or the privatisation of water or ETSA, the Premier has a clear record of saying one

thing and doing another. That is why the Premier's unofficial mini-campaign, designed to boost his electoral stocks in the two months before the Olympic Games, has been so ineffective, and that is why we have also seen so many dramatic events within the Liberal Party in recent times. They involve dissension with a Liberal Party led by a Premier without credibility. That is why the Independent member for Hammond received enough votes to be elected to a parliamentary committee through a leakage of Liberal votes just hours after the member for Hammond gave notice of a motion actually condemning the Premier and members of the Liberal Party for a cover-up over the Cramond inquiry into whether the Premier deliberately misled parliament over the Motorola deal.

Today in this parliament I asked a series of important questions about the ethics of this government, particularly about the ethics of the Premier's office. The Premier has told this House, knowing the responsibility that that entails, that he was unaware—totally unaware—of actions that had been taken to improperly and unscrupulously register a web site domain in my name. We will take the Premier on his word that he has not misled parliament, but I believe that this particular officer did not act alone and without the authorisation of a more senior officer in the Premier's office. It is incumbent upon the Premier to find out who was involved and what their plans were. Mr Cope—the hapless Mr Cope—will be remembered for a long time in this parliament, as someone of disreputable and unscrupulous nature—if we are to take the minister's comments in other places and in this House seriously. I do not believe that he acted alone. Eventually, the full story about the Liberals' dirty tricks campaign, both planned and already under way, will come to the surface.

My warning to the government is that if it wants to embark on the slippery slope and involve itself in the Kennett kind of campaign that involves refusing every FOI request, not answering Estimates Committee questions, not revealing what it pays in terms of consultancies to its mates, not revealing fees that are being paid to board members, and not being honest with the people of this state, let alone the parliament, then the hiding it is heading for at the next polls will be even more serious than it could possibly contemplate today.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Before moving onto issues that are contained in the Governor's speech, I pay tribute to the Governor Sir Eric Neal and Lady Neal for the way in which they do their job. They welcome and support many people in South Australia from a wide variety of backgrounds. They open Government House to a wide range of groups and they do the office proud. I congratulate them on that.

I must say, as I listened to the Governor's speech, which as the Leader of the Opposition has just said was prepared for him by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, I could have been forgiven for being beset by a feeling of unreality at some of the statements and some of the things said in that speech. Interestingly, like my colleague the member for Kurna, I, too, was taken by a couple of sentences, in particular one sentence in which he said:

As we approach this coming session and as we embark on a new era into a second century of our federation my government intends to continue to deliver to South Australians a future which emphasises quality of life.

I thought that was a very interesting statement. It was followed up by a number of other statements of a similar vein. I wondered at the time whether I was living in the same community as the writers of this speech. I would like to back up those comments with some of the evidence, and certainly some of the issues, that face the people who live in my electorate.

Just yesterday, the South Australian Council for Social Service (SACOSS) released the results of a national survey conducted by ACOSS wherein almost 1 000 community agencies across all states and territories in Australia responded to a survey on the issues that they were encountering in providing welfare services to over 1.7 million people in the first six months of this year. I want to quote from the press release that was put out yesterday by SACOSS as follows:

In South Australia, two-thirds (65 per cent) reported an increase in the number of people accessing their services. Given that 76 per cent of agencies were already operating at maximum capacity, they have been forced to develop alternative strategies to cope with the demand:

- 45 per cent were either unable to meet the demand or have had to cut back services by offering reduced services, tighter targeting, increasing referrals to other agencies or by creating waiting lists; and
- a further 43 per cent have had to resort to using up their financial reserves or have increased unpaid efforts of staff and volunteers.

But these strategies cannot be employed indefinitely and are detrimental to the low income Australians they serve. South Australian agencies commented:

- we do not make direct cuts to services or turn people away but, as our waiting lists growing longer, people perceive it as hopeless and drop off of their own accord;
- all our time is taken up just responding to immediate client need. This means we have no time or energy to engage in creative solutions and justice advocacy.

This latest survey also reveals the emergence of a worrying trend in the shifting of costs for welfare services away from the government and towards users of the service. . . The survey found that homelessness and the need for more crisis and more permanent accommodation is the single biggest issue confronting people seeking help from agencies. Poverty, inadequate levels of income support, and rising levels of need for emergency financial relief was the second most common set of issues facing their clients.

When you read that, you do want to ask the question: to whom is the government intending to deliver a future which emphasises quality of life? Just whom are we talking about? About whom is the government talking when it says that it intends to continue to deliver a quality of life? Yet these revelations are not new. SACOSS's budget submission for 1999-2000 stated:

Using the Henderson poverty line currently 162 000 people are living in poverty in South Australia. 40 per cent of households have an annual income below \$25 000 and one-third of all rural families have annual household incomes below \$16 000.

That was a year ago. I do not know about this social dividend. If it is there, it certainly is not touching nearly half of South Australians. Huge areas of our state contain people who are really struggling, and I am sure that most members in this House would have on a daily basis people coming to their office and raising with them issues such as increased taxes and charges; the fact that they not only have to contend with a low fixed income but also have to pay GST and an emergency services levy, increased fees for dental services, for domiciliary services, for council rates—and the list goes on.

That is what the agencies are saying, and that is what this survey has revealed. Another report of a survey was also released earlier this week, involving a national inquiry by academics relating to evidence of socioeconomic divides that exist in Australia's big cities. Their press release states that

a high proportion of places in Adelaide and Hobart in particular plus a significant number of communities in Melbourne are characterised by the coincidence of high levels of welfare dependency and low levels of labour force skill in subregional labour markets where there are very few opportunities for work in the occupations and industries of the new economy.

In that survey Elizabeth in South Australia was named as the most vulnerable community in Australia. It is interesting that the media here in South Australia and nationally chose to focus simply on Elizabeth; perhaps it is easier and simpler to point the finger at one community rather than address the systemic nature of the changes that economic restructuring has brought to many communities around the country. It is also easier and more comfortable for everyone to focus on one community, as long as it is not yours, rather than confront the fact that this is not an individual problem but a much wider structural problem that is a consequence of a national policy direction that we have adopted to various degrees, but certainly with gusto, in this state.

As far as Elizabeth goes, we are used to these reports and findings. Every year or so a similar report is released and commented on. Some people in the Elizabeth area handle it by attacking the messengers, other people feel angry and depressed while others just get on with what they are doing; but it is demoralising when these things are said time and time again and people themselves do not see any changes or any light at the end of the tunnel. The fact is that many challenges are facing communities such as Elizabeth, which, as I said before, is not alone; in fact, other members in this House have raised similar matters regarding other communities in South Australia. These challenges cannot only be the responsibility of these communities themselves. The solutions require an acknowledgment that it is not acceptable for some communities to bear the brunt of policy directions, together with a commitment by all government to work hand in hand with communities to build on their strengths and work on new solutions for the future. That is what is needed, and that is what must occur. Unfortunately, it is not occurring now.

I will make a few comments on those matters in relation to the community of Elizabeth. Some people say that both major parties have played a part in this problem, and I think that over many years that is true, but in the early 1990s the then Labor government made a strong commitment to address particular issues in the Elizabeth Munno Para community. The Elizabeth Munno Para social justice project was established in the office of the Premier. It was given priority to analyse and evaluate the needs, to do that in a way that had strong community involvement and to come up with a plan of action that tackled the problems in a coordinated and integrated way and, very importantly, hand in hand with the community.

That process started, and a lot of positive energy came through from the community. The group was led by Joan Russell and had a team of very experienced and skilled people who were able to work at grassroots level alongside people and get them involved in identifying problems and coming up with a range of solutions. Unfortunately, at the end of 1993 when those plans were completed, the government changed, as did the priorities, and the report was shelved; and, as far as I know, that report with most of its plans is gathering dust on a shelf in some department. Some aspects of those plans were begun and carried through. The Rosewood development at Elizabeth North had its genesis in that project, but the comprehensive overarching community

regeneration program that was the vision of that project has simply not occurred—and that has been a tragedy.

I must also say that a number of other initiatives were in place in the Elizabeth area in the early 1990s. Some programs had been in place for many years and were continued to be supported right up to the early 1990s, such as the Para Districts Counselling Service and an organisation called Care Link, which provided integrated education, health and welfare support for families. Those programs were cut by the present government, and a lot of very good work and volunteers were lost and the community was set back.

I would like to mention another important initiative of the former Labor government in education that still remains (thank goodness) in relation to the Peachey Road schools where, through consultation with the union and school communities, the government organised and set in place a new deal for staffing. That enabled those schools that had a lot of trouble getting teachers to come to them and stay there to advertise directly for three to five year contracts for teachers. Those schools were able to attract a whole lot of new talented young teachers who were not able to get into the system under the usual entry requirements. So, a whole lot of new, enthusiastic young teachers were able to win positions and a significant difference has been made. That one, thank goodness, has survived.

I will now concentrate on some of the issues that have come across my desk from my electorate over the break. I mentioned the issue of taxes and charges and the struggle that people on a fixed income have in meeting them. A number of people contacted me, particularly around the time when they received their council rates. Of course, the council rates went up, along with everything else. People asked, 'What has happened to concessions?' They are still the same, even though our council rates have gone up, and that is eating into what we have left over to live on.'

I wrote to Dean Brown, the Minister for Human Services, about this on behalf of a number of constituents. He replied, explaining that concessions expenditure had risen because the number of concessions approved for local government rates had risen incredibly. For instance, in 1989-90 the number of concessions approved was 88 900, and in 1998-99 (10 years later) it was 147 100. He went on to say:

The state concessions budget is limited and, although the amount per concession has not increased since 1978, the overall expenditure... has consistently increased over the years. This is due to the increased number of people receiving a pension (particularly the ageing population).

When the government was elected in 1993, one of its election policies that applied to older people was a review of concessions. That review has never occurred. I am sure that I would not be the only MP that has many older people coming and saying, 'We just cannot manage and something needs to be done.' That review should have been conducted. The government has ducked that one. It has refused even to look at the matter. That is something that will need to be done, and certainly a Labor government will undertake that much needed review into the level of concessions.

Another issue belongs in the over-arching issue of health. Like everyone else, I see a constant stream of people who are on hospital waiting lists and who are turned away from outpatients appointments, unable to get an outpatient appointment for many months, or cannot get mental health services or services for their young children. The issue I want to talk about in particular today is renal dialysis services in Elizabeth and for people south of Adelaide more generally.

I received a letter early in September from a constituent, and I will quote from his letter. He had actually written a letter to the editor of the *Advertiser*. I do not think his letter was published, so he sent it to me with a bit of extra detail. The letter states:

My wife Helen needs dialysis treatment three times a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

They live at Elizabeth Grove. It continues:

The treatment takes about three and a half to four hours plus time to set it up, then at the end disconnect and stop any bleeding. She is booked to start treatment at 1 p.m. and treatment usually finishes about 5 to 5.30 p.m.

That treatment is at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The letter continues:

Because of the late finishing time no hospital shuttle car is available to bring her back to Elizabeth. This service finishes at 4 p.m. She could get a shuttle car trip to the hospital but I would then need to pick her up at a little after 5 p.m. We have found the shuttle pick-up is not very reliable. One time it did not turn up at all and I had to drive her to the hospital.

The first time going to the hospital she tried going by ambulance. That time they said be ready at noon. Well they eventually arrived at 10 past 2, having had some emergencies and a breakdown. Well, she got started very late and finished late. The ambulance brought her home at about 9 p.m. Her four hours treatment plus waiting times took nine hours!

She has to go three days a week from Elizabeth to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. In the redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Health Service a dialysis centre is on the plan for stage B. The problem is that stage B does not start until some time after 2005. This means that the situation in which these people find themselves has to continue for at least another five years. It is interesting to see what services currently exist for renal dialysis. I will outline them for the House. At the moment there are 35 renal dialysis chairs, which are spread between the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with 10, the Flinders Medical Centre with nine, the Women's and Children's with five, and the Royal Adelaide Hospital with 11. The Royal Adelaide also has 12 beds.

There are also some satellite services. There are 14 chairs at Wayville, 10 at North Adelaide (and they are public), nine private chairs at Brighton and five private chairs at Walkerville. There are also eight public chairs at Port Augusta. The problem is that the need for renal dialysis is greatest in the north and the south, and that is where there are not enough chairs. In fact, in the north there are no chairs at all. I guess we could say at least the south has nine at Flinders Medical Centre, even though that is nowhere near sufficient for its needs. But, the north has none so, of course, people have to travel across country to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or to the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

In 1997, 63 people were travelling from the north, either to the Queen Elizabeth, the Royal Adelaide or one of the other public renal dialysis centres. In 2006, that should be 74 to 82, and in 2011 it is projected that will be 81 to 90. We desperately need this in the north. When I talk to people at the hospitals, they tell me that people come from as far as Tanunda and Sheoak Log to get their renal dialysis treatment. They come three times a week, and that is practically a wipe-out for those three days every week. It is costly. I was told that one person who went from Virginia to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for renal dialysis paid \$38 each way for a taxi. Just think what that does for your budget, three days a week if you cannot get the shuttle because your treatment does not fall within the times when the shuttle runs. It is

completely unsatisfactory, and waiting until 2005 for that situation to change is simply not on.

I have only a few minutes before my time elapses and I would like to mention briefly some good things that have happened in the Elizabeth community over the break. I would like to congratulate the Elizabeth Lions Club for another successful Convoy for Kids on the last Sunday in August. The Elizabeth Lions Club, in conjunction with the Transport Workers Union, the Crippled Children's Association and other local service groups, have run one of the most successful and enduring annual fundraisers in this state. Convoy for Kids is an activity when hundreds of truckies transport disabled children from Port Adelaide to Elizabeth. This year they raised a further \$40 000. The total that they have raised, over I think eight years now, exceeds \$300 000. It is a marvellous effort and a great day, which had its origins through the Elizabeth community and the Elizabeth Lions Club.

I would also like to pay a tribute to Fremont-Elizabeth City High School, the major secondary school in the Elizabeth area—in my view, anyway, because it is in my electorate—because it has just gained international accreditation, and the accreditation is ISO 9001 for quality standards in continuous improvement in education delivery. I am told that Fremont-Elizabeth City High School is the only years 8 to 12 school in South Australia to have gained this accreditation, and it has committed itself to regular external, six-monthly audits that would chart the course of development work done across the curriculum and improve outcomes for students. I congratulate the school for this.

I also mention an initiative of the Elizabeth campus of Regency TAFE, with a joint venture with Zhaoyuan City in Shandong Province in China to jointly teach students in information technology. Chinese students will do the earlier parts of their diploma in China, as well as learning English. They then complete their course at Elizabeth here in South Australia.

At present, seven Chinese TAFE students have taken up residence very close to the Elizabeth campus, right in the centre of Elizabeth. A further 70 overseas students from China are expected in January next year. This is a great initiative from the Elizabeth campus of Regency TAFE. It is great for Elizabeth, it is great for the students and it is great for the TAFE. It is certainly part of South Australia's priorities in terms of attracting international students to our shores and I congratulate TAFE.

In relation to community safety and law and order, I have—as do other members—a number of very active Neighbourhood Watch groups across my electorate. I like to support them and I congratulate them on their efforts. Recently, the Neighbourhood Watch group centred on Elizabeth Grove and Elizabeth has raised the issue of hoon driving and the extent of it in the area. A week or so ago, they took me on a tour and I was absolutely staggered by the marks on the road, their accounts of the noise and the smoke as well as the dangerous driving practices, which are a real concern to them. They are making it a priority and are working with the local police on strategies to overcome this problem.

The group has also asked me to write to the Attorney (which I have done) to suggest to him that we consider an initiative that is being used in New South Wales where rather than just fining people found guilty of this very dangerous practice their cars be impounded, and I am taking this issue up on behalf of the group. I would like to congratulate them

for taking this on as their interest extended over a number of years. It is not easy and it is something that many communities have to contend with. It requires a combined response from law makers, police and community members, and this particular Neighbourhood Watch is working with the local Elizabeth police and I congratulate them on their efforts.

Again, I return to the Governor's speech on behalf of the government. I do not think most South Australians have the quality of life the government has talked about. I do not think that is a priority of the government at all.

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

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

A quorum having been formed:

Ms KEY (Hanson): In speaking to this motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor's speech, I point out that, as a republican, I do not have much support for the whole process of Governors and Governors-General, but it provides me as a republican with an opportunity to talk for 30 minutes, so I would certainly like to take that opportunity. One of the areas for which I now have responsibility within the Labor Party is the area of housing, which has been a long-term interest of mine. I had the privilege of being on the Housing Trust board for 12 years and managed to serve on the Housing Trust with Professor Hugh Stretton, as he was then known—I think he is now Dr Hugh Stretton. You would understand, Mr Speaker, having previously been a minister for this area, the importance of the whole area of housing in South Australia.

One of my concerns, having been involved in the area for a number of years, is the change in terminology and attitude with regard to housing. These days the predominant terminology rests on user pays and mutual obligation and there has been a real shift from collective to individual responsibility. Why has the concept of user pays flourished? How much responsibility does the community have to ensure that the user is able to pay? User pays also assumes that people are able to purchase goods and services. This assumption is considered in the context of South Australia's jobless rate of 7.6 per cent, which is the lowest figure we have had in the last 10 years and which is good news, I suppose, on one level, but then when we look at the youth jobless rate, we see that in July it was 20.5 per cent, which was the lowest we have had in 10 years, and last month that figure increased to 25.1 per cent. Obviously, we still have a real problem regarding employment in this state.

Older workers have also been put into difficult circumstances in South Australia. People who have always had jobs—full-time jobs, secure jobs—have been retrenched. When we look at the list of companies in South Australia, some of them being very traditional and South Australian in origin, that have retrenched people, as I said, it is really disturbing to think about the position of those people who previously have always had jobs. I will read from the list those companies of which I am aware. This is by no means a complete list, but since I also look after the shadow employment portfolio I have concerns about the number of redundancies that have occurred: Griffin Press, 140 people; Toro Irrigation, 150 people; Perry Engineering, 130 people; Revitt Kitchens, 60; Clark Shoes, anywhere from 200 to 300 people; the Submarine Corporation—there has been some good news and bad news in that area, but at least 100 people

of whom I am aware have been retrenched; Chapman's Meats; Mount Schank Meats; Mitsubishi—again, there have been some salvage packages but also a number of people have lost their jobs; Bank SA; Bridgestone—some 126 workers in the northern suburbs; Consolidated Apparel; Malco; AMCOR; BHP; John Martins; Levi; Corfu; SAMCOR; Telstra; Banksia International—this is in the furniture area; Austral Pacific; Email; ABC; Penrice; and Angas Fruits. As I said, they are just the ones of which I am aware, so it is by no means a complete list.

We have also seen in the financial sector union a number of banks being cut back, with jobs going particularly in rural and country areas, and the public sector has been downsized quite regularly over the past few years. Many of these workers, as I said previously, had been in secure jobs and have only been able to pick up casual and occasional jobs with no security.

Members in this House would have seen in the media in the last few days the news that the area of Elizabeth has the lowest income per head of population and the social wage in that area draws double the taxation income available. Elizabeth is seen as the most vulnerable community in Australia—and the member for Elizabeth has amply identified this issue.

South Australia also has social and economic difficulties in areas such as Yorke Peninsula, the Lower North, the Murraylands and Eyre Peninsula. A third of rural households have incomes below \$16 000 per annum. It may be of some interest to members that I have concerns about rural areas, being a representative of an electorate in the western suburbs, but I must say that I have concerns for the whole of South Australia and it really worries me that, although I am not responsible for the area of Elizabeth, one of our areas is considered to be the most vulnerable area in Australia, and I think that South Australians should be worried that we fit into that category.

In South Australia we now have families of three generations who have never experienced some employment. I will refer to some of the more recent books that have been written on this issue. One is titled *Home Truths: Property Ownership and Housing and Wealth in Australia*, written by two South Australian authors, Dr Blair Badcock, who is a reader in the Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies at the Adelaide University, and also Dr Andrew Beer, Senior Lecturer in the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management at Flinders University. The other document to which I have referred the House previously is titled *Revealing the Hidden City*, which looks at responding to poverty in central Adelaide. There are a number of authors of this particular document, but what they report in this document is quite chilling.

Having been involved with a soup kitchen in Grenfell Street for a number of years, I am aware of the fact that there are a number of homeless people in the city, but unfortunately the number seems to be getting bigger and our social policy response does not seem to be supporting these people.

As I said, it is a real concern to have three generations of people in South Australia who have never had secure employment. Instead of the Australian tradition (and I mean both our black and white tradition of mutual and community responsibility), we now have the term 'mutual obligation'. The basic tenet of this principle is that if you receive something you should give something back, and I believe that most of us, certainly superficially, would support that. It is

interesting that, in a community sense, this principle is inflicted on poor and vulnerable people.

The Australian Social Indicators Report 1999 shows that the top 20 per cent of income earners receive 37.4 per cent of all income, whereas the bottom 20 per cent of income earners receive 7.6 per cent of all income. Christopher Talbot, who is a worker at the Adelaide Central Mission and who contributed to the book *Revealing the Hidden City*, states:

How can the less well off meet the current and future obligations if they are receiving a small and declining share of the community's income?

And that is a question we might well ask about the situation in which many South Australians see themselves. Matthew Woodward, who works at the Multi Agency Community Housing Association, has pointed out that the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report from 1996-97 indicates that 11 800 people have found themselves homeless at least once this year. These are people in South Australia.

South Australia has a strong record with regard to the level of public housing. Premier Thomas Playford saw housing as an integral part of the economic and social fabric of this state. I believe that his vision was taken up by the late Don Dunstan and a number of other social progressives in South Australia. Our state has had a very high public housing level, as you, Mr Speaker, would know, having been a minister in that area. The level has been approximately 9.8 per cent, whereas the national average is somewhere around 6 per cent.

The emphasis has now changed, from housing and housing assistance to that of welfare assistance, and this has always been of concern to me. I believe that there are a lot of good, economic reasons why we have public housing and why the state gets involved in housing.

Lionel Orchard, in the Shelter newsletter dated May this year, is quoted by Matthew Woodward in his article (and I think that this summarises my point) as follows:

The South Australian model of public housing in its heyday was based on a mixture of radical and conservative principles in which public housing investment played an essential and creative role in underpinning the development of the South Australian economy, whilst serving the interests of the low income people in keeping land and rents down. The South Australian experience has shown that the commercial and social objectives can be managed in the interests of people who are in this situation.

In estimates in June this year we learnt from the Minister for Human Services that it was his intention to retarget the program of assistance for individuals in the private housing market. In the meantime, the decision to abolish the state-based rent relief scheme came into being. I am advised that this has the potential to impact on some 11 200 South Australians—mostly single parents on a low income and also many young people. Minister Brown has told the various student, youth and community organisations that he will reconsider this issue of rent relief.

One other problem with respect to this policy change is that the removal of rent relief payments (on average in South Australia, it is \$17.55 per week, and I am referring to state rent relief payments) has created a major disincentive for people to pursue short-term work opportunities, despite the fact that, in many cases (and we hear fairly chilling figures of one in three people working as casual, part-time or occasional workers in South Australia), by obtaining this work, no matter how short term it may be, it will act as a disincentive because one will lose one's rent relief forever.

The government removed the scheme for new applicants on 1 July this year, but undertook to support those families

relying on payments to afford housing in the more expensive private rental market. But the government and the minister failed to say that even short-term work that took the family's income over the usual eligibility level would disqualify that family from any future rent relief forever. The government in this instance has tinkered at the edges to deal with problems that it has created. Many students in particular are faced with the prospect of being cut off from rent relief at the end of each academic year.

Although there has been, as I said, some joy with regard to the minister's giving an undertaking to look at this area, the issue with respect to families has not been dealt with. A number of constituents who are really affected by being cut off from rent relief have come to my office.

The government's actions serve, as I said, as a disincentive to recipients to pursue short-term work opportunities. The present unemployment rate serves as a negative rather than a positive. A few weeks' work could cost a person their rent relief for good. It is not a lot but if you are a low income earner or on a social wage it could be critical.

According to Shelter SA the current average weekly rent for a three bedroom house is \$172 a week minimum, while the average weekly low income is between \$165 and \$220. Many people know that there is homelessness in South Australia, but I would argue that many people would not understand first hand that this is a real issue. Peter Burke, Coordinator of the Magdalene Centre in South Australia, states:

The chronic poverty that induces families with an average of 320 children to access the emergency assistance offered by the Magdalene Centre each month must reinforce the cynicism that the benefits of economic reform will 'trickle down' to all Australians. Many just feel that they are being dumped from a great height.

Allan Fairley, a social planner with the City of Adelaide, states:

A sense of common concern, commitment and even outrage is shared to a greater or lesser degree by the authors of this collection of papers [*Revealing the Hidden City*] with respect to the worsening situation of poverty and distress forced upon many of our fellow citizens. Many of us who work as public servants in this environment share the concern about this shameful reality.

I conclude by quoting from *Home Truths*, because I think that this document, which was released about one month ago, is the most up-to-date analysis of what is happening in the housing industry. It is of real concern to me that we have a number of people, not only being homeless in this state but whom we really are not assisting, but that our social policy actually looks at moving away from the public housing system and propping up the private system. I believe that there is certainly some room for private rental and private rental being supported. The authors state:

Policies that change the tenure mix have a series of knock-on effects. The problem as we see it is that home ownership is in a decline due to the economic and demographic change, and the public housing sector is being downsized. These two developments will put increasing pressure on the private rental market. Yet there is no indication that governments in Australia are taking the looming supply problem at all seriously. They have a blind faith in the capacity of markets to eventually adjust to the increase in demand for private rental accommodation. But this does not allow for low income households that get squeezed into the rising rents in the bottom of the private rental market while all this resorting takes place. Addressing these stresses in the housing system will require mechanisms that offer more protection to those marginal home buyers at risk in the labour market; the restoration of funding to the state housing authorities; and a much more sophisticated approach to targeted subsidies that work on the supply side of the private rental sector. That leaves the politically fraught question about the tax treatment of housing wealth and its inheritance.

The authors then talk about how we ensure, through good social policy, that people can live in dignity; that they have access to resources; and that they are not forced to sleep in the park or, as I understand it, the West Parklands, as the weather is improving, to survive.

We must look at ways of making sure that people have support rather than being dictated to about their lifestyle, their problems and the issues that they face. We must have proper social policy in housing that ensures not only that there is some dignity for the people using the services but also that the multiplicity of issues as to why they are homeless, why there are problems, and what sort of support is available are put in place.

As much as I appreciate some of the comments that were made by His Excellency Sir Eric Neal in his address, I have a real concern that, when we look at the number of homeless people and the people who are disaffected in that area in South Australia, the figures are quite chilling—and they are just the people who have been counted—and we need to analyse our policy seriously to ensure that people do not live in Third World conditions and are at risk.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): Today is the third anniversary of the election of the Forty-Ninth Parliament and the beginning of the fourth session. We are gathered on Kaurna land and I acknowledge the Kaurna people, the traditional custodians, who have cared for and nurtured this land for so long. In their caring for the land they have given us a most valuable lesson for, without a healthy planet, there would be no global village for us to be part of. As we begin deliberations in this place on how best to lead and serve our communities at this time of change and uncertainty, we would do well to bear that in mind.

I also acknowledge the Governor for his delivery of the opening speech. His Excellency and Lady Neal are held in real affection by South Australians and serve this state so very well and generously. We are fortunate to have them fostering and promoting South Australia, ably supported by the staff at Government House.

From the opening speech, which outlines the government's program for the coming year, as a citizen of this state and as a member of this House I am not reassured that South Australia has had the best course set for it on its journey into the new century of federation. For although we have come a long way since the invasion and beginning of colonial settlement of this continent, turning the challenges into opportunities, as this government hopefully proposes, may be easier said than done. Unless we recognise what the challenges really are and order them in terms of priority and importance, marking achievements in this, to quote from the Governor's speech, 'new era which emphasises quality of life', it may mean little but a posturing of cliched words. What worries me most is what the definition of 'quality of life' will be for this government.

I agree that security and greater certainty are very important to us all but, to quote again from the speech, 'better schools, better hospitals, better roads, a cleaner environment and a move towards a future where we are a more compassionate and just society' is a grab bag of political button pushing at its best, intentionally put together for its impact on the listener. Has the government finally realised that the community is concerned that things are not as they should be? Has it realised, even in a small way, that more of the same will no longer do and that the community can see past the shallow rhetoric, the preoccupation with the mean-spirited

financial fussing and debilitating internal Liberal Party bickering, and wait in hope for a vision of a future that is inclusive, compassionate and confident? How do we set the course for change?

In his 1999 book *Tips For The Travelling Soul Searcher*, Tim Costello talks of Ivan Illich, as follows:

... a great advocate of the South American poor. One day he was asked what he thought was the most powerful way to change society. Is it by means of revolution, the eager inquirer asked, where the hated power brokers are arrested and executed for their economic oppression? Or is it by means of reformation, where the major tools of influence such as education, parliament and key industries are gradually taken over by reformers who implement their vision for a new society? Illich replied that it was neither. Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, he said. Rather, you must tell a new and powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step forward.

The time has come to take the next step forward. No longer is it good enough to replicate the boom and bust cycles that have seen the world and its population reel through the agricultural revolution, industrial revolution and two world wars. We are now in the transit phase of the information revolution and it must be managed better this time around.

It is our task in this place to work through the strengths of this state, weaving together the powerful knowledges of the past to fashion the story of our state that our great-grandchildren will look back on, hopefully with pride. We have recently heard in this parliament condolences for great South Australians who have died, who led lives that enriched and added quality to all our lives. What great qualities did the Roma Mitchells, the David Tonkins and the Mark Oliphants bring to us? Apart from their uniqueness as special and talented people, they each epitomised a creativity of vision, a generosity of spirit and the capacity to see further than the day-to-day petty struggles of ego advancement.

Creativity and compassion must be among the most important qualities that we need to be able to deal with the challenges we face, not opportunism or glib, quick-fix solutions. Yet a vision for the arts—under Don Dunstan the flagship agenda of our state for so many years and a major industry for South Australia, with the establishment of the South Australian Film Corporation and the development of the Festival of Arts—was missing from the opening address. What does that signify? Why are we leaving the arts and cultural development behind in the eggs-in-one basket, tunnel vision, headlong rush to embrace the latest gadgetry, new fads and buzz words, and business jargon?

Australians are capable of being different, of leading. Look at the impact on the nation that an investment in sport has given us recently through the Olympic Games. There are many lessons from the Olympic Games. It was great to have a genuine feeling of goodwill pervade the country instead of an individualistic, self-centred approach. It was good to feel part of a great organisation, to feel a sort of solidarity. It certainly was Australia at its best, the best organised games ever. What a great side of Australian culture to show the world. We are now the leaders, but what do we show and teach others by this example?

One of the key elements we all agree upon was the nature of how glorious a celebration of Australian life the Olympic opening and closing ceremonies were—generous of spirit, inclusive, fun and creative. That is what the arts can do for a community, and the ability to reflect our culture to embrace new ways of seeing things, and to celebrate as well as educate

is part of the tradition of this state. I ask the Premier to spell out why the arts has slipped from its pride of place as synonymous with South Australia. Our Festival of Arts, WOMAdelaide, Come Out, the Feast festival (now in its fourth year), community arts in metropolitan areas and country regions, our indigenous art, our world leaders in arts administration—surely these must be part of a compassionate and confident state agenda.

Without the same level of investment in intellectual and cultural development in research and development initiatives, as we have seen in sport, we will lag further behind in the global world where creativity and innovation is the new key to community wellbeing. If South Australia is to have a future, if we are to create jobs for our children in the new economy, then we must acknowledge that we need local excellence in scientific and technological development. Investment in research and development is essential for sustainability and a growth-focused economic plan for the state's future. All that is special and fine about the Australian way of life is embodied in the ethic of a fair go, to do our very best for ourselves and for each other, and only accepting the best we can possibly be for the unity of the nation. Unity is strength.

The Olympic Games gave us strength, mostly on the back of an army of volunteers. Volunteering can move mountains. It is now a vitally important part of our society and the economy as governments abrogate responsibility in so many areas. However, volunteering does not bring in a wage. It does not support living expenses and families, but it does provide an essential element for the nurture or spiritual life of human beings, self-esteem and a purpose of life. With the International Year of the Volunteer approaching, we need to focus on the effect of volunteering versus paid employment, for there is no doubt that a never-ending amount of work needs to be done. The sticking point seems to be that those who are benefiting most from the globalisation of the world foolishly do not see the merit of sustaining the world's population and keeping its morale high.

Why then is it not possible to put the same creative Olympic effort into solving the problems that unemployment and underemployment bring? The term 'full-time equivalents' now covers the truth: the number of people involved in the work force looking for extra work is masked by the so-called record participation rate. Casual employment presents difficulties and has the greatest impact on women. A survey on casual employment recently released in Adelaide showed that 60 per cent of respondents had a week or less notice of their shifts; 42 per cent said that being on call made it difficult to plan for family commitments and other events in their lives; and more than a quarter wanted permanent work.

Permanent work brings the security this government is talking about. It means that you can get a loan to buy, for instance, a house. Home ownership has long been a valued and achievable goal in Australian life. In other parts of the world it is an impossibility. We are fast approaching the time when Australians, too, might only be able to dream of owning a home. Security means that we can plan for a family. This, too, is becoming well nigh impossible with the costs associated in supporting a family and combining ever increasing work commitments with family life. Remember when a second income helped provide the extras: many people who speak to me say they now need two incomes to survive.

In the speech there was no mention of child care or support for sole parent families. With the number of single parent families increasing, how can sole parents find jobs

without access to reliable, affordable child care and convenient, appropriate transport to access these services? We are making the hurdles higher and higher for those who need the assistance that will enable them to reach their potential. And there are other pressures on family life now. While there have been welcome initiatives to address the increasing problem of domestic violence that has become a reality to so many as they struggle to make ends meet, more needs to be done—and quickly. Why is it not recognised that the effects of unemployment and underemployment bring us problems that take twice the effort to put right?

Depression is the fastest growing condition being recognised as a determinant for poor health outcomes. The United Nations has cited it as one of the most significant issues facing mankind. We need to bolster our support of mental health initiatives because this trend is not being addressed. Mental health figured in the opening address but as a program to be managed efficiently rather than an area of policy that often reflects the failures of our community to provide meaningful, gainful employment and preventative support to its citizens.

There is a documented link between unemployment and depression. There is a chronic concern about the despair among our youth. Recent, soon-to-be-published findings by Flinders University's Professor Jim Barber reveal that depressed youth become more susceptible to suicide when they feel that those around them are happier or better off, especially evident in countries such as Australia. He calls this the 'relative misery hypothesis'. Similarly, Tim Costello has also identified the problem which is a growing scourge to us all. He calls it 'the wealth makes happiness story'.

Suicide is a serious issue which may sometimes be able to be prevented with timely and skilful psychiatric and community support. This is not simply a question of putting more support at the residual and acute end of the traumatic cycle that leads to major mental health crises but also about addressing the matter as a whole of government integrated approach to primary community health strategies, to placing unemployment at the centre of policy, not the periphery, and to providing more support to isolated and vulnerable families in the city and country regions dealing with the extraordinary pressures of poverty and struggle.

Another indicator of poor health is the significant increase in addictive behaviours. The use of hard drugs and dependence on pharmaceuticals affect our younger and older Australians. We could surmise that young people see no value in being part of a society that does not value them and, likewise, older Australians. Maintaining them as they become an ever increasing proportion of the population is seen as a growing problem to be solved. Older Australians have borne the brunt of burgeoning hospital waiting lists in areas such as physiotherapy, specialist consultations and surgery, rationed dental treatment and, most importantly, threats to their independence and ability to stay in their own home environments with the cruel cuts to domiciliary care.

To say that it is now time 'to improve our social well-being' will not erase the pain this group has had to bear in the name of creating 'the conditions for long-term security and certainty for South Australians'. Why not make a commitment to these people and create a new industry by making South Australia the centre for expertise and caring for the aged—the Florida of Australia? We have the climate and the work force able to be trained to care for the very people who made this country the great nation that it is. We can build on the high standards of aged care we have traditionally had in

South Australia and on the new developments in healthy ageing.

What better way for us to learn than from being around the enormous expertise that is to be found in the life experiences of the older generation? From what I can see, as we become busier than ever, we are not in the position to care for older generations and are finding it ever more difficult to find places where the accommodation and level of care is acceptable. I would be very much better off if I had a dollar for every time I have heard a constituent say to me how difficult it is to get a bed or arrange care and help for their aged or infirmed relatives.

The other addictive behaviour that has caused so much grief to so many in the community is gambling. In its many forms gambling is presenting many problems and bringing many families to crisis point. When the government is so reliant on the revenue produced by gambling, it is difficult to estimate what would be needed to encourage the necessary effort to look for an alternative, let alone replacing gambling as an income stream. Those who have addictions or severe mental health problems are often shunned and shamed by society. Yet those who are suffering can teach us much about ourselves as a society. It is the way a society responds to the needs of its poorest communities, the distress of its most marginalised minorities where poverty is a reality—the homeless and the unwell—that is the measure of a society and its wellbeing as a community. Communities count. We live in a community, not just an economy.

Tim Costello reminds us that in much the same way as canaries showing signs of distress are the first warning of danger in mines underground so, too, should we recognise that the pain of addicted people signals that all is not well in the social life of our state. This government has shirked its responsibilities in the critical areas of employment, especially in growing industries such as the arts, health and aged care, and preventative community health and medical support for the mentally unwell. These policy areas are an investment in our quality of life, not optional extras to be minimised or thrown to the market place to be savaged.

The government mouths the term 'quality of life' as our social fabric is fraying. It offers only bells and whistles in the suburbs and rubbery budget figures to impress the top end of town. Well, out in the suburbs in my electorate my constituents need to know they can have and keep their jobs; give their children a good education so that they can find jobs; have access to medical advice and hospitals when they need to; and gain care with dignity for their elderly relatives without having to mortgage their homes and lives to do so.

They care about public transport, too. It is a shame that there is no mention of public transport in the opening address. Perhaps this portrays the government's mindset and intention that public transport is not a priority. Now that it is privatised, it is evident that it is out of sight, off the balance sheet and out of mind. South Australia cannot afford to do this. We are one of the most suitable cities for light transit in the world. We are compact and flat and can provide excellent transit support which is environmentally friendly and community building. Public transport will become more, not less, important in the future. It is a key to sustainability, with less reliance on fossil fuel, and will contribute to protection of the ozone and earth's atmosphere.

Our reliance on cars and petrol must be curbed. Imagine if emerging economies such as China were to have cars in the proportions that we have: the protection of the ozone layer and global warming would become overwhelming problems

to tackle. Instead of building multi-million dollar freeways we should be investing in future transport infrastructure. We are told privatisation has increased Adelaide's public transport patronage. In reality increases have come from strictly policing ticket inspections. This could have been achieved long ago. Bring back the conductors!

At a public forum held last week, Dr Paul Mees from the University of Melbourne—probably Australia's most respected public transport researcher—likened Adelaide's recent patronage increase to a 'dead cat bounce'. In explaining this he said that, just as when something that is beyond help will bounce up when it is dropped from a height, patronage here in Adelaide has shown a bleep of life when shown attention at its death knell.

Reannounced, repackaged initiatives are a feature of this government; so, too, is a lack of openness, accountability and freedom of information—which these days has come to mean no access to information at all. Public transport has had its fair share of announcements and non-disclosures. For example, claimed service innovations as a result of privatisation include uniform timetables across the system. We had this previously, when the entire system was government owned. Extra services on week nights are actually funded by the Motor Accident Commission and so have nothing to do with the privatisation and everything to do with good public policy investment.

Of course, the classic example of this government's rebadging approach to our public transport system is the new names. We now have Adelaide Metro, formerly the Passenger Transport Board, before that TransAdelaide, and before that the State Transport Authority. It happens in other departmental areas, too. What my constituents want is open, accountable government.

In his 1998 Whitlam lecture, Don Dunstan made a statement that is particularly applicable to public transport, although it may be taken as a criticism of this government's slash and burn mentality generally. He said:

In planning for our future it serves neither economic efficiency nor social justice to destroy the institutions that society from experience has created and that are efficiently meeting the social needs of the community. They are not impediments to progress but foundations for it.

Professor Vukan Vuchic, a world renowned transport academic has stated:

Public investments in well planned, coordinated, multi-modal transport systems represent an absolute essential for development of livable, sustainable urban areas.

Ultimately we all pay the penalty if we fail to ensure that our public transport system is adequately funded and appropriately targeted. I think Sydney's Olympic experience showed what extra funding can do for a transport system, and how efficient public transport can really be.

I recently accompanied Tim Costello to three meetings around Adelaide. He is one of Australia's most sought after speakers. Across the continent and beyond he is asked to comment in the media and to speak to conferences and gatherings of all shapes and sizes. He says that his approach to public speaking is to recount stories on all manner of things, such as the new and brighter tale that Ivan Illich talked about.

South Australia has had a rich tale to tell and can have it again. Let us be brave and bold, compassionate and community focused in the direction we take. It is the story we create in this session of parliament that will engender the spirit of South Australia for the near future and beyond.

Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey): With pleasure, I rise tonight to speak to the Governor's speech in the Address in Reply debate. In reference to that speech, I would like to outline some of the issues that are relevant to the electorate of Chaffey. One of the issues that was raised related to a sustainable environmental future, and a sustainable water supply in particular. The Murray River is the heart of my electorate and indeed is the lifeblood to this state, and not a day goes past that the issue is not referred to in my electorate office.

I have been fortunate to be a member of the select committee that was established by this House last year to look at issues in relation to the Murray River, and as a result of that committee we have been able to expand the knowledge of members of this place in particular relating to the issues of concern. There has been a lot of publicity in the media of recent times. Some of it has been reasonably accurate, while some has been rather sensationalist, and it has caused me a certain amount of grief to see the way in which the South Australian government has pursued the issue in some areas.

In particular, I point to references to our upstream water users. I would agree with the government that we need to address the issues of concern in relation to overuse of water in those areas, but to stand on this side of the border and throw stones across at our interstate counterparts in order to score points in the local marketplace does nothing for our ability to then sit around the negotiating table and come up with what is in the best interests of the basin and ultimately of South Australia as well.

I am under no illusion that it is an easy task to sit around this discussion table, but it is vitally important that we understand the issues that our neighbours are also facing. If we do not understand those issues, we cannot hope to start to negotiate a better position for all concerned. After all, the people who are irrigators upstream are irrigating under the current law of their state with the right of that state to do so. For us to say that those irrigators are at fault would be to say that our irrigators in the Riverland are also at fault. I believe that it is incorrect to blame the people who are using the water on the basis of a legal right. It is the legal right that has been given to them that is at fault. The issue needs to be taken up with those who have given them that legal right, along with how we may best claw back the overuse of the system for the benefit of all, taking into consideration the social and environmental, as well as the economic, issues of concern.

One of my particular concerns with the Murray River is that there has been enormous pressure for there to be action now. I do not dispute that there needs to be action now, but this has resulted in an enormous amount of work and effort being put into producing plans and strategies. The community has now been inundated with a number of documents, committees, organisations and media hype that have created confusion out there that is to some extent certainly impeding progress.

The recent release of the state water plan defined this government's direction for the next five years, and I applaud that document. At the same time, we had the release of the South Australian salinity strategy, as well as the release of the Murray Darling Basin salinity strategy. The Murray River Water Catchment Management Board also released its water allocation plans and catchment water management plans. The community out there is now throwing up its hands up in despair and saying, 'What does all this mean, and how will it impact upon me?'

So, it is very important that we on the select committee and other leaders in the community take the time to explain what is happening out there so that people can be brought along with the process and are not run over with it. I believe that efforts are being made through different organisations to hold various workshops, but we must ensure that we move ahead steadily and bring the community along with us, or else we risk losing its support and hence the political agenda will make it very difficult to implement change.

In the regions where change is happening all too rapidly, we are seeing that our producers in regional areas are operating on a worldwide market at the moment. The changes over the past five to 10 years have been incredibly dramatic, and it has been very difficult for these people to adapt to what it means to be operating in a global marketplace. We have seen the reduction in tariffs, the deregulation of markets and imports which have undermined our local produce and which have seen our producers hurt greatly.

Fortunately for South Australia, we have also had the wine industry, which has been incredibly successful. The wine industry has been dragging through what would otherwise be a fairly bleak picture. The wine industry in the Riverland has been doing exceptionally well. I give credit to all those in the Riverland who are involved in the wine industry and who are moving ahead in leaps and bounds and managing the industry reasonably well.

The Riverland is actually the second largest wine grape production area in Australia. In 1999, it produced a crush of more than 245 000 tonnes, second only to the Murray Valley, which is a New South Wales-Victoria region. To put that in perspective, the next largest region in South Australia was the Barossa, with a crush of 37 500 tonnes. So, it is a significant contributor to the state's export production, in that it produces 60 per cent of South Australia's crush.

Risks are coming up for the wine industry. There are areas of concern in relation to over supply. Some are predicting that prices will drop further, and there is a need for us to be able to manage that within the community. Prices in the wine industry were incredibly high until the last harvest, when we saw a dramatic decrease in price. The prices have not dropped below production prices or got anywhere near production prices, but at the same time there was a dramatic reduction last year. The community felt the impact of that.

The citrus industry has seen some dramatic drops in prices also for this year's harvest. The citrus industry has had a couple of good years and has expanded its US export market and been able to increase the quality of fruit and the niche market that it was approaching. However, this year has demonstrated how dangerous it is to have all your eggs in one basket. We had a season where the fruit was not quite the quality that we would have hoped; we had problems with a particular pest snail being found in a delivery; we had flooding of the market by other countries competing against Australian produce which was not quite up to its normal standard; and we saw a dramatic drop in prices coming back to our citrus growers, creating an enormous amount of angst within the industry.

This has demonstrated clearly to me that the government in South Australia should continue to support the industry and expand its programs looking at other markets for export produce, in particular citrus and other types of fruit. If we can expand these markets we will spread the risk somewhat and we will not see the peaks and troughs that we have seen over the last three years in the citrus industry where things were starting to look good and producers were walking around

with a half smile on their face, only to have the rug pulled out from underneath them earlier this year. So I think it is vitally important that governments look at expanding the opportunities for increasing export markets overseas. The government's role is to facilitate the expansion of those markets in conjunction with industry.

One of the things which comes up regularly in regional areas but which is not often referred to is the changes that communities are facing because of the global marketplace and deregulation of industries. People are being asked to adapt to change without necessarily having the skills to do so. There is a real gap in our education process, particularly in regional areas. If we are going to develop and expand regional areas, I think we have to be able to provide people in those regions with skills to adapt to the marketplace that they will be working in.

In the up and coming years, and even now, we have a real drain in leadership qualities. We have fewer and fewer people who are prepared to take on roles on boards and even work in the local sporting clubs and community associations. At most meetings I go to around the district you see the same old faces turning up at each of the meetings. I think we need to focus in our leadership programs on educating and training not only our achievers at school who are likely to move on and move away from the district, but also those who are likely to look at opportunities for career paths within the district. Those leadership qualities need to be in people who stay behind if we are going to be able to grow and strengthen our regional communities. Indeed, we need to be really focusing on the community spirit within our schooling and education system so that our young people can understand the importance of playing a major role in supporting their community.

One of the other matters that has been of major concern in my electorate recently is in relation to reconciliation, I guess, and the issue recently of notices from the National Native Title Tribunal. Under the commonwealth Native Title Act, the tribunal is required to notify landowners of registered native title applications that have achieved the registration test. This resulted in 10 000 letters being sent out in August this year to holders of perpetual leases and other miscellaneous leaseholders.

Perpetual leaseholders, in particular, were not aware that they were even to be involved in the native title process. Over the two years since the claim was lodged over the Riverland area, which is my electorate, many workshops have been held by the Native Title Unit in conjunction with the South Australian Native Title Steering Committee and the South Australian Farmers Federation, and all those workshops were held on the basis that people were told that perpetual leases extinguish native title and there was nothing to worry about. So there was not terribly much angst in the community.

A total of 4 418 letters were sent out in my electorate in early August. They went out not only to people who own fruit blocks but also to owners of town residential blocks, to the owners of retirement homes and retirement villages, and also right across the agricultural and pastoral areas, which, of course, you would expect in some respects. What this has done to reconciliation in the area of the Riverland has been absolutely disastrous. People have felt that their security has been undermined and that they now have to face a lengthy process before they can feel secure in their landholding again. It has created mayhem within the real estate market, in that now real estate agents are required to declare the native title claim details in the sale of perpetual leases, but beforehand

perpetual leases were considered an exclusive possession-type property and not subject to native title.

This situation has been brought about by the fact that this state has not passed any validation and confirmation legislation which defines where native title has been extinguished under common law as a result of the Wik decision and the subsequent federal Native Title Act. This has created an enormous amount of angst within the community. When the notices first came out, my electorate office received in excess of 100 phone calls a day. One particular lady rang me after she had been crying for two hours before she got herself together enough to ring me to say that before her husband had passed away six months ago they had bought a unit in the Barmera Retirement Village and now the natives were coming to take away her home. That is unfair. It is not true and there is no need for that person to be going through this because of a legal technicality that says that these properties have not been extinguished by statute under South Australian law so they must be notified as they have perpetual leases. So we are needlessly worrying people when under the law we know that native title has been extinguished on these properties.

So I believe that in the up and coming weeks this needs to be sorted out amongst all the parties. I do not believe that the indigenous communities in the Riverland and, indeed, across the state want to see what is happening in the Riverland at the moment. I believe we have seen reconciliation set back at least 20 years in the Riverland. We have a community that is now incredibly divided. We have a community that received letters that may not take away their rights, but certainly say that it could happen. It might be all right for members to shake their heads, but if their mother received one of those letters they would be concerned as well. That is the point that I am trying to make.

I think it is important that we do not make this a political football to be debated through parliament but that we all sit down and speak about this logically and clearly, identifying areas of concern to the indigenous community in the existing legislation before parliament in another place, and what areas we can definitely say have been extinguished so we do not need to put people through this heartache. What has occurred is very unfortunate. It has been two years in the making, with the validation and confirmation legislation having been first introduced about two years ago, and I think we are now in a very unfortunate situation. The Aboriginal community in the region is also divided over this issue. I think that it is important that we sit down and work it through.

One other area that I want to speak about is referring not to the Governor's speech this year but to the Governor's speech last year when the government indicated that it would introduce proprietary racing legislation. I am looking forward to seeing that legislation this time round. I have been given an undertaking that we will see it in the next few weeks. We have seen considerable movement in straight line racing development in the Riverland by greyhound and harness racing authorities, and I think it is going to be a worthwhile enterprise for the Riverland that will see jobs come into this state. I hope that the proprietary racing bill will be introduced so that we can get it before this place and debate it in a sensible manner as well.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I would like to say, first, that I was a little disappointed that there was not more reference to my shadow portfolio area of primary industries in the Governor's speech. Needless to say,

it is a vital part of our state's economy and one that is in the forefront of the opposition's mind, but there was very little reference in the Governor's speech to primary industries. In fact, there was just a short reference to issues about the level of employment in regional Australia and a mention of regional development boards being allocated \$2 million to implement strategies, something, of course, that I applaud.

However, there are a number of other issues in primary industries at the moment that I would have thought warranted some mention in an outline of the government's intention over this session of parliament. I refer to issues such as fishing and aquaculture and agriculture generally, particularly biotechnology issues. The issue of the single desk for barley exporting has been a matter of great discussion in recent months and, hopefully, we can expect to see some action from the state government in extending the single desk for the exporting of barley very shortly.

There was also no mention of ensuring that there will be a deep sea port facility for South Australia's agricultural exports in the future, and no mention of what will happen with the sale of the Ports Corporation and how the export avenues for Australian agriculture will be safeguarded by this government. There was no mention of compliance issues in agriculture and, with the locusts having hatched and about to swarm, I would have thought that that matter might warrant some comment, as well as some comment generally about compliance.

There was only a brief mention of regional development issues, which are not only about how much regional development boards are supported and providing funds to communities, although I take the member for Chaffey's point about leadership in rural communities and agree that quite a lot needs to be done in community development. There was no mention in the Governor's speech about addressing the problem of infrastructure in regional South Australia and that, after all, is and will be the key point in regional development. Development is not possible without the basic infrastructure required, and I was very disappointed that there was no mention of this in the Governor's speech.

As to my other shadow portfolio of science and technology, during the parliamentary recess we saw the long-awaited release of the Olsen government's Information Economy 2002, the information economy plan for this government. It is a plan that is well overdue. In fact, the former Premier, Dean Brown, was quite active in the area of information economy. Although I question whether EDS should have been awarded a 'whole of government' contract for information outsourcing, looking back I am grateful that the Premier of this state had some interest in the information economy and had some plan for the future and actually implemented an action plan. I understand that the plan was due to be reworked and re-released over a year ago but we have had to wait until now for the Olsen government to get its act sufficiently together to produce a policy.

We now have Information Economy 2002, which is described as 'our plan for the future'. I certainly have no quarrel with most of the sentiments expressed in this policy document: it contains a great many worthy sentiments; all the right jargon words are used, and all the right goals are described for bringing South Australia into the information economy, making our industries competitive and giving South Australia a chance to compete in the global economy.

The 21 key areas outlined are very worthy for the most part. Some the government claims to have implemented; some it claims to be working on; and many of them are yet

to be done. I have no quarrel with that. Any policy document would outline measures for the future and would not simply concentrate on what has been done. However, I would say that this Olsen government, in fact, has done very little.

The Minister for Information Economy is a late and obviously a very fervent convert to the benefits of the information economy and he reflects those sentiments in the House. Again, as with regional development, it is all very well to talk about what one might do but we really need to see some action in this regard. I note that on the 'Talking point' web site there is some discussion about access to infrastructure in the information economy, and the point is made that very little can be done without cheap and ready access to broadband cable width—and that is very much the case. It is one of the big aims of the government to improve that access, and I hope that that is speedily achieved in conjunction with the federal government.

One of the points contained in the Information Economy 2002 policy paper that the opposition finds difficult to swallow is the concept of the virtual electorate. I really do not need to go into this in great detail: it was released during the recess and I think a great many people have made fun of this policy—and quite rightly so. It seems to be a desperate policy of a government with not many ideas left, not many runs on the board, and an attempt to form itself into a visionary and innovative government at this late stage. Well, it will not work and it has not worked. I was at a business lunch when I received the press release and it certainly provoked a great deal of mirth around my table, and that is the overwhelming response.

The minister has gone forth and tried to sell this policy but really the policy is not worth selling. It proposes the idea of having two members of the Legislative Council looking after a virtual electorate. So, the people who could vote for these two Legislative Councillors are expatriate South Australians—not citizens of this state. According to the consultation model, they simply need to be 18 years of age, an Australian citizen born in South Australia but ineligible to enrol under the Electoral Act principally, one presumes, because South Australia is not their principal place of residence. Enrolment and voting for this electorate would not be compulsory. Therefore, we would have two members of the Legislative Council, two well paid members of this parliament, looking after a virtual electorate of people who do not live in this state and have virtually severed their connections with this state.

Among the questions on the web site concerning this issue is the question, 'How many expatriate South Australians are there who might be eligible?' and the government's answer is, 'The truth is that we don't know, but we know that there are a lot.' That is a truly pathetic response, and one of the respondents to the web sites says it quite concisely. The minister has read out to this House a couple of responses which are quite congratulatory of this proposal, so it is quite appropriate that I read out one that definitely is not. The respondent says:

What a crazy idea! Has the government taken leave of their senses? Perhaps the government should try listening to the people already residing in South Australia instead of creating some virtual electorate! Who exactly would they be electing, anyway? A virtual politician?

This idea does not seem to have been well thought out (despite the Premier's quote claiming this whole info economy thing is). What if only a few hundred people enrolled? That would give them a disproportionately large amount of power, surely? This would pave

the way for particular interest groups, like say ex-pat business people to push their particular interests.

Considering the government spends a large amount of time getting stuck into the Legislative Council and talking of reducing the numbers, they are either clutching at straws (since they cannot seem to come up with any other ideas to inspire the people of South Australia) or this is a dummy position they are talking of creating.

Think again, Minister Armitage. Let us talk about electoral reform based in reality, not cyberspace.

Indeed, that is the crucial issue: let us think of real reform in this state, not some idea dreamed up God knows where in the minister's department or maybe even in the minister's head.

What this government has to do is address the disfranchised in the community, not those who have voluntarily left this state. Very well, keep contact with expatriate South Australians; I am all in favour of that. My friends and relatives interstate say that it is very difficult to get any news about South Australia whatsoever in interstate newspapers or on television, so certainly it would be very good to find a way in which to communicate with them over the internet. However, to give them a vote and give them perhaps disproportionate power in the Legislative Council (maybe even the balance of power) is surely something for which the South Australian public will not vote.

However, I can see that it might have some attraction for the government. It might well consider that it has found a group which would not have been affected by its actions over the last seven years; it might well have found a group which, for example, has not been affected by hospital cuts, cuts in education or by the emergency services levy and other taxation increases imposed by this government. That would be very handy, would it not? It would be very useful to have that group which was not affected by those policies and which, from afar, might think that this government has done a reasonable job. However, those of us who live in South Australia and who are in contact with our communities know that all those cuts in services and all that redirection of priorities by this government from essential services to paying consultants is hurting people, and I believe that those people will not vote for this government at the next election.

Today we marked three years since the Olsen government was narrowly elected in 1997. This government is well and truly on the last leg of its term, and this time next year it will feel the wrath of South Australians who have been very disappointed with the calibre of this government and its lack of vision—and gimmicky ideas such as the virtual electorate will not make up for that lack of real depth and vision by this government.

Ms BREUER (Giles): I welcome this opportunity to speak today, and I must say how impressed I am with Sir Eric Neal, our Governor, and also the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, of whom we saw a lot during the Olympics. And how nice it would have been had they been our presidents rather than our Governors at the Olympic Games.

Tonight I wish to raise a number of issues which are of concern to me and my electorate, but I am a afraid that I may miss some of these because of the absolutely inept and unreliable computer system with which we are expected to work in this place. I have been working with computers for 20 years, so I am not a novice or a raw beginner. I will not profess to be a whiz, but I do know enough to be able to use a computer competently.

I do not know what the problem is with our system or the cause—and I do not blame the support staff who are very helpful and assist whenever they can—but I believe that it is

time that this system was looked at. The whole system is useless and something must be done to replace it. I do not know how much it has cost taxpayers, but in the last year I have been able to use my computer for something like 10 weeks only. I have had problem after problem.

Yesterday, the Minister for Information Economy spoke of South Australia and the 21 initiatives of the government's information economy 2002 policy. What a joke this is when we cannot even get our computer system right in this place to serve 70 odd MPs and support staff. I do not feel very comfortable about talking about this issue, but I have been let down so many times and I know that so many of my colleagues have also been let down that I think enough is enough and it was time something was done about this.

Today I want particularly to discuss the impact of this present government's policies on rural non-government organisations. I believe that the present system is currently falling down around us and collapsing in a heap. In the past two months, problem after problem through inadequate services has arisen in my electorate. Mental health is a major issue. I personally know of two families who have teenage sons who require intensive assistance but for whom nothing is available. This is causing major stress for the whole family, and at a later date I would like to detail some of those problems further.

Other health services are lacking, and indeed one of my own staff members was required to take her four year old son to Port Augusta from Whyalla last weekend for an appendix operation because no surgeon was available at Whyalla Hospital, which serves a community of 23 000 people. She had to stay in Port Augusta for the weekend with her young son.

Welfare organisations, both government and community, are in great demand, but they lack resources, finance and the capability to provide the services that are required. This seems to have particularly fallen down in the past few months. I think the system has reached a crisis point and something needs to be done about it.

The state and federal governments now seem to value competition over community spirit. Agencies within communities are now competing with each other and, to a large extent, they have lost the cooperation that is essential, particularly in rural communities, which have limited resources. Competitive tendering, contracting out and project specific funding have divided agencies within communities. I think communities have been aware for some time that this has been occurring, but it has now become acute. In Whyalla, for example, there is a service called Centrecare Catholic Family Services: it is an excellent organisation, very ably run by its Director, Pauline Frick, but it is becoming the big ogre in Whyalla because of its success in winning tenders. This should not be the case. It is a committed, locally based and staffed organisation which has excellent results, but it is now facing other community organisations' angst because it is seen as taking all the available funding to the detriment of smaller organisations.

This is most distressing and is being addressed by the community organisations which know that it is an unworkable and unfair approach, but it is very difficult not to do a Perc and pack your bags and go home when the competition seems too stiff. For all these organisations seeking funding, the insecure and narrow parameters set through competitive tendering, contracting out and project specific funding are creating enormous problems, and I express my sincere admiration to the organisations that are coping despite this.

An organisation in a rural community is there to deliver human services, but when a client requires assistance the funding is usually project specific (not generalist) and certain criteria must be met before that client can be seen. What happens is that organisations must blur the boundaries knowing that there is nowhere else for the client to go, and they have to take on a feeling of responsibility for the community problem.

Attracting staff to regional Australia is a major problem at any time. Despite the joys of *Seachange* on ABC on Sunday nights, there is very little interest by professionals to relocate to country regions and, if an organisation can offer only a one year contract, it is almost an impossibility. Most programs now are offered only on a short-term basis with no guarantees of long-time funding, and staff consequently feel insecure and start looking elsewhere. Most funding is for service delivery only and the agency must then cover the costs of infrastructure, training, travel costs, etc. Many rural and remote workers require a high level of support of supervision and professional development as a result of their isolation, and they often must travel hundreds of kilometres just to see one client. Trips to Adelaide for training and support involve travel costs and accommodation.

To telephone one's colleagues in metropolitan Adelaide for support and debriefing we are talking about STD calls which are expensive; yet within the tendering process often metropolitan and rural services are funded equally but not with equity as many of the costs of operating a rural service are not taken into account. Often successful tenderers are from outside of communities and are reliant on national support organisations with regional perspectives. For local communities these larger organisations are seen to be moving in on their territory. This is keenly felt when metropolitan organisations, without a local base, win tenders for a whole region. There is a sense of community representation being lost and, in reality, what it means is that lone workers may be hundreds of kilometres from their head office and enormous travel and telephone costs are involved.

Another problem with the tendering process for community organisations is that funding is usually project specific, for example, domestic violence, gambling, or sexual abuse, but for family or teenage problems, depression or anxiety, there is no allowance so clients must be sent away with a 'sorry'. Most findings show that rural human service provision involves counsellors having to be specialist generalists: they need to have a sound broad-based knowledge across a section of client needs to be able to work effectively in those communities.

Project specific funding sets narrow boundaries and puts services into little boxes. This puts enormous pressures on these workers in these services and they are hurting. You cannot send someone somewhere else in a regional community for assistance. It has been expressed to me (and I have seen it personally) that never before have staff been put through the struggle and trauma they are now experiencing through these boundaries. The depth of client need and workload are causing burn-out. The government does not realise the need. An agency often takes on clients for whom it is not funded. Consequently, government does not realise that there is a need there because it does not get recorded in statistics. The counsellor takes on the responsibility of the emotional needs of a community.

The tender process itself involves energy, time and money and writing tenders requires a lot of skill. Agencies often do not have these skills. It increases pressure on staff workloads

and, as I mentioned previously, it does create division and a lack of trust with fellow agencies. Policies around competitive tendering and contracting out are decimating communities and no structures are being put in place to overcome these symptoms and problems. A sense of powerlessness is being felt by the smaller agencies in communities. Often when an agency wins a tender it creates problems for it when that funding runs out.

The dearth of general counselling services in country areas often puts them in the invidious position of having to say no to clients when, in fact, it is actually government policy that is saying no. An example of this is one organisation in Whyalla which was successful in gaining one-off funding to offer an adult survivors of sexual abuse service. This service was funded through the South Australian Community Benefit Fund and, due to requests for this sort of counselling, it was seen as seed funding with the hope of winning follow-up funding at a later time.

It became the specialist service for adult survivors, with referrals coming from all organisations and out of town clients. Before the funding period ended the service began lobbying other government departments for the continuation of funding given the demonstrated need. This was not successful and the counsellor used in that position has since been moved into a different program, yet the service still continues to receive referrals for sexual abuse counselling. Each time it must be explained to inquirers that the service is no longer available. There is no other service to which people can be referred and they feel both let down and powerless in terms of accessing help without having to drive to Adelaide.

With generalist funding the person could have received assistance instead of slotting them into a program box. Contracting out also means that innovation is out. Too often we receive tender documents that state that they are looking for an innovative and new way of delivering the service. The irony is that the money allocated for the service makes it almost impossible to take risks and be innovative. To run pilot programs, whether they fail or succeed, are great for communities and the government needs to understand that a research, development and social policy is as relevant for that as it is for businesses.

Agencies are not just service providers but incubators of good ideas. It seems such a waste of resources to have short-term contracts, with all the costs that they incur, instead of sustainable community services. Government cannot develop policy based on short-term contracts. It is now time to bring the two methods of funding non-government organisations to the table for evaluation and discussion. It would make a marvellous study and South Australia could become a progressive state in acting upon the issues of a nation of community-based organisations. The situation is at flash point and I urge the government to reconsider its approach to human services provision.

I want now to look at some other broad-based issues that affect regional South Australia and my electorate. The issue of communications, of course, is an ongoing issue for us in remote South Australia. Mobile coverage is still very limited and poor telephone lines are in much of the state. These are federal issues but I urge the state members to lobby their federal counterparts on these issues. I want to talk about a number of issues to be discussed at this coming Sunday's Spencer Gulf Cities Association meeting to be held at Roxby Downs. Audio tactile line marking is an issue of concern that has been discussed at a number of meetings of the Spencer

Gulf Cities Association because of its importance to rural South Australia.

Country South Australians realise the improved safety and effectiveness of audio tactile line markings and have been frustrated by the delays in implementing the request for more reports that keep coming through and the arguments over costing. Surely safety and lives are above these frustrations. I urge the government to get its act together quickly on this issue. I am pleased, however, to see that more overtaking lanes are being constructed between Port Augusta and Port Pirie, one of the most dangerous roads in South Australia. They are considered essential by country drivers.

Another suggestion that has come from the Spencer Gulf Cities Association meetings is that drivers use their headlights when travelling on country roads. We use these roads constantly, we know the safety issues and we urge the state government to consider these options and advise their federal colleagues. I always use my lights when I am travelling on country roads and I probably do more kilometres than anyone in this place.

Water costs are a major concern to country people and we know that, in theory, country people will not be paying more, and that is not true. The Minister for Water Resources promised a response to a number of questions when he attended a meeting some six months ago, yet no response has been forthcoming. There was also some discussion that the Spencer Gulf Cities Association be dissolved and, in many ways, I would be sorry to see this as I have been attending the meetings for 10 years now and consider them to be very important in promoting a spirit of regionalism in our area. I would like to congratulate the Spencer Gulf Cities Association for its years of work and its influence and role as an advocate for country residents.

Again, I refer to the problems of Penong residents in the far west in obtaining water. I have raised this issue a number of times in this place but there has been no result. Farmers and residents are still being forced to pay \$8 per kilolitre for water, yet the pipeline is only eight kilometres from the town. No-one in government is prepared to find funding for this extra eight kilometres, and this is the year 2000. Pimba, near Woomera, has a similar story. This little community of about 12 houses, despite being right alongside a major power transmission line, cannot have mainline power because no-one in government will accept responsibility to pay for or arrange for the power to be supplied.

The Department of Defence and the state government cannot get together over this issue. I am following up both these issues because I cannot believe that, in the new millennium, power and water are denied to these communities and they do not have the privileges and the rights of other residents of South Australia.

Of course, people in regional South Australia do not seem to have rights, as instanced by the continued push to establish a low-level radioactive waste dump in our region. That has been mentioned a number of times today. There has been action to oppose a medium-level dump, but no-one is respecting our right to say no to any dump. We are being ignored despite the fact that it is our region.

Many issues of concern to me need to be raised, and I congratulate all those involved in the recent Olympic Games, both competitors and supporters, and I give my special congratulations to an athlete from our region, from Roxby Downs, Jana Jamnicky. Jana was a member of the women's handball team. She is a 33 year old electrical engineer in Roxby Downs. She is also the mother of two children. She

has been involved in handball since she was 10 years old in her native Slovakia. It is an incredible effort that someone from a remote region in Australia is able to continue training and be able to participate in the games. I extend my warmest congratulations to her and I wish her well in her endeavours to coach for the 2004 games in Athens.

I will also talk briefly about cuttlefish. The annual migration of hundreds of thousands of Australian giant cuttlefish (*Sepia apama*) onto the reef areas around Black Point and Point Lowly, north of Whyalla, is recognised as one of the most significant and spectacular natural events in Australian marine waters, if not the world, and is rapidly gaining international recognition. A proposal has been put calling for the establishment of a permanent marine protected area, a marine reserve and a marine sanctuary or conservation park to protect Whyalla's unique spawning aggregation of the Australian giant cuttlefish. This protection should extend to all species of cephalopod, which includes cuttlefish, squid and octopus, within the proposed area from 1 March to 30 September each year. The South Australian government has also been requested to employ a fisheries officer in Whyalla to protect the spawning grounds each season against illegal fishing of cuttlefish.

The proposal has been prepared by the Whyalla Sports Divers Club, with the support and encouragement of the Whyalla City Council, Australian and international marine scientists, distinguished marine film-makers, divers from across Australia, the general public and me. We are told that this aggregation occurs nowhere else in the world in such numbers. Before the introduction of large scale commercial fishing in 1997 and 1998, hundreds of thousands of these unique animals would congregate with unfailing regularity to mate and spawn each year between early May and mid August. Today these large numbers have been decimated and will continue to fall unless the spawning grounds receive permanent protection.

It is a unique event both nationally and internationally, it is ecologically significant and it provides unlimited potential for sustainable ecotourism. Divers come from all over the world to watch this event each year and there is significant scientific and educational interest in the phenomenon. However, the industry is vulnerable to fishing pressures. Spawning grounds have never recovered from the unmanaged commercial fishing that occurred during the 1997 and 1998 seasons when over 400 000 cuttlefish were taken. At present, around 55 per cent of the shallow rocky shoreline on which the cuttlefish lay their eggs is open to commercial fishing and the area is not managed.

Great concern has been expressed about proposals being put forward by commercial interests to gain even greater access to the remaining cuttlefish. The value of ecotourism far outweighs any short-term and unsustainable gain that could be received from fishing the cuttlefish. This year Whyalla and South Australia attracted divers from the USA, Chile, Canada and from across Australia, who would never have visited if not for the cuttlefish. It is truly one of South Australia's diving secrets. It needs not only to be protected but also promoted. It has the potential to develop into one of the top 10 dives in Australia, indeed the world, if protected, and permanent protection is essential for its survival.

The sustainable long-term proposal that is being considered suggests that the existing closed area should be permanently protected each season and no cephalopods can be taken. In addition, there is to be no commercial fishing in unprotected spawning grounds north of Point Lowly and

around the Whyalla marina. The bag limit would be up to 12 cuttlefish per day for local fishermen outside the protected area. The effect of those measures would protect the remaining cuttlefish, allow numbers to rebuild, provide local fishermen with access to bait and provide local operators with manageable quantities for sale as bait. It would protect the total spawning grounds.

The Primary Industries Minister, Mr Kerin, has already shown commendable leadership in this area with the introduction of a moratorium on commercial fishing in 1998 and the subsequent introduction of appropriate research and scientific investigation of the phenomenon. As well, he has withstood strong and ongoing pressure from the commercial fishing industry to allow an early resumption of fishing of this resource, and I thank him and congratulate him on his efforts. There is now a unique opportunity to demonstrate ecological and environmental leadership of a standard that has been sadly lacking in this country and around the world.

Given the limited commercial fishing potential of this resource, compared with the significance of this unique natural event and the sustainable and non-exploitative ecotourism and research potential of this phenomenon, long term and safe decision making for the protection of this resource is urged. Establishment of a marine protected area category 2 national park, or equivalent, is the only way of ensuring that future generations will be able to experience the privilege of witnessing the mass spawning of the Australian giant cuttlefish at Whyalla. I urge the minister to support the proposal when it comes to him.

I thank the House for the opportunity to speak tonight. There are many other issues of concern in my electorate. I know that many of the issues that I have raised may not be particularly relevant to metropolitan electorates, but I also know that many issues are common throughout all our electorates. I hope that the government will look at its present policies of competitive tendering and reduced funding so that we can address some of these issues and go back to our communities and tell people that we have some relief for them.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Local Government): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I will speak about the government's disability services planning and funding framework for 2000-03. About 18 months ago the Minister for Disability Services announced with great fanfare that, in spite of the fact that there had been a range of other reports—about six reports—over recent years about disability services, we could not proceed without a disability services planning and funding framework. The final draft of that document has been made public and submissions on the document closed on 1 September. During the break I was able to have a look at the document, and I would like to put some of my reflections on the record tonight. My overall conclusion is one of disappointment with the South Australian government's planning and funding framework for disability services for 2000-03. The document offered some initial hope by stating that:

The plan recognises that it is vital to ensure that mainstream services are accessible for people with disabilities, as well as providing specialist services that aim to meet their support, advocacy and accommodation needs.

However, in my view there is nothing in the document to reinforce that statement, nor does it describe a strategy to overcome the appalling lack of accommodation services and lack of cooperation between disability and mainstream services.

The framework also falls short of an initial government promise that the framework document would lead to a complementary implementation plan. Families and service agencies are informed in the document that the framework, once approved by the minister, will 'guide the planning and purchasing of disability services over the next three years'. In essence, this is the final document.

That said, let us consider what the framework specifically promises for families, clients and service agencies that has not been promised or agreed upon as a priority policy issue years prior to the framework document being written. I could not find one new specific policy commitment with clear time frames and/or funding commitments in this document. I examined the framework document for new general directions that did not have funding commitments or time frames. There were several of these, as follows:

1. The use of mainstream aged-care facilities will be supported by both the disability and aged-care sectors.

I am pleased to see that statement in the document, even though it did not have specifics with it because I find it pleasing to see a change of heart from the approach that the government had in relation to the upgrade of Strathmont and the building of a dedicated aged-care facility for people with a disability. I am pleased to see there has been movement in government policy. I am also pleased to see the second point in the document, which states:

2. There will be a commitment to creating more community accommodation placements, with a concomitant reduction in the number of residential places in institutions.

I am very pleased to see that stated, and perhaps that is the most important statement in the whole document. I am very pleased to see that the minister, who at one stage not so long ago actually said that institutions for people with a disability reminded him of university residential colleges, has obviously changed his position in relation to those initial statements. The document continues:

3. There will be a statewide assessment framework.
4. Flexible ways of supporting families through respite and post school options which do not rely on paid places but, rather, encompass community and volunteer activity.
5. Anticipatory planning for those people with disabilities facing retirement.
6. New models of response. . . for those at risk before the situation is critical. . . in order to avert a full crisis which may precipitate the need for institutional care.
7. Over time, equity and funding across disability services will be achieved.
8. The options coordination systems will continue and collaborative arrangements will be clarified and enhanced.
9. Funding and service agreements under CSDA will be for a three year term.

Members will note that all but three of the nine points are revised administrative arrangements. I also have criticisms of the body of the report. Headings titled 'Key Outcomes' largely describe the processes required to reach an outcome. For instance, 'there will be an investment in community infrastructure which supports the independence of people with disabilities and their families' is not an outcome. It

describes the process required to meet an outcome for people with a disability and their families. An outcome is the specific benefit achieved from the process described. This is repeated throughout the framework document under the heading 'Key Outcomes', and it allows the government to escape funding and service scrutiny through these generalisations.

Unfortunately, the same sort of confusion occurs under the document heading used as a 'Policy Statement'. This vague and broad collection of dot points describes a collection of consumer rights but by any definition is not a policy statement. Labor is unfortunately left to once again describe the major shortfalls of a government initiated disability plan.

First, people with a mental illness are not mentioned at all in the framework document, even though commonwealth and South Australian government legislation specifically includes people with a mental illness. Secondly, options coordination stays largely as it is, other than vague references to better coordination. The three years old Brown review of this service does not rate a mention, even though families offered major criticisms in the initial draft report—now apparently discarded by the South Australian government, even though it knows that the present diagnostic service structure for options coordination is beyond repair.

Accommodation services—still the biggest unmet disability service need in South Australia—is given no specific funding priority other than a commitment to creating more community accommodation places. The lack of accountability by generic departments and funded generic non-government agencies for people with disabilities is not specifically confronted other than with vague generality such as 'joint planning between mainstream and specialist disability agencies'.

No clear policy direction is described in the framework document by which service agencies can confidently plan for the future. Also, the framework document is vague, noncommittal and gives little hope to families or adult consumers of services that their welfare is a priority for the South Australian government.

So, after approximately 18 months, the Liberal Government has given families and their children with a disability another plan to accompany all the other plans or reviews—or whatever else you want to call them—since it formed government in 1993. It seems to me that this exercise was more about buying time in which the government would not need to place extra funding and more services on board for much needed services and for families in real crisis.

I continue to receive a stream of letters describing appalling circumstances for people coping with and caring for someone with a disability. It is about time that these people's needs were taken seriously, that we forgot about vague generalisations, and that we seriously commit ourselves to improving services and doing the right thing by these most vulnerable members of our community. It is a really disappointing document. It is time for action. It is time to give people some hope, and it is time not just to present them with yet another empty plan with vague generalisations and no specific commitments.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Last Friday, on behalf of the Premier, I had the privilege to launch the Adelaide Hills Discovery Expo: Business and Tourism 2000. At the outset, I want to congratulate the Hills Business Link Group for showing the initiative in developing this idea. Of course, many other organisations provided sponsorship and, altogether, it was an excellent event. The fundamental aim of

the event was to showcase the wide variety of quality businesses in the Adelaide Hills. As I would hope most members would know, the Adelaide Hills business sector has always been unique, not only because of its geographical characteristics but also because of the strong support that it has enjoyed from the local community.

As a result of the opening of the Heysen Tunnels, we all are aware that there has been a steady growth in tourism—and I say that as Chairman of the Adelaide Hills Tourism Marketing Committee. There has been a steady growth in retail, the wine industry, enterprise and real estate. Clearly, the hills are closer and more accessible than ever, making the drive from the Adelaide metropolitan area much more inviting.

The state government is strongly committed to South Australia's regional communities and to regional development. Our policy is to work in partnership with the regions. In the case of the hills we can point to the very active and productive partnership between government agencies and the Adelaide Hills Regional Development Board, for example. In particular, through its agencies such as the Business Centre, the government is keen to help local businesses capitalise on the reputation of the hills region as a unique business community, providing products and services for the many excellent niche markets that we have through the hills. We also want to encourage the development of new market opportunities, particularly out of state exports, and the improvement of production capability and product quality.

Over the three days of the expo, visitors had the opportunity to get a practical taste of what the hills region has to offer. There are so many organisations and individuals working together for the advancement of the hills region. It is really impossible not to predict a rosy future for the area. As far as the government is concerned and as the local member I have absolute faith in that future. I understand that it is the intention of the organisers of this expo to continue this initiative on a yearly basis. I hope they do.

There were a number of sponsors and exhibitors, and perhaps now that those who were a little sceptical about becoming involved have had the opportunity to see the success of the expo I am sure that many more organisations, businesses and so on will want to participate next year. Certainly, I think there is a great opportunity for those connected with tourism to become much more involved, and I am quite sure that the Adelaide Hills Tourism Marketing Committee will be participating in a much more effective way during the next expo. Again I want to congratulate the expo's organisers and sponsors and congratulate all those who have participated in this activity.

At the same venue on Friday I had the opportunity to launch the SAILAH three year strategy, SAILAH being Schools and Industry Link Adelaide Hills. It is an organisation that is dedicated to establishing programs in our schools system. It is an excellent program, about which I

hope we will hear a lot more. The programs are aimed at ensuring that students leave school with skills relevant to business and industry. This initiative reflects the state government enterprise and vocational education strategy. The strategy encourages sustainable regional partnerships that facilitate the development of skills leading to regional growth and the promotion of a culture of enterprise. SAILAH was originally formed three years ago. It developed partnerships between local businesses and the schools in the hills region. At this event on Friday I was delighted to see that representatives of many of the schools involved were present and entertained the guests who were there, and their entertainment was enjoyed by all.

The aims of SAILAH were to provide quality vocational education and training as well as work placement opportunities for young people. I have now had the opportunity to see how effectively this program is working through the schools in various sections of the hills. With broader representation, however, SAILAH has now become the regional management group that oversees the implementation of the Adelaide hills enterprise and vocational education strategic plan. Last Friday, following a lot of hard work on the part of board members and participating businesses, we were in a position to launch SAILAH's strategic plan. That plan is a three year strategy for enterprise and vocational education in the hills. The strategy aims to put young people on the pathway to sustainable employment, and I do not think I need to explain to members of the House how important that is. It also ensures that each pathway is the right one for each student. Regional commerce and industry will now have a pool of local, young, job ready talent. Again, I think we all realise how important that is.

While young people will benefit from not necessarily having to leave the region to obtain employment, the program itself provides a great deal of experience and opportunities to ensure that when these young people go out into the work force they are well equipped. So, it was as a result of that and because of the success of this program and this strategy that I was delighted to represent the Premier. Regrettably, the Premier had only just learnt of the death of his mother on that day, so he asked me to stand in for him and I was delighted to be able to do that. On behalf of the Premier I had the pleasure to present a cheque for \$460 000 to help fund the work of SAILAH over the coming three year period. That cheque was very well received, and those involved are quite confident—as I am—that SAILAH and those involved in that program will continue to improve the situation for our young people through our schools, particularly as they leave school and seek employment. I certainly wish all those people every continuing success in the future, particularly the young people, who I know will benefit particularly from that program.

Motion carried.

At 9.30 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 12 October at 10.30 a.m.