

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 29 May 2001

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

NATIVE BIRDS

A petition signed by 16 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to repeal the proclamation permitting the unlimited destruction by commercial horticulturalists of protected native birds, was presented by the Hon. J.W. Olsen.

Petition received.

FIREWORKS

A petition signed by 105 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House ban the personal use of fireworks with the exception of authorised public displays, was presented by Mrs Geraghty.

Petition received.

COUNTRY HALLS

A petition signed by 107 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to return the proceeds from the sale of country halls to the local communities in accordance with the advice of the Crown Solicitor, was presented by Mr Lewis.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER:** Order! I direct that the written answers to the following questions on the *Notice Paper*, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 2, 16, 23, 33, 45, 48, 69, 76, 93, 96, 97, 108 and 110.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Hon. M.D. RANN** (25 October).

The **Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The Treasurer has provided the following information:

I refer to page 3.6 of the 2000-01 Budget Statement, which reads:

'In April 2000 the ABS released its first accrual-based GFS publication. The finalisation of the concepts and methodology of this reporting framework now allows all states to report on an economic, as opposed to accounting standards, accrual basis. The commonwealth and some states have adopted the fiscal balance as the key budget indicator. The 2000-01 budget remains focused on the cash-based deficit, as it represents the third year of a four-year cash based fiscal plan. In formulating a future fiscal plan the government will consider the appropriate fiscal target to adopt.'

The government is still considering the appropriate accrual fiscal target for South Australia and will consider current practice in other states.

However, this government has been totally transparent, at the cost of some considerable resources within the Department of Treasury and Finance, and has included in its budget papers just about every conceivable reporting format—cash based, accounting standard accrual based, and ABS standard accrual based.

Therefore, I feel confident that when the government moves to adopt a particular accrual based target as part of a new fiscal plan, the transition will be relatively smooth, given the history of budgets being presented in the different formats for a number of years.

It may be the case that it is simply not possible to present a time series commencing before 1998-99 using accrual methodology once new targets are adopted. This is a fundamental problem to be faced

when such changes occur. An example is when the ABS, following consultation with the states and territories, amended the scope of the institutional sectors, and removed SAFA and universities from the general government sector. This meant there was a break in the series. In relation to net debt, Treasury has attempted to provide transparency by providing data on both series, with a two year overlap (refer page 7.5 in Budget Paper no 2). However, it was simply not practical to backcast the new series in an attempt to provide a longer time series on the new basis.

In moving to accrual presentation, it may be the case that data prior to 1998-99 is simply not available, or that it is not practical to estimate such data, and therefore I am unable to give the assurance the honourable member seeks. However, I can assure you that we will be attempting to make the transition as smooth as possible through the provision of dual series of data, where that is seen as necessary in enabling readers to understand the underlying trends in the state's finances.

It is not my intention to consult with the Auditor-General in relation to the appropriate fiscal target, nor has he suggested that such consultation should occur. The Auditor-General has quite rightly pointed out, consistent with our own views as articulated in the budget statement, that the matter of appropriate fiscal targets for the state needs to be resolved in the near future. The Auditor-General's comments on the matter will be taken into account in the determination of future budget targets.

In reply to **Hon. M.D. RANN** (24 October).

The **Hon. J.W. OLSEN:** The Treasurer has provided the following information:

Growth in real outlays—The Auditor-General has reported (page 64) that total outlays (as measured by final consumption expenditure adjusted to remove expenditure funded by the Commonwealth Specific Purpose Payments superannuation funding, separation packages and the cost of asset sales), are estimated to rise in real terms by \$500 million or 19.5 per cent over the period 1997-98 to 2003-04. While this is calculated on a slightly different basis, it is consistent with Table 2.1 of the 2000-01 budget papers No. 2, which showed a similar result.

The increase in outlays over the period reflects the government's objective of maintaining community services to a standard and level comparable with other states – as articulated in the government's 1998-99 four-year financial plan. A significant part of this increase has been significantly increased salaries for teachers, nurses, doctors and police.

It is important to note, as the Auditor-General points out on page 60 of his report, that the data used reflected data at the time of the 2000-01 budget. Since then agency underspending against their predicted results has been achieved and an additional \$100 million was paid towards superannuation funding. This is not reflected in the numbers quoted in the page 64 reference. This factor will significantly reduce the growth for the period 1998-99 to 1999-2000 reflected in the Auditor-General's comments.

It is important to recognise that these increases have been accommodated within the fiscal constraint of a balanced underlying budget (with the exception of a deficit in 1999-2000 mainly due to one-off GST implementation costs).

Budget contribution to net debt—Page 120 of the Auditor-General's report provides a table which shows the non commercial sector's contribution to changes in net debt. The table indicates that based on 2000-01 budget time financial projections, after a deficit including abnormals in 2000-01, the non commercial sector contributes to a marginal reduction in debt over the remaining forward estimates period.

However the net debt projections contained in the budget papers and the Auditor-General's report are prior to taking into account any abnormal transactions, other than those included in the 2000-01 Budget for separation payments and costs of asset sales, that may arise over the projection period. Any abnormal costs incurred in the non commercial sector over this period will, other things being equal, contribute to an increase in net debt levels.

Reduction in net debt—The Auditor-General's report actually lists net debt in real terms in June 1993 as \$9.373 billion. The major reasons why the fall in net debt has been less than gross asset disposal proceeds received over the last seven years are:

- Funding of targeted separation packages totalling \$866 million (cost of packages repaid in ongoing salary savings after 2 years)
- Asset sales costs of around \$130 million
- Assumption of superannuation liabilities by purchasers (more than \$160 million), and

Accumulated underlying non commercial sector deficits totalling \$700 million, most of which were inherited from the Labour Government of the early 1990's. For example the 1993-94 underlying deficit was \$300 million. These deficits have now been eliminated following the program of fiscal repair undertaken by the government commencing with the 1994-95 budget.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is highly disorderly for members to continue interjecting when the House has just been called to order.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Plan Amendment Report—Gawler (CT) Development Plan—Development Plan Confirmation

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

Stamp Duties Act—Regulations—Recognised Stock Exchanges

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Environment Protection—Power Station Exemption
Land Agents—Sales Representative Qualifications
Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers—Identification

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

Murray-Darling Basin Agreement—
Amended Schedule D
Amended Schedule F

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. D.C. Kotz)—

City of Onkaparinga—By-Law No. 9—Dogs.

QUESTION TIME

FISCHER, Mr TIM

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Premier reveal today who negotiated the consultancy fee, retainer, travel arrangements and job description for retiring former Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, who has been appointed as a special envoy for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: No. A media report claims that the Premier only found out about Mr Fischer's salary details in a memo from the project consortium, after the Premier's announcement on 16 May—so, the Premier apparently did not know about it. The report also claims that Mr Fischer, after the federal election, will receive a \$3 000 monthly retainer and \$2 000 per day for each day worked promoting the rail project, plus travel, plus accommodation and other costs. Today's media reports are claiming that Mr Fischer, like the Premier, knew nothing about the level of the fee, so who negotiated it?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I will get some specific details for the leader, but my understanding is that it was Partners—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Yes, I am happy to—in Rail, who have been charged with the responsibility of maximising our investment in the Adelaide-Darwin rail link so that we, in maximising that investment, obtain benefits for South Australians, both in jobs in the provision of goods and services and subsequently, after the construction phase of the rail link—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The leader will come to order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:—and the operational phase. We will then put in place the task—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The leader has asked his question, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! The leader will come to order.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Well, I have. The question was who negotiated the fee. My understanding is that it was Partners in Rail.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the leader does not ignore the chair.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: What the responsibility will be is to focus, particularly overseas, the options and opportunities that will arise from the rail link. Now that we have actually secured this deal for our state, it is important that we make sure that we maximise this rail link, value-add for this rail link, create jobs not only in Port Augusta in an intermodal hub for road and rail, but also here in Adelaide.

It is important now that shippers, both in Singapore and in Hong Kong in particular, get to factor into their forward plans the finalisation of construction of the rail link and, given the lead times that are related to forward planning of goods and services over various transport routes, it is important that that now be marketed appropriately. This is about maximising our opportunities. Our Partners in Rail program that was put in place several years ago, after the initial contract signing, was to ensure that we maximised the benefits in this rail link and our investment for South Australians.

We have seen something like \$150 million of \$240 million of contracts so far let being awarded to South Australian firms. What we want to do is value add and maximise South Australian business opportunities. In the final negotiations, the percentage of goods sourced from Northern Territory and South Australia increased from 70 per cent to 75 per cent—another 5 per cent was added in during the final stages of negotiation with the consent and concurrence and offer of the consortium.

This is all about not just sitting back and resting on our laurels but taking another positive step forward. I put to the House that, if you want to talk about someone who is respected in terms of exporting and international trade, Tim Fischer has developed that reputation. Even his opposite numbers in Canberra will acknowledge the role that Tim Fischer played as Deputy Prime Minister and as Minister for Trade focusing on the expansion of exports.

What could be better than to go into the market with a person with a national profile, to market what we ought to be putting over about the benefit of the rail link? What we are attempting to do is maximise the jobs coming into our state

as a result of the rail link. The planning now will deliver the jobs in three years' time.

UNIONISM

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Government Enterprises advise the House of the effects of the government's voluntary unionism policy?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I thank the member for Hartley for his important question about a matter of fundamental difference between the government and the Labor Party. As everyone in the chamber and, hopefully, in South Australia knows, the government is a long-time advocate of maintaining the fundamental concept of the workplace relations system, which embodies a principle of freedom of association and, indeed, voluntary unionism.

We think that this ensures that unions and union officials are not given any privileges that they have not earned and that they do not have any undue influence, unlike what occurs opposite. The former member of the Labor Party, former Independent Labor member of the chamber and former minister, Terry Groom, observed on 8 July 1993 that Trades Hall was an example of South Terrace running North Terrace. All examples from interstate indicate that nothing has changed.

The member for Hartley asks what is the effect of our voluntary unionism policy, which was achieved in late 1997. The effect is that, once people have been given a choice, they are in fact leaving the unions. The ABS figures indicate that, as at August 2000, union membership had dropped to a low of 25.9 per cent of the work force, from 41.4 per cent at August 1994. That is despite the fact that the number of employees is growing under this government's policies.

One particular union is especially interesting, and that is the Australian Workers Union (AWU), because the AWU would have members opposite believe that it has in fact been fighting this decline in union membership. I am informed that in 1997 the ALP reported that the AWU had 14 010 affiliated members. Last year's ALP convention was told, I am informed, that the AWU still had 14 010 members on 31 March 2000: no change, no loss of members, etc, unlike the union movement as a whole.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am asked how it happened. What is particularly interesting is that, despite the change in union membership from 41.5 to 25.9 per cent under our policies, and despite the AWU's confirming that it had the same number of members between 1997 and March 2000, the accounting officer's certificate for the AWU Greater SA Branch dated Friday 22 September 2000—signed by the then accounting officer Bob Sneath—certified that on 30 June 2000 the number of financial life and retired members of the organisation was 10 208.

This could be an absolute example of the government's voluntary unionism policy inaction whereby between March and June 2000 the number of members in the AWU fell by nearly 40 per cent. However, if the accounting officer's certificate is correct, one can only assume that the AWU had a few extra votes at the ALP convention to which it was not entitled. It is very surprising that this would happen while the ALP state president was the AWU secretary. One can only assume that he knew what he was saying or, indeed, that he has Chinese walls in his head, because over the space of three months there has been a 40 per cent loss in numbers, or

the AWU is engaging in things about which Premier Beattie in Queensland is particularly concerned. Nothing has changed; it is the same all around Australia. I would love to hear the Leader of the Opposition's opinion regarding what is a clear irregularity, but we have heard nothing from the leader of the ALP. So, as I have said before, nothing changes.

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY

Mr FOLEY (Hart): There's nothing sadder than a failed politician.

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

Mr FOLEY: I thought you could do better. Never mind.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will ask his question.

Mr FOLEY: Sorry, sir. I just felt sad for the member for Adelaide. Will the Premier explain why the Northern Territory and commonwealth governments, and the private sector Asia Pacific Rail Corporation were not involved in appointing or paying for Mr Fischer's consultancy as special envoy to the Alice to Darwin railway line project; and is the cost of his consultancy included in or is it additional to South Australia's already \$176.5 million contribution to the railway line project?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): As I indicated in an earlier answer, this was negotiated by Partners in Rail and Mr David Klingberg. Partners in Rail has been allocated a budget. My understanding is that negotiations are with the Northern Territory in relation to its support of his appointment.

YATALA LABOUR PRISON

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services provide the House with the facts surrounding the recent PSA executive backflip regarding a gun being found at Yatala prison?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): I thank the honourable member for his question, because I know he likes to get the facts and not the fiction—as, indeed, does the whole of the department. The Department of Correctional Services has had unprecedented positive results in the work it has been doing right across the prison system in the past few years, and for that I am deeply appreciative of the efforts of all the committed officers from my CEO right down through the department. We all know that the intelligence investigation unit has had outstanding results when it comes to the detection of illicit drugs by entry, and so on. Acting on intelligence that had been gathered over a period, about four weeks ago the unit did some significant searching of certain wings of Yatala, during which it found mobile telephones, illegal substances and various homemade instruments such as sharpened toothbrushes, etc.

Also as a result of that incident and intelligence around that, it was decided to transfer a number of prisoners to our maximum security section of Yatala. That was four weeks ago, yet only yesterday the PSA, namely, Jan McMahon, came out and claimed in the media with a press release that only last week there was an attempted foil of an escape and that a zip gun and other weaponry was found in the prison system. They are very concerning allegations. Upon hearing about this, my CEO immediately initiated an investigation by prison management.

In answer to the honourable member's question, the investigation revealed absolutely nothing. I can tell members from experience that, had a zip gun or hacksaw blade been discovered in Yatala, it would have been common knowledge throughout the whole prison system within 10 minutes. That is how it works in the system.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: The Leader of the Opposition ought to listen to the answer on this one. What makes this particularly bizarre is that the very minute Jan McMahon, out there on behalf of the Public Service Association, was holding a media conference, the PSA representatives were actually with senior officers of my department discussing a range of issues about correctional services and the welfare of officers and knew nothing about this incident at all. Yet Jan McMahon is out there trying to beat up things on behalf of the union in the media.

I am pleased to see that Channel 7 did a lot of homework around this and were not fooled by the press release put out by the PSA. In fact, in doing its homework it reported last night that Mr Christopher, the second in charge, and certainly the officer in charge of the issues around correctional services officers, had to make this statement:

It may be that the information provided to the Public Service Association on this occasion is incorrect. If that's the case, we accept it.

What happened to those hard working prison officers when they heard about this, the concerns for their families and the children of those families, who know the dangers of working in the prison system? Where was the apology from the PSA on behalf of all the people whom they purport to represent? This smacks of the fact that Jan McMahon and the head of the PSA, in an attempt to pull down the department and its good work, and do anything they can to have a go at our government, are prepared to go right out on left field and ignore the best interests of the union workers whom they represent to try to get a cheap political point for the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party. That is outrageous, and hundreds of prison officers, who pay very big membership fees to the PSA, were very disappointed by the actions of the PSA on that occasion yesterday.

Let us be clear about the facts on this. The facts are that there were no zip gun or hacksaw blade, there is no story and the PSA executive, who have done this time and again, have now shown that they are totally unprofessional and have no credibility whatsoever. I back and support every one of those hard working prison officers and the executive of the DCS, who are doing a great job. I wonder whether the shadow spokesperson supports them or whether he is happy to get into the gutter with the PSA and Jan McMahon.

FISCHER, Mr TIM

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the government's new-found commitment to openness, will the Premier now table a copy of Mr Tim Fischer's employment contract for his job as special envoy to the Alice Springs to Darwin rail project so that all South Australians can see who will be supervising this position and exactly what constitutes a \$2 000 a day job promoting the rail project?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I would be happy to ask the Chair of Partners in Rail, David Klingberg, to provide the appropriate information.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTS

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise the House of participation rates in the latest round of literacy and numeracy testing undertaken in our primary schools last week?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for MacKillop for his question. Yes, literacy and numeracy testing occurred—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It is interesting that the member for Ross Smith should mention spelling because, unfortunately for the honourable member, I must advise him that I have sold out of all those hats. However, if he would like one, I can arrange for a specially autographed photograph. The literacy—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: You have got his billboards, have you? Very good, excellent; I hope that the spelling is correct. Last week grade 7 students undertook their literacy and numeracy testing, and that is in addition to the testing of years 3 and 5 which, of course, occurs in August of each year. In fact, the government has now invested some \$7 million in the future of students who need additional support in literacy and numeracy. That support makes a very significant difference because 92 per cent of year 3 students who were in the lowest literacy level moved to a higher level in year 5, and 60 per cent of those students advanced more than one grade. So, they advanced by more than one step.

The parents of over 100 000 students in South Australia now have more comprehensive information about their children and their performance at schools, and those parents have backed these tests to the hilt. In fact, last year almost 100 per cent of year 3 and year 5 students sat the test, and last week 97 per cent of those students who were eligible sat the year 7 test. The only group that is not winning from the BST is the AEU and its Labor mates who have consistently not supported these tests. In fact, they continue to get the answers wrong.

They had the wrong answers on Oak Valley, they had the wrong answers on Partnerships 21 and they had the wrong answers on SSO wages and salaries—in fact, they have the wrong answers on most education issues that arise in this House. In fact, they have not banked a single credit for some years. The majority of teachers are now rejecting union membership, and that can be seen quite clearly. Under its current leadership the AEU has become education's weakest link. It has gutted the professionalism of teachers and teachers should say 'goodbye' to their leader.

FISCHER, Mr TIM

Mr FOLEY (Hart): If you ever want to see a political party—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY: —that is getting ready to leave office—

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: My question is directed to the Premier.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Meier interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Goyder!

Mr FOLEY: Well, members opposite are a bit pathetic today. How much of taxpayers' money has been allocated over the next three years for Mr Tim Fischer's consultancy

as special envoy to the rail project which, of course, includes a \$3 000 a month retainer, \$2 000 a day and travel, accommodation, entertainment and other costs? What is the taxpayer paying for this job for Tim?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): It will depend on the number of days that Mr Fischer actually works on the rail contract. In answer to a previous question I indicated that I would be happy to get the appropriate information from Mr Klinberg from Partners in Rail and supply that information to the member for Hart. But the member for Hart must clearly understand that, if the consultancy is calculated on the basis of the number of days allocated, it will depend on the number of days Mr Fischer allocates and undertakes work on behalf of the rail link.

LAKE EYRE MINISTERIAL FORUM

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Minister for Water Resources advise the House of the benefits of the first meeting of the Lake Eyre Ministerial Forum which took place last weekend in Queensland; and will he also advise the House of the importance of this particular region to the tourism industry in South Australia and assure the House that no action will be taken to impede further development of the tourism industry?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources): I thank the member especially for the extempore part of his question. The Lake Eyre Ministerial Forum held its first historic meeting last weekend in Longreach, Queensland. I am delighted that this forum took place, because we can all take pride in the fact that this was the first parliament in Australia to pass legislation which protected the Lake Eyre Basin. The member can take great comfort that this legislation protects the basin, and inherent in that is no silly games being played further with the unthought-out development of the resource for exploitation. Both South Australia's great river systems—the Murray-Darling and Lake Eyre Basins—have their origins in other states. Our geographic position at the receiving end of these river systems makes it imperative that we establish formal cooperative arrangements with our upstream neighbours.

We have had such arrangements in place with the Murray-Darling Basin for some time and have now developed the Lake Eyre Basin agreement for the Cooper and Diamantina river systems. Interestingly, the area of the system is about the same as the Murray-Darling; and it is important, because it is the largest ephemeral dryland river system in the world and contributes to the fifth largest inland lake in the world. So it is a most important system by world standards—and I note the shadow minister nodding in agreement, which I am pleased to see. Consequently, a management approach is required that is quite different from that usually applied to the Murray-Darling or even coastal rivers.

We have an opportunity for good sustainable environmental management in the Lake Eyre Basin, an opportunity for getting it right, an opportunity which we have been slow to recognise in other river systems and which we are now struggling to correct there. The first meeting of the ministerial forum at which South Australia played a key role is the first step in getting it right for South Australia. Established under the Lake Eyre inter-governmental agreement, the forum is made up of the federal Minister for Environment and Heritage, my good friend, Senator Robert Hill; the Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Mr Stephen Robertson, and myself. The federal Minister for

Conservation, Mr Wilson Tuckey, also attended on behalf of the federal Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Warren Truss.

Key results of the outcome included establishment of a permanent secretariat to support the forum and its scientific body work to be located in Environment Australia; appointment of the Lake Eyre Basin Coordinating Group as a community advisory group to the ministerial forum, which will expand membership to include—the member for Stuart may be pleased to hear—the South Australian Arid Areas Catchment Water Management Board (so we will have a say on that advisory committee); a budget of \$500 000 per annum; the establishment of a scientific advisory panel headed by Professor Peter Cullen; agreement on a timetable to develop policies and strategies to manage the water and related natural resources; arrangements for an agreement for the Lake Eyre Basin's river assessment; and arrangements for the Lake Eyre Basin conference to be held in October next year, so as to coincide with the second anniversary of the signing of the agreement.

The weekend's meeting was one of the better examples of cooperative federalism. It was an absolute pleasure to sit down with the federal ministers and with my counterpart from Victoria and, on behalf of this state, actually having a chance to play a part in getting a national problem right. All the ministers cooperated in this; it is to the credit of Queensland, the commonwealth and South Australia, and it augurs very well, I would hope, for future cooperation on the Murray-Darling Basin.

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is again directed to the Premier. Will the Premier take action to ensure that cheap imported cement being dumped in Australia will not be used to produce railway sleepers for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway project, and that the contract for an estimated 60 000 tonnes of cement over two years will instead go to a local or at least an Australian cement producer?

According to media reports, the recent AGM of Adelaide Brighton Cement Ltd—which is in my electorate at Birkenhead—was told that the company had only a 50 per cent chance of securing the cement contract worth about \$20 million because Chinese cement makers were dumping excess cement in Australia at rock bottom prices. Shareholders told the meeting that they would be bombarding state and federal MPs with complaints about the dumping of cheap cement imports.

Adelaide Brighton Cement Ltd Chairman Mr Malcolm Kinnaird, who is also Chairman of the Adelaide to Darwin Rail Consortium, explained to the shareholders that, even though there was pressure to use local material and workers, subcontractors were looking to get the best possible prices for the rail construction. Perhaps this could be a job for Tim?

An honourable member: The new-look Bart!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): No, I wouldn't actually say that with the new hairdo he looks like Bart because I am only envious that he has hair to cut—very envious. I have had a discussion with both the Chairman and the CEO of Adelaide Brighton Cement Ltd in relation to practices alleged by them of dumping concrete clinker—I think the term is—into Australia, which is applying pressure.

I have taken up this matter with the federal government. The tests for dumping are fairly stringent. I understand that Senator Vanstone in her previous portfolio with customs, not

the current portfolio, did pursue this issue quite vigorously but was unable to bring it to what we would describe as a successful conclusion as it related to the activities of this cheap clinker coming into Australia. I intend to take up the matter further with the Prime Minister on the basis that goods produced in Australia are able, and ought to be able, to compete on merit, not against imports which are unfairly dumped on the Australian market and which therefore create difficulties within Australia not only for companies and the shareholders of the companies but also, importantly, for the work force that is reliant on jobs in those industry sectors.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I can assure the member for Hart that it is a matter that has been raised. It has been discussed at federal level and it will be pursued—and I would hope eventually—successfully. In addition, I intend to have discussions with the international principals of Adelaide Brighton Cement Ltd as to investment future and security of jobs in the industry in our state.

GAMING MACHINES

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): My question is directed to the Premier. Is it true that, in addition to the existing 13 950 gaming machines that were already operating in pubs and clubs when the government finally agreed to our calls for a cap, there are now applications before the commission to get several hundred, indeed over 1 000 more machines, approved and/or installed; and, if he is, will the Premier allow them to be approved or installed?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I will have to get the specific numbers and the dates for the member for Hammond. When we made an announcement in the House that we wanted to put in place a cap, those applications that were in prior to that would be processed in the ordinary way, that is, it would not be retrospective. I understand that there were a number of those from the public announcement until such time as the parliament took the first step to put in place a cap. As to the exact number of them, I do not have that information at my fingertips, but I am more than happy to make those figures available for the member for Hammond. The initial intention was that when the date was established the applications already in would, in the ordinary course of events, be processed, so it was not in effect retrospective legislation. I will obtain the numbers.

HOSPITALS, DEBT

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. Has the government agreed to the minister's green book request for \$35 million to repay recurrent debts accumulated over the last four years by our major hospitals, or will hospitals be required to repay this debt and, if so, how much will they repay next year? On 3 April 2001, the minister said that discussions were being held with Treasury on how to resolve the issue of debt accumulated by hospitals over the last four years.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): Really what the honourable member is asking is information that might be contained in the budget. The budget comes out in two days' time, so I would have thought it was more appropriate—in fact, it is appropriate—that the honourable member wait until the budget comes down in this House in two days' time. I am sure that with just two sleeps

to go, she will be able to contain her excitement waiting for the budget papers to come.

I must pick up another point, because I have heard the honourable member speculating on the budget in the last couple of days and accusing this Liberal government of closing a lot of hospital beds. I must point out that, if the member for Elizabeth had a look at the recent annual reports, she would find that the Labor government, in its last two years, closed more beds than the Liberal government did in its first five years.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Police!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: So, when it comes to bed closures, can I suggest that the member for Elizabeth goes and looks in a mirror or looks at her colleagues, because they have a record of closing on average 220 beds per year in the last two years they were in government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come back to order.

The Hon. M.H. Armitage interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Government Enterprises!

The Hon. M.H. Armitage: Sorry, sir.

MOTOR VEHICLE AND DEFENCE INDUSTRIES

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): My question is directed to the Premier.

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Stuart!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Given that last week's federal budget announced a range of industry assistance initiatives, could the Premier inform the House as to any benefits that might flow to this state's car and defence industries?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): The federal budget last week contained a couple of very significant measures that will benefit South Australia. Approximately 30 000 South Australians are employed in the defence and automotive industries in our state, and the government has worked hard with those key industry sectors to make sure that not only do they remain in the state but also that they have the capacity to grow, such is their importance to South Australia, its economy and employment in our state.

We have a strong record of supporting these industries. It was this government that fought hard to have put in place the freeze on tariffs on motor vehicles until 2005. A very important breathing space was put in place through the representations of the South Australian government. We also established Auto21 with representatives from car companies, automotive manufacturers and the union, to map out a future for the key industry in our state. In that instance, we worked together to get an outcome that was in the state's interest.

I am pleased that we now have a commitment from our federal counterparts to those two key industry sectors in our state. One in particular that we want to grow substantially in the future is the defence and electronics industry. As it relates to the defence and electronics industry, where there are some 14 000 to 15 000 South Australians currently employed, the federal government has announced a 10-year capability enhancement plan costing \$28 billion. That was part of the defence white paper of which I know the member would be well aware. That defence white paper has been the foundation upon which investments have now been allocated. The budget provided for \$5 billion of this in the next four years, includ-

ing major industry infrastructure initiatives that will benefit South Australia, such as acquisitions of four AWAC aircraft (Boeing 737s fitted with high-technology early warning devices that can patrol our coastline) and also an initiative to bring the six Collins class submarines up to their high level of capability. Affirmation of that, and \$60 million in addition, will assist the defence and electronics industry.

I have indicated to the House previously that the share ownership of the commonwealth government in relation to the Australian Submarine Corporation is of very keen interest to us. We want to ensure that in any exiting by the federal government of its share ownership of ASC South Australia is fully consulted and involved to ensure that we can maximise any sell-down of that shareholding to create further investment and further jobs in that industry. That builds on GM defence with its tank turret manufacturing in South Australia and SAAB with its recent announcement of investment and head office and major office accommodation to be located at Mawson Lakes.

As it relates to the car industry, the full input tax credits for business on the purchase of motor vehicles will help fleet purchases of motor vehicles which in some instances, post GST introduction, have been tardy; and, of course, it is the fleet vehicle sales that enable us to amortise the cost of manufacturing and production in both Mitsubishi and General Motors for their products to access the international market. We have to have volume going through those plants to assist with the export effort. With General Motors, in particular, it has been outstandingly successful, especially to the Middle East and, more recently, involving Mitsubishi, with its badged Diamante vehicle going into the Avis fleet market in the United States. Those two initiatives are very big wins for South Australia, its economy and, importantly, jobs.

These are areas where we will continue to work cooperatively, as appropriate, with unions rather than being dictated to by unions. There is a difference in how you can work together cooperatively to reach an outcome and when you are subservient to the outcome which is not in the state's interest. One only has to look over the border to see what has happened in Victoria in recent times where that pro-business investment state has had a stalling of business investment. There is no wonder why—it is because of the union dominance and frequent major strikes and disputation that we see there. It is a major competitive edge for our state—and I constantly remind the House that it is the attitude of our work force that is very important towards securing our future—particularly when you see the union dominance in Victoria and what is now emerging in Western Australia, where the change of government saw the union movement, as *Four Corners* and *7.30 Report* programs recently highlighted, move in and bring about policy changes.

At the end of the day, that is not in the interests of the economy, nor is it in the interests of retaining jobs for people in their respective states. We have had a 25 per cent increase in private sector capital investment in South Australia, and over the last five years we have been second in Australia in attracting new private sector capital investment. That is what generates jobs—a proactive business environment which attracts new investment. At the end of the day, it is the private sector that will create the jobs, and having a climate to encourage their investment is the way to go to create more jobs in our community.

WESTPAC MORTGAGE PROCESSING CENTRE

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Given that the government has spent as much as \$30 million to get the Westpac mortgage processing centre to locate in Adelaide, and given also that Westpac is now considering the outsourcing of this operation to another company, can the Premier confirm that the new company would be eligible to receive continued payroll tax concessions, and will the Premier say what guarantees he has received about workers' job security and maintenance of their wages and conditions should the outsourcing go ahead?

Westpac has invited two companies, EDS and Unisys, to bid for the business. A media source has recently reported that the Premier's office did not respond to its inquiries as to whether the new companies would continue to receive payroll tax concessions. Recently, EDS sought and won a ruling that it was not required to honour existing awards and conditions of workers whom it picked up through outsourcing.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I can only go on the goodwill and advice of the chief executives who have had discussions with me on this matter, one of whom is Mr David Morgan from Westpac, who indicated to me that all those commitments would, in effect, be honoured; that there was not to be any 'change of circumstance'; that they were only considering the option of outsourcing; and that it was not a matter that was determined or decided but that they would be making a determination on that (although I forget the time line) in about another two to three months.

Two companies have been invited to put proposals for the board of Westpac to consider, but from my discussions I do not anticipate or foreshadow that there would be any change of circumstances. If the government has written agreements in place and they are moved on to another organisation, we would expect those to be honoured. In fact, the companies which have spoken to me and which intend to place proposals before Westpac have indicated that it is their intention to maintain the commitments that had been put in place previously.

These matters are yet to be determined, and I take on face value and accept the general commitments that have been given that, should Westpac decide—and it is not determined that it will—to do so, the interests of South Australia, the work force and our investment in attracting that very significant investment to South Australia will be protected, and during discussions we will be looking to ensure that that is the outcome.

The Westpac mortgage loan processing centre has been an outstanding success for this state. It came here with a commitment of 900 jobs because of the work force, the output, the cost of establishing Westpac's facilities in South Australia (which are competitive compared to those with other states), and with the level of turnover in the work force compared to that of the eastern seaboard. I do not know what the current figures are, but they used to be of the order of 6 to 8 per cent staff turnover annually in South Australia compared to anything between 24 and 30 per cent on the eastern seaboard in Sydney. That brings with it massive training, employment, reskilling and placement costs to a company.

Westpac has grown beyond the commitment of 900 jobs: I think that there are something like 1 400 to 1 600 full-time equivalents, which would be close to 2 000 persons. In addition to that, I want to acknowledge that, on record, Westpac has also indicated that it was to expand the facility

by a further 600 in South Australia, and I understand that nothing will interrupt the plans to proceed down that track.

The government will continue to work cooperatively with Westpac and either of the other two companies, should they be successful and should Westpac make that decision, to ensure that as far as South Australia and the work force are concerned it is status quo into the future.

CHILDREN, HEALTH

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Human Services advise the House how the government is helping South Australian schoolchildren to lead healthier lives?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): The government is concerned at the fact that a growing number of children in our state are overweight. They are overweight partly because they do not get enough exercise—

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask whether you would reconsider your ruling of two weeks ago on the decision earlier this year of the Presiding Officer of the Scottish parliament on questions being asked in parliament relating to matters that have already been canvassed in the media. That is, we should be reading the minister's answer in the media the day after the minister has given it, not prior to the answer being given. This is just an abuse of question time.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The chair is not prepared to use Scottish parliament rulings to run the South Australian parliament.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The government is concerned—

Ms WHITE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. This is the same question as that asked of the minister on 16 May by the member for Hartley when the minister was asked to outline how the government is promoting health in South Australian schools.

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair will not uphold the point of order. This is a far more general question than that which was asked before.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Thank you, Mr Speaker; I appreciate that very much indeed.

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Sir, would you please explain why you are not upholding that point of order?

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair does not have to go into detail. I have made a ruling, and I stand by the ruling.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am amazed that the opposition would want to take three points of order trying to stop the answering of a question which relates specifically to a program that was launched today. In fact, several members of the opposition were invited to come along to the launch and did not come.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Ross Smith!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The government is concerned about the fact that our schoolchildren are becoming significantly more overweight, and an increasingly higher percentage of the children—about 40 per cent—are now classed as being overweight. There are several reasons for that: one is the lack of exercise; another is the fact that they tend to eat inappropriate foods. A survey showed that fewer than half of our schoolchildren eat adequate fruit and vegetables. As a result of that, the government has initiated a program with the Adelaide wholesale produce market. Over

a two-year period we are launching a major program called Eat Fresh SA Schools which is designed to get fruit and vegetables into South Australian schools.

Some members may recall the days when free milk was provided to the schools.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That identifies those waiting for nursing home beds! Some of them are not quite eligible for a nursing home bed yet, but at least some of them are. We have identified today the need for students to get greater access to fruit and vegetables so that their risk of cancers, heart disease and diabetes is significantly reduced in future years. We know that one of the best ways of doing that is to put more fruit and vegetables into the schools and to establish a number of programs whereby the schools are then distributing that or encouraging students to eat the fruit and vegetables.

Some of those include a program to put fruit and vegetables in the tuckshop at very cheap rates. Another encourages the students to cook with fruit and vegetables as part of their educational program. Another part of it is all about the students understanding the importance of fruit and vegetables in terms of their own diet. Under this program we have this partnership between the Department of Human Services and the Adelaide Produce Wholesale Market. It is a major two-year initiative. We will be providing funds through the government to purchase at least \$100 000 worth of produce at very cheap rates indeed and to target that into specific schools. There is an invitation for the schools to participate in a range of different programs so that they are able to get the fruit and vegetables into those schools.

I compliment the market and the growers involved in this partnership, and I also compliment a number of groups already doing this. I met this morning with some of the wholesalers and retailers who have a number of programs particularly to provide fruit and vegetables for those children who go to school each morning without having had breakfast. The people concerned are providing a breakfast of free fruit and vegetables for students who would otherwise go hungry. It is a major initiative. We want to ensure that our young children in certain target groups, particularly indigenous children, have the opportunity to eat more so that the risk of fundamental disease like cancers, heart disease and diabetes in future is substantially reduced.

TERMINATOR TECHNOLOGY CROPS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries. Will the minister inform the House whether field trials of terminator technology canola have taken place in South Australia, and can he assure the House that the trials in the South-East of the state, where it is well known and documented that some GE crops were not disposed of in a secure fashion, were in fact TT free; and, if they were not, what has been done to prevent the detrimental effects of terminator technology?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Minister for Primary Industries and Resources): Obviously GM canola crops were grown in the South-East, and that has been the subject of considerable media talk and of a report by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator. I believe the report is available now.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I did not hear all the question as there was so much talk over that side. What happened in the

South-East has been well documented: there were reports, and Aventis has been put on notice by the federal government.

AUSTRALIAN TOURISM EXCHANGE

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism. Will the minister outline to the House South Australia's involvement in this week's Australian Tourism Exchange in Brisbane and indicate how it will increase the number of visitors to South Australia?

The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism): I thank the member for Colton for his question, because I know that when he was Lord Mayor he would love to have seen the ATE here in Adelaide, as indeed we will in 2005. It is an important event because it is the time of the year when all the important international trade and tourism operators combine in one place to look at the Australian tourism product. It is estimated that about \$10 million is spent in the cities that host this event and from our own perspective we had 36 of the South Australian wholesalers up there dealing with our product in the international market. In total, there are 650 Australian companies at the ATE, with 780 international buyers from more than 47 countries.

Members can imagine the importance of this ATE in terms of the current state of the Australian dollar because Australia is now one of the most preferred destinations of all countries in the world. As members may know, we have just announced that, in 2002, South Australia intends playing a key role in the Australian Year of the Outback. We are reclaiming our title, legitimately, as the gateway to the Australian outback, and we are talking about the 700 000 square kilometres we have in our backyard. One of the best attributes that we had to offer at this year's ATE, in terms of the enormous interest out of Germany, Italy, Britain and, in particular, France, was our product with respect to the Australian Year of the Outback.

We have planned an amazing range of events for 2002, but the interesting aspect is the extraordinary interest internationally. I took the opportunity to outline some of our main events for next year because, as members would know, the lead time in purchasing international tourism product is very significant, and operators need to submit their purchase numbers now. Without doubt, it gives the international operators a very unique opportunity to see what is on display in South Australia and, at the end of ATE (at the end of this week), more than 40 international tour operators will visit South Australia to look at new products to be included in their brochures for next year.

It is incredibly important for us to understand what the tourism industry is doing to our state, to our regions and to our economy. I listened to a number of the international operators and, indeed, to a number of the other tourism ministers—I might say that the Labor tourism ministers took the opportunity to work out what they are going to do at the next tourism council meeting; they did not bother to speak to the federal minister or me about it, which I find fairly interesting—and of particular interest is that they all acknowledge the absolutely incredible opportunities for employment and economic activity.

I believe that the opportunity we have presented to us for next year is something about which we should be very proud because 95 000 international visitors have already visited the Flinders and the outback. Next year we will ensure that they have plenty of reason not only to visit and spend their money

but also to return in the future.

LAND AGENTS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): I lay on the table the ministerial statement relating to the Land Agents Act 1994—National Competition Policy Review made earlier today in another place by my colleague the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

RECONCILIATION WEEK

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Minister for Local Government): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Yesterday, I was pleased to launch the official start of Reconciliation Week in conjunction with Professor Dennis Ralph and Ms Shirley Peisley AM, co-Chairs of the State Reconciliation Committee. This is the sixth year that we have officially celebrated National Reconciliation Week, which was first instigated by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1996 to provide a special focus for nationwide activities to support the Council's vision of:

...a united Australia, which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.

Here, in South Australia, Reconciliation Week celebrations have continued to grow and gain the support of our community. This year a number of special activities will be conducted throughout the state which will enable all of us to pledge our support for reconciliation in Australia. I sincerely congratulate those who have taken it upon themselves to promote reconciliation within their communities.

Reconciliation Week is a time to explore and acknowledge shared experiences of living in our community, to discover a shared heritage, to understand and respect each other's culture and to make our community a better place to live. This week is a time to reflect on achievements made so far and a time to focus our minds on those things that we can still achieve. Indeed, it is time for the community to show its commitment to each other and to reconciliation.

This government is committed to ensuring that reconciliation remains an important feature in the continued growth of our state. We have embarked on a program to promote reconciliation in government and to ensure that we give practical examples of our commitment through the work of our agencies in South Australia. In addition, I recently advised the House that the state government has signed a memorandum of understanding with the State Reconciliation Council and has provided some \$100 000 towards its operation.

Last Sunday, I was pleased to launch, on behalf of the state government, the Digital Library of Indigenous Australia, which allows us all to gain an appreciation of the past 100 years of Aboriginal culture in South Australia. The digital library is dedicated to providing an interactive online archive of photographs, press clippings, videos, sounds and stories of indigenous culture, both past and present, documenting everyday life and extraordinary events. Over 10 000 photographs have already been entered electronically onto the library. The digital library will be a valuable educational resource facility for schools, universities and

tertiary institutions locally, nationally and overseas. Over time and through promotion of the site, the potential for exposure and interest in the site from a worldwide audience is unlimited.

In addition, it provides, in particular for the Aboriginal community of South Australia, the ability to access historical information and it provides an important resource for tracing family members, which is another important step in progressing reconciliation.

I invite all South Australians who share the government's commitment to practical reconciliation to visit the DOSAA web site both to view the digital library and to find out more about the many events that are taking place throughout our state during Reconciliation Week. The South Australian government remains strongly committed to the promotion of reconciliation, respecting the richness of Aboriginal culture and protecting and preserving Aboriginal heritage for future generations of Australians.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Ms KEY (Hanson): The grievance I bring forward today concerns two meetings I attended at the Clarence Park Community Centre, sponsored by the Clarence Park Environment Group and also the Soil Association of South Australia. At these meetings a number of concerns were raised by people in the community regarding the programs which have been taking place of spraying and baiting for both the Mediterranean and the Queensland fruit-fly. One of the chemicals that has been identified as being used by Primary Industries workers was fenthion. Not having a background in chemistry or knowing about pesticides in any detail, I thought it was important to find out what this chemical is made up of.

Fenthion is distributed under a number of trade names and I was really concerned to read in information available from the United States Environment Protection Agency, the Office of Pesticide Programs, some of the details that have been put forward about this chemical. Apparently fenthion was developed in 1960 and was commercialised by Bayer Agriculture. Fenthion has also been used in pet sprays and shampoos to control external parasites and it has been widely used as an ectoparasitic insecticide for livestock (lice and fly control). Concerns over the environmental risks posed by livestock applications prompted the manufacturers to voluntarily cancel all these uses. Phase-out of all livestock applications began in March 2000 and will continue over the next two years to allow for depletion of existing stocks.

The data also states that, undoubtedly, the most extreme risk it posed was to birds. It has been used as an avicide, applied as a paste to perches to kill pest birds. Countless numbers of raptors and other non-target birds were killed over the period from 1964 to 1997 before this use was voluntarily cancelled by the manufacturer.

I know that the members for Unley and Bragg have received—as I have—a number of complaints and concerns from constituents, but one of the issues that was raised not only at the public meeting but also with the member for Bragg really summarised the concerns of a number of residents whom I represent and also the residents who attended the meeting.

The first letter talks about the concerns expressed to Mr Ingerson by this particular resident and states:

As a constituent of your electorate I am sending you a copy of my email.

I understand that this letter also went to the Minister for Primary Industries and Resources. Quite a number of issues are raised in this first letter. This resident identifies, quite rightly, the fact that the member for Bragg, being a pharmacist in his previous life, would certainly understand some of the more complicated issues surrounding the use of chemicals and some of the problems affecting humans, in particular, as a result.

As the days went on, this particular resident also was impressed that the Minister for Primary Industries and Resources did put a halt to the spraying for fruit fly while seeking further information. I received only yesterday a copy of the leaflet that was distributed in the electorate, but a number of people have had concerns about this information. In the summary this resident states:

The good news is this was the first information in my area that we ever received from PIRSA. The bad news is neither document contains any information whatsoever for residents on:

1. What should be avoided by residents prior to, during or after PIRSA spraying or baiting programs.
2. No notification of the time period before any produce on that property was safe to consume.
3. No poisons antidote information is contained in any of this documentation either.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Before I begin, I wish to express my condolences to the member for Elder. Mrs Conlon was in this House only a few days ago, as members know, and we all are very shocked to hear of her sudden passing. To Patrick and the Conlon family, I extend our heartfelt sympathies.

Two weeks ago, as Chair of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, I raised the matter concerning whether the Barossa Valley needs a commercial airstrip. I asked questions of the two witnesses concerned at the committee meeting, both of whom operate an air charter tourism business, and their answers were a definite 'Yes'. The evidence states:

We need a 1 000 metre long strip in the Barossa, not necessarily sealed, but it would be best if it was, and capable of handling up to at least nine passenger twin engine aircraft.

I have been researching this subject. The Barossa already has three private strips, one at Nuriootpa, one at Rowland Flat and the other at Lindsay Park at Angaston. The issue was raised many years ago but was not proceeded with. Apparently none of the three private strips would be suitable as a public airstrip.

Well, things have changed. Business activity and tourism have boomed in the Barossa, as members know, and the question needs to be asked again. Many of our wine and associated businesses have a proportion of interstate and international owners and associates who need to visit regularly and quickly. After landing at Adelaide Airport, it is a 1½ hour drive by car to the valley or 15 to 20 minutes by plane, so there has to be an obvious advantage there.

Tourism operators, especially those who put together packages, need to be able to fly in and fly out clients who are continuing on or coming back from tourism experiences in the outback. If an airstrip needs to be established, the question arises: where should it be built? Where is land that is flat and long enough and available in or near the Barossa? Land at vineyard prices would necessitate its being away from the valley floor, but 10 to 12 minutes from the centre of the Barossa should be acceptable.

A site north of Nuriootpa was considered many years ago. I visited that site last Tuesday morning, and certainly it is suitable. Although it may be too close to some houses, land is available next-door, and it would seem quite appropriate for a strip 1 000 metres long. I think we need to pursue a new public airstrip for Australia's premium wine growing region.

The concept has been enthusiastically received by Mr Barry Salter, General Manager of the Barossa Wine and Tourism Association. Mr Salter said that Parafield was too far away for those with limited time, such as VIPs from overseas. They fly into Sydney and then want to fly directly to the Barossa. There is certainly a demand at the top end of the market, particularly with corporate incentive packages—usually weekend packages—and people want to get to the Barossa as quickly as possible. The valley has a high standard of accommodation and we certainly have the attractions. 'If we had an airstrip, these people could fly on to the Barossa,' Mr Salter said.

Another prominent Barossa identity, Mr Doug Lehmann, General Manager of the famous Peter Lehmann Wines, reiterated Mr Salter's comments. Mr Lehmann said that he has also talked to pilots who fly these people around, and they say the demand is certainly there. There is a whole group of people from overseas who fly from place to place. They might go to the Margaret River and then on to the Hunter but, if we do not have an airstrip, the Barossa is missing out. Mr Lehmann went on to say that, from a wine industry point of view, it definitely would be a good idea, and he would be right behind it.

As I said earlier, I definitely think it is a goer, and I will certainly be pursuing this in the months ahead. The Barossa is a world-renowned premium wine growing region, and does need an airstrip to at least handle nine-passenger, twin-engined aircraft. We are losing valuable tourist dollars without it.

The concept obviously has support from the Barossa. All we need now is to find suitable land, and we need about 30 hectares and some money to build it. If we were to build two air strips—one east-west and the other north-south—we would require 60 hectares. With that amount of land at the price Barossa land is making, it would have to be away from the valley floor. I certainly support this venture and am interested to see what proceeds.

I was pleased to be able to attend the Grant Burge Melodinacht held last Saturday night. It was a great success, particularly realising that so much local talent was involved. It was an extremely successful evening.

Time expired.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): I acknowledge that we are gathered on Kaurna land, and this week the traditional owners celebrate National Reconciliation Week. I commend the minister for her remarks today and I want to carry on from what she was speaking about. This week is a time for all Australians to seek new pathways to reconciliation in our communities, workplaces and homes. It is a chance to reflect on progress to date, what remains to be done, and how to move forward. It is also a chance to think of ways in which we can all further contribute to the stated vision, and I again quote as the minister did, 'of a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and provides justice and equity for all'.

Reconciliation Week is framed by two significant dates in Australia's history which symbolise the hopes and aims for

reconciliation, beginning with 27 May, which marks the anniversary of the 1967 referendum, and concluding around 3 June, the anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgment on the Mabo case in 1992. The theme for South Australia in 2001 is 'Reconciliation: The future is up to us', and it encourages individuals, businesses, government and communities to work towards maintaining the process of reconciliation. We are going to focus on partnerships, commitments and sustaining the reconciliation process beyond this year. Given that the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation ceased to exist on 1 January this year, reconciliation will indeed be a process that is up to all of us.

Yesterday, although I was not able to be present, I was represented at a function to mark the beginning of Reconciliation Week at Otherwood, in Lenswood, held with the permission and assistance of Mr and Mrs Brockhoff. The whole event, set in very splendid surroundings on Peramangk land, was the ideal beginning to what will surely transpire into a constructive, progressive and enjoyable week for us all. There was a performance by Tal Kin Jeri, and it was breathtaking as usual. This very popular, creative and talented group of Ngarrindjeri dancers, led by well respected and much loved elder Major Sumner, presented traditional dance and songs.

Speeches were made by Shirley Peisley AM, Denis Ralph, David Rathman and the minister, and they set the scene for what was a memorable morning. I would like to acknowledge the incredible amount of work done by the staff of DOSAA, by David Rathman and Frank Lampard in the organising of the event, and to all the reconciliation groups who assisted.

On Saturday, I was present at the launch of the Digital Library of Indigenous Australia. This is a resource of national and international significance. It is dedicated to providing an interactive online archive of photographs, press clippings, videos, sound and stories of indigenous culture, both past and present, documenting everyday life and extraordinary events. It will also be a valuable tool for families to locate children and loved ones who were removed, thus helping to begin to repair longstanding and deep hurt. This web site will allow people to look at the past 100 years of Aboriginal culture. Currently there are some 10 000 photographs, with the earliest one dating from the mid-1800s.

This is a week for celebration and also acknowledgments. I would like to personally acknowledge the tremendous work performed by the Otherway Centre. Coordinated by Father Tony Pearson and Shirley Peisley, the Otherway Centre provides support to indigenous people. It operates a prison service and provides food and assistance to people in need. Effectively, the Otherway Centre runs on the most meagre resources because of the expertise of its staff; it works with very little funding and few acknowledgments. It seems to me that if this government wanted to make a real commitment to the Aboriginal people of this state and to the spirit of reconciliation, it would see fit to make a real effort to provide appropriate assistance to indigenous people and their families by, for example, funding places like the Otherway Centre so that it can continue to carry out the exemplary work that it does. The government could also provide assistance to pay the centre's staff wages and recognise the work they do.

This government could also pledge increased funds to Aboriginal housing to facilitate the purchase of larger houses with a minimum of four bedrooms to accommodate larger families so that we might see an end to the dreadful overcrowding situation that many indigenous families face daily. I note that there was a recent convention here in Adelaide of

skin specialists who concluded that the skin conditions suffered by Aboriginal people are prevalent because of the overcrowding that they face.

In my own electorate of Florey this week, we will be launching our reconciliation quilt with the assistance of David Rathman, Polly Sumner and Shirley Peisley. This is a chance for my local community to reinforce its message of commitment, and I hope that we might host that display for a short time here in parliament. I also hope that parliament might lead by example and find a way to allow the flags it is flying this week to remain on the building permanently.

Time expired.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I think that members will be well aware that I am not a great supporter of Australian Rules Football and that I support soccer. However, over the last week, like all South Australians, I have been incensed by certain comments about one of South Australia's football greats. I make these remarks especially because not only is Barrie Robran a great footballer, sportsman and a great role model to all South Australians: he is also a constituent of mine. I was very much incensed by the comments of John Elliott.

As members would be aware, just over a week ago triple Magarey medallist and South Australian football great, Barrie Robran, joined football's elite when he was inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame in Melbourne. Set up in 1996, the Hall of Fame was established to honour the efforts of Australian Rules players from all states in Australia. Barrie Robran was inducted as the 17th legend of the game for his outstanding contribution to Australian Rules Football. He is the first South Australian to win the coveted title and is the first legend to be elevated without VFL or AFL experience. By all accounts, there is no doubt that Barrie Robran has a rightful place in the Hall of Fame.

As I have said, I am not a follower of football although, to an extent, I follow Norwood in my area and, of course, the Crows. Nevertheless, Barrie Robran certainly has had an impact on me, someone who does not even follow the game—which shows the extent of the influence of such a great ambassador for the game.

By all accounts, there is no doubt that Barrie Robran has a rightful place in that Hall of Fame. AFL commissioner, Bob Hammond, reported that even when Barrie Robran was playing senior football in the country as a 17 year-old, there was no doubt that he was a champion player. In 1967, he went on to join North Adelaide Football Club in the SANFL competition, playing 201 games for Norths until 1980.

Robran's extraordinary talents were also recognised interstate, and it was not long before Geelong Football Club made attempts to lure him over the border. It was only the illness of his father and his loyalty to North Adelaide Football Club that prevented him from playing in Victoria at the highest level of the game. I have met Barrie on many occasions when he has been a representative at functions, promoting a healthy lifestyle. Barrie works for the Department of Human Services' health promotion branch, and he is certainly a great promoter of health, in the Quit Smoking campaign, and a great example to all South Australians.

So, it was unfortunate that the selection of such a great South Australian should be criticised last week by Carlton's long-time President, John Elliott. It appears that other South Australians are also offended by Mr Elliott's comments in the media, and I was slightly satisfied with today's article in the *Advertiser* reporting the SANFL's dumping of Mr Elliott as

a guest speaker at a pre-Crows v Carlton match function in August.

Although South Australians would welcome the selection of other South Australian greats in the Hall of Fame (such as Malcolm Blight), there is no doubting that Robran is one of football's truest champions and rightly deserves his place in the Hall of Fame. He is a great sportsman and a great role model, unlike John Elliott, who is not necessarily a good example of good Australian sportsmanship, nor can he be regarded as a good promoter of a healthy lifestyle.

It is a pity that he had to make such comments. As I have said, I am not a great fan of football but I recognise good sportsmanship in whatever code of sport it may be, and here I mention Pat Rafter, in tennis, as an example. Certainly, Barrie deserves that title, and I congratulate him and his wife and family.

Time expired.

Mr HILL (Kaurana): I am very pleased to rise before this packed House to raise two very vital issues for my electorate. The first of those involves a piece of land in Old Noarlunga, an area that I believe was at one stage part of your electorate, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe that it has been a part of a number of electorates in this state.

On Malpas Street in Old Noarlunga there is a piece of land owned by the Education Department, attached to Noarlunga Primary School. That land has been unused, I gather, for some time and is really surplus to the school's requirements. A little while ago I was contacted by a number of residents in that area who complained to me that the land was going to be sold by the Education Department to a particular organisation, a Christian church, and that there was no tender process and no advertising: it was just going to be done by private arrangement.

I thought that this was a bad process and I contacted the minister, who assured me that there were no plans to sell the land and that people need not be worried. In fact, what is happening seems to me in some ways to be even worse, because there is now an application before the local council for the development of that land as a site for the church. In fact, there is a proposal that buildings from the school, old buildings currently used by the church for its services on Sunday, are to be moved across the road to the spare piece of land, and that car parking for 30 cars and a toilet block will be built on that land, effectively turning it into a church, yet without any public process.

There has been no consultation, other than through the Planning Act, with the local community; no details about what arrangements have been made. It seems to me that it is a gift of that land to the church on a long-term lease, perhaps a peppercorn lease basis, I do not really know. I have written to the minister and spoken to him about it a couple of times, and I must say that he also expressed some concern about the arrangements. I wanted to put this matter on the public record, because this is a totally inappropriate way for arrangements to be made.

If the land is surplus to the school, a public process of sale or lease should be gone through, but a sweetheart deal between the school and the church—a church which does not service that local community or that township but a broader southern community—is causing great concern in that township that people will be coming into the area, parking cars, making noise and all those sorts of things that are associated with a public building, and without any consultation, any discussion with them whatever. I am very hopeful

that the minister, who is aware of this matter, will be able to deal with it appropriately and ensure that proper processes are followed.

The second issue I wanted to raise today is that of electricity. I noted in the press today, in the pre-budget kind of leaks that are standard practice these days for government, that the government is bragging that it is \$100 million or so better off as a result of the long-term lease of the electricity assets and that that \$100 million will be used for health, education and other purposes. It may well be that the state is \$100 million better off as a result but, certainly, the community is no better off and, in fact, is worse off.

As we all know, the price of electricity is going up by something like 30 per cent. I did a rough back-of-an-envelope calculation this morning. My household pays about \$1 000 a year in electricity for power bills and I estimate that, if our bill goes up by 30 per cent, we will be paying an extra \$300 a year. There are half a million or so households in South Australia, and that would equate to something like \$150 million extra. That is not taking into account the extra price increases that business, charities and others will have to pay.

It may well be that the state government has \$100 million more to play with, but the fact is that the community will be considerably worse off, so the burden has really shifted from the government through to the community. Briefly, I want to raise one issue in particular in relation to that. I have a letter in front of me from Bedford Industries, which was sent to its donor base, complaining about the effects that the electricity tariff will have on it. The letter states:

The impact of GST is being felt far and wide and has affected not only our businesses but also our fundraising, particularly our lottery. But the latest news has us reeling. We may be faced with a huge increase in the cost of power to run machinery for our businesses. . . . If it [power] goes up 30 per cent, where are we going to find an extra \$70 000 a year? We rely heavily on customers' donations and people's generosity to keep going. We wouldn't cut the number of employees. We would be forced to abandon or delay some developments.

Time expired.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): The first matter I want to raise today relates to an exciting proposal that the owners of the Innamincka Hotel have put forward to redevelop that site to meet the growing demand for tourism—

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I don't think so: not in their line of business. This particular project will do a great deal to house the growing tourist trade in that part of the state. The reason I raise it today is to ensure that members of this House are aware of this very exciting, well thought out and necessary project. I sincerely hope that the government will ensure that all its agencies move forward at a very quick rate to approve this project and that we do not have any sections of the anti-development league or anti-tourism groups trying to put forward any blockages to stop it. The proposal is to build 20 share twin motel units. A laundromat for public use will be incorporated into the motel complex.

New toilet and shower facilities are due to be constructed in the beer garden to service the hotel and the public, which will necessitate the following: an upgrade of the septic tank; upgrade of the kitchen and dining room; improvements to the management residence and staff accommodation for extra employees required to service the new complex; construction of stormwater gates at the trading post-hotel boundary and the rear of the kitchen to eliminate flooding of the bar and kitchen; upgrade airconditioning; installation of refrigerated

airconditioners to existing motel and bunkhouse buildings; an upgrade of the main electrical switchboard to install a sub-board to the kitchen; refurbishing the bathrooms in the existing motel rooms; repainting the hotel, motel, toilet and bunkhouse internally and externally; site works and landscaping.

This is a very exciting project that will provide badly needed accommodation. It will preserve the amenity of the area, because none of us wants to see the amenity of the area disturbed or interfered with, as that would destroy the uniqueness of the area, which is one of the things that encourages tourists to visit that part of South Australia. The hotel already provides a very good facility, as do other businesses in the area. There is a need to address a number of issues in the area.

The other important issue that needs to be addressed is finding a suitable location for the contractors who will in the near future develop the other leases that have been issued. Innamincka should not be the site for a contractors' camp. That would certainly interfere with the area, and the community does not want that. There is a need to allow some more residential accommodation. It is interesting to note the representations made years ago to try to stop the government cancelling the freehold blocks. The concerns of those who made the representations have now come to fruition, and there is a need to redress that foolish action taken by the previous government.

The second matter I want to talk about today is that I, like many people in this state, am getting sick and tired of a small group of people who have taken it upon themselves to disrupt the proceedings along North Terrace. These people have no regard for the welfare, privacy and wellbeing of the average members of the community who wish to walk along North Terrace. From time to time we hear leaders of the Aboriginal community demanding more rights. However, they must also accept that they have responsibilities, and it is about time they accepted some of those responsibilities.

In certain areas, my constituents are facing the same sorts of difficulties. The people to whom I refer are a small group, a minority, who have no regard for elderly people or other tenants' rights, their privacy or their property. They are vandalising, acting in antisocial ways, and causing great concern and anger in the community. It is no good well meaning but misguided people saying that there is not a problem, that nothing can be done or that we should try more programming. Some firmness on behalf of the administration is required to deal with these people.

The sort of behaviour that is taking place in North Terrace, Victoria Square or in sections of Port Augusta is no longer acceptable. I do not care who they are or what they are: the time has come to move them on and deal firmly with them. We are sick of bleeding hearts.

Time expired.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

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

That the select committees on DETE funded schools and on the Murray River have leave to sit during the sitting of the House today.

Motion carried.

REAL PROPERTY (FEES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Real Property Act 1886. Read a first time.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This bill proposes an amendment to section 277 of the *Real Property Act 1886*. That section enables the making of regulations dealing with fees payable under the Act.

Amongst the other functions carried out by the Registrar-General, the Registrar-General registers changes in ownership of land when the parties to a land transaction lodge a Memorandum of Transfer in the Land Titles Office. The fees fixed for the registration of transfers of land have been fixed by the *Real Property (Fees) Regulations*. The present system of determining fees came into effect in January 1975 and although adjustments to the actual fee levels have been made since that time, the basic system for determining fees has been maintained ever since.

This bill is designed to ensure that the system which underpins the method of fee determination since 1975 is transparently reflected in the provisions of the Act itself. For the same reason, the amendment will have operation from the time at which the present fee system came into being.

I commend this bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

This clause provides for the commencement of the amendment.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 277—Regulations

This clause amends the regulation making power in the Act to enable fees for the registration of transfers to be based on the consideration for the sale or the value of the land.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

SUPPLY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 May. Page 1615.)

Mr FOLEY (Hart): After careful consideration, this hotly debated topic within our caucus—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Is the member for Hart the lead speaker in this debate?

Mr FOLEY: No, sir, I am not, and I will not be speaking for long. The Leader of the Opposition is the lead speaker. Following serious debate in our caucus, the opposition resolved today to support supply. We did so in the longstanding tradition of the Labor Party. Unlike the conservative side of politics, we support supply and the right of a duly elected government to have supply. Our conservative opponents have a track record of standing up governments when it comes to supply.

I would like briefly to make a few comments. Of course, it is now only a matter of a couple of days before we see the eighth budget of a state Liberal government, and I sincerely hope it is the last budget of a state Liberal government for some time. However, in politics one can never be confident about the outcome of any state election. I sincerely hope that this time next year I will be sitting on the Treasury benches, listening to the shadow treasurer making a contribution on supply. I will listen carefully and politely, and encourage the new shadow treasurer in his or her pursuit of their portfolio.

Some comments need to be made about the state of the finances in South Australia, because after eight years of

Liberal government, after one of the most significant asset sale programs of any state government in Australian history—involving \$7, \$8 or \$9 billion, if we take into consideration all assets—and after hundreds of millions of dollars of massive cuts throughout the life of this conservative government, we find that it is still barely able to balance the state budget. So, after the elimination of tens of thousands of Public Service positions; the stripping away of hundreds upon hundreds of millions of dollars of government programs; the biggest single tax grab in this state's political history, from my recollection, with hundreds upon hundreds of millions of dollars of new taxation; and asset sales approaching \$10 million over the life of this government, they are still unable to balance the books, still unable to live within their means.

As we know with last year's budget, the government was in fact in deficit in both accrual terms and certainly on a cash basis. Think of the trickery, the sneaky trick played by this government, where the contribution from the sale of the Adelaide Casino was paid into the State Superannuation Fund—as it should have been, no argument with that. The government then said that as that money was paid back to State Superannuation, given that the taxpayer owns the asset with State Superannuation as the investor, they should have received the proceeds, but it enabled the government to not make its contribution to unfunded superannuation liabilities, which gave it the opportunity to technically balance the budget in cash terms. We picked that within five minutes of glancing at the budget papers. It was obvious that sleight of hand, some trickery and the use of asset sales were used to put together a phoney cash surplus.

Not only did Labor say that, but from my recollection so did Standard and Poor's, the rating agency, which, as swiftly as Labor, identified the phoney bottom line of the state budget and said so in a release. I say that because in this budget year it worries me that this is the last budget before the next state election. I know the Premier will potentially drag out the date of the next election six months beyond the constitutional due date of the election in terms of the four year mark, but not even John Olsen can drag out the election long enough to get him into another budget year. So this is the election budget, whenever the election is held.

What will this tricky government do with the state finances in the lead-up to this election? I have a fair idea what it will do. It will spend, spend, spend and commit the state to significant ongoing funding, for which proper provision will not be made in the forward estimates, in a blatant attempt to buy back voter support on the eve of a state election. There is no doubt about that. It will be irresponsible as it has been for many a year with the construction of these budgets and will put in place nothing more than a pork-barrelling state budget aimed to save some seats as it heads into the next state election.

It would be fair to say that I suspect that the Treasurer of this state, Rob Lucas, has given no consideration to what needs to be done to save the member for Hartley because from what I am hearing from some of the highest levels in the Liberal Party, Hartley has been written off, and from what we are told from our sources within the Liberal Party hierarchy on Greenhill Road, the party budget has been cut for any campaigning or activity in the state seat of Hartley. I hope you have done some fundraising Joe, because no money is coming to you from your head office from what we are told.

The budget will be designed to try to save the skin of the Deputy Premier in his vulnerable seat. It will be designed to save the skins of the member for Bright and a whole series

of members of the government who are as vulnerable as the most marginal members. I am concerned that little care will be taken as to the future impact on state finances of their decisions. It will be interesting to see what the government delivers in its so-called dividend from the sale of ETSA. My colleague the shadow minister for the environment pointed out the story today that \$100 million of new spending is on the books. That money has been spent. Whatever budget bottom line saving there may have been technically from the sale of ETSA, you can rest assured that that money has been spent two or three times over and any new expenditure coming from this state budget cannot be attributed to any dividend from the sale of ETSA because that has already been factored into previous budgets and has been more than spent. So the government will have great difficulty in bringing forward a budget with any integrity in terms of the financial footing on which it leaves the state, but we will have to wait and see.

The backdrop to all of this is the economic crisis of this government's creation that is sweeping our state's economy. I talk about electricity.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I talk about electricity. I will ignore the member for Hartley as his irrelevance is obvious to all of us. Perhaps he should be spending a little more time looking after the interests of his constituents rather than being in here behaving like a juvenile, sitting on the back bench throwing silly, inane comments towards this side of the House.

The electricity crisis sweeping our state is the creation of failed Liberal government policy that is seeing on average 40 per cent to 50 per cent price increases in power, with some increases as high as 100 per cent. We have story after story appearing in the daily press and week after week stories appearing of companies paying massive penalties. Sola Optical is paying \$700 000 more for power. We have cases where small engineering firms in my electorate are paying \$30 000 or \$40 000 more for power. These companies employ half-a-dozen people. The manager of the local Pizza Hut in Port Adelaide said to me that he has a \$20 000 impost coming to him on power. That is \$20 000 less he will have to spend on casual Labor in my electorate in one little business alone. We see a number of major manufacturing businesses in our state suffering enormous price increases. Some companies we are advised are considering relocation. Some companies are almost certainly reducing labour forces as we speak and some companies cannot move.

Members would be aware of the story that appeared in the paper from the property industry in South Australia of property owners who are unable to physically relocate their businesses and are facing massive increases in the price of power because much of their power is consumed in peak periods with air-conditioning and heating systems. The explosion in power prices will be reflected in rents. Power cost increases will be reflected right across the economy. The Chamber of Commerce said that its initial estimate of the impact on GDP based on a 30 per cent price increase was a \$200 million swipe off gross state product. Now we know that price increases could be as high as 90 per cent to 100 per cent. As I put to Business SA, as much as half a billion dollars or more of gross state product could be wiped out because of this incompetent government. That will cost many jobs. It will be a knock to confidence and will find its way through to inflation and with inflation come price increases and with price increases comes an unstable economy.

This situation is courtesy of an incompetent government, which has locked our state into power price increases for many years. The power prices about which I talk are power prices that consumers are being forced to accept for, in many cases, a period of up to five years and, come 1 January 2003, domestic tariffs will be deregulated. I can give a message to members opposite, whether they be in government after the next election or over here on the opposition benches: every South Australian will know who was responsible for the nightmare scenario and the nightmare outcome of massive power bills. The incompetence of this Olsen Liberal government has locked our state into high power prices for the foreseeable future.

Hopefully, though, South Australians will be prepared to elect a state Labor Government at the next election—a government that will be prepared to tackle the vested interests and prepared also to tackle the uncompetitive nature of our electricity market and bring about structural reform to our market that will be sufficient and needed to ensure that we deliver on cheaper prices. Make no mistake about it, the Labor Party's position is quite clear: we do not believe that subsidising business per se is the answer. Whilst I can understand that business may want to call for subsidies, that is not the solution. That takes the pressure off the government to fix the underlying structural weakness.

The underlying structural weakness of the market is quite simple: we do not have competition as a result of this incompetent and greedy government, and the Deputy Premier was complicit in scheming to ensure that the residents and the businesses of Port Pirie were the losers. The Deputy Premier was part of a conspiracy of this government to lock out and minimise competition and to boost asset values for our remaining generators. As the Deputy Premier tries to explain that one to the people of Port Pirie, Labor will be saying that what this government has done is a disgrace; that it is part of a conspiracy—and no less emotive term can be used—to inflate the value of our generators in order to maximise the financial return for short-term gain to government at the expense of locking in consumers to five years of up to 100 per cent power price increases.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: The Deputy Premier mumbles 'Rubbish.' The reality is that the Deputy Premier knows that I am right. He knows that his participation in that conspiracy has locked our state into one of the most horrendous economic scenarios, that is, that the cost of doing business in this state is going through the roof. I cannot believe that a government deliberately would conspire to bring about this outcome. I say to the Deputy Premier, 'Please explain to the people of Port Pirie and to South Australians why you and your colleagues conspired to develop an outcome that would lock your constituents, my constituents and the member for Waite's constituents into such a price penalty.'

I can think of no greater conspiracy than that, and this government will wear that at the next state election like a crown of thorns. I can assure members opposite that the Labor Party in the state will be making sure that every constituent in this state will know that the Deputy Premier, the Premier and all his colleagues who conspired to force such a price increase on South Australians are the guilty party; they are responsible; they have locked this state into an economic crisis that is costing jobs and investment; but, most frightening of all, it will cost individual families so dearly. No wonder the Deputy Premier is hanging his head

now in this chamber because, if I had been part of that conspiracy, I would be hanging my head, too.

My final comments are these: do the right thing this Thursday and bring down a balanced budget. Put money into the important areas of health and education, not into those areas you have done so for the past eight years—whether they be multimillion dollar consultancies, appalling pieces of capital work expenditure, such as the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, or projects which this state can ill afford. This government, of course, is a government of monuments. I suppose that I should conclude by referring just briefly to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium because, along with electricity, a shining example of incompetence, wrong priorities and failed governance of this state is, indeed, the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. Over \$40 million of taxpayers' money has been expended to date, and the Deputy Premier will be signing off another couple of million dollars to buy the land in the next 24 hours. What do we get for that \$40 million? We get a soccer stadium that we must maintain, I am told; we get—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: It is \$40 million.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin: It is not.

Mr FOLEY: It is \$40 million. It is frightening when a Deputy Premier simply does not understand the numbers. It cost the government \$30 million to upgrade, it cost the government \$2 million to buy the land and it cost the government \$8 million for Olympic soccer, which equals \$40 million. At the end of the day we have one soccer team that can barely attract 3 000 people to a game. We have, we are told, the potential for one or two concerts a year—\$40 million of hard-earned taxpayers' money sitting as a white elephant, as a terrible waste of taxpayers' money when our hospitals, such as the QEH and the Lyell McEwin, are crumbling.

As our police officers are lacking resources and as our classrooms are lacking teachers and resources, what do we find from this government? We have a grandstand and we have a soccer stadium. We find that this ill-conceived, ill-thought through priority of this government will stand the test of time as demonstrating that a Liberal government is simply incapable of delivering essential and important services to the greater good of all South Australians. A Labor Government, on the other hand, will deliver the goods and the services to the key constituents of this community. We will prefer to spend money on hospitals than on white elephants. We will prefer to spend money on important services, not on highly-paid American or interstate consultants. We will deliver services to the people.

Time expired.

Mr HILL (Kaurna): I want to talk briefly about the Supply Bill and, as the shadow treasurer has indicated, the opposition, of course, will be supporting the bill. I want to talk about some of the deficiencies in supply as it relates to my electorate. In particular, I wish to start with an issue that I have raised on many occasions in this House, that is, the provision of transport services to the outer southern part of my electorate, in particular, the areas of Aldinga, Port Willunga and Sellicks Beach. I refer briefly to the *Southern Times Messenger* of 23 May, a newspaper publication, the front page of which, headed 'Living on the outer', contains a very good account, which covers several pages within the newspaper, of the cost of accessing public transport for people living in the Aldinga area. Members must understand

that Aldinga, for most people, is part of the metropolitan area, yet it is not provided with metropolitan bus services. A separate bus contract is provided by Southlink, the same provider that carries the metro section of the southern suburbs to the Aldinga area. That service takes people from the Aldinga area to Colonnades. The maximum fare for that trip is \$2.60 one way.

People who live in Aldinga and who work in the city or in another part of Adelaide must pay one fare to get to Noarlunga Centre, where they can catch a train or another bus, and then pay a separate fare to go elsewhere. It would cost those people something like \$10 a day in fares on public transport, which is of the order of, I guess, \$50 a week. That is a huge impost on working people, and the people who live in the Aldinga area by and large are not wealthy. They are battlers. For them, it is a large impost. The message I get from that community all the time is: why can we not have an integrated ticketing service? Why can we not catch a bus at Aldinga and connect up with the rest of the metropolitan area's bus service? I think Gawler is included in the metropolitan system. Why cannot the constituents in my electorate have the same privileges? Why must they pay \$10 per day in transportation fees just to get to work?

It is a real impediment and really reduces their standard of living. It makes it difficult if there are two or three members of a family who all must travel to work or school or elsewhere on a daily basis. That is the number one complaint I am getting from that area. It is certainly a hot issue, and I very much hope that in this coming budget the government can find ways of providing an integrated ticketing service. I guess people are grateful that there is some public transport available in that most southern part, but they most desperately need an integrated ticketing system.

That raises the general issue of country and metro, and I have raised that before in this place. A campaign has been run by many in the local community which I have aided and abetted to have a full-time police station open down there. The government promised prior to the 1993 election, which it won, that a full-time police station would be opened there. Unfortunately, it is not open 24 hours a day. It really closes at about 11 p.m. when everybody knows that most of the villains are out. A local community group has been established to try to work with the police at finding ways of ameliorating some of the problems, and one of their suggestions is that a mechanism be provided whereby telephone calls will automatically be diverted to another police facility when the station is closed. I am quoting from Mr George Apap, the author of a letter to me and an advocate on behalf of that community, who said:

Will a mechanism be provided whereby, when the Aldinga police station is closed, telephone calls to the station will be automatically diverted to another police facility where trained, knowledgeable staff can provide information and advice and/or redirect calls to an appropriate person within the police organisation?

That seems to me to be a reasonable request. The community wants a 24 hour a day station, but they are saying that, if they cannot get that, at least they should be given telephone access so that if they have a problem they can get to speak to someone who knows about this local community.

The whole issue of where the metropolitan boundary finishes needs to be properly addressed. I have been asking questions about this matter for the whole time I have been in this House. A couple of years ago the Premier announced an inquiry. That inquiry concluded and a report was given to cabinet. All I get from the Premier when I write to him about

it is that it is still being considered. When will that consideration be finalised? When will this issue be addressed? People on the fringes of the metropolitan area need to know whether they are country or city. It varies from government department to government department. I will not go through the detail now, as I have done so on many occasions in the past.

The other issue I raise in relation to my electorate at the moment is the incredible problem that people continue to face in getting access to public or private housing. I am inundated—as I know my colleague the member for Reynell is—with people coming to our office, often referred by the local Housing Trust, seeking a letter saying that they are in desperate need and asking whether the Housing Trust will please give them a higher priority. I am always happy to assist where I can, but the problem is that we know there are not sufficient houses. It is not appropriate for people to be living in garages, or sleeping in cars or rough on beaches. These are ordinary, good people who are desperate to get housing. In some cases they have children and in some cases they are single, but they are people who are desperate for housing.

The sad fact is that every year since the Housing Trust was established in South Australia until 1993, when this government took office, the number of homes operated and controlled by the Housing Trust increased. From 1993 until now, every year this government has been in power, the number of homes controlled by the Housing Trust has been reduced. That is a tragedy. Housing is absolutely the basis of having strong families and having a strong community. If we cannot put families into houses, we have really given up on making sure our community works properly.

The other issue which I will address briefly and which I think needs investigation and some work is the way in which the WorkCover system operates at the moment. I am sure that many members can identify with this. I have coming into my office many constituents who are having trouble getting through the WorkCover process.

The other day I saw a constituent who had finalised their compensation with WorkCover in February and who, at the end of May, is still waiting for the money. The problem, as I understand it, has been with the insurance company. I rang the insurance company and the insurance company told me that the problem was with Centrelink. However, my constituent was clever in that he went to Centrelink and Centrelink said, 'We only received the letter from WorkCover yesterday in relation to this matter. We will fix it up within five days.' The whole process is dragged down with lawyers, insurance companies and WorkCover bureaucracy. The whole process is bedevilled by delays which put constituents at a great disadvantage.

I will also refer to another constituent who visited me recently and who was a contractor. He did not believe he was a contractor, but he worked as a courier with a delivery firm. When he began his job he asked the boss, 'Am I covered by WorkCover?' The boss said yes because he in fact paid a levy to WorkCover for this particular employee. The employee then had an injury. WorkCover identified a case manager for the employee and, as soon as the case manager contacted him, the insurance company involved said no, this person is a contractor. He is not a worker and the WorkCover act does not apply to him.'

This person who, in good faith, believed he was covered by WorkCover and whose boss believed he was covered by WorkCover—and WorkCover believed he was covered—has now been told by an insurance company that he is not

covered at all. So, his injuries are uninsured and it is up to him to deal with them. This is an absolute travesty. It is despicable and it is disgraceful. I will help this man as much as I can pursue it through whatever system I can, but it seems to me that it is unconscionable conduct by the insurance company and perhaps by WorkCover, although I am not sure in that regard. It is appalling that the system can let down a person who is basically a worker doing a job because some fancy paperwork has decided that he is a contractor, and then when he has an accident and injures himself he has no protection. That aspect at least of the WorkCover act needs to be addressed.

I raise just a couple of other quick issues. I note that the Treasurer is still to bring in amendments to the Port Stanvac Indenture Act. The ongoing debate about whether the council rates should be reduced has gone on now for several years. It is not good for Mobil or the local community, and it is certainly not good for the local council to have this matter unresolved. When will the Treasurer deal with this issue? When will he make a decision? I suspect that he is delaying it so that it will be resolved only after the next election, because he knows that, if he reduces the rates and causes the council to pick up a greater share of the burden, then that local community will be up in arms.

I think it is ironic that as the government is trying to reduce the council's funding, the member for Mawson is referred to in the local newspaper of 16 May under the headline 'Councils should help centre'. The article states:

MP Robert Brokenshire has urged Onkaparinga council to put more money into the McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Visitor Centre.

The government has contributed some, and he [Mr Brokenshire] says, 'Well, that is enough, it is really now up to the council to sustain the funding.' How can the council keep putting money into new projects when the government is reducing the funds available by attempting to reduce the rates that will be paid by Mobil?

In addition, the council is struggling to look after its 35 kilometres of coastline. The Coast Protection Act says that the government should contribute 80 per cent to the cost of coastal works and the local council is supposed to put in 20 per cent, yet when the council goes to government and says, 'Look, we need some work down here urgently,' (as is the case at Port Noarlunga) the government has no money and it is now try trying to negotiate a 50-50 deal. The government cannot have it each way: it cannot reduce the funds and it cannot reduce the commitment to coastal protection and then ask the council to put more money into a wine centre in the member for Mawson's electorate. No doubt it would be of benefit, but it seems a difficult thing for the council to do.

I will refer to volunteers briefly. This is the Year of the Volunteer and there has been a lot of publicity. We have had Volunteers Day and we have had lots of breakfasts. Interestingly, I am not sure whether any member of the opposition was invited to the breakfast for volunteers. I certainly was not. It was an opportunity for the government to grandstand again and allow members of the government to look like heroes in that particular community and receive publicity in the newspaper. However, when members look at the reality, I do not think things have improved for volunteer services.

The Fleurieu Volunteer Resource Centre is in my electorate. I asked a question of the minister about funding for that community program and I was told that it receives \$12 700 per annum, which has been indexed by 2.5 per cent, which will give it \$13 000 in the 2000-01 year, yet it deals with

approximately 93 organisations and has 351 volunteers on its books. The Minister for Human Services, who provided this answer, said:

Currently, no growth funding is available in the family and community development program.

This is the Year of the Volunteer and the government is trying to get as much kudos from looking after volunteers as it can, but when members look at what it is actually doing to help volunteers in the community, which is where they do their work, there are no extra funds or extra support at all.

The final point I make concerns a more general issue; that is, the Glenthorne property on South Road. For some time now there has been a campaign to have Glenthorne maintained as open space. I think prior to the last election the state government said that it would buy this property and turn it into some sort of wine project where students could be involved in viticulture and there would be revegetation and so on. It is now almost four years since that announcement and still this project has not been finalised.

I hope that there is money in this coming budget to provide the funds to purchase this property. The local community is becoming quite agitated. They have been waiting a long time now for this matter to be resolved. It is well overdue and I certainly urge the government to address it as swiftly as it can.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): In speaking to the Supply Bill I want to raise some issues that are of concern to people in my community. Some of the issues relate to the day-to-day living of people who are on low and fixed incomes. I would also like to follow on from the comments of my colleague the member for Kaurna in relation to volunteers. Recently I had the opportunity to support Radio 5RPH's radiothon, and I would like to commend the volunteers who run this radio station because they play a very valuable role in our community. Given that this organisation is funded greatly by donations from the public, it is amazing that they are able to do the wonderful job that they do for our sight-impaired folk in the community.

This dedicated group of volunteers works to ensure that people who cannot read a newspaper still have access, albeit via the radio, to items in the newspaper, including the death and funeral notices. Perhaps to some of us that would not be anything of particular importance, but I recall some time ago—and I cannot remember how long ago—one lady informing me that she had only become aware of the death of a relative when the notice was read out over Radio 5RPH. That may seem a very awful way for someone to learn about the death of a relative or a friend, but for people who cannot read a newspaper and who perhaps over time have lost contact with family and friends, without the efforts of the volunteers of Radio 5RPH they may never know that a member of their family or a friend has passed away.

I might say that while I was in the studio I noticed that much of their equipment was very old. They tell me it is often in need of repair, yet they still keep it going, often at a cost to themselves. Perhaps some people may volunteer to help to rectify some of their aged equipment. However, the station still keeps going and I might say that, as I found out, the volunteers continue in their efforts with great enthusiasm and humour to keep their programs going to air. I guess that is just part of the dedication of these very committed volunteers.

Other such organisations perform good work in the community and they, too, run with the support of their

volunteers on basically shoestring budgets. Most of these organisations operate with either little or no government funding, and even though they perform this very important role in the community, their efforts are really not recognised—certainly not by government.

We know that an increasing number of people in our community are struggling, and certainly since the impost of the GST many people have received little or no compensation to help them; they are forced to rely on charities for support and help. It is the opinion of many people that both the state government and the federal government have been exceptionally mean spirited to charities which are attempting, on very limited donations, to help those in need.

We have seen little from this Olsen government to support charities. In my electorate of Torrens one organisation performs a very great service within the community yet its funding will run out in September this year. The government has squandered a great deal of money on the soccer stadium and consultants—and much more—yet does little to help those folks in need. This is a disgrace. Our poor become poorer and, with the price of electricity soaring, they will soon have to resort to living in the dark and going without decent food and medication—and many folk are doing that now. A number of people in my electorate cannot afford to purchase the medications they need. They turn off their lights early and do not use heating, and that certainly disadvantages their quality of life.

While our government continues to ignore the need to fund these organisations, they are forced to rely on the goodwill of the community. NECAP (North Eastern Community Assistance Project), an organisation about which I have spoken on numerous occasions in this House, certainly continues to do its best to support those in need. As in the case of 5RPH, much of NECAP's workload falls on the shoulders of volunteers, many of whom themselves are struggling to make ends meet. NECAP currently receives no financial assistance from the state government: it has received assistance only from the federal government for funding for emergency relief. This federal government funding is strictly allocated for client emergency relief in order to offset poverty, and only 10 per cent of the \$55 000 NECAP receives is allowed for administration.

It certainly appears that neither the state nor federal government believes it has a social responsibility to assist the poor, including those volunteers who work very hard to help others. The state government in celebrating the service of volunteers has a social responsibility to at least contribute to volunteer welfare organisations such as NECAP and the many other organisations in our communities, so that administration and management of these organisations can be resourced thus giving them the opportunity to support those in need.

NECAP covers a huge area throughout the north-eastern suburbs and offers assistance to families with the payment of bills and the distribution of food hampers—which is greatly needed. It is an essential service because many families have children ranging from very young babies to teenagers. NECAP's assisting with bills makes the difference to these families in terms of whether or not they cut back on their food budget. My experience with assisting families in poverty has shown that there is nothing for families in poverty to fall back on and a cut in the food budget simply means that they go without food; they go without food to pay their bills.

Just a week ago, NECAP's store was broken into and food for those people who are in desperate circumstances was

stolen. While one can understand the need to have food on the table, stealing from an organisation that collects and gives food to those in need is truly deplorable. There is no excuse for such behaviour. Regrettably, this is not the first time these thefts have occurred. On other occasions thieves have stolen goods stored at NECAP—goods which have been donated by the community for those who may not have a bed for their children or who may need a washing machine or fridge because theirs has broken down.

I really wonder if these mean-spirited people realise they are stealing from folk who are desperately in need. To add insult to injury, the donations which are stolen often come from poor people who are seeking to help others. They might think they have a little bit extra that they can give to help someone worse off than themselves. It is really just mean and it is vile of these thieves to think they have a right to help themselves to these goods. I know that many volunteers who spoke to me after this latest theft were absolutely heartbroken about it because, as I said, it is mean and quite vile.

I sincerely hope that the government will consider the good work of charities and provide support to them so that they can continue to help people who have become economic victims of both this government's and the federal government's policies. We have seen Minister Evans announce a volunteer day yet we do not see the government standing up and making some sort of tangible contribution to the volunteers who provide these wonderful services in the community. The government does not give them fair and proper funding to do their essential jobs.

I ask the government to please consider those organisations that are struggling to do the valuable job they want to do in our community. If the government gives them the appropriate level of funding, they will get much for their dollar.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I support the passage of the Supply Bill today. This will enable funds to be expended on projects which are announced in the budget this week before the budget is actually passed by the parliament. One project of significance is a major development for the electorate of Mitchell and the people of the south-western suburbs. I anticipate that very shortly there will be a government announcement for an aquatic centre of an international standard to be developed in what is called the domain area adjacent to Westfield Marion. That would be a momentous decision not only for the swimming fraternity and sorority but also for the people throughout the southern half of Adelaide.

Clearly, there is a need for improved aquatic facilities in Adelaide. It would be glorious if we had the opportunity to stage international events in Adelaide in a range of aquatic sports, including swimming, and there is no doubt in my mind that, if such a project is to go ahead, the domain at Marion would be the ideal site because of its proximity to public transport, the shopping centre (which is adjacent to the site), Marion Cultural Centre and the tourist precinct at Glenelg. For a range of reasons it is the ideal site.

A number of people have been pushing for this for a long time now. I am happy to pay credit where credit is due. I know that the member for Bright, the Marion council and I, all in our different ways, have been pushing for a favourable result for the local area. Of course, many community members on various swimming committees in the south-western region, in particular, have been pushing for it, working hard towards it and lobbying for it. It will be very

pleasing for them and the whole community if the government sees fit to make that announcement very shortly. The timing is perfect. Marion council cannot delay development in the domain any longer, so it needs to know this week whether the aquatic centre project will go ahead. It will not be any good to come back in six or 12 months' time with the announcement. It has to be this week; it is now or never, and I will be the first, along with a whole lot of people in the local community, to celebrate when I hear that announcement later this week. I will conclude on that point.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): I want to commence my address this afternoon by, in a sense, posing a question to the Treasurer who, unfortunately, is not a member of this House. I am still awaiting an answer to a question that was put to him by the Hon. Ron Roberts in another place on 11 April 2001. It was a two-part question, and the part in which I am particularly interested is the answer to the question whether the government will emulate other state governments such as Victoria and New South Wales in relation to the HIH issue.

The question related to people who were unfortunate enough to be insured with HIH insurance prior to its collapse, who now have no policy cover and who have had to take out an insurance policy with another insurance company to cover the same assets and are paying stamp duties a second time within the same 12 months time frame in which they paid the state government when renewing or taking out their policy initially with HIH Insurance.

This is very simply an issue of double dipping. It is not a matter of the state government's missing out on revenue; it already has had that revenue from the clients of HIH through the payment of their initial stamp duty. Then, because of that company's collapse and those clients having to take out cover with other insurance companies, they have had to pay the same stamp duty twice within the same period of insurance cover.

This is important to everyone. These are not insignificant sums of money, whether it be for personal household insurance, car insurance or anything of that nature which we all readily incur. It is very important with respect to small business and the money that it is having to pay in stamp duties for the renewal of professional indemnity, whether that be for lawyers, real estate agents, accounting firms or whatever.

I cannot understand why the Treasurer, when he took that question on notice on 11 April 2001 and said that he would take further advice on whether or not this state government would, like other state governments, eschew the double dipping exercise on collecting stamp duties with respect to HIH clients, has taken over a month to reply and we still have not had any word from him as to whether or not the government will follow the lead of other states and not engage in double dipping. Perhaps we will hear this Thursday when the state budget is delivered. In any event, I hope the decision is taken soon, that no double dipping occurs and that those individuals who have been forced to pay stamp duty twice in the circumstances I have described are given a refund.

In speaking in support of the Supply Bill, I know that many of these speeches are, quite frankly, other than for the members themselves who read their own speeches, not read by many others, but I hope that the Premier's office will read the contribution that I am about to make because it certainly trumpeted the state government's so-called initiative in a document headed 'South Australia: Reducing the Greenhouse

Effect'. I will read from the foreword to that document, which is given by the Premier. It states, in part:

South Australians contribute more than 30 million tonnes of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere each year—about 20 tonnes for every person in the State. We all contribute to these emissions and so must all work together to minimise the problem.

The Premier then goes on to state:

The State Government is leading by example by establishing Greenhouse Gas Targets for all South Australian Government agencies, to reduce both greenhouse gases and energy costs. It is working with industry and the Commonwealth through a Memorandum of Understanding on the Greenhouse Challenge program, and with local government through Local Agenda 21 and Cities for Climate Protection.

The Premier closes his foreword by saying this:

Global warming and the greenhouse effect must be tackled jointly by all sectors of society—it is our responsibility to ensure everything that can be done, is done to preserve the environment for the next millennium.

Wonderful sounding words! However, I suspect it is more rhetoric than action on the part of the Premier.

I will provide the House with some small examples of where this state government could actively engage in significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions within its own agencies, at the same time significantly reducing the cost of energy to South Australian taxpayers, which it is not doing. I refer to a letter that I know was sent to the Premier on 29 February 2000 by a company known as Air Con Serve Pty Ltd. It was headed 'Re: South Australia—reducing the greenhouse effect.' From my understanding of this company, it has had little contact from the Premier's office since forwarding this letter to the Premier following receipt of the document I just read from. It really calls into question this government's commitment in terms of tackling greenhouse gas emissions. In part, the letter states:

During April 1998 the Government of South Australia entered into three separate FM contracts covering Government Assets in Metropolitan Adelaide (two Regions) and the Central Building District (CBD) in Adelaide. The CBD FM contract was awarded to CKS Facilities Management.

The FM contract with CKS had no direct requirement for Energy Management. An innovation provision was included in the contract whereby the contractor (CKS) would be rewarded by sharing savings with the Government upon the successful application of any innovations and not specifically Energy Management. During CKS contractual involvement, we discussed with them the concept of Energy Management together with the presentation of an implementation plan. Furthermore, we were involved in considerable discussions jointly with CKS and Government Agencies eg. Office of Energy Policy (OEP) and the Department of Administrative and Information Services (DAIS).

All parties recognised the importance and necessity to incorporate Energy Management strategies within Government contractual arrangements with CKS however the implementation of the plan never took place because:

- (a) CKS to us it appeared, wanted a share of energy saving under the innovative provision however Government agencies rightly assessed it not to be a CKS innovation and that all energy savings should be retained by Government Agencies.
- (b) CKS themselves were in financial problems and did not have the resources to address this issue satisfactorily because their attention was directed elsewhere.
- (c) Government Agencies could not contractually separate the task of Energy Management from CKS.

This company refers to government agencies and government owned buildings. The letter continues:

Many assets in Adelaide house more than one agency or many departments of the same agency with each responsible for its own energy budget. Where separate agencies share common services eg. air conditioning and electrical, no financial motivation exists for an agency to conduct energy management procedures if the energy costs

are not charged to themselves ie. One agency alone 'pays' for the energy consumption of central air conditioning plant. Furthermore, the agency currently 'paying' the energy costs has no control or authority over the efficiency of usage over the provided common service.

One paragraph later, the letter states:

Consequently unnecessary complexities and difficulties arise in motivating staff to implement energy management strategies.

Under the heading 'Government tenanted buildings', the letter continues:

We are aware of one privately owned building in Adelaide that is solely tenanted by a single Government agency who in turn pays all energy costs. The building itself is maintained by an agent of the owner (not CKS). Early in 1999 we identified at least \$150 000.00 of energy savings however the agent did not implement these savings at that time because they wanted a share of those savings. The implementation of procedures to achieve these savings would have cost about \$5 000.00 and whether or not they eventually were implemented we are uncertain, however lease agreement should not allow for any restrictions with regards to Government Agencies being prevented from the utilisation of Energy Management strategies as was the circumstance in this lease.

Further, the letter states:

These obstacles should be easy to resolve and we have recognised the potential to save about \$600 000.00 of energy or equivalent to 4 000 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide per annum in four only assets and without any infrastructure costs.

I also want to point out that the same company has had discussions with AGL Energy Savings, Sales and Marketing about how the South Australian government could save money and energy at peak times, particularly during the summer, with respect to electrical load shedding. What appals me is that this state government has done so little on this subject.

This company was involved in the installation of air-conditioning systems in a number of state government buildings. It knows what it is talking about, and it knows it can save considerable sums of money, to the tune of at least \$2 million per annum just in a number of state government buildings in which it was involved, as well as saving enormously with respect to greenhouse gas emissions. In an appendix to that letter to AGL, the company points out that just on the buildings that it is aware of, including the Adelaide City Council, it could save about 35 000 kilowatts per day in energy, with a bit of thinking on the part of the government.

These include areas such as the State Administration Centre, the education centre, Treasury buildings, the police headquarters, Wakefield House, forensic science, motor vehicles, State Library, Art Gallery, Artlab, natural science, historical on-site buildings, government hospitals—Royal Adelaide Hospital, Women's and Children's, Port Pirie, Barmera and Berri hospitals—Julia Farr and Hampstead centre, as well as TAFE colleges and schools throughout the state. They also include the universities—the University of South Australia, Adelaide University and Flinders University and a number of their separate campuses—the court system, as well as other government assets such as Netley, the Wine and Roses, Parliament House itself, the Entertainment Centre, the Convention Centre, the exhibition centre, WorkCover, ETSA—as it was then known, 1 Anzac Highway—Loxton irrigation centre, as well as government tenanted buildings such as Australis, Riverside office block and Chesser House city centre. In the Adelaide City Council area it includes areas such as the Town Hall, Colonel Light Centre and Gladstone Chambers, the Pirie Street car park,

Rundle Street car park, Topham Mall, Adelaide Aquatic Centre and Happy Valley council.

Each of those buildings that this company is aware of have their own diesel generators which can be kicked in centrally at peak times in the afternoon so that those diesel generators would in effect take off line the power used on the main grid, which could therefore remain in the main grid to help other industries and residential consumers. In addition, other measures can be taken during the course of the afternoon where the temperature within air-conditioned office buildings can be increased slightly during the afternoon without any great degree of discomfort to the occupants of those buildings. The situation concerning those buildings I have outlined would save the government 35 000 kilowatts per day, which equals 35 megawatts—and that sells on the market at the moment in peak hours at \$5 000 per megawatt hour and after April 2002 the maximum of \$5 000 per megawatt hour increases to \$10 000—so the savings to the government are substantial simply with the assets I am pointing out.

There are other areas in the private sector where savings could be achieved, such as the freezer rooms for storing pilchards, the tuna feeds in Port Lincoln. This company has been advised that the refrigeration could be stopped at these sites for at least four hours each day in summer with no deterioration to the pilchards themselves. That would release energy back into the grid in terms of a gain for residential or business usage. It just requires a bit of lateral thinking on the part of this government and the ministers responsible. I understand that AGL is certainly interested in this plan but it will want to reap some of the savings for itself. It should be a 100 per cent saving to the government if it introduces this system, but we are aware of its lackadaisical attitude on energy savings, and if AGL takes up this idea it will produce it as a wonder plan to the government, no doubt saying that it wants to share some of those savings.

So, instead of the whole of the savings being passed on to the South Australian taxpayers perhaps only 50 per cent might be passed on with the other 50 per cent remaining in the pockets of AGL. This is despite the fact that this company has sought on a number of occasions to interest the Premier and his department in this issue, to seize it and run with it. All we get is inertia, which costs us money as taxpayers and does nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, I refer to the blow-out in costs of the Adelaide Convention Centre of some several million dollars as reported in the *Advertiser* of 23 May.

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: It will now be a \$100 million centre. This matter is worthy of a thorough parliamentary investigation. I have had enough informal discussions with certain people who have had contracts or sought to have contracts with that centre where they have won certain contractual benefits—won the contract—only to have them undone and reconfigured so that it would appear somebody else could get the job. Those people are quite happy to talk to a parliamentary committee of inquiry and have further investigations into this cost blow-out. I have been informed by one subcontractor that they were told by Balderstone when it was looking at bidding for it that this was a set price for the Convention Centre with no ifs, buts or maybes: that was the bottom line and there could be no further allowances for any cost blow-outs. Yet we now have the minister responsible for this matter turning it into another Hindmarsh stadium fiasco.

Time expired.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased to speak in the supply debate today. This morning I discussed with Kim Beazley the sort of things we can do in cooperation with federal Labor in terms of a South Australian regional package because we have the rare opportunity this year to see both state and federal Labor governments elected almost simultaneously, which gives us a great opportunity to work together to fix the problems confronting this state. It gives us the best chance to address Labor's priorities of providing ordinary South Australians with better schools, better hospitals and good jobs by tackling these issues at both levels of government.

The combination of state and federal Liberal governments have punished this state severely. Our public hospitals are under enormous pressure and patients are waiting in emergency for beds for more than 24 hours in some circumstances. We have seen drive-bys by ambulances, wards closed, services shut down, a crisis in our country hospitals and 500 public hospital beds closed in the past eight years—the equivalent of a large metropolitan hospital closing in Adelaide. This week we will hear big jamboree time. It will be, 'You beauty, we've got the money; we'll spend, spend, spend; everything's fixed; there'll be a glut of money for health, hospitals and education in this week's budget.' We know that because not only have we seen not only the green book but also we remember what happened in 1997. After the cuts in hospitals, suddenly it was, 'You beauty, the money's there; we're in the home straight.' The problem is that few believed the government then and no-one will believe it again. People remember that what you gave in 1997 did not make up for 1994, 1995 and 1996. Not only did it not make up for what had been taken away, but straight after the election the cuts began again and there was a massive increase in taxes.

Not just our hospitals but also our schools are under pressure. Parents are facing school fees of hundreds of dollars a year—in one case up to \$900 a year—to send their children to state high schools in South Australia and meanwhile the drop-out rate is skyrocketing. Our retention rate for year 12 students has fallen from 93 per cent in 1992 to less than 60 per cent now. For boys in state schools it is about 50 per cent. How can we possibly be the smart state in the clever country if fewer than six out of 10 state school students are finishing high school? That is why education has to be an economic as well as a social imperative.

While jobs have grown by 18 per cent nationally since December 1993, in South Australia jobs have grown by just 5.3 per cent—less than one-third of the national rate of jobs growth—and in the past year South Australia has lost 11 000 full-time jobs. The job scene may also be affected by the electricity crisis when it hits with full force. After 1 July more than 2 500 South Australian businesses join a contestable market for power and they are facing average power increases of 30 per cent. The Olsen government's privatisation of our power system has left us with the most expensive power in Australia and not the cheapest, as the Premier promised South Australians. Of course, the Premier promised not to sell ETSA in the first place, so why should we be surprised by Liberal broken promises in this state?

That is why this week's state budget will not be believable. People have drawn the curtains. The electorate is turning on the Liberals at both state and federal levels for their shortcomings and also for their dishonesty. We know that the federal Liberals are mean and tricky because they have admitted it themselves in private memos that went

public. The South Australian Liberals are seen as arrogant, out of touch and untrustworthy.

It is therefore very important to look at today's symbol. Here we have a government that is addicted to consultants. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on consultants by this government. But we are told that suddenly they will cut their consultants, and we had the metaphor for it today when we heard that, whilst pensioners will receive just \$300 as a one-off payment to compensate for the GST, the South Australian Liberals have hired Tim Fischer as a consultant on a \$3 000 a month retainer and \$2 000 a day.

At the state level, I have made clear that Labor recognises that people live in a community and not just in an economy. A decent community demands a level of concern about the social problems that confront us. If South Australian Labor should win government, I have announced that we will immediately introduce our social inclusion initiative which will look at tackling the problems that confront us in a new way. It will have not just a whole of government but a whole of community approach to tackling important social issues. It will include business and the community sector, as well as government departments working to thrash out action plans to tackle specific problems, with definite time lines and targets.

It borrows from the Blair government in the United Kingdom, where their unit has been referred issues such as truancy, sleeping rough and neighbourhood renewal. I have stated that the first reference for South Australia's unit will be our plummeting school retention rate. That is why I am excited by the chance for this initiative to work with Kim Beazley's plans for education priority zones to work to attack the problem in a coordinated way. Of course, if we are looking at education priority zones, they will be established by our federal Labor partners in areas in schools with a low retention rate.

Of course, there are other issues. In the area of mental health, I have said that we will attack the issues of those people who have been abandoned by the retreat of the state system. The institutionalisation began with the right motivation but has become an excuse for cutbacks. Dickensian wards in Dickensian-style asylums were closed in the 1960s and 1970s, and everyone across the political spectrum supported that. The whole point was to actually provide backup and respite in terms of community care and support, and the adequate community support that was promised has simply not been delivered. We regard that as a priority issue in terms of the health portfolio.

As I have said, our broader health and hospital system will be a priority for state Labor. Again, we look forward to working in concert with a Beazley Labor Government. I was delighted last August to sign with Kim Beazley the Medicare alliance which will herald an unprecedented level of cooperation between state and federal governments not to cut our health system but to rebuild it. Under the Liberals in South Australia, both levels of government have cut health funding and then blamed each other in an invidious display of name calling.

But instead of cost shifting, Labor's Medicare alliance will see state and federal governments working together to deliver 10 years of growth funding to our health system. All this gives the lie to the claims that Labor has not released policy or broad plans for government. Indeed, at the state level, we have released eight direction statements amongst a string of other announcements.

In most recent times, in fact, last Friday, I announced Labor's Direction Statement covering the areas of manufacturing and innovation. That was a commitment by a future state Labor government to establish a dedicated centre for innovation in manufacturing, industry and business. Our Centre for Innovation will work with existing industries, including small and medium firms, to retain and create jobs, to gain access to new skills and new technologies and to develop new products and processes for new as well as existing markets.

Our Centre for Innovation will combine the resources of the Centre for Manufacturing, the Business Centre (formerly known as the Small Business Corporation), other parts of the Department of Industry and Trade and parts of other agencies to provide practical and strategic assistance to existing industries. The information technology portfolio will be integrated with the industry portfolio to ensure a broader application of new technologies in industry. Our centre will work with the university sector, the CSIRO, the commonwealth research centres and other world-class research organisations to lift the sights of local industry towards competing through skill and innovation.

We hope that Labor's Centre for Innovation will become the hub for a South Australian regional innovation system, which will be a set of linkages between companies, research and education institutions and state and regional and local government economic development agencies. To elaborate in more detail, Labor in government will abolish the Department of Industry and Trade and eliminate the waste and duplication that has developed between it and other agencies. There will be a more effective and integrated economic development structure, which will be much leaner than the Olsen government's bloated bureaucracy.

Labor will cut the duplication that has flourished under the Olsen government. Under this approach we will create the Centre for Innovation to lead and deliver economic development programs. It will combine, as I said before, with other areas, including the Business Centre, to provide practical and strategic assistance to existing industries. Under Labor the information technology portfolio will be fully integrated into the industry portfolio. The role of the Playford Centre, for instance, as an incubator of new IT innovations and products, will be developed further so as to promote more effectively the application of advanced technology in existing industries. The industry minister will also be the minister for information technology.

I think that it is important for members to reflect that, back in 1987, with the support of John Button (the then federal industry minister), state Labor established the Centre for Manufacturing, which has proved to be a most useful assistance tool to local industry; but eight years of Liberal government has seen its role diminished and downgraded. I was certainly proud to be the minister responsible for the Centre for Manufacturing in 1992 and 1993. Instead of the centre being the key delivery arm to help a wide range of industry sectors, its functions in recent times have been reduced; it has been allowed to languish within a disjointed, unfocused and fragmented bureaucracy.

Labor recognises that the demands of the new century require a new vision and approach and our new Centre for Innovation will reflect this. It will support existing industries, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, and help identify strategic areas for diversification of South Australia's economy. Labor believes that government does have a vital role in assisting our manufacturing sector to adapt to new

opportunities and challenges. An advisory group of stakeholders in the manufacturing sector and related industries will provide their expert advice to the Premier and senior economic ministers.

The group will grow from the existing Manufacturing Industry Advisory Board. Certainly, our intention is to drive innovation in this state and that is why our centre will provide practical assistance to industry. It will be an activist agency, with staff working on practical projects and companies in industrial parks, in business incubators, or on the road with a mobile phone and a list of clients, to name just a few. The centre will provide experts on the ground working with industry, not bureaucrats in offices with fancy titles and even fancier salaries. Labor's Centre for Innovation, as I mentioned before, will become a hub for a South Australian regional innovation system—a set of linkages between companies, research and educational institutions, as well as state and regional and local government economic development agencies.

In doing so, the centre will integrate the benefits of the so-called new economy with the existing economy. The centre will target small and medium enterprises, which often lack the resources needed for innovation, such as new technology, new forms of business organisation, excellent management skills, the development of clusters and networks between companies and information on international market opportunities and design innovation, amongst other things. It will support start-up companies in high growth areas through business incubators and other means.

There is a substantial potential for government to become a much more active facilitator of the growth of and innovation by small and medium-sized enterprises. We will reduce the barriers to innovation that face them by providing infrastructure which helps them to reduce their administrative and other overheads and which helps them to develop new ideas and new products. The centre will also assist in the development and long-term success of family businesses, and I want to pay tribute to the pioneering advocacy and work being done by Ray Michell, of the Michell group of companies, the wool processors, in recognising the problems faced generationally by family businesses of all sizes.

Also, of course, last Friday, apart from announcing the details of how the centre will work in terms of opportunities for value adding and diversification, enterprise improvement and the commercialisation of research and development, I also announced that Labor will establish an expert and professional Office of Investment and Trade to improve the quantity and quality of inward investment to South Australia. Labor will reform existing investment attraction policies and practices to cut back on waste and to ensure that our scarce resources are used to provide maximum benefit to South Australia. The Office of Investment and Trade will report to the Treasurer as minister for investment and trade.

We will also review our overseas trade offices to eliminate waste and duplication whilst opening new offices and targeting resources where they can do most good for South Australia. Whilst continuing to support South Australia's exports, these offices will increasingly focus upon presenting a strong case for overseas investors to invest their capital in South Australia. Labor will open an investment and trade office in the United States, and will consider the need to enhance our investment and trade resources in continental Europe. We would also close at least two offices in Asia: one of the four Chinese offices will go and so will one of the two Indonesian offices.

A strong presence can and will be maintained in Asia but with fewer offices. Labor will also not only abolish the Department of Industry and Trade but replace it with a leaner and much more effective structure. We will also integrate skills and work force development fully into industry development programs to maximise jobs as part of a vigorous whole-of-government push for jobs and economic growth. Labor's industry policy will emphasise strongly the development of the skills of South Australians.

As a former passionate minister for TAFE, who worked for three years in that portfolio and who was involved with John Dawkins in setting up the Australian National Training Authority, I think that what this government has done to ringbark TAFE in this state is a crying shame; and it is now, apparently, embarking on ways to privatise the TAFE system. Fully costed details of these initiatives will be provided during the election campaign, however, the proposals I have outlined to the House today will be funded from within the existing budgets for industry development and other related portfolios and agencies.

In conclusion, we hope that this budget will give support this week in terms of health and education and in terms of innovation. However, no-one will believe a government which each day in this parliament has absolutely criticised teachers and diminished their role in society, which has actively gone out to persuade the public not to have confidence in the public health system and which has run down the Centre for Manufacturing, but suddenly, gee-whiz, does an about-turn and now hopes that the people of this state will believe it. They will not believe it again. Essentially, the people of this state know that this is a government which is arrogant and out of touch, which is not on their side and which does not share their values.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): This afternoon I would like to spend a few moments summarising some major issues in the health portfolio preceding the budget announcements on Thursday, and hopefully looking forward to perhaps some good news, but with a little bit of cynicism in relation to that matter. On Sunday, the opposition released information about the number of people in South Australia waiting for elective surgery in our public hospitals. What we know is that as of now 8 253 people are waiting for elective surgery at the Flinders Medical Centre, Lyell McEwin Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Re-pat. Hospital. There has been a shameful 40 per cent, or 2 398 more people, in the number waiting for elective surgery at our five major metropolitan hospitals since February 1998.

The interesting thing about that figure is that during the 1997 election campaign the Olsen government promised South Australians an accessible health system with increased opportunities for elective surgery. I think that all South Australians would agree that that is not increased opportunities for elective surgery. Of course, what we have seen is just another hollow promise from a government that had no intention whatsoever of addressing the issue of proper, reasonable health care for South Australians. The figures to which I have just referred the House relate to the metropolitan hospitals.

We also know that in country South Australia bed closures and surgery delays are commonplace. In fact, the most recent set of cuts to the Angaston Hospital were highlighted by that community. The issue that has been put to me in relation to country hospitals in particular is why those hospitals should be forced to cut their services to pay for expensive regional

management costs. I put on the record that, after the announcement just a week or so ago that the Angaston Hospital needed to close 10 beds, postpone 30 operations and cancel surgery until July 2001 because of a funding shortfall, we find that \$250 000 a year is being diverted from hospitals in the Barossa Valley towards the Wakefield region's management costs.

This has to be another question of priority, because \$250 000 a year diverted towards setting up a bureaucracy could have paid for about 100 cataract operations or 25 joint replacements. This is symptomatic of where this government has gone so wrong in terms of health care. My information is that the costs to country health services across all seven regions in country South Australia are of that same order. Rather than the government funding the regional structure which it has established and which it promised to do in its election platform, the cost of regional managers, strategic planners and so on is being taken out of the money which would have paid for elective surgery and for other health services and which should have gone to people in the country.

That issue is raised with me constantly. It seems to me that it is about time the government addressed it and realised that, rather than setting up another layer of bureaucracy, it ought to think about putting that money into services. On Sunday, the Minister for Human Services made his first announcement in relation to the budget that is to come down in a few days' time. His press release was headed '\$15 million to ease hospital pressures'. He talks about 'an extra 65 hospital beds being made permanent under a \$15 million plan announced by the state government today'.

This is where it is really pathetic, because when we look back at the time when the 65 so-called temporary beds were opened in November (when all hell had broken loose in the metropolitan public hospitals) there was no mention then of the fact that those beds were temporary. This has just been a convenient way for the minister to make an announcement to try to hoodwink the public into thinking that it has done something extra. What the minister actually said when he made that announcement on Sunday was that they would not be cutting the number of beds they increased in November and that the 20 beds at the Royal Adelaide, the 15 beds at Flinders, and the 10 beds each in the Queen Elizabeth, the Lyell McEwin and the Repat. Hospital would remain intact; they would not be cut. This is all it seems that Dean Brown was able to announce.

I suppose you could say that, with a government such as this, you have to be grateful for small mercies and perhaps we should all be very grateful for the government's saying that it will not cut the number further. Perhaps that is all we could ever expect to get from a government such as this for which health is so clearly not a priority. What people need to understand is that since 1993 (when this current government commenced its first term) nearly 500 beds have been cut from our public hospitals. The opposition was pleased to see 65 beds put back last November, but we have an awfully long way to go to get anywhere near where we were.

Even if we put aside the fact that now there is a lot more day surgery and procedures can be done more effectively and faster with new technology, the demand for services has increased quite substantially and it is quite clear to everyone in our hospitals that there are not enough beds. And so, we have the constant backup in our emergency departments. The emergency departments are taking up all the available bed room in hospitals, which impacts on elective surgery, and consequently we have the enormous blow-outs in the waiting

lists to which I have just referred. That is where we have got to at almost the end of the second term of this government, and in this area it is a shameful record and one for which the government should pay dearly.

I remind members that we should not be surprised at how bad things have become. Let us not forget that the Olsen government announced in the state budget last year that it had a program that aimed to do worse (and I emphasise that) this financial year. It aimed to cut by 10 000 the number of patients treated in public hospital emergency departments. The new targets laid out in the 2000 budget papers showed that the Olsen government hoped to reduce to 70 per cent the number of patients receiving emergency treatment on time. Of the patients who needed urgent attention within 30 minutes of entering an emergency department, it aimed to reduce from 65 per cent to 60 per cent the percentage of those actually getting that emergency help. It actually aimed to do worse—not only to make people wait longer but also to put safety and quality of care at risk. We all know that the government has succeeded.

Finally (and this is the only statistic I have omitted), in the last budget the government also had targets to cut by 4 000 the number of patients admitted to metropolitan hospitals—and of course it has done that with the elective surgery waiting lists—and it aimed to treat 93 000 fewer outpatients. That was its aim: 93 000 fewer people would get to go to outpatients. That is what we have come to in the last year of the government's second term.

I want to refer to two incidents which the opposition discovered and about which it asked questions of the minister regarding how bad things are in our hospital system. The first question was asked by the Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday 3 April. We asked the Minister for Human Services whether in fact hospitals would be provided with the cash they required to run the hospitals until the end of the financial year or whether they would be forced to take out bank loans to maintain services. The minister gave a fudgy reply saying that he was not aware of the detail but that he would ascertain specific information in relation to this.

We knew that this had occurred. We knew that in one of our major hospitals this issue had reached board level and that the board in its discussions had decided that it would not take out bank loans. It was terribly concerned about its liability in this whole business. Interestingly enough, the Minister for Human Services never bothered to report to this House. If people had followed up in the daily press they would have noticed a little article in which the human services minister admitted that this might have 'inadvertently occurred'. His department had actually suggested to hospital boards that they consider taking out bank loans to pay off debts that they had incurred in delivering services.

The other issue I would like to raise is the fining of hospitals for ambulance diversions. I put a question to the minister on Thursday 17 May. I know that this also was on the agenda at very high level. A scheme was being put forward by the Department of Human Services, and under the plan public hospitals would be fined \$2 000 an hour whenever ambulances were put on bypass for more than two hours. A month before that question was asked, I heard about that at a meeting of doctors working in emergency departments and they were horrified at the thought of what that would mean, namely, that when they moved an ambulance on because they determined that it was unsafe to treat more people in the emergency department they would be fined for so doing.

The minister ignored the question but simply pointed out that diversions were not happening very often. He never answered that question. Essentially, he made the point that diversions did not happen very often. If they did not happen very often, why was his department considering such a ridiculous, manifestly excessive, sledgehammer approach of fining hospitals for being on diversion? I think those two examples, that is, the boards having to take out loans to pay off their debts and the Department of Human Services at executive level considering a fining system for ambulance diversions, are symptomatic of just how bad things are.

On Sunday, the minister in his press release also said that, as well as the \$15 million for not cutting beds, there would be an extra \$200 million for the next three years for nurses, including 200 new nursing positions and approximately \$110 million for doctors. We have checked with both the ANF and South Australian Salaried Medical Officers Association, and this is money for the pay rises that have just been agreed to. This money will do nothing to increase patient services. Except for the 200 new nursing positions—the \$8 million from the cancelled Le Mans race—the rest grants a pay rise but does nothing to deal with the issues. I hope that there will be better news on Thursday because South Australians are desperately hanging out for a change of attitude towards health.

Finally, I would like to talk about dental waiting lists. Dean Brown on 25 May came out with a press release announcing that he had reduced waiting lists by 17 per cent over the past 10 months. Well, that was pleasing to see, but he did not say that we still have 81 377 people waiting for dental treatment, compared with 53 800 in 1996. It is terrific, I suppose, for a government that has sat on its hands for five years, since the commonwealth dental program was cut, at last to have done something to start dealing with it, but there is a very long way to go.

We need a comprehensive approach to deal with the dental issue. The co-payment scheme and the one-off bits and pieces of money thrown at the scheme has achieved a 10 per cent or 12 per cent reduction in the list, but to break the back of this it will need a much greater contribution.

The minister himself in his own budget submission asked for \$5 million a year for three years. That was what his department estimated it would take to deal with the issue and to fix the matter. Again, we will have to wait and see. However, I am cynical enough to think that a press release five days before the budget, lauding a very tiny start in approaching the problem, is probably what the minister did knowing full well that that was all they would get.

So, this is where we are in terms of health care, the number one issue by a country mile in the minds of the voters. This is where we have got to over the terms of the John Olsen and Dean Brown Liberal governments: not much of a legacy to the people of South Australia and a huge job ahead of the Labor Party when it finally wins government and actually has to sit down and start to rebuild a system that has virtually been shattered. Our only hope will be that we win government federally and that with the Medicare alliance and a federal government also committed to health as a fundamental priority, we will be able to make headway.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I rise to speak in the supply debate because my hope is that we will have no more icons. I want to see local, practical initiatives, particularly those based on evidence about what the problems are in a particular community. The icons I do not want to see only warrant

listing. We know them: the Hindmarsh stadium and the waste of \$40 million; the Wine and Rose Centre which was supposed to be opened in time for the Olympics and is still far from opening, let alone producing a final account; the Convention Centre extensions which started off costing \$55 million and now stand at \$100 million, complete with the amazing arguments about how wonderfully successful the Convention Centre has been in the past. Nobody will deny that. If it has been so successful in the past based on what is now regarded as a bad building, it has been because of its excellent services. We do not need a big icon to keep on bringing in the conventions to this state, we need the continuation of the excellent services.

I do not want to see another iconic government radio network which does not seem to work in any way at all and which has pagers that have to be returned. It is working on a radio frequency that means that South Australia is soon likely to be the only place in the world where certain equipment is required for Motorola, so we will not be able to have any benefit of competitive tendering in that area. I do not want to see any more Barcoos, where we are sending dirty water out to sea instead of cleaning it up.

So, let us get rid of those icons and talk about what does need to be done at a good practical, grassroots community level. Flinders Medical Centre has to be the first priority for the south. The Noarlunga Hospital and the community health service there can always do with more resources, but for the major issues it is the Flinders Medical Centre to which the people of the south turn. It is the third busiest emergency department in Australia and 80 per cent of its overnight admissions come from the emergency department. This puts a tremendous strain on our hospital—most hospitals around Australia have only about 60 to 70 per cent of their overnight admissions coming from the emergency department. This means that the people of the south have a particularly difficult time in terms of so-called elective surgery. I am still unable to understand how somebody waiting for a hip or knee replacement operation and who is unable to work is 'electing' to have surgery. I think it is pretty critical.

We need far more programs at the local level to work within the community to enable people to take control of their health. We have an excellent health village, as I have mentioned, down at Noarlunga. We also have some first-rate community centres that work with local people to help them to enrich their lives, develop their skills and take an active role in the community. Between those organisations we need more resources to tackle some of the endemic health problems found in both the outer south and the outer north. I know we have universal health promotion messages but the evidence is that these only go so far in tackling issues such as smoking, consumption of fruit and vegetables, decrease in fat consumption, etc. We find that those who have a good level of education and ready access to health services are much more likely to take up some of these messages than those who have not been successful in their educational experiences and who do not have the means of looking at practical alternatives. Community based programs are the best way of working with those people to enable them to take control of their health and to have sufficient information and confidence to know when to go to the emergency department and when they can manage a minor health problem themselves; to be able to identify whether their child really does have something that is critical or whether they can manage their child's problem at home with Panadol and tepid baths, or whatever it might be.

If you have a look at the attendances through the emergency services, you see that the concentrations from particular geographic areas are evident. To deal with that sort of concentration, one needs to work directly in that area, but not by some remote health message on television. We need only a small amount of expenditure there: a \$20 000 or \$40 000 grant to a community centre would produce enormous results in terms of enabling people in that local area to develop their skills and confidence in managing their family's health and adopting a healthy lifestyle.

In education, one of the first priorities has to be school counsellors at every primary school in areas where there are high levels of absenteeism. I have mentioned in this place before that I was fortunate to secure the services of a parliamentary intern to investigate the issue of absenteeism, and in our definition, 'absenteeism' included late attendance. We found that on occasions a third of a class was absent at the beginning of the day. This makes it very difficult for children to be successful in their school experiences. What is needed to address this problem is primarily school counsellors. They must be supported by school attendance officers and by improved links between school and other community services. With the focus lately on literacy, literacy and literacy, and the thought that schools being involved in the community other than as a way of getting money is just not on, some of the contacts that used to occur between school and community services have dropped away. For instance, schools are not any more the focus of various community health initiatives that they were in the 1970s and 1980s.

Perhaps at times they went too far, but we have certainly gone too far the other way now in isolating the school from service provision and simply wanting it to relate to the community if it can get some money. We need to respect the skills of teachers and support their skill development so that they can deal with the increasingly complex task we ask them to perform. We need to look more closely at equity in the treatment of schools and recognise that the same funding does not produce the same outcomes. What children come to school with is very different in different parts of the community. Where children have parents who have not had successful educational experiences, they need an awful lot more resources in the school to assist them to learn successfully than children who have been read to at an early age, who have had books given to them from the time they were a few weeks old and who have had songs sung to them from the time they were in utero.

We need to look at the equity in terms of some of the government's achievements. We have heard the minister talking about how pleased he is that his aim of having one computer available in schools for every five children has been realised. Minister, I do not know how closely you have looked at the figures, but certainly in my area there is not yet one computer for every five children, and there is not likely to be for at least the next three years, according to some of the principals to whom I have spoken. The availability of computers in schools depends on where you live and how rich your parents are, not what your needs are and not even whether you have computing support at home. Again, in our system we do not recognise the fact that at times the school has to make up for what the parents are not able to provide, and computing as well as literacy is one of these areas.

We need greater focus on children with special needs. Lately, we have seen that the definition of 'special needs' has got tighter and tighter such that we almost must have a

complete failure in any one area of learning to be entitled to special help. So we have computers marking literacy tests but, at the same time, it takes longer and longer for a child with a learning difficulty to get support which may be able to provide immediate assistance. Children who have never heard a nursery rhyme at the age of eight years do not have much of a chance of being able to read. They need that support straight away, not when they reach the bottom decile.

We have many people in the south who have various forms of disability. One only has to look at the social atlas to see the way the areas of need are being focused in the outer south and the outer north. We have many successful people in the south, but we also have many areas of special needs, and I am focusing on those areas at present. In the area of disability, a person in the south who needs a wheelchair has to go all the way to Regency Park to be fitted with one. Surely we can find a way of providing a disability equipment service in the south so that people can go locally to have their equipment needs met.

Safety is an important issue, and one of the issues that we would like to see delivered on is the 1997 announcement made by the member for Mawson that the Beach Road/South Road/Doctors Road intersection would be upgraded. This was announced with great flourish in the *Southern Times Messenger*. Several times I have seen a few cones go out there and thought, 'My goodness; they are going to start it.' However, my hopes have been dashed, as have the hopes of people living in the area who frequently have to face flooded intersections, stalled cars and so on. So far, despite the fact that we have gone from 1997 to 2001 there is no sign of this intersection being upgraded. We want a full safety review of the Flaxmill/Wheatsheaf Roads intersection. Again, I have mentioned this problem in the House before.

While carrying about the same volume of traffic as the Beach Road intersection, this intersection has about three times the rate of injury-causing crashes. There is obviously something wrong with this intersection. I have had many suggestions from the community about how it should be re-engineered, in terms of both the traffic light management and the design of the corner. This government simply sets up a flashing light saying, 'Turn right with care' and a red light camera thinking that that will solve problems that are inherent in the design of the intersection. Again, no evidence-based action has been taken. The evidence is there. This is a dangerous intersection; people are being injured. The attitude is, 'No, we won't fix it up. It'll get right with a flashing light and a camera.'

When we have fixed up that intersection, we need to move on to the Bains/O'Sullivan Roads intersection with South Road, because that is our next most dangerous intersection and is likely to be adversely affected by the introduction of the Southern Expressway. I could talk about problems with the Southern Expressway, but I will leave that for another time as that will take too long to mention at this stage. It will be good to have some extra transport facility through the Southern Expressway. However, again and again I and other members have been asked, 'Why didn't it go both ways?' and time and again we have to reply that making it go both ways now would just be prohibitively expensive, and we need to look at alternatives to assist people with their transport needs.

Community safety is an issue for the people of Reynell, as it is with others in our community. They also want there to be enough police to be able to respond to their calls. They also want to see that police can be released for training to upgrade their skills in such things as negotiating conflict

resolution and investigation of difficult crimes of sexual assault and abuse.

The complexity of modern life is increasing the call on police. The way so many older people are uncertain about their safety puts more reliance on police to demonstrate that the needs of the older people in the community are being met and that we are developing a generation of younger people who have respect for the law. The police have quite an important role in this, because unfortunately not all families these days are able to demonstrate that their children have respect for community values and community laws.

Another emphasis for our community is that of community sport. We have many community organisations, particularly sporting organisations, that are increasingly stressed by the long hours that so many of their members are required to work and the low income that others receive. This means that often the few are keeping facilities and clubs going, and this is very much to the cost of community spirit and health promotion. We could have so much more value in our community from dollars being spent at the local level on community sport rather than on icons.

In the area of welfare, one of the issues required is financial counselling services. We need sufficient facilities available for people to be able to get support in managing their budgets before they get into deep difficulties and have half their household goods at Cash Converters. They must be able to get ready support in this area so that we engage in problem prevention rather than just having financial counselling as a rescue service.

We need support for our export extension service that the city of Onkaparinga is running. This is a very valuable service that works with local businesses to develop their skills so that they can develop their markets further. It does not matter whether export is interstate or overseas. We are looking to work with the many small businesses in the south to increase their markets and therefore employment. About 80 per cent of the employment in the south is in small businesses, despite the importance to us of places like Mitsubishi, Sola, Kimberly-Clark and Port Stanvac. Small business, which is so vital to us, has the burden of the administration of the GST. We have to look for ways of making it easier for small businesses to grow their services.

Port Stanvac deserves a mention. The fact that it is now nearly three years since the Mobil refinery first approached this government for some council rate relief is appalling. One really wonders about this government's decision making ability when it cannot come to a decision on such an issue—small in one way but large in terms of the impact on the city of Onkaparinga. It is just Mr Magoo running amok when you cannot make a decision on what is happening with the Mobil rates.

We need to continue to support our tourism industry, and one of the most important aspects of that is the protection of our natural resources. The southern beaches are magnificent, but at the moment there is a severe risk to the coastline, and again we are just not getting the support from government to protect our coastline—which means our environment and in particular our tourism potential.

So, Mr Speaker, these are just a few of the issues that come up on a regular basis in the south, areas where the community is looking for action but sees inaction, where it is looking for fairness but sees money going in great big blobs to particular hobby horses of different ministers, and where the community feels that their actions are not being rewarded.

I finish by mentioning the actions of so many volunteers in our community, who this government has yet to recognise need workers compensation protection if they are injured in their voluntary work. This means often that they are not able to undertake their paid work properly. It means that they may incur expenses in managing normal family duties when they are incapacitated. We need this government to really look at what is going on in this community and address the needs of ordinary people and not the needs of a few big businesses or the egos of a few ministers.

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I am delighted to start my contribution before the dinner break and will in all probability conclude my remarks after the dinner break, not that I intend taking my full 20 minutes. In true Labor tradition I am happy to support supply. Unlike the conservatives, we always give our support to supply. However, there are a number of issues in my portfolio areas that I would like to address and in the 10 minute grievance that follows I wish to identify some specific problems at a local electorate level. A number of speakers before me this afternoon have raised some critical issues from a general viewpoint—a macro viewpoint—and also, in some cases, have raised more specific problems that relate to the region and home in on a specific electorate.

I talk not necessarily in any priority order but certainly from the viewpoint of contemporary issues in front of us. One which was today reported in the *Advertiser* and about which I am sure we will hear much more in the ensuing weeks is of course the very sorry, sordid saga with respect to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. If we ever had one particular issue that has been botched from day one by a government, this certainly stands out well and truly above all others when you just go through the analysis of it. The opposition very responsibly has highlighted in the public domain where this government has failed time in, time out; day in, day out when it comes to the fiasco that revolves around the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium.

You, sir, would be well aware, from the important role you played in chairing the Public Works Committee, that there was genuine bipartisan support with regard to stage 1 of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium—never let it be said otherwise. This predated my coming into this chamber, but I am very proud of the role the Labor Party played in giving full support to stage 1. Along with the government we identified the need for a purpose built soccer stadium and I know that you, sir, played an important role in this and were very supportive of it.

There was a degree of debate amongst certain people, whether inside this chamber or beyond it, that we could hold Olympic soccer perhaps at Football Park or Adelaide Oval, but this chamber was united in its support for spending the something like \$8 million to \$9 million initially committed in stage 1 for the building of Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. It was purpose built. We could see the value soccer would get as a sport; we could see the benefits that would come as a result of hosting the Olympic Games soccer and as a result of South Australia playing its part in an international event; we could see the importance of that taking place here in South Australia. Beyond that the wheels have fallen off when it comes to this government and good public policy decisions with respect to some important infrastructure that was to be put into our community.

Let us not hide behind reality or behind the fact that it was being done for soccer because that is simply not the case. This is all about pure political crass grandstanding and this

government really made sure with the way it went about forcing through (and I will not go through all the details because it is on the public record) stage 2 when there was never any need to do it and never any need for us to commit that \$18.2 million for stage 2. Without reservation there is little if any doubt that we were to get our part of the Olympic soccer as a result of the commitment we made with respect to stage 1—that \$8 million or \$9 million we made available for that important piece of infrastructure.

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

Mr WRIGHT: Before the dinner adjournment I was talking about the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, and I think I made the point that this project had received bipartisan support until it reached stage 2 and, of course, that is where matters fell apart. We were very confident, and we have said so from day one, that, as a result of announcing and proceeding with stage 1, South Australia would receive its share of the Olympic Games, which we think was a very important factor and we acknowledge the government's role in that. The government said from day one that stage 2 was required for South Australia to win that bid.

I might say that, apart from geographical reasons, any state that did bid, in fact, did get the games. I am confident that, as a result of stage 1, South Australia would have acquired the same quota as it did receive. Today we read in the *Advertiser* that the government has now moved to the next stage of purchasing the land for \$1.7 million plus, of course, three blocks of land. The Deputy Premier has said that he needs to look at that to give it his imprimatur. Of course, the Deputy Premier has taken over this project from the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, and that is another unanswered question.

We are not quite sure why this matter was taken out of the hands of the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. That matter is something which is still unexplained and which has not been put before either the public or this parliament. A range of issues in relation to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium fiasco still remain unanswered. Suffice to say that I believe that no person in the community would rent a piece of residential property, improve its valuation and then go ahead and buy that property if it intended to improve the property to the magnitude (on a proportionate basis, of course) of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium.

Quite clearly, from day one, the government should have negotiated an arrangement to purchase the property before it undertook the \$30 million worth of taxpayer-funded improvements for this particular project. In addition, we are on the eve of receiving the Auditor-General's findings as a result of a broad-ranging inquiry on a number of issues that have been identified with regard to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. Why the government would want to purchase the land now as we await the judgment of the Auditor-General is well and truly beyond me.

We look forward to that judgment being revealed in the public domain so that we can read the findings of the Auditor-General and analyse a lot of information that, of course, the government has refused to make available. Suffice to say that this has been a very sorry saga from day one. It has been botched, it has been a political exercise and it has been a fiasco; and I believe that a lot of information will still be made available on the public record.

There is another portfolio area about which I will not go into much detail, but I was somewhat amazed that the

Premier, at the Adelaide Cup presentation, took the opportunity to request that he be given speaking rights. To the best of my knowledge, I do not recall that happening in the past. The Premier actually requested—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr WRIGHT: Do not say, 'Oh', because the honourable member just does not know. The Premier requested that he be given the opportunity to speak at that presentation. He used that opportunity for a political exercise to announce that he, on behalf of the government, would advance \$3 million of the money required for the upgrade of the Morphettville racetrack. There are a few points that need to be made about that. That \$3 million is conditional on the sale of the TAB. This is money that the government has foreshadowed as a result of the TAB sale—\$18.5 million will be made available to the racing industry following the TAB sale.

The Premier announced that he intends to forward that money to the racing industry. Of course, not all of that money goes to the thoroughbred section but a big proportion—approximately 70 to 73 per cent—will be made available to that code. That \$3 million being advanced to the racing industry for that particular project, as important as the project is, highlights to me that the government intends to sell the TAB no matter the price. This government is hell-bent on selling the TAB. It will sell the TAB even if it makes a loss. We have already had identified in the public arena that \$18.5 million will be made available up front to the racing industry as a result of the sale of the TAB.

The Minister for Government Enterprises, as a result of probing questions in the parliament, advised that up to \$17.5 million is available for redundancies, and our advice is that the amount could be even more. In addition, of course, something in the vicinity of \$5 million is being made available for consultancies. What we know about this government is that it wants to be rid of the racing industry at all costs. The government sees this industry as the last weight resting on its shoulders. It has corporatised the racing industry in the belief that that will rid the racing industry of any economic and moral pressures on the government.

The twin plank involved there is wanting to sell the TAB. That is the government's last attempt to rid the racing industry of any government responsibility. As you well know, sir, as a former Minister for Racing, that will not stop the racing industry coming to government—quite the opposite. But we see that the Premier has advanced \$3 million to the racing industry, which tells me that the government is going to sell the racing industry no matter the price, and that is a shameful thing. Let the Premier tomorrow deny that and guarantee the taxpayers of South Australia that the government will not sell the TAB with the taxpayers subsidising that sale; because, unless the government can get a bare minimum of at least \$40 million, taxpayers will be subsidising the sale of the TAB.

The TAB makes something of the order of \$60 million annually, \$33 million of which goes to the racing industry and \$27 million to the taxpayers and, sir, as you well know, that is a very handy asset. Of course, we also have control of racing dates and all the other related areas as a result of the TAB being in the hands of the government. I want a commitment from the Premier that he will not sell the TAB at any old price. We know, of course, that the government had to advance by seven days the final bidding process. I think that that concluded, ironically perhaps, on Adelaide Cup day. Let us see, ultimately, what turns out to be. My assessment is that the Premier undertook a political exercise on Adelaide Cup

day and what he is doing, in advancing that \$3 million, is signifying that he is prepared to sell the TAB at any price.

I would also like to touch on something which the parliament has had before it. I will speak only briefly about this matter because I understand that some debate may have occurred in the Legislative Council. It has been the case in recent weeks—and I think this is probably the situation both on the government side and on the opposition side—where the bookmakers league has had cause to make representation to people about an issue relating to the fingerprinting of bookmakers and also in respect of the act which now exists regarding the ABOB (which was the companion bill to the TAB (Disposal) Bill), that, by and large, bookmakers be treated the same as other areas of gambling such as the Casino and other gaming operations.

I might say that I had and still have great sympathy for the argument that was put to me by the bookmakers league, that is, to now introduce a bill which requires existing bookmakers to be fingerprinted and which requires—

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair is of the view that this may be better served in the 10 minute grievance following the second reading contributions. It is off the subject of the debate.

Mr WRIGHT: As you know, sir, I am always happy to take your advice—I hold it in high regard—and I will do so, but it is related to the Supply Bill because the IGA is being funded by the government and, as a result of that legislation, this will require government resources, because not only does it require a commitment from the government from a policy point of view but also in respect—

The SPEAKER: The chair is pleased that the member has made that link and he can proceed now.

Mr WRIGHT: You agree with me?

The SPEAKER: I agree now that you have made that link.

Mr WRIGHT: Thank you, sir. The important point is that it is critical that we do not judge all areas of gambling as being the same. I believe that it is important to realise that there are differences in the different forms of gambling. Some members would—and I am not suggesting that this is the case in this House—like to lump it all together, but that is just not correct. I would like to give some credit, if I may, to the Hon. Angus Redford, who, I understand, has moved an amendment with regard to this issue which has the full support of the Labor Party. If he had not done it, we would have done it.

I fully acknowledge and congratulate him for moving the amendment. It is my understanding that the Legislative Council has amended the bill so that the requirement that existing bookmakers be fingerprinted and all the financial details of their family—spouses, parents and children—need to be trawled through has been removed. I acknowledge and give credit to the work that has been done. It is a sensible amendment and it certainly received the full support of the Labor Party, and we are all the more mature for it. I am sure that the Independent Gambling Authority will fulfil a very important requirement in this broad issue of gambling, but let us ensure that we put things in their right priority and that things do not get out of control.

This was one example in the bill which I think was passed before last Christmas—I am not sure when it was, but about October, November, or thereabouts—and which might have slipped our guard, and I am pleased that it has been brought to the attention of members and rectified. It certainly receives the full support of the Labor Party, and the act will be better for it. I am pleased that that has been rectified and I acknow-

ledge the work that the Hon. Angus Redford has done in that area. Perhaps the Independent Gambling Authority could have a careful look at the debate that has taken place and consider the views of people in this parliament, because it certainly is an issue of civil liberties and concerns many of us both in the House of Assembly and another place. I am pleased that it has been addressed and I hope that the Independent Gambling Authority takes it on its merits.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I would like to canvass a range of issues and begin by saying that, despite all the woes that we hear about, we still live in a fantastic state, with great people, but the challenge is to make it an even greater state. One of our challenges is the ageing population and the need to boost our population, and particularly to encourage and attract younger people back. I therefore welcome the government's initiative in that regard, and I wish it well in trying to attract younger people into the community. That is not to say that older people are without merit—they are certainly not—and I do not think we use the talents of older people to the extent that we could or should.

I believe that the forthcoming budget will be tight. The bonanza from the GST has not emerged, although I have heard some financial commentators suggest that the states are all enjoying huge increases in revenue as a result of transfers from the commonwealth. I do not believe that will be the case, certainly not this year. We will have many challenges, and the government certainly faces many such challenges in respect of the budget in finding adequate moneys and additional moneys for health, education, police and other essential services.

All the areas that I have mentioned need significant extra funding. Schools certainly need a lot of money in terms of capital works. Many of our state schools not only require painting but also significant additional new maintenance, plus extra capital works on many of the sites throughout the state.

I note that the government has announced the employment of 50 extra police. I welcome that, but I wonder what the net difference is between that increase and the numbers that we are losing through natural attrition. The announcement, too, of police being assigned to schools has been a hobbyhorse of mine for a while. I do not know the detail of what is contained in the budget, but I have argued for a long time that, once again, we could learn from the Northern Territory, which has a police officer assigned to a secondary school and who acts as a youth worker, organising camps, doing counselling, talking to young people about drugs, and so on. If it is along those lines, I certainly welcome it, because, as with the Active 8 Cadet Program, it is something that I have been keen to see in place for many years.

I would like to see greater reform of government processes. I was pleased to hear the announcement by the government recently in relation to government being more open and accountable. It is a temptation for any government to slip into bad habits. I look forward with interest to see what the government will do in respect of the freedom of information legislation and being more open and accountable in respect of industry assistance. I have never been against industry assistance. What I have been concerned about is the lack of transparency in the process, and being unable to determine whether or not we are getting value for money. I do not have a problem with properly targeted industry assistance, as long as it is done in an open, transparent and accountable way.

There have been some other good initiatives recently. For example, the biotech support, involving \$12 million over four

years. That is not a lot of money compared to Queensland, which is spending about \$100 million a year, but at least it shows some commitment and it is a start. Over time I would like to see our commitment as a community, and particularly financial support from the government, increased. The reduction in waiting times for dental treatment is welcome, but there is still a long way to go. Many of my constituents raise that as an issue with me. I am pleased something is happening there and making greater use of a co-payment system involving private dentists.

The area in which the government has run into quite a bit of trouble has been the management of projects. I am not sure who is specifically to blame but, if members look at many of our larger projects, they have either gone over budget or have in some way been handled inappropriately. It is something that will cost the government in terms of public support—I believe it already has—but that is an area which needs urgent attention in terms of managing projects more tightly and more carefully.

I noticed recently that the Victorian government has announced a lot of money going into country rail. We do not own the country rail network any more. Victoria is planning to standardise about 70 per cent of its total rail network and provide links from cities such as Mildura to Portland and Ararat, and so on. I think that highlights the sad fact that in South Australia our country rail network was largely dismantled or left in a state which has rendered it useless. There will not be any easy restoration of that network in South Australia, but it is something that the government should be looking to do as far as possible. I am not only talking about the Mount Gambier to Wolsley line but also the Taillem Bend to Loxton line, and so on.

We face a great challenge in this state in terms of energy supplies. I call gas and electricity 'the twins' in relation to energy because the two are closely interconnected. We know that it was not the privatisation of electricity assets per se which caused the problem: it is the fact that there never was, and still is not, a true market operating in which private operators could effectively compete with each other, even if they wanted to, and we do not have enough different entities to compete in the first place. That is an issue that will cause the government enormous grief in the 12 months ahead and I do not believe there is a lot that can be done in the short term to rectify the situation.

Gas as an issue has crept up on this community. I believe the government should have had its eye on this earlier. Santos has enjoyed a virtual monopoly and the sooner we can bring in additional gas, either from the Timor Sea or the Minerva field off Victoria, the better off we will be.

Another issue that interests and concerns me is the number of young people still at risk who have left school early or have been put out of school early. The statistics show those people are at risk of being unemployed for many years. I plead with the government, once again, to put aside extra funding to deal with this issue, to get these young people back on track, to boost their self-esteem, to give them basic skills and to help them back to a career path which will be long term and take them away from the current situation where throughout the metropolitan area literally hundreds of them spend their time hanging around shopping centres or generally being idle. It is not a situation which is good for them and it is not a situation which is good for the wider community.

Following the federal budget, there has been a lot of talk about pensioners and self-funded retirees. I do not wish to take away from either of those categories, but I often feel the

group in the community which is doing it very hard is young families on a low income and with several children, particularly where one of the adult partners does not get paid to work. A lot of these people are struggling and they do not get concessions. I am surprised that many of our institutions and public venues do not offer concessions to assist young families. It is an area in which I would like to see the government get more actively involved.

The government has had for a long time a family impact statement policy. I am not sure what has happened to it, but I think that it is an area which needs urgent and prompt attention—young families on a low income who are struggling in the current economic climate not just because of the GST but also a whole range of other factors, and compounded by petrol prices. I know a lot of these problems are caused by federal issues but, nevertheless, the state government has a responsibility in respect of trying to help young families by taking the burden off them.

I have been concerned in recent times with the progress of the Adelaide City Council. As someone who spent many years in local government, I do not use this opportunity to denigrate local government. I think it would be fair to say that the Adelaide City Council needs to be mindful that the jury is out on its performance, and I think there is concern in the community about some of the snap decisions it makes and some of its spending priorities and other activities. I make that observation, reflecting what I believe is widespread community feeling.

An issue which I have raised on many occasions and which is very difficult for the Minister for Transport is the costly provision of buses for people with disabilities or the frail aged. I am a great supporter of those people—and it is not the result of a decision of the minister—but the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission about six or seven years ago made a ruling that buses had to cater for people in wheelchairs and that the buses had to be what are called 'kneeling buses' that come down to ground level.

As a consequence of that decision, the cost to the taxpayer is enormous and it is not serving the needs of the disabled or the frail aged. The new buses are designed to take two wheelchairs. I have spoken to many bus drivers, some of whom have been driving for three years, and they have told me that they have picked up two people in wheelchairs during that time. I think this issue needs to be re-examined by people from the disability sector and COTA and other experts to see if we can come up with a better solution. At the moment, as a result of providing those two spaces—which is well-intentioned—you are taking out something of the order of six to eight seats from the bus. I am getting complaints from people who say, 'We are not going to stand up on a bus travelling into the city because of the current design arrangements.'

I have spoken to the minister about the issue and written to her on several occasions suggesting that they try to design the buses so that, when there are not wheelchairs on the buses, those areas can be fitted with more comfortable seats for use by passengers. It was a well intentioned initiative and I am sure that the court was well meaning, but it has meant that people in outlying suburbs are travelling on buses which rarely, if at all, carry people in wheelchairs so we have a very inappropriate and counterproductive approach.

As was pointed out to me by Jeff Heath (who would be well known to many members as a prominent person in the community serving those with disabilities), if you cannot get to a bus stop because you do not have wheelchair access and

there is no shelter, then you will not be using the bus in any event. I accept there are certain bus routes where there would be a high incidence of people in wheelchairs—I have no problem with that—but I think this area, including Access Cab vouchers, needs to be looked at. Are we helping the disabled and the frail aged as well as the community with our current and costly approach?

I have been heartened by the support of the Minister for Human Services in relation to men's health. Once again, it is sad that I must qualify this by saying that I am not wishing to take away anything from improving women's health, but men's health is still an area which is lacking support in research, even though there have been some advances in education programs to encourage men to seek medical help much earlier and at an appropriate time. While it is not a total measure of men's health, it is obvious that men on average live five to seven years less than women. Obviously, there is some room for improvement. It was an issue I tried to get accepted as part of Liberal Party policy back in 1993 but I was told that people would laugh if men's health was put in the platform. I am pleased that the current minister is taking this issue seriously.

In regard to taxation reform, some people have taken the view that the GST is as good as it gets. I do not take that view at all. A comprehensive review of taxation needs to take place. The argument that we are over taxed is a half truth. Some people are, but many are not. Many are not paying even a reasonable share of what they should be paying. We need to look at that issue and encourage the federal government to move to reform the taxation system and look at things like bracket creep and some of the deductions. Generally it needs to go beyond just GST and look at the whole taxation package; it needs drastic reform.

I now refer to the matter of the Mobil Oil Refinery, which is important to South Australia and to my electorate, because a lot of the people who work there, including the manager, live in my electorate. I am disappointed that we have not yet seen any indenture brought before parliament, because time is running out. The City of Onkaparinga will be issuing another rate notice shortly, and Mobil will have no alternative but to pay that rate notice. It is a difficult issue for me, because the people who will pay for the shortfall in rates are those in my electorate in the northern part of the City of the Onkaparinga. Under the rate equalisation formula, they are the people who will pay an extra burden if the oil refinery receives a cut in its rates. It is fair and reasonable to argue that the current rates paid by Mobil are high, but the question is: who should compensate the people in the south, and particularly in part of the south; why not the whole state as part of an industry assistance package?

The issue of fruit fly eradication has arisen, and it highlights what has been a concern of mine for a long time. We focus on the spraying, which is important and significant, but we do not pay enough attention to the quarantine provisions. I am pleased that the federal government will spend more money in that area. Even on an interstate basis we need to toughen up and get a lot more vigilant in respect of the morons who bring in fruit that puts our valuable horticultural and domestic fruit production at risk. I cannot understand the mentality of people who think it is smart to smuggle in fruit and put our industries at risk. I urge the Minister for Primary Industries to put adequate resourcing into interstate inspections, including rail travellers, and not just rely on people's goodwill. Most people will do the right thing, but sadly a small percentage of morons do not respond

and have no community commitment at all. Members may have seen a program recently highlighting the unfortunate introduction in Queensland of South American fire ants, which could well render the barbecue and other outside activities inappropriate.

East of Murray Bridge we have a problem with branched broomrape. Most members have probably never heard of it, but it is a very serious threat to our vegetable production, and I note that the government has recently called tenders to take action there. It poses a real threat to our vegetable production areas, as well as our grain growing areas. Even though many of us live in the city, at the end of the day we are all affected by what happens in country areas. It is a very serious matter. I acknowledge that I have relatives who live in that area, and I have seen first-hand the impact on people east of Murray Bridge where properties have been infected by this insidious branched broomrape.

Overall South Australia seems to be a state that will always have to do it tough unless someone can find oil or gas. That should be a challenge for us. We have always been smart, innovative and creative people. We need to continue to believe in ourselves. Importantly, through its resources—and it is not necessarily a matter of more money; it is often a matter of being smarter about things—the government needs to build on the strengths of the people, be open and accountable in terms of their actions. If we can reinvigorate the population profile, we will be able to do a lot to enhance this state and enable it to continue to be the best place to live on this planet.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I would like to comment on what I see as a real differentiator between this current Liberal government and an alternative Labor government, that is, the position on industry development and jobs, which is a central plank for Labor. I want to concentrate on the aspect of skills development, which is one area in which this government has shown itself to be weak. Last week, Labor released a directions statement on industry and innovation. Of course, the details of the initiatives indicated in that announcement will come later towards the election date. However, the proposals outlined were an indication of those to be funded from existing budgets and some fundamental things that need to change in that area of industry support and innovation promotion. There were several planks to the statement:

- an announcement of a dedicated centre for innovation and manufacturing industry and business;
- an establishment of an expert and professional office of investment and trade to improve the quantity and quality of inward investment to South Australia;
- a review of overseas trade offices to eliminate the very sizeable waste and duplication which this government is residing over in that respect;
- the abolition of the Department of Industry and Trade and replacement of it with a leaner and more effective structure involving a number of agencies which are currently duplicating effort (and not very effectively so, I might say); and
- importantly, an integration of skills and work force development into industry development programs to maximise jobs—a focus that this government has totally lost.

Another plank of the statement was an explanation of Labor's goal in working more closely and innovatively with existing industries. As someone who sits on the Industries Development Committee, many times in this parliament I

have said that I have been appalled to learn just how poorly targeted our industries assistance is and how it is inappropriately targeted at existing businesses or businesses coming to the state at the expense of other established industries that could seed many jobs and much economic growth for the state. That totally needs reworking and redirecting. It is appalling that the government has let the situation erode to the extent it has. The waste and failure of this government's industry development policies are indicative of a government which has a philosophy of deregulation, leaving things to business and industry on the premise that by themselves, without direction from government and without any support or facilitation from government, you get the economic outcomes that you want—totally erroneous, of course. However, that is the very real policy of the current Liberal government: the total hands-off, deregulatory approach to industry development and, importantly, also to skills development.

The innovation statement released by the opposition has as its key plank the goal to totally reform the relationship between business, industry and government; to totally remove barriers to innovation set up by this government and to link more effectively the important facets of industry, training and economic development in this state and facilitate the sorts of infrastructure that is needed and should be provided by government in order to achieve both a physical infrastructure development as well as support structures in other ways. It is very important with respect to developing South Australia's economy, and important in that it is the skills development reprioritisation that needs to be done by this government.

I want to concentrate a little on the consequence and the direction that this government's deregulatory approach to skills development is having in South Australia, as well as the difficulty and problems that alarm me and the Labor Party as a consequence of what we see happening. A fundamental principle for Labor is the need for a strong public education system. That may sound very trite but I mention it because we have witnessed a significant attack on public education by conservative governments at both state and federal levels. The attack has come in the form of significant funding cuts, where more than \$180 million of spending on education has been withdrawn over the past three years by the South Australian government alone. The attacks also come in other ways.

Before John Olsen and Dean Brown took over, we had the lowest school drop-out rates in the country, and we now have about the highest. In 1992, a total of 92 per cent of our students finished year 12; the latest figures show that in 1999 only 58 per cent of our public school students finished high school. In the country it is even worse: last year, only 44 per cent of males in rural South Australia finished year 12. The expectation of government once was that we should be the best in the nation on a whole range of measures. Today, the Liberal government stands up in this House and gloats with pride if we even approach the average. This government aspires to be average.

Worse than that, we have a training minister in minister Brindal, who is scathing of our TAFE system. Remember his attack on TAFE in March, when he said that it was overgrown, bloated and lazy. I remind members that he made that statement just one day before he went into negotiations with the federal government to sign up to Dr Kemp's very inadequate ANTA funding deal. In an election year, the best this government was interested in achieving for training growth funds was \$6 million for the next three years.

Indications are that other states will be offered substantially more. How poor an effort that is, and what little interest it has in providing training places for future South Australian students.

Before the Liberals took over, the importance of having a strong TAFE system was agreed. We believed that we had the best TAFE system in the country and we provided national leadership in the implementation of progressive programs and policies. Today, this government places competition in training as its highest priority—and that is not only competition between public and private training providers but also competition between TAFE institutes. This direction is clear in the pitch that accompanies this government's draft bill to corporatise the TAFE system. Under the government's model of corporatisation, the necessary collaboration between institutes that is needed to ensure quality of training in a market as small as South Australia's will take second seat to the drive by institutes to compete against each other.

The pressures on TAFE over the last few years have been enormous, particularly the cut to institute budgets of almost \$10 million which has had a massive impact on student fees, course offerings and student services. The pressure on institutes to undercut each other's tenders in the competition for the diminishing local training dollar will impact on choices about course offerings and levels of student fees. In the draft legislation the government has put forward, it plans to deregulate fees and courses, despite the minister's promises that this would not happen. We need a strong public TAFE system that will offer courses in areas of skills shortage. We do not want our TAFE institutes to become quasi-private providers interested only in offering courses that turn a profit. Under that scenario, the competitive neutrality principles of which the government is so fond will lead to privatisation of our TAFE system.

When all the TAFE institutes in South Australia put together still only amount to the size of a single TAFE college in the western suburbs of Sydney, it makes little sense to take a path that pitches institute against institute. The government says that more competition will lead to increased market share of training funds for TAFE. I say that we need to encourage cooperation between institutes that is necessary in order for South Australian TAFE to attract interstate and overseas training funds.

The government says that privatisation is not its agenda. However, its plans in relation to making institutes pay rent for the publicly owned premises they occupy are very telling. According to the government, TAFE institutes must comply with national competition policy and that, they say, means the removal of any competitive advantage. In other words, the private providers do not have access to publicly funded buildings, so why should the TAFE institutes?

The government brushes off these multimillion-dollar rents as merely accounting practice, saying that institute budgets will be increased to cover them, but that funding for these would be negotiated with the government on an annual basis. According to the government, the purpose is for institutes to identify surplus assets and lease or dispose of them. When I asked about this in parliament, the minister was quick to draw the analogy of the Partnerships 21 local management scheme in public schools. That is interesting because, as schools are slowly discovering, the department is very quick to reclaim surplus space and is strict about not paying for maintenance of it.

Another aspect that schools are discovering is that hallways and other unusable space count towards their entitlement. In any case, who is going to believe a government about sustained increases to TAFE budgets when the evidence over the last three years has been an enormous almost \$10 million budget cut to TAFE institutes—not just to TAFE but to TAFE institutes?

There is a final trend in TAFE, and that is the casualisation of the work force. The conservatives regard casualisation as central to obtaining flexibility, which they say is essential in order to respond to student needs. Increasingly, though, the use of contract and casual employment is being seen by the government as an effective way to cut working conditions and to limit employees' bargaining power. Uncertainty about the continuity of your job does tend to act as a very effective curb on your willingness to protest. Why else would an organisation go to the expense of making dedicated, long-serving and proven employees apply for the same contract or casual position over and over again? The impact on corporate morale is profound, not to mention the impact on private lives.

So why go down this track? Well, apart from competitive neutrality, and according to the government's site, 'it will allow wider representation in decision making, enabling institutes to become more entrepreneurial.' That wider representation is said to include staff and students who are no longer guaranteed representation on the management boards. However, the government claims that this means better access to decision making because previously staff and students only had an advising role with regard to the Director, whereas under the new structure they advise both the Director and the management board. It is like saying to the person who misses out on the job, 'Hey, you're the real winner here; not only do you get to keep your old job but also you get a new boss thrown in for free.'

The government says that the changes will have minimal impact on funding and the costs of delivery. However, this is contradicted in documentation where it is clearly stated that under the new model institutes will be expected to rely less on public funds. This is simply code for an excuse to decrease TAFE funding.

The final reason the government gives for its move down the corporatisation track in this way is that the institutes are dissatisfied with their lack of say at the moment. I can understand this: with the amalgamation of the training department and the Education Department, the subsequent loss of TAFE's voice within the new super department, the absence of a TAFE representative on the important budgetary committees and a heavy focus on the schools sector, it is not surprising that institutes see in the move to corporatisation an opportunity to gain a say in the decision making that affects them.

As one TAFE institute director put to me recently, 'They won't listen to us: perhaps they'll listen to their own appointed boards.' There are, of course, other options to make TAFE stronger in this state. My concern is that the direction in which this government is taking TAFE is one of closing its eyes to the problems in the system and taking a wrong path: a path where it will have little control over what we need to control if we are to effectively develop skills in this state over the offerings of courses.

Deregulation of courses and fees and charging TAFE institutes rent for the use of premises are part of the government's plans, and they are taking our TAFE system down the wrong path. Encouraging competition between TAFE

institutes is the wrong thing to do in a training market as small as South Australia's, forcing concentration on competition between institutes for local training dollars instead of cooperation between institutes in looking towards training moneys that can be attracted from interstate and overseas. That is clearly the wrong direction.

Clearly, given the chance at the next election, the Liberals would look for more opportunities for privatisation and no part of the education sector would be immune. For workers in the education sector, for students and their parents, the coming election will be treated as a referendum on privatisation. From discussions that I have had with students, with parents, with lecturers, with teachers and with other education workers, the answer will be a resounding no to the Liberal government and its policies.

Call it privatisation, corporatisation or anything in between, we have heard this government's promises before. Remember the mess it put us in over its handling of competition and privatisation in the electricity sector? Let us not allow it also to experiment with our TAFE system. We need a strong public TAFE system, not a quasi-private operator; not an empty shell.

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

A quorum having been formed:

Ms BREUER (Giles): Tonight I want to address a number of issues relating to the Supply Bill that particularly affect regional South Australia. I have noted in recent months an incredible amount of money being spent by this government telling us how well we are doing in the regions. There was an eight page lift-out in the *Whyalla News* recently, telling us that it was a bumper year for regional industries.

Yes, exports from regional South Australia are booming; we are leading the way in the state's economic growth and export expansion, and that is why it is important for the regions to be recognised. And yes, many areas are booming, but they are very select pockets of this state. Many more areas are finding that their communities are shrinking; they are finding it very difficult to survive; public services are being pulled out of these regions; and the state government is doing very little for regional development in those areas.

Of course, the panacea for this, for my part of the state particularly, is meant to be the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link. We certainly welcome that, which means jobs for our region. However, the Premier quotes the fact that 40 jobs will be created in Whyalla because of the rail contract that OneSteel has received, but I have to seriously question this. The contract is very important to OneSteel, which is still struggling to establish itself after its formation in recent months. The world market in steel products is very low, and it is feeling the effects of this.

So, the contract is extremely important to OneSteel. But as for the 40 jobs, perhaps there will be transfers from other areas of OneSteel to where the rails are rolled, but the jobs have only really been transferred: they are jobs that have disappeared in certain sections of the plant. There are not 40 new jobs in OneSteel because of this rail contract. The Alice Springs to Darwin rail link is a short-term bandaid solution to an ongoing problem, particularly in my city, the city of Whyalla.

Whyalla has been through a very critical and difficult period and it does not seem to be improving. There seems to be very little concrete support for Whyalla from the state government. We are unable to attract new industry; we are

losing some of our local contractors; we have seen a decline in government services and government departments; and, although they are just a few here and there, they do have a major impact on our city. For example, a review presently being undertaken has the potential to close one or two high schools in Whyalla.

Surely the impact of doing this to our community can be recognised by the Minister for Education. The prospect of having a derelict school in Whyalla in a prime location appals many of us. A couple of years ago, a school was closed at McRitchie Crescent, which is in a prime location in Whyalla. We were promised that the school would be sold or leased because a number of people would be interested. To this date there have been no buyers and the school is falling down, even though it is in a prime location. We are not able to sell it and not able to lease it. Vandals have moved in. I believe that there are young people living in the school as squatters, and the whole place is an absolute mess.

The proposal in Whyalla is that we would probably have one combined school. Such a school would have a population of something like 900 to 1 000 students. To me it is ludicrous to be looking at those sorts of numbers in one school. There are plenty of schools in this state that survive with 100, 200 or 300 students. Closing two of the schools would mean a lack of choice for parents in Whyalla: it would really be public versus private education which, in a city of some 23 000 people, is not on, and quite significant numbers of jobs would be lost by closing a school or two schools. Teachers would disappear, SSO support staff would disappear and, once again, that is quite an impact on any community of our size.

We also have the prospect of a high school being closed, which is one that has been quoted, and it is in a prime location in part of the city where all tourists and visitors constantly go past. If that school were to close and they were not able to sell it—and I cannot see in the current market that they would sell it—the morale in the community would be shocking. The community is being asked to recommend the closure of one or more of these schools and to come up with which schools should close. Why should our community have to make this choice? Let the minister make this decision. Why should we be making the decision? A working party has been investigating the issue but has been unable to come up with a full decision. They have realised the impact on the community of the closure of these schools. They have instead recommended that the minister make the final decision. The minister is the one looking for the school closure: he has the ultimate final say in this process.

What are the reasons for wanting to close one or two of these schools? Is it another experiment or pilot study, which Whyalla has notoriously in the past had to put up with to the detriment of many of our students? Is it for the good of the student community, or is it just to save money for the Education Department? If the working party was forced to make a determination on which school was to close it would be very difficult for it to do so and very divisive for the Whyalla community. The state government should not be removing infrastructure from Whyalla or any country location. Cuts to services that have occurred in country locations, in particular Whyalla, through regionalisation or the withdrawal of a service may save a lot of money for the state government but in the big picture the impact on a community that would lose two, three or maybe 20 staff—20 families therefore—is devastating, particularly when it is not

just one service that disappears but communities lose three or four of their services.

Today in this place we have seen union bashing day: the AWU, the AEU and the PSA have all copped it. Recently the AEU wrote to a number of politicians asking whether they supported improved funding for public education. They pointed out that schools and TAFE have faced constant budgetary pressure during the last eight years the Liberal Government has been in office. They said that the state budget handed down on 25 August 1994 announced budget savings of the order of \$22 million increasing to a total saving of \$40 million in 1996-97. A media statement issued by the minister on that day announced that teacher numbers would be cut by a total of 452. As a consequence, in secondary schools class sizes were increased on an average from 16.5 to 18 students.

In addition, hundreds of school services officers who provided support were taken out of schools. There were changes to eligibility criteria and reductions in the level of School Card payments to students in financial need. In the 1995 budget the Government announced a reduction of a further 100 teaching positions and 250 full-time equivalent SSO positions. Then the 1998-99 education budget announced a three year budget reduction strategy. The reductions were \$29 million in the 1998-99 budget; \$46 million in the 1999-2000 budget and \$69 million in the 2000-01 budget.

I congratulate the AEU on making these points. My father used to say that sometimes the truth hurts, and that is what I think happens with this government and why the AEU cops so much flak. The AEU pointed out the needs. There is an enormous demand for additional education spending across a wide range of priorities, which include class sizes, training and professional development, provision of additional support staff, particularly for special needs students, IT and administrative support in schools, measures to assist in the recruitment of teachers and improved education provision in country regions, including measures to attract and retain new staff. Additional funding is required for TAFE to overcome the extraordinary levels of cuts they have received in the past few years, and also we need to look at the abolition of school fees and major reductions in TAFE fees. What does this government intend to do about this?

One of the problems I have particularly identified in my electorate is an acute shortage of teachers in my part of the state. All the remote schools are having problems getting teachers. There is a shortage particularly of TRTs in Port Augusta and Whyalla, and this is impacting on student learning. It has duty of care implications and it is imposing excessive workloads on staff. The department was alerted to this problem last year by the AEU and some possible solutions were presented, but what strategies has DETE put in place to overcome this problem? None that we can ascertain.

There is also a shortage of PRTs, particularly in Whyalla. The number of PRTs appointed to Whyalla is unacceptably low when compared with other areas. With the shortage of TRTs this places once again a very unacceptable workload on teachers. On top of this a number of PRT vacancies have not been filled, staff on leave have not been replaced and PRTs are appointed to long-term vacancies that have not been filled by other means. Once again this mismanagement and lack of resourcing is impacting on student learning. It has duty of care implications and again imposes excessive workloads on staff.

PRTs are also often being used to fill contract positions and then those positions are not backfilled. A number of PRT vacancies have not been filled, with little effort being made to fill them for the first half of this year. Already schools have not been able to find people to replace staff who are absent due to illness. This growing shortage and perceived inaction by DETE raises the following questions. Why has it not put in place strategies to overcome this growing shortage of TRTs and PRTs? Why were not all PRT positions filled by the start of 2001? Why have PRTs been placed in contract positions in vacancies of greater than 19 days or positions, when they are on leave, that have not been back-filled?

There are two groups of PRTs in country areas, in particular cluster PRTs who are placed for between one and 19 days only. They get a smaller pay loading, only 5 per cent. The maximum distance they are supposed to move from their location is 50 kilometres and they have no overnight stays. Area PRTs get 12 per cent loading—somewhat more. In some areas, particularly in Port Lincoln, they are sending out cluster PRTs to fill the positions that should be filled by the area PRTs. The areas they are going to are far in excess of the 50 kilometres allowed for. This means that the department is getting cheap teachers—cheap labour—and because of the distance and isolation from Adelaide it is getting away with it. Nothing has been done to attract more TRTs. There has been some advertising of PRTs but no strategies to attract those people.

Whyalla's allocation of relief teachers is managed daily from the Whyalla Town Primary School. The TRTs pool is not large for a town with eight junior primary schools and three secondary schools. It will get even smaller as the year progresses and these TRTs pick up contract work. How do the schools overcome these shortages? They have to split classes. They expect staff to exceed their workload limits. Principals and deputies spend most of their time taking reliefs. SSOs are taking classes. Hourly paid instructors are hired, and any professional development is cancelled because they do not have the time to put in. What sort of incentives could be offered to attract TRTs? First, they could get access to government housing, proper induction, professional development and accelerated progression to permanent employment.

Whyalla has some problems with contract appointments, and I have some questions about this. Irregularities in the appointment of contract teachers have been brought to my attention. It seems that contract teachers, as clearly indicated on their appointment slip, have been appointed to fill full-year contracts, only to find their tenure in a school for one term. The AEU has been informed by DETE officers that it was always DETE's intention to place them at another school for the other terms in the year; but why was this not communicated to the teachers in writing? Why did the appointment slip not reflect the placement? How were contract teachers identified to be moved and why were the normal processes not used? How often will these contract teachers be shifted and what process will be used?

I also want to talk about government housing for teachers. On 8 March this year, the AEU wrote to Minister Kerin pointing out that, since 1994, 717 properties have been sold by the Real Estate Management. The number of houses in the pool has now dropped to 1 800. The money from the sale of houses has been used to retire debt with little reinvestment in the assets. In the Pirie district, housing is old and does not meet the needs of the teachers in that area, especially in the case of those teachers with families.

Port Pirie is also facing a shortage of housing. There are not enough houses to go around and that is as a result of the sales through the 1990s with no replacements. The minister's response was that a consultant has been engaged to look at housing standards in the next few months. Is this a ruse so that nothing will be done until after the next election?

The policy of selling houses without reinvestment is unsustainable and unacceptable. It leaves a pool of low value, less desirable homes with no income source to permit a replacement program. If the government continues with this policy, government employees will find a deteriorating standard of housing and a growing gap between community expectations for housing and that which the REM provides.

Clearly, the government needs to budget for a capital investment program to eliminate ageing and substandard housing. I received a letter, which I have discussed with the AEU, asking for my support to gain improvements in housing for public sector employees, and particularly teachers. Housing is seen by many government employees in country South Australia as one of the most important factors in attracting and retaining staff. For example, Coober Pedy has 1960-style housing: weatherboard houses that do not suit the climate or the current expectations of tenants, and most of the housing is above ground.

The houses in Whyalla are old, small in size for families (because they are the old Housing Trust style), and the locations are often in the client area, where students reside, and this can create problems for teachers. Getting any maintenance carried out on housing located in the Far North is a real concern. Security upgrades are needed with funds provided to enable this to happen sooner rather than later. What is happening in these areas in my part of the state is that good money is being thrown after bad. We need new housing to be built to escape the maintenance cycle that is occurring in those areas.

New houses need to be purchased to encourage teachers to feel comfortable and happy with their surroundings. Of course, housing for teachers in the Aboriginal lands defies discussion. Education is of vital importance in country regions. Students do not have access to the same opportunities as do metropolitan students; so, it is important that teachers' morale be maintained and standards kept. It is very difficult for teachers under these circumstances.

This minister knocks the AEU at every opportunity. I say, 'Thank you' to the AEU. It is very important that it does speak out about these issues; otherwise, the country, the regions and remote South Australia will be ignored. Classic examples of what is happening can be seen in the Aboriginal lands, which are so remote from this area.

People living in regional and remote South Australia believe that this government has turned its back on them. Regional development is seen as applying only to certain very rich areas in this state. The Alice Springs to Darwin rail link is not the answer to our prayers, despite what the Premier tells us. The issues with respect to country schools, staffing and housing have impacts on whole communities, and this government will need to answer to those communities on election day.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I move:

That the House note grievances.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): Only at the request of our deputy whip am I rising tonight to speak in the grievance debate because of the worth that she knew I could contribute to the sum knowledge of this House. She may regret it!

I want to talk a little about the media and also about the issue of what the media correctly describes as a growing cynicism of the political process in this country by the people of this country where they distrust the words spoken by their political leaders, and it does not matter what political party it concerns. The media is very quick to criticise the politicians—the political leaders—for this cynicism by saying that people are tired of hearing well worn clichés.

People are tired of being told what is wrong, but when it comes to what is necessary to solve a particular problem a great deal of deliberate confusion is thrown into the air to try not to mention the words ‘tax’, ‘impost’, or anything of that nature because it is considered that it would worry the punters, so to speak. Of course, the media have a great deal of responsibility in this area.

We do not have a free and democratic press in this country. We have a print media controlled by two media barons: the Packer family and the Murdoch family, and they will print whatever suits their own political interests and, more particularly, what is in the interest of their own personal hip pocket, irrespective of the public interest. It does not matter how many politicians from either side of politics tug their forelock at Rupert Murdoch or Kerry Packer: they will do precisely what they have always done, that is, take decisions and give prominence to news stories, and the like, that favour their personal financial interests over those of the Australian people. That is a given. Whilst we have cross-media ownership laws, that still does not prevent the Murdoch empire from controlling large slabs of the print and electronic media in this country.

Quite frankly, in terms of the Murdoch and Packer empires, they are both extremely wealthy families and men, and they will not support policies that require them to dip further into their pocket to help the less well off in our society and, if any government or party sought to do that or advocated such policies, they would be quick to condemn them. So, is it any wonder that all major political parties in this country, state and federal, deliberately hedge around the issue of how various election promises will be funded.

We saw what happened to Labor Senator Conroy last week when he made a statement (which I did not think was anything out of the ordinary) about if Labor is to carry out its policies federally it will either have to cut programs or raise taxes in some areas; not an exceptional statement, but deliberately blown out by the media hungry to distort whatever the truth may be to suit their own particular circumstance.

Let us be very clear about it: we require the expenditure of vast amounts of money in this country if we are to continue to be on the first rung of nations in the 21st century, whether it be in public education, public health, the renewal of our basic infrastructure or the remediation of our Murray-Darling Basin—the very lifeblood of this state, the Murray River. Billions and billions of dollars will be required, and we will not pay for it simply by cutting government expenditure on the advertising of programs.

Now the fact is that in terms of the public debate on this issue there should be a far greater level of mature debate about ensuring that we make laws and enforce those laws to make sure that the people who have the greatest capacity, and ought by right to contribute the most according to their

earnings to the good governance of this country, pay their fair share. The tax dodges and tax minimisation schemes that are taken advantage of by some of the very wealthy and by private companies which exploit tax loopholes and which threaten to set up their head offices offshore in tax havens and the like to avoid their responsibilities towards the Australian community have to be tackled.

It is not something that we in Australia can necessarily do on our own. Global capital moves far quicker. The press of a button on a computer can see billions of dollars exit this country within nanoseconds without tax being paid, and we and other nations in the developed world have to secure our tax base. It will be very hard to accomplish any sort of uniformity in respect of action on a global basis, but let us also recognise that at a national and state level there is a great deal we can do to shore up our own tax base, not to increase taxes necessarily, but to ensure that the spirit of our taxation laws is observed and enforced and people who should pay the required tax rates actually do so; because if we do not do it, we cannot tackle the great issues of this country such as the growing divide between rich and poor and the fact that our public housing is in a state of decay—worse interstate.

We all know just with regard to the simple things, such as the infrastructure required for sewerage, stormwater and the environment, that billions of dollars of public infrastructure expense are required and, as much as we might like to try to ignore that absolute fact of life, we cannot keep trying to fool the people. The public understand only too well that, at the end of the day, if the community as a whole wants certain minimum standards of a world class nation in the 21st century to continue, there is a price and we have to apply it, but they want it to apply fairly. They want to make sure that the Murdochs and the Packers of this world pay their fair share.

I always worry when the Murdoch press supports the Labor Party to win government, because they only support the Labor Party to win government when they know it will win anyway, and then they claim that we only won because they supported us, so that we will not interfere with their domination of media outlets. They will not support the Labor Party when they feel that they might be right but they are on the nose politically, or when it is against their financial interests. In terms of the media—and I know this is an exaggeration—in the old Soviet Union there were two newspapers in Moscow, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and in South Australia now we only have the *Advertiser* and it is becoming a more tawdry old rag every day.

Time expired

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): Tonight I would like to make a contribution on a local issue. This is a fairly sensitive issue to say the least and an issue that has been ongoing for some period. I refer to something which was detected in the West Lakes area some time ago; that is, the finding of cadmium in the soil. This came as a major shock not only to local residents but to the broader community and there has been a range of activity since that finding. I do not think that it was particularly well handled by the government from the outset. It had been known within some realms of government, and as a result of a press release and an announcement by the appropriate ministers—the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Human Services—this came into the public domain near enough to 12 months ago, but it is important that people realise that this issue is ongoing.

I deliberately draw that to the attention of the chamber tonight. The problem has not gone away. It is my understanding that cabinet is being kept up to date with this particular issue and so it should be. It is a critical issue; it is a sensitive issue; and it is a very important issue. The issue remains unresolved and it is important that we realise that. I understand that, ultimately, we may well be looking at a cabinet submission, and I hope that that cabinet submission (which may well have to be taken to cabinet perhaps jointly by the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Human Services) resolves a number of the existing problems and issues.

I might say as a local member of parliament that this is probably the most critical issue with which I have had to deal with since being elected. I feel somewhat constrained with this issue because different people in the community have a whole range of concerns. Clearly the most critical issue is health and, I hasten to add, the environment. Added to that—and some people put this at a higher value—are concerns about what this issue will do to property values. We must be mindful of that, and certainly as the local member I must also be mindful of it. Needless to say, there are implications for government. It is important that we get an early commitment from government as to what it is prepared and willing to do.

It has been a fairly long, drawn out process. There have been a lot of meetings, and the West Lakes consultative committee, which is an elected body representing the broader community, has been working with the EPA and DHS. However, it is my belief that that now needs to be all drawn together. We need to get a recommendation before cabinet and we need to get a commitment from government. We need to know that action will be taken.

It is important that the residents and the West Lakes Consultative Committee that is representing the broad cross-section of residents do know, and are made aware of, what will take place here, what the recommendations are, what the action will be and what the will of government will be. It is probably fair to say that debate still needs to take place as to which is the best way to proceed, but that debate has been going on for some time now and that debate can only go on for a set time. I think we are approaching the climax of that debate. We need recommendations that will advance this matter. We need to know that there is a political will to fix these problems. We need to be aware of the time lines that exist in relation to how these problems will be addressed.

These problems cut across government. Certainly, two ministers have been and need to be involved, with regard to this particular issue. I do not know whether there will be a lead minister or a joint submission from the two ministers, but it is critical. Obviously, it needs to be handled with care and I would not ask that it be rushed. It is important that we draw all this together. This matter has been dragging on for some 12 months. There is an expectation within the community to see some cogent action and tangible results from the debate, the deliberations and the meetings that have taken place between the West Lakes Consultative Committee, the EPA and the Department of Human Services.

We expect government to take a step forward. There must be some real action and some tangible results. It now must be driven forward. It is important that this debate is progressed. It cannot drag on indefinitely because that will not solve the problem. We need to be about finding solutions. The problem needs to be addressed in a responsible, meaningful way. I might say that the local community has handled this delicate issue very responsibly. The West Lakes Consultative

Committee has acted in a very professional way and represented a broad cross-section of the community. Initially, I think 20 to 25 members, including myself, were part of the committee. We have been meeting on a regular basis with EPA and DHS trying to drive the issues forward.

Our most recent meeting was a subcommittee of that group that met with representatives from government and I would hope that we are getting to the stage where something will go before cabinet so that some recommendations come out of cabinet as to how we will drive this issue forward. Some recommendations have been put forward to the department by the West Lakes Consultative Committee. It is my understanding that they are being processed and that an initial recommendation by government is now being reviewed as a result of recommendations put forward by the West Lakes Consultative Committee. That certainly is the way to go.

We are pleased that those recommendations are being taken account of, and we would hope that in the very near future a draft document will be put before the committee for its consideration. Undoubtedly, the problem does have some budgetary implications. I think it will require specific recommendations with some budgetary lines attached to it and that some work will need to be undertaken in the community. It is important that the government moves forward on this particular issue, which is a major one in the region and particularly the West Lakes community. It is something that has been handled responsibly and professionally by local residents. I think for that commonsense to now continue and to prevail within the community we need to have some results and some indication from government as to how it will now move this issue forward.

We cannot maintain the status quo and continue in the same situation that has existed for a number of months. It is important that we do move forward. Personally, I think this has dragged on for too long. I think it is important that the government now gives an indication to the West Lakes Consultative Committee and local residents, who are being represented by that committee, as to what the next stage will be, what the next step will be and how the government will drive this issue forward. It will require some government action; it will require government expenditure; and it will require some commitment from government to drive this issue forward. Failure to do so will see this issue finish in the courts and that will be no good for the local community; it will be no good for the broader population; and it will be no good for the government of South Australia as well. The government needs to take control of this issue and to show its hand, some leadership, responsibility and direction. We await that event.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): I endorse the remarks of my colleague the member for Lee. We both come from the western suburbs and our electorates are jam-packed full of foundries and factories that either pollute or disrupt our local residents as a result of their activities, involving air and noise pollution. The matter at West Lakes is more severe than that affecting my electorate but, nevertheless, it is just as dangerous and terrible. It is a problem for government, which must deal with industry located within residential areas. It is a serious problem which must be dealt with sensibly. A lot of emotion is involved and there are a lot of angry residents—and they are entitled to be angry. As a government, the one thing it should be guaranteeing is people's safety in their home from pollution. I feel strongly about this issue.

The first issue I wish to address is the latest outburst by the Minister for Transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) about prostitution not being legalised; how it was a disgrace and how upset she was. Well, people in my electorate were not upset at all. People in my electorate were not hurt, they were not devastated and they did not feel betrayed. They did not feel that they had missed out on a one in 10 year opportunity to change the world. People like Ms Laidlaw, who live in leafy North Adelaide surrounded by beautiful trees and high fences, forget that people in Thebarton, Torrensville, Mile End, Brooklyn Park and Underdale are having to put up with brothels in the electorate because police are not policing the problem properly—yet we have people like Ms Laidlaw saying it should be legalised.

One former Liberal MP in another place (Bernice Pfitzner) called for Mile End to be made a red light district; now the Hon. Diana Laidlaw is saying that we have missed out on a huge opportunity to legalise brothels. I say to Ms Laidlaw, who has the comfort of her home in North Adelaide, that those of us who live in the western suburbs do not like the idea of having a brothel next-door to us. We live in suburbs—neighbourhoods and communities—that are well maintained. We do not deserve to have all the brothels of Adelaide lumped into one area simply because Ms Laidlaw thinks that her swansong in this parliament should be the legalisation of prostitution.

Someone of her station in life, as it were, with her opinions of people who live in the western suburbs, thinks that people will not mind where we put brothels as long as it is not in North Adelaide; as long as it is not next to her home, then it is fine. The one place where there will not be brothels is in Ms Laidlaw's street—and that is simply because they cannot afford the rent or to buy the property. Where do legalised brothels go? They go in Labor electorates because, unfortunately, the rents are cheaper, there is a larger mix of industry and residential areas together and there are a lot of vacant places for rent which attract these sorts of people. I am shocked that Ms Laidlaw would think this way about brothels.

I want to change the subject and talk about the ever escalating crime rates in the western suburbs. Crime has been on the increase for the last seven years.

Mr Clarke: How long have you been a member?

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Four years. I believe the member for Ross Smith has been in this House for eight years—

Mr Clarke: Seven.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Maybe there's a correlation there somewhere, but I don't think so. Since the government has been in office, every year except for two years the government has decreased the number of police officers on the street and has not recruited against attrition. Surprise, surprise, those two years in which it has recruited to meet attrition have been elections years—1997 and this year. The public of South Australia will not be fooled.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Let me finish!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Scalzi): Order! I should be hearing the honourable member only.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I will get to you in a minute, Gunny. The idea that this government is tough on crime is a joke. The idea that this government takes crime seriously is laughable. This government has closed more police stations than any Labor government has ever tried to. This government has opened up shop-front police stations but they are not open. If you ring them up, no-one answers the phone because

they are inundated and overworked. Patrol cars are not able to respond as quickly as they used to because this government has shut down local police stations. It has massive police stations, but the response time is getting worse because police officers must travel further in order to do their patrols. The paperwork that police officers are forced to do is making them spend more time in their office rather than on patrol.

I believe that Labor will reprioritise police work and where our money is being spent. I do not believe, however, that we will need to increase taxes to do that, because we will get our priorities right. We will not spend the massive amounts on advertising as this government is doing. Earlier I heard a member remark, 'You can't just simply pull back on advertising; that's not enough.' I say to that member—and I am not quite sure who it was—that the federal government is now spending \$1 billion on advertising per year. It is the largest advertiser in Australia. It outspends Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Coles and Woolworths. It even spends more on advertising than Channel 7. That is amazing: \$1 billion. If members in this place think we cannot redirect that \$1 billion into public programs which will benefit the people who need it the most, perhaps they should get out their calculator. The sum of \$1 billion being spent on selling the government's tax package is a disgrace.

We have now seen this government think, 'This is not a bad idea; we will start spending taxpayers' money on advertising as well.' The people of South Australia will not buy it. Members opposite can get out there and buy television advertising to sell the Liberal Party with taxpayers' money, but people will remember it. The government claims to have secured the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link on its own. However, people will remember that they have used taxpayers' money to sell themselves. They will also remember that they are paying Tim Fischer—a former Deputy Prime Minister with a massive superannuation fund—\$2 000 a day, for two minutes a day (two minute Tim), to come here and sell—

An honourable member: Groceries.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS:—groceries for us. I return to the member for Stuart, who is soon to be retired. I know he is looking forward to it. He has bought a new tractor, and he is gearing up to look after his farm. One thing this government will not escape is the forgotten country. Country people are hurting, and this government is not listening. This government has all its priorities wrong. One member of parliament in particular is not listening, and his constituents' complaints are falling on deaf ears—and that is the member for Stuart.

Our candidate Justin Jarvis is doing an excellent job in Stuart. The responses that he is getting are amazing. Justin Jarvis is more of a household name in Stuart than is one G. Gunn. But that is okay. It has always been the case; he has always been lucky. He has only ever had one real challenge to his seat, and that was last time. That was underfunded and underresourced.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, Ben Brown did a good job. It is too bad he didn't want it again. We have an excellent candidate there now, and he will do a great job. I am sure that the member for Stuart will be sorely missed from this Chamber once he has departed.

The last issue I want to talk about is Adelaide Airport. This Premier has promised over and over again to get the terminal upgrade happening. It is not. Our airport makes us the laughing stock of this nation. Residents are being left behind with noise protection. Consumers are already paying the levy,

but no work has been done on the terminal. This Premier talks about flying interstate and banging heads together. How about he stay in Adelaide once in a while, talk to the two airlines involved and bang their heads together so that we can start construction and get some development going in the western suburbs? It is okay to talk about things, but it is about time he started doing things. He calls himself Action Man. It is about time the Premier got out there and started doing something. I feel sad for the Adelaide Airport owners because they have invested a lot of money. The airport terminal should go ahead. However, for some reason this government does not think it as important as its other objectives.

Time expired.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): First, I wish to applaud Mr Duncan Kerr, a member of the federal parliament, for his very recently published *Elect the Ambassador*, which is available through Pluto Press. In his book, Mr Kerr contains a powerful argument for democratisation of the forces which might constrain global capital with the ever-increasing power that the forces of global capital seem to have by means of the process known as globalisation.

The book acknowledges the reality of globalisation while seeking to encourage a democratic response to it through our own national government and various non-government organisations, including the United Nations. For a further exposition of the ideas in the book, I will simply refer to the contribution made earlier this evening by Mr Clark, the member for Ross Smith.

Secondly, I refer to the federal budget which was brought down very recently. In a way, it was a peculiar budget. It was a very cynical and deceitful budget. It pretty well emptied the coffers of the federal Treasury such that if a Labor government is elected toward the end of this year—as we expect it will—it will be heavily constrained. That is worth mentioning in this parliament, because the South Australian parliamentary Labor Party is likely to face a very similar position when we come into office later this year or, under the protest of the people, if Mr Olsen, the Premier, goes early next year we may have to wait until then.

The budget was also deceitful because at first blush it offered so much to older people. It seemed to offer tax cuts. It had a promise of a one-off vote buying offer of \$300 for old age pensioners. It was only after a few days when one was able to read the fine print did one realise that these goodies were not for everybody; in particular, the tax cuts of up to several thousand per year were available only to a limited subset of older Australians and self-funded retirees. In round figures, to get the benefit from it, a household needed an income of about \$40 000 a year. So, you would need about \$500 000 in savings to be able to get the benefit of the federal government's handing back of money to older people in this federal budget. Of course, that places the average Australian right out of the picture. It was yet another example of the federal government redistributing wealth to those who already have it. It did it with the GST, and now it has done it in this federal budget with its package of benefits for wealthier self-funded retirees in the older age bracket.

As far as the \$300 vote buying exercise is concerned, it is an insult to those pensioners who were promised \$1 000 compensation for the GST by the Prime Minister, John Howard. That promise was broken. The way the \$1 000 deal was implemented last year was to give the \$1 000 compensation to those who had sufficient money in the bank; those with less money in the bank got less. So, it was a purely

regressive measure, which was completely against the Australian spirit of a fair go, and it left a lot of people in my electorate insulted and feeling cheated.

Many enraged pensioners came to my electorate office with notices they had received from Centrelink, which said that their account was to be credited with \$1. Bearing in mind the postage involved in sending out the notice, it really was an insult. These were people who clearly remembered the Prime Minister's promise that pensioners would receive \$1 000 to supplement the blow of the GST. So, the fact that these people might now be credited with \$300 and the thought that their votes can be bought for a paltry fraction of what was originally promised by the Prime Minister and his government is offensive. That is why I call it an insulting and deceitful federal budget.

Curiously, it was also a politically defensive budget because it was designed to shore up the primary vote of people known to vote Liberal in any case. Historically, that older age group—particularly self-funded retirees—is known to support the Tory side of politics, at least by the time they get to that age. The Howard government has benefited the wealthier of that group. I do not believe it will switch groups from the social democratic party to the conservative party. I acknowledge that it might boost the Liberal Party's primary vote by getting back some of the people who might have been inclined to vote for a minor party because they just could not stomach voting for the Liberals after being whacked over the head with the GST, the decisions on petrol pricing, and a host of other issues. I found it a curiously defensive budget in political terms. No doubt, a grab bag of promises will be released immediately before the federal election, which is due later this year.

Regardless of the budget, these days the voting public is becoming increasingly cynical and sophisticated. I am sure they will not be bought off—whether it is the self-funded retirees or the majority of people in the community—by these blatant vote buying exercises. I know the Labor Party has been guilty of these practices in the past, but we certainly are seeing a prime example of it with the federal budget delivered last week. No doubt, we will see it in the state budget to be delivered this week.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): During the course of this legislation, we are appropriating \$400 million for the state government to continue to provide services to the people of South Australia. Very often those services are taken for granted by most of the community. The argument seems to be about what else we could get as opposed to what we are getting; that is, rearranging the priorities or, more particularly, how we could expand the size of the cake.

My remarks tonight are directed to both those matters because I think we can do better than we have done. Let me say at the outset that our fortunes as a people and as a nation depend largely upon our capacity to produce goods and services that we can sell competitively not only within our shores but also to the world market. Because of the size of our markets, we must not overrate the levels of prosperity the Australian community can achieve by servicing the demand that spontaneously arises from this sparsely populated continent; we must find markets overseas. I have always recognised that point and have done whatever I can to ensure that other South Australians have understood it, whether they have lived in my electorate or elsewhere.

We are particularly cursed in South Australia with the problem arising from a small local market in that it does not

enable home grown firms—South Australian based—to establish themselves in a market with a sufficient economy of scale to compete with their interstate counterparts should the market they are supplying begin to look lucrative to a firm engaged in a similar kind of enterprise interstate. That firm can merely take a cut in the price that it will sell to its market locally, which, nonetheless, leaves it with its ability to recover all its fixed costs—costs fixed per unit output—and then make a contribution to the variable costs, which are fixed on a per annum or over-time basis.

If we do not export, we cannot expect to expand our job opportunities. It does not matter which government of the day is in office but it does matter whether they focus attention upon this problem. South Australia will continue to hang around in the doldrums unless the environment in which those firms operate is properly serviced by the so-called utility services, such as water supply, electricity and gas, which are the essentials of any business base or household. If our cost of living is adversely affected by any one of those things, people will naturally seek higher pay so that they can afford to live in the manner in which they believe their contribution to society entitles them.

I have noticed over recent decades—in fact since I have been in parliament—that public servants who are secure in their employment—not those on contracts in the middle or lower order but those who are permanently appointed—regard the work they do in the 37½ hours they put in at the office as adequate to compensate the community for what they have received by way of recompense. I am equally sure that, while they conscientiously believe that is true, they could all do better for this state if they so chose; in consequence, the state would be better off because the more we do today the better off we will be as a community at large and the further we progress tomorrow and the next day. It is about competition with other people striving to do the same.

In addition, policy introduced by the government of the day must enhance the incentive for existing firms to expand their business or new firms to spring up. We all saw South Australia's business base stripped during the 1980s in consequence of the ill-advised policies pursued by Hawke and Keating, as his Treasurer, when they were in office. They allowed small companies, especially small public companies, to report their assets at replacement cost value on the balance sheet. In South Australia, a large number of more conservative, longer-standing firms supplying high quality goods and services into the market place were then left in competition with people interstate who were able to borrow against the inflated, by comparison, value of the same assets in their balance sheet; if they were not the same, then similar. So, two firms with an almost identical work force, real estate value and investment in capital assets such as the machinery that might be involved in producing the widgets they sold to the market place, with one reporting its balance sheet and asset value on historical written down cost and the other reporting on replacement cost enabled the latter (the one reporting replacement cost on the balance sheet) to borrow from the banks against the value of those assets.

In doing so, they could buy out their South Australian competitors, which they did wholesale. They bought out those assets, took the brand names away from the factories that had been producing them for decades, if not over a century, shifted them to their own bases back in the east or wherever else they took them, sacked the South Australian staff and sold off the equipment and the real estate, depressing the

value of such equipment and real estate in general here in South Australia as a consequence.

And the Labor Party in office sat on its hands and allowed that to happen in this state, and said nothing in Canberra and nothing publicly about what I consider to be the improper if not immoral practice that was then permitted, which we now no longer permit, or about the consequences for our smaller regional economy. If we are to rebuild that economy, we must now provide the incentive for small firms—not these ruddy great big back office operations that can be moved within a week or two.

I noted the question asked today by the member for Wright about Westpac. It is a fact that Westpac could outsource and alter its back office operation in a matter of 10 to 12 days, and what we spent on bringing those jobs to South Australia is a dead loss and a sunk cost on our taxpayers. If we continue to appropriate funds to support business of that kind, then we have not even got rocks in our head: it is worse than that—we have a complete vacuum there in that we have failed to understand that these jobs are very transportable.

The kinds of firms that we need to be encouraging and the sorts of enterprises in which they should be engaged are those that are producing not so much services, unless it is education services or high quality surgery services to people who come in here to use them from overseas if not from interstate, but more particularly the base resources needed to underpin an economy. We do not have, for instance, a small mining industry in this state. The minister has picked up on remarks that I have made about that over recent months since he became the minister, and I commend him for it, but the government is still doing nothing about it.

We would have 20 000 more jobs in this state's economy if we had the same level of employment in the small mining enterprise sector that they have in Queensland or Western Australia. That is one area in which we can improve. Equally, in other areas of excellence, that small job loss where small parts of machinery are needed to be made, we can do that and do it well. The small foundry that shifted from Mount Barker to Murray Bridge, for instance, does that with exceptional and outstanding results.

We need to encourage similar firms to do likewise if we are to rebuild the head office base in South Australia, because it will be on the reputation of their brand names that they will be able to survive. It is fortunate that Coopers is owned by the family, for I am sure it would otherwise not have survived as long as it has, given the fact that we have now lost our other breweries to multinationals based interstate or offshore in New Zealand. I am surprised that the government has not understood these basic economic truths that cannot be escaped, and the policy would be better if they pursued it on that basis.

Ms BREUER (Giles): I want to speak briefly tonight because I think it is important for me to speak this week—

The SPEAKER: Order! I am sorry to intervene: could I just say to members of the gallery that photographs are absolutely not permitted. The member for Giles.

Ms BREUER: It is important for me to speak this week and to point out that it is one year this week since that tragic plane accident which occurred last year in Whyalla on 31 May and which claimed eight lives. There will be a memorial service on Thursday evening in Whyalla that is due to finish at 7.04, the time when the plane went down. In many ways, that plane crash and tragedy changed our community. It certainly made us realise that we are a small community and

that we appreciate each other and what we have as a smaller community much more.

We appreciate our volunteer and emergency services and the role they played in the rescue of the aircraft and in searching for the victims of the crash. We in Whyalla have got on with our lives, but I wonder about the families of the victims and whether they have been able to get on with theirs. It has been easy for our community to move on. We will never forget, but we have certainly moved on.

But for the families that were involved—the sons and daughters who lost a parent (or two parents, in the case of the Olsen children), the partners who lost a beloved spouse, the parents who lost a son or daughter—their lives were touched and changed forever by this tragic accident and, as this sad anniversary approaches, their grief must be unbearable. My thoughts and those of my community are with those people.

I mentioned the role of the emergency services, and again I pay tribute to them and the work they do in all our communities, but particularly in regional South Australia. Last week I was pleased to attend a presentation by the Minister for Emergency Services of a new fire engine to the Whyalla fire service. I particularly want to pay tribute to those people who, as volunteers, risk their lives on every occasion on which they go out to fight fires in Whyalla.

To chief officer Wayne Haynes I say thank you, and extend my congratulations to him and his staff for all the efforts they make in Whyalla, and a special thank you to them for my ride in the new vehicle last week, which was a dream come true—to ride in a bright, shiny, red fire engine. I also want to mention tonight Ric Santucci, whom I spoke of last year in paying tribute to the volunteers who assisted in the search procedures after the accident. Ric Santucci, who was the SES controller for many years in Whyalla, recently resigned. He did a wonderful job in those years and we will miss him, but I offer him my congratulations and good wishes in his new role, as he was elected as an area councillor in the Whyalla council last week.

On Friday I am opening the Joan Gibbons Neighbourhood House in Whyalla, which is a great honour for me. This is a tribute to Joan, who was a victim of the plane crash and who spent many years in community service in Whyalla operating the neighbourhood house, a community centre where people in Whyalla could go and seek assistance if they needed it. She worked in this centre for many years on very little pay. It became a full-time commitment to her, and she helped thousands of women and men in our Whyalla community. It is a fitting tribute to a wonderful lady, so I look forward to opening that house on Friday.

I have heard so many other stories about victims of that accident, similar stories of community work and community involvement, and they all appear to have been very special people. It is very easy after a tragedy or a death to say nice things about people but, in the case of those involved in the accident, there seems to be special mention made of them and an acknowledgment of the sorts of lives they led, what they did for their communities and what wonderful family people they were.

The Whyalla Airlines tragedy shocked this nation and, above any other accident in recent years, raised the nation's awareness of air safety and the importance of our air safety organisations. The results of the investigations have not been finalised, so we still do not know the cause of the accident. Whatever is found will certainly give no comfort to the families of those victims, and I hope that this week this parliament and this state will share in my thoughts and my community's thoughts for the families of those people who died on 31 May last year.

Motion carried.

Bill taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.39 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 30 May at 2 p.m.