

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 5 June 2001

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

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (GAMBLING
REGULATION No. 1) BILL**

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, intimated the Governor's assent to the bill.

FIREWORKS

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

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that 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 102, 104, 105, 106, 109 and 113.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Mr CONLON** (25 October 2000).

The **Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE**: Mr Von Stiegler is not an employee of SA Water. The company of which Mr Von Stiegler is a principal, Manggih Rahayu Wisanti (MRW) is contracted to provide services to SA Water in Indonesia. The engagement of the company, MRW, was executed by Mr Ted Phipps, who was the then Chief Executive of SA Water.

Mr Von Stiegler was specifically engaged because of his unique cross-cultural skills and detailed understanding of Indonesian politics and administration. In his engagement through MRW, the position description was as follows:

- Rates Government priorities and advises on appropriate projects for sponsoring by SA Water and the South Australian industry.
- Oversees the Indonesian casual employees working to secure water and wastewater projects on behalf of SA Water and therefore the South Australian industry.
- Advises on project team structures and membership from an Indonesian perspective.
- Advises on management and funding systems in Indonesia for infrastructure projects undertaken by SA Water Corporation.
- Advises on political and commercial matters of minimum risk on behalf of the Corporation.
- Ensures SA Water procedures and practices comply with the Republic of Indonesia's political and commercial laws, rules and regulations.
- Liaises with SA Water representatives to ensure a coordinated approach to infrastructure programs.

In addition to providing these specific support programs to SA Water, MRW provides:

- Invaluable assistance to the Corporation by way of extensive knowledge of the Government and political processes in Indonesia in dealing with the commercial, political and financial aspects which are part of major infrastructure development works in water and wastewater.
- Assistance enabling bridging of relationships between South Australia and the Government of West Java, and provides very valuable advice to the Corporation on the management of such relationships because Mr Von Stiegler is well known in the community and is able to facilitate appropriate introductions, in accordance with Indonesian cultural sensitivities.
- The identification and investigation of water and wastewater infrastructure opportunities in Asia, and subsequently their transfer to the South Australian private sector, which result in

increased employment and exports for the state of South Australia.

Mr Von Stiegler has been a key player in establishing South Australian water and wastewater programs with the Government of West Java. Mr Von Stiegler is highly respected by the Governor of West Java, the National Minister of Trade and Industry, the Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the National Minister for Settlement and Regional Infrastructure.

Mr Von Stiegler is an ambassador for the State of South Australia and his continued involvement will be critical for the long-term success of the water programs currently being addressed by the Cooperation Board in West Java.

As a contractor, Mr Von Stiegler does not hold any financial delegations on behalf of the Corporation. All financial and management issues are directed from Adelaide.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Pastoral Land Management and Conservation—
Document and Other Fees
Seeds—Service Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Adoption—Application Fees
Controlled Substances—
Pesticide Fees
Poisons Fees
Development—Fees
Harbors and Navigation—Trade Plates Fees
Housing Improvement—S.60 Application Fee
Local Government—
Freedom of Information Fees
Prescribed Fees
Motor Vehicles—Fees
Passenger Transport—General Fees
Private Parking Areas—Expiation Fees
Public and Environmental Health—Waste Control Fees
Radiation Protection and Control—Ionizing Fees
Road Traffic—
Expiation Fees
Inspection Fees
South Australian Health Commission—
Private Hospital Licence Fees
Recognised Hospital Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Dangerous Substances—Licences and Other Fees
Explosives—Application and Licence Fees
Freedom of Information—Agency Document Fees
Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare—Inspection Fees
Rates and Land Tax Remission—Criteria
Roads (Opening and Closing)—Fees
State Records—Copies and Research Fees
Valuation of Land—Fees and Allowances

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Education—Head Teacher
Gaming Machines—Application Fees
Land Tax—Liability Certificate
Lottery and Gaming—Licence Fees
Petroleum Products Regulation—Fees
Tobacco Products Regulation—Licence Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Associations Incorporation—Fees
Bills of Sale—Fees

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration—Fees
 Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium—Admission and
 Service Charges
 Building Work Contractors—Fees
 Business Names—Application and Other Fees
 Community Titles—Application and Other Fees
 Conveyancers—Fees
 Co-operatives—Application and Other Fees
 Cremation—Permit Fee
 Criminal Law (Sentencing)—Fees
 Crown Lands—Application, Document and
 Miscellaneous Fees
 District Court—Civil, Criminal and Criminal Injuries
 Fees
 Environment Protection—
 Beverage Container Fees
 Unit Value Fee
 Environment, Resources and Development Court—
 General Jurisdiction Fees
 Schedule Fees
 Fees Regulation—Appointment Fees
 Firearms—Licence Fees
 Land Agents—Fees
 Liquor Licensing—Licence and Other Fees
 Magistrates Court—Civil and Criminal Fees
 National Parks and Wildlife—
 Hunting Fees
 Permit Fees
 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—Rodeo Permit Fee
 Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians—Fees
 Real Property—
 General Fees
 Land Division Fees
 Registration of Deeds—Fees
 Second-hand Vehicle Dealers—Fees
 Security and Investigation Agents—Fees
 Sexual Reassignment—Recognition Fees
 Sheriff's—Fees
 Strata Titles—Lodgement and Other Fees
 Summary Offences—Dangerous Articles Fee
 Supreme Court—
 Probate Fees
 Schedule Fees
 Trade Measurement Administration—Licence and
 Instrument Fees
 Travel Agents—Licence Fees
 Worker's Liens—Fees
 Youth Court—Schedule Fees

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

Water Resources Act—Regulations—Fees

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

Corporation By-laws—City of Unley—By-law—
 No 1—Local Government Land
 No 2—Moveable Signs
 No 3—Dogs
 No 4—Lodging Houses
 No 5—Permits and Penalties.

WORLD POLICE AND FIRE GAMES

The Hon. J. HALL (Minister for Tourism): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. HALL: A Triple A rating is what we are after, and that is for—

Alluring
 Autumn in
 Adelaide.

Our bid team for the World Police and Fire Games is assembling as we speak in Indianapolis, and the reputation of our autumn weather will be a backdrop to what is an

impressive presentation that we will make to the 16 member board of the World Police and Fire Games on Thursday.

As we know, Adelaide is a unique city, and we give highly focused attention to staging major events. We know it is a superb venue, and the bid committee presenting the case for our state will present a hard sell with a strong emphasis on the partnership between the government, the police, the firefighters and our major events unit, together with the magnificent facilities we now have in and around Adelaide.

Many members will be aware that South Australia came very close in 1999 to being chosen as the host for the 2005 World Police and Fire Games. Tomorrow morning I leave for Indianapolis, and on Thursday I lead our delegation in Indianapolis to present our final bid for the 2007 games.

I would like to acknowledge at this point the cooperation and the bipartisan support of the opposition and the Independents for this bid. The opposition and the Independents understand the significant economic benefits of staging a games such as this, as well as the positive effect it will have on our already great reputation as the premier major events state in Australia—and I thank them for granting me a pair to enable me to lead this delegation and hopefully win the games.

Adelaide and Brisbane are the two final bid cities for the 2007 games; Rotterdam and Birmingham have withdrawn. Our committee, representing Adelaide and presenting our final bid, consists of the Governor of South Australia, Sir Eric Neal; the Police Commissioner; the Metropolitan Fire Service Chief; officers from SAPOL and MFS; myself; and the Chief Executive Officer of the South Australian Tourism Commission, Mr Bill Spurr.

Members may be aware that these games attract more competitors than the Commonwealth Games, in more than 80 events from cycling, shooting and hockey to darts, wrist wrestling and the hotly contested 'toughest competitor alive'. In fact, I understand that the games are the third biggest event in the world; they are larger than the Commonwealth Games and topped only by the Soccer World Cup and the Olympic Games. In November last year, a Games Federation site evaluation committee visited Adelaide to assess the quality of our more than 90 venues, and our capacity to stage the games. We were able to demonstrate that we have the infrastructure and the venues to stage a successful games and, with a considerable number of venues rating exceptionally well, importantly, we would not have to build any additional venues in order to host the games.

It is estimated that the games would attract more than 10 000 competitors and, with their families and event tourists, there would be a total visitation to South Australia of between 15 000 and 20 000 people for an average stay of eight days. It would generate an estimated economic benefit for our state of approximately \$30 million. Importantly, competitors and their families would, we hope, spend a little longer in South Australia and venture out into our regions to experience the unique and authentic tourism products we have on offer.

Hosting the games would be a great coup for South Australia and regional South Australia as well, but the benefits for South Australia to staging these games would not stop at the economic impact. These games would have significant national and international media coverage, and hosting these games would further enhance our reputation as a premier destination. Our theme for the bid is 'Competition, Unity and Friendship' and obviously support from the community base would be demonstrated visibly by the participation of thousands of police officers and firefighters

from within the South Australian community and across the country.

Naturally, though, we have to beat Brisbane first. We have a great record of hosting and staging major events, and I am sure that our reputation will stand us in good stead as we make our final presentation less than 48 hours from now. I want to place on public record my thanks to all those who have worked tirelessly to put together what is a most professional submission. The bid committee and participants from the police force and fire service and all involved at the production level have worked well together to help us produce what is an extremely attractive and well supported bid. Members will recall that we came close in 1999 to winning it for 2005. We look forward with optimism to our prospects for 2007. The World Police and Fire Games Federation will announce the host city of the 2007 World Police and Fire Games on Friday night, South Australian time. I sincerely hope that we can celebrate the news of our successful bid for an 'Alluring Autumn' in Adelaide 2007.

QUESTION TIME

HOSPITALS, FUNDING

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Can the Minister for Human Services confirm that both the Queen Elizabeth and Lyell McEwin Hospitals have run out of money, and can he assure the House that the hospitals will not be required to take out a loan to maintain services? The opposition has been told today that both hospitals have run out of funding for the remainder of this financial year and need an extra \$5 million to cover costs in June. The opposition also has been informed that the board of the North Western Adelaide Health Service, which runs both hospitals, will meet on Wednesday to consider proposals from the minister's department that the hospitals should draw down on non-recurrent funds, such as trust funds or private practice grants, or agree to the department's arranging a loan from SAFA.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): Firstly—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Well, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As the budget papers show, the hospitals for the current financial year have overrun their budget. We do not know the exact extent, but it is perhaps \$10 million to \$12 million over budget. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, on previous occasions, has built up a debt for a number of years, but the Department of Human Services has always covered that in cash terms. I have raised this matter in the House previously and explained exactly what the situation is, and I will continue to do so.

STATE BUDGET

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Can the Premier inform the House of benefits that will be delivered to South Australians from the 2001-02 state budget delivered by the Treasurer last Thursday?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I am delighted to do so—and might I respond to an interjection from the member for Hart a moment ago, when he talked about improved credit rating. I will tell you who developed an improved credit rating for South Australia: it was a Liberal government, which took us from a basket case to a AA+ credit rating, with

Standard & Poor's acknowledging on Friday that substantial improvement had been made in turning around the fortunes of South Australia.

This budget, delivered last Thursday, brings about some 200 additional nurses in our system; and, over the last financial year and the next, 203 additional police officers in our system. It puts more computers in our schools for our school children. It underpins our tourism industry with further marketing dollars for tourism in the future. It is a sensible budget (as identified by media outlets) that is laying a solid foundation upon which this state can build again in the future.

But, importantly, this is now crunch time for the Labor Party. We have put down a budget, having repaired the finances of South Australia, reinvested in areas to which I gave a commitment two to three years ago in education, health, law and order and other employment generating services in the state. It has delivered in all those areas and it forecasts, in addition to that, where this state will go in continuing to rebuild the economic base of South Australia. We have achieved something that the member for Hart, as a former adviser in the Bannon-Arnold administration, and the absent Leader of the Opposition, as a minister in the former Bannon-Arnold administration, could never achieve: Access Economics has indicated that South Australia's economy is now an untold success story in going from a basket case to being rejuvenated. That is an undeniable fact. Five percentage points have been taken off the unemployment levels in South Australia. Unemployment under Labor was 12.3 per cent: it is now something like 7.2 to 7.3 per cent. That is a significant achievement in itself.

However, to return to the point, we have brought down a budget which prepares the finances; reinvests in education, health and law and order; and plans for the next three years. It will be interesting today to see whether the leader has any plans at all beyond saying, 'We will cut consultancies.' This government is already doing that and is on track to make the 20 per cent savings in consultancies. It is a glib answer by the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that consultancies are going to fund his programs in the future. Mind you, we do not yet know what the programs are, but we do know that successive opposition shadow spokespersons in the course of the last few days have said that more money should be spent on this, on that and on something else.

Then the member for Hart has said that there is no money. So, the simple test for the opposition, if it wants to spend more, is where it will get the money. Today it has the opportunity, in responding to the budget and, more importantly, it has the responsibility to establish any semblance of credibility as an alternative government, to lay out a detailed plan not only for this year but also for the three years in advance, in the same way that the government has put it on the table. It has also been said (and I am not sure whether by the member for Hart or by one of his colleagues) that the budget was a bit boring. I make the comment that if it was boring, it is a sensible—

Mr Foley: It was the *Advertiser*, wasn't it, or the *Sunday Mail*? It was the *Sunday Mail*.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, it wasn't.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: In response to the member for Hart, if you want excitement—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will not ignore the chair.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Nor will the Minister for Water Resources.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: Perhaps the member for Hart wants a bit of excitement such as HIH or One.Tel. That is the sort of excitement that we can well do without in South Australia. Talking about HIH brings to mind the level of debt in this country as talked about by the *Financial Review* and other papers looking at HIH and its impact across the board. What we inherited in 1993 makes HIH pale into insignificance, because the previous government effectively gave us a \$10 billion debt in today's terms. Whereas in that instance the insurance company has spread the debt across the commonwealth government and about three state governments, one state of 1.5 million people picked up the whole component of the State Bank. That is the difference between the Labor track record of the past and the rebuilding and the rejuvenation that has been put in place.

As I have said in this House on a number of occasions, some very tough and difficult decisions were made, some of which were unpopular and some of which we would have preferred not to make. However, we have not shirked our responsibilities in cleaning up the mess that Labor left where there was despondency, high unemployment, no investment and no money for education, health and law and order. Those are the circumstances that have changed, and changed substantially. We have reduced unemployment and increased employment, and have put investment back and are outperforming many states of Australia.

In addition, because we have repaired the finances, we are able to reinvest funds in education, health, law and order and job generating projects in this state. That is a stark contrast to the Labor track record of yesterday and their plans for the future.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HOSPITALS, PUBLIC

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Given that the government has refused the Minister for Human Services's budget request in the green book for \$35 million to repay debts run up by public hospitals, will hospitals now have to cut services to repay this debt? Last Tuesday, the minister told the House to wait for the budget to find out whether public hospitals would have to repay debts run up over the last four years.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: We did read it. The budget did not allocate any money to meet these debts, and the opposition has been told that the business plans for metropolitan hospitals now include a requirement for the debts to be repaid. Where will the money come from?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I refer the honourable member to a detailed answer I gave to this parliament earlier this year. This question borders very closely on a repeat of a previous question of the honourable member, and I will answer it again for the benefit of the member for Elizabeth, because she does not listen. As I have said to this parliament before, it is recognised that the hospitals have overrun their budgets for a number of years. However, the Department of Human Services has picked up that debt—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Elizabeth!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—and covered it. Therefore, the cash debt does not lie with the hospitals; it lies with and has been fully covered by the Department of Human Services. What could be more clear than that? The answer to the honourable member is that a \$35 million cut in services is not about to be imposed on the hospitals, as she tried to imply, because, as I have said, the Department of Human Services has picked up that debt, and we have covered it in cash terms for the last four years.

HEALTH, FUNDING

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Human Services outline to the House the increase in funding for health and what some of the key initiatives are for that funding?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I would like to outline to the House exactly where the total funds for the Department of Human Services have gone to in terms of health. The increase in the health budget this year is \$213 million—and I hope the member for Elizabeth is listening to this—and that represents an increase of 10.6 per cent, which is well above the inflation rate. Of that \$213 million, \$40 million goes to a record capital investment in the health sector. That represents an increase of 39 per cent in capital works. I point out to the House that the capital health budget now is approximately three times greater than it was under the Labor government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The operating budget in the health sector is an increase of \$173 million, representing an increase of 9.1 per cent. I heard the opposition saying that all the increase would be used simply to pay for the salary increases for the doctors and nurses. Let us look at what the salary increase for the doctors and nurses is out of that \$179 million; in fact, it is \$67 million. So, there is a huge gap between the \$67 million and the \$173 million increase in the operating budget for health. Let us look at where some of those additional funds are going. An extra \$15 million—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Elizabeth to contain herself.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN:—has been provided for the emergency department to ease the pressure in those departments to employ more staff—more doctors and nurses—and to open up the 69 extended emergency care beds in conjunction with the emergency departments. There is additional funding for mental health and dental care. Two hundred extra nurses are being employed within the hospital sector. There is a provision for clean needles for diabetics for the first time in South Australia. That is an initiative the diabetics have been asking for, and this government has responded to that. It is very important indeed. Extra money has been allowed for the patient assistance transport scheme in country areas. I know a lot of people in this House representing country areas appreciate greatly that PAT scheme but have asked for some modification to it. Therefore, there is extra funding for the PAT scheme to allow that modification to occur.

Because we know the extent to which there has been an increase in the number of people in the hospital sector who are waiting for a nursing home bed, we have allowed for additional funds for the transition of those aged people out of hospital into a facility managed by a consortium of eight aged care providers in South Australia. So far this year we have

helped 100 people out of the hospital system to access suitable care, either in a nursing home, in their own home or in some other suitable facility. It is the state government that has picked up that responsibility to make sure that we free up beds within hospitals so that elective and emergency surgery can proceed as quickly as possible.

Other initiatives include extra capital funding, and I would like to touch on that just briefly. As I said, it is a \$40 million increase in capital funding. That has gone into three key areas. The first is the redevelopment of four country hospitals; the second is the upgrade of nursing bed facilities in seven of our smaller country hospitals where we pick up the nursing home requirements as part of the hospital itself; and the third is in upgrading very substantially mental health facilities that will include, amongst other things, providing secure adolescent beds at the Women's and Children's Hospital for the first time, upgrading and improvements at Glenside, and also a new psychiatric wing at the Flinders Medical Centre.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is interesting that, even at this stage, the member for Elizabeth cannot bring herself to acknowledge the fact that this government has increased hospital and health care by \$213 million in this budget, but equally she cannot bring herself to acknowledge the fact that there has been a 40 per cent increase in capital funding. That is very significant, and it is interesting that she wants to knock anything that comes up, including even a record capital budget in the health sector.

ELECTRICITY, NATIONAL MARKET

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that the New South Wales and Victorian governments took the initiative and committed themselves to the formation of a ministerial council on electricity (public statements made earlier this year), to deal with the problem in the national electricity market, what advice will the Premier take to Friday's COAG meeting from his special working party on electricity, and will that include specific action on increased interconnection, dealing with increased pool prices, gaming by generators, and the future role of NEMMCO and NECA? What has the special working party given you to take to COAG—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —given that the ministerial council has already been agreed to?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. He knows full well that he does not have to repeat the question at the end.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I have publicly stated in this House previously that the governments or the various jurisdictions have to get control of the policy settings for the national electricity market. That can only be achieved by the establishment of a ministerial council that will have oversight on the policy settings of the national market. This national market, let us not forget, was the brainchild of Paul Keating.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The COAG communique of 1993 clearly establishes that it was Lynn Arnold, Premier, and Paul Keating, Prime Minister. It was on the agreement of that COAG meeting that subsequently those arrangements had to be put in place.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I am reminded that the member for Hart was the adviser, and no doubt he was with Premier Lynn Arnold at the COAG meeting that released the communique committing us to a national electricity market. The fault with that model of the national electricity market, as put in place by Paul Keating, is that various jurisdictions lost policy oversight and control of the market, and that set of circumstances is impacting in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. As Mr Raymond Michell said on Friday last, they had an increase of approximately 50 per cent or more in a power bill in one of their facilities in New South Wales under the government owned electricity market.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, the average is 30—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The member for Hart has got it wrong again—

Mr Foley: No, I haven't got it wrong.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: You have got it wrong: the average is approximately 30 per cent. I make the point for the member for Hart, who wants to be obstinate in this matter in not wanting to hear the truth, that whether it is the government owned electricity industry in New South Wales or the privately leased electricity industry in South Australia, the impacts of the national electricity market are being felt the same in New South Wales as they are in South Australia.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I have just quoted—

Mr Foley: That is nonsense.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I would ask the member for Hart—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will contain himself.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I beg your pardon.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Hart.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I ask the member for Hart to do no other than pick up the phone and ring Mr Raymond Michell, and if the member for Hart—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, it is not.

Mr Foley: It is a lie.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Hart to retract that statement.

Mr FOLEY: I retract the word 'lie', sir.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: I would ask the member for Hart simply to ring Mr Raymond Michell, who told an audience of about 300 on Friday morning that his electricity 'from the New South Wales government owned enterprises' was of an order that we are seeing in South Australia. So, let us put to one side this nonsense as put forward by the member for Hart. What the member for Hart conveniently forgets and what he is wanting to do is walk away from the fact you were the architects of the scheme.

There are problems with the scheme, which I have acknowledged, and those problems are evident in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, and we will work our way through those issues. As virtually indicated by the leader's question, there is no single one issue solely within our province in South Australia that can ameliorate this effect. We have NECA, a code administrator; NEMMCO, a code management company; and the ACCC, all of whom have a responsibility and a part to play and all of whom

discharge responsibilities in relation to the management of this national electricity market.

As much as the honourable member might want to allege that position, the simple fact is that it is not the case. We will pursue this issue, as I have indicated. I asked for this matter to be listed on the COAG agenda. The Prime Minister has agreed that it be done. I have been—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: It has to go beyond a ministerial council, and I am pleased that Bob Carr and Steve Bracks—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN:—recognise that this issue is of such significance in New South Wales and Victoria that they will support the establishment of a ministerial council to get back some policy oversight. In a note I received from Premier Carr (I think I received it on Friday), he affirms that approach for this ministerial council on Friday—and we will pursue South Australia's interests.

EDUCATION, EXPENDITURE

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise the House of the significant expenditure initiatives taken by the government in this year's state budget and how they will further enhance the education of students in South Australia?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for MacKillop for his question, because I am pleased to provide more details to clarify incorrect comments made in the media by careless opposition members. The allocation that this government makes to education is quite remarkable. In fact, it is no less than one-quarter of Treasury's allocation; that is, \$1.829 billion on educating our young people from early childhood and beyond. The budget has been of this proportion ever since the Liberal government came to office, because this government values the opportunities that were previously denied to our young people by a former incompetent Labor government.

What is more, the average increase for the seven years that we have been in office has been around \$60 million; that is an extra \$60 million spent on education. At the same time as cleaning up the mess, we have spent more. Members of the House might recall that in 1993, when this government took over the reins, there was a \$300 million recurrent deficit. The previous Labor government could only be listed as one of the most disastrous financial managers in the state's history. We should have been able to spend more on education. I would love to have more money to spend on education and, had it not been for Labor mismanagement, we would have been able to spend more over the last seven years of this government.

But we have been able to make and maintain a strong commitment towards education. Labor left this state with a debt of \$7 008 for every man, woman and child. After seven years of Liberal government, this amount has been reduced to \$2 176 and we have still been able to continue and advance educational programs in this state. We have still been able to manage that debt per man, woman and child. In fact, that is a staggering 70 per cent reduction in the debt per man, woman and child in this state because of good fiscal management by this government. The restoration of this economy, which was left in tatters after Labor's slackness, has been a serious management problem for this government. We have had to address that over the seven years as well as meet

pressures in terms of changing education moves since that time.

Since 1993, the education budget is up by 30 per cent: it has gone from \$1.41 billion to \$1.829 billion in just seven years. In this budget, the government will spend \$145 million more on teachers' salaries; \$30 million on teacher training; and \$15 million on external repairs to our schools. It is a budget that is delivering opportunity and a future for every young South Australian. The endless drone that we hear from the opposition ranks on the opposite side of this House delivers nothing for our students—no future, no jobs and no hope.

TAFE INSTITUTES

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Can the Minister for Education and Children's Services tell the House how many young South Australians will be disadvantaged next year by the decision to cut 2 980 000 student hours from TAFE institutes and private providers? The budget statement for the provision of vocational education and training by TAFE and private providers outside the school system shows that the next year's annual curriculum for students will be cut by almost 3 million hours. The output statements for vocational education and training also indicate that, compared with last year, funding for vocational education and training will be cut by \$28 million next year.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): If there is one thing that is consistent in this House it is that the member for Taylor will be fed by the education union for her questions. Let me tell the House that there will be no reduction in the nominal hours in any given course as a result of the budget. No student who is enrolled in a course will receive fewer hours of instruction as a result of the budget changes. The value of the courses, including what students receive for their fees, will not be diminished. We have an excellent TAFE education system here. It is the best one in Australia in terms of client and employer satisfaction and the fact that those young people and people who return to education come into TAFE, with 80 per cent of them receiving jobs at the end of their study. Some 80 per cent of them receive employment after that time. Some 57.4 per cent of TAFE graduates who were unemployed prior to undertaking their training found work, and that compared to a national average of 49.8 per cent. So, we are about 8 per cent above.

Since 1996, TAFE enrolments have increased from 90 000 to more than 98 500 last year. Our TAFE system is doing an excellent job of training our young people and, now that we have a very smooth transition between school, TAFE and universities, our young people are able to attain qualifications in TAFE and then use those qualifications for recognition when they move forward to a university degree. It is a system that is gaining more in flexibility as we move along. As I said, there will be no reduction in nominal hours of any given course as a result of the budget, and no student who is enrolled in a course will receive fewer hours of instruction as a result of those budget changes.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I direct my question to the Minister—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: You have already asked one dorothy dixer; wait for the next one.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Look, you have not done—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Will the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services outline to the House any recent budget initiatives that are improving community safety and indicate whether there is a bipartisan approach to these important issues in relation to protecting the public?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): I could spend the next 29 minutes talking about positive initiatives in the budget when it comes to community safety but, given there are two parts of the question, I will not spend the whole 29 minutes highlighting our new initiatives for community safety: I will spend a couple of minutes. First, I would like to speak a little about the police budget. Last week we saw a \$28 million increase in the police budget; that is now a record spend for police, at \$397.3 million with \$114 million more going to South Australian police this year than under the last Labor budget. It will mean 90 extra police, 20 of whom will target outlawed motor cycle gangs; 36 of whom will hone in on the illicit drug issues in this state that are such a concern to the government; and another 34 going to the LSA for more operational police to be involved in general patrols.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

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

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: On top of that we have seen money going to Crimtrac, we have seen a major new initiative with a new call centre to address the issues around 11-444, and the list goes on. This applies not only to police but also to emergency services. Without increasing the overall budget income for emergency services under the levy fund, we have been able to deliver more to the SES and the MFS and, importantly, we have been able to deliver much more to the CFS. In fact, this budget provides a \$2.9 million increase to the CFS budget. That is now a budget to the CFS this year of \$36.9 million.

I would like the honourable member on the other side to listen and pay attention. He does not listen; he cannot read a budget line and, if he cannot read a budget line, what hope would he have in government of ever been being part of formulating a budget line? He would have no hope at all, and there would be no hope at all for South Australia. To return to the facts on this budget initiative, \$1.4 million will go directly to those magnificent volunteers in the brigades and groups. That is a very important initiative, and it gives them that record budget.

The second part of the question was whether there was any bipartisanship when it came to the budget. Again, sadly, the answer is that there is no bipartisanship whatsoever. All the members of the opposition did for the three days following the handing down of the budget was to go out there and carp and knock the budget, to misrepresent and to put forward rumour and innuendo. They did not put forward any facts, because they cannot read a budget line and they cannot formulate a budget.

There has been deathly silence about the increased police numbers. This government has delivered 203 extra police in two years, and there has been not one murmur from the whingers and the carpers on the other side. Also, there has

been no comment at all on the call centre, yet we have delivered a call centre that will give a customer focus and a friendly, very quick response to people when they ring 11-444.

In fact, in answer to the second part of the question about bipartisanship, the only comment came this morning from the shadow spokesperson, who claimed that \$9.6 million, an initiative to purchase an audio management system, was from a line at the top (which is the CAD line) down to the GRN line with the emergency services levy; somehow, the bow was that long and, indeed, bigger than this chamber. He brought this bow in through a press release and he then tried to say that a CAD line that was delivering an audio management system, which is simply about internal telephone and communications for only some of the emergency services and police, was a blow-out in the GRN. What a load of nonsense. Not only was it a load of nonsense, but the member backed that up when, on the radio this morning, he used words such as, 'Well, I can only assume', and 'It seems'—words such as 'assume' and 'seem'. If the shadow spokesperson had got on the phone to me (I am available to him 24 hours a day), I would have given him the facts, instead of his going out there and misleading the community of South Australia. He knows that this is a good budget. It is a budget that the Labor Party could not deliver. It is a budget that sees a future, a vision and an opportunity for South Australia—something, sadly, that was neglected under 11 very long years of mismanagement by Labor, and particularly the Leader of the Opposition, Mike Rann.

NATIVE VEGETATION ACT

Mr HILL (Kaurana): That was great.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Ross Smith! Order, the member for Hart!

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Has the member for Schubert finished?

Mr HILL: My World Environment Day question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. When will the review of the Native Vegetation Act and its regulations be finalised and brought to the parliament? Will the minister strengthen penalties applying to those prosecuted for illegal clearance, ensuring that disincentives for clearance are greater than the rewards derived from cultivating illegally cleared land? A document prepared by a working party comprising representatives of the Native Vegetation Council, the minister's department and the Attorney-General's Department published in August 1999 over the name of Peter Dunn, the Presiding Member of the Native Vegetation Council, had this to say:

... deficiencies in the legislation remain in relation to enforcement or compliance. An unsatisfactory level of illegal clearance has persisted over the years, and the department and the Native Vegetation Council have been unable to respond to these instances effectively. Because of difficulties with the enforcement provisions, relatively major clearances have only been subjected, in some cases, to a warning letter from the department. Problems with enforcement may well have led to further unauthorised clearance.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage): The fact that that discussion paper was produced shows that the government recognises that there are some issues in regard to native vegetation.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I accept that it was two years ago. It is a very complicated issue, and we are working through

those issues in regard to native vegetation. The honourable member would well know that there is a wide range of views in relation to matters regarding native vegetation—

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Inside the parliament and outside the parliament—and I am sure that the opposition is undertaking the same consultation process as we have been. Certainly, we are aware of the issues that are raised. We are working through those issues, and it is hoped that we will certainly have some legislation back before the House in due course.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Can the minister for Environment and Heritage update the House on today's activities to celebrate World Environment Day? Earlier today, I had the opportunity to have a look at the excellent environmental displays in Rundle Mall, and I would be most interested to know of the other activities being staged to mark World Environment Day in South Australia.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I thank the member for Heysen for his question and I encourage other members to take the opportunity to visit Rundle Mall today to see some of the excellent displays highlighting World Environment Day. Last year Adelaide did a sensational job in promoting World Environment Day, not only to Australia but also to the rest of the world. This year World Environment Day is hosted by two countries—Cuba and Italy—and we wish them well in hosting the event.

Programs available for people range from lectures and briefings (which are being held in the updated Environment Shop) to tree planting in conjunction with local schools. Plenty of activities are available for communities to get involved in. The EPA this morning took the opportunity to launch its new eco-efficiency program, which encourages industries to do more with less—to use less energy and less water—while still producing a bottom line profit, but at the same time making our resources last a lot longer and be more sustainable.

This country still has some significant environmental issues to deal with. We are one of the largest producers of greenhouse gases, one of the largest users of water per head of population and, also, one of the largest distributors of waste to landfill per capita in the world. These are significant, long-term issues that need to be addressed not only by this government but by future governments. Today, in an effort to bring some of the environmental issues to the broader community, we have launched an air quality index, which will be in use by Christmas. This is commonly understood and is used in the same way as a weather forecast, a pollen count or a UV factor. An air quality index will be able to be used by the media or published on an internet site to enable people with medical conditions to make judgments about the quality of the air they will breathe on a given day and adjust their behaviour to suit. It will measure impurities within the air such as sulphurs and dioxins, and people with allergies to certain conditions or chemicals will be able to make some judgment about their activities that day. We think this is a very positive step and we are pleased to undertake that work on behalf of the state as well as to assist in the development of an air quality standard for the rest of Australia.

For those people who wish to see how it works, an air monitoring van, which has all the information, is in Rundle Mall this afternoon. About 15 air quality sites are already

taking measurements around South Australia. It is an area that brings the environment to the people to help them understand that there are long-term issues with air quality. As we speak, Adelaide's air quality is fairly good, but will not necessarily be as good in 20 or 30 years time. With the publication of an air quality index, which will be available for comment and research, the public will be able to measure the success of government decisions and policies and apply pressure to the government of the day in five, 10 or 20 years time with regard to policies on air quality.

So, there is a range of activities today in relation to World Environment Day and I encourage those members who have the opportunity to visit not only the mall but also the other activities that are available to celebrate this important day.

HIH INSURANCE

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): My question is directed to the Premier. Will the government follow the lead of the Victorian and New South Wales Labor governments with respect to the removal of stamp duty payable by HIH policy holders who have had to take out separate insurance premiums following the collapse of that company? The Treasurer was asked this question in April of this year and promised to report back, but there has been no report to date.

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I am happy to take the question on notice and refer it to the Treasurer for a response. I will follow it up for the member for Ross Smith. The Treasurer has been monitoring the circumstances in South Australia as distinct from those applying in New South Wales, Victoria and, perhaps to a lesser extent, Queensland. We do not have the same number of property holders in South Australia, but they still deserve consideration by government. They will get appropriate consideration by government as to what ought to be done and needs to be done to give them a degree of support and protection. To date, as I understand it, the Treasurer has indicated that the department of Treasury is monitoring the situation. We first wanted to see what the federal government would do. We were opposed to a levy across the board levy, which was originally—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: No, I know the point the member is making. I just want to make this point: the federal government was initially looking at a 1 per cent levy on all insurance premiums across Australia to bail out HIH Insurance, and proposals were put to the federal government to this effect. However, we objected to that, and we did so on the basis that nobody offered a 1 per cent levy across Australia to bail us out of the State Bank debacle, where we had to go it alone, and we have worked our way through that issue. That having been said, the federal government has now put down a policy position in terms of the funds it will commit, the majority of which clearly are allocated into New South Wales and Victoria because of the number of policies and the exposure in those states as distinct from South Australia. However, as it relates to the stamp duty on the re-insurance, which is the point the member for Ross Smith is making, I will take that point up with the Treasurer because, whilst there might be a lesser number of policy holders in South Australia, they will still receive due consideration by government.

WATER QUALITY

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Minister for Government Enterprise outline to the House details of a major new program that will demonstrate to our school students the importance of clean drinking water, and indicate how this government is providing clean water to more South Australians than ever before?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I'm not going to. No, don't worry. I thank the member for Colton for his very important question, asked on World Environment Day, about what is clearly an important resource in the driest state in the driest inhabited continent. In South Australia we are, indeed, lucky that, despite what is a relatively scarce amount of water, we are able to deliver clear, clean water to so many people. In an average year the River Murray supplies about 40 per cent of Adelaide's needs, and in times of extreme drought this can be as high as 90 per cent of our needs. As the Premier and the Minister for Water Resources have so clearly demonstrated, the River Murray is under threat, and that is obviously very important for South Australia. The quality of our source water is not good. If I were allowed to display anything which I understand I am not—

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister is aware that he is not allowed to do that.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I understand that; but, if I were allowed to, I would show a bottle, close to my right hand, containing the source water from the Murray which is clearly not good—

An honourable member: Not clear!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: It is clearly not clear, indeed. On two separate occasions today—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am referring to the bottle that you're pointing at. On two occasions I have already been asked, 'Is that ginger beer?' No, it is not; it is the source water from the River Murray. At Murray Bridge earlier today, with Mr Graham Dooley, the Managing Director of Riverland Water, and also at the site of one of their water treatment plants—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Fixed—as part of World Environment Day I had the great pleasure of launching an awareness program for schools and teachers that supports the excellent environmental work of SA Water and its partners, and it is called 'On the trail of clean water'. It is designed to identify to school children aged between the years five and 10 some of the difficulties and dilemmas with the water cycle in South Australia. It is designed to help their exploration of water sources and resources, of the waste water problems and what can be done about them and, indeed, water management. It is also designed to make sure that all South Australians are aware of the complexity in turning the ginger beer in the bottle that I am not displaying into the perfectly clear water next to it. The kit will be distributed to all schools near the various water treatment plants. It can be downloaded from SA Water's web site, and I would encourage all schools to do that because it is an excellent resource.

The kit is part of an evolving partnership between SA Water and Riverland Water which, as members in the House would know, since 1997 has delivered 10 water filtration plants throughout the Riverland and the Adelaide Hills, providing clean, clear water to those communities. The

first plant opened in December 1997 at Balhannah, and it was followed by plants at Swan Reach, Waikerie, Barmera, Berri, Mannum, Taillem Bend, Renmark, Loxton and Murray Bridge. These plants mean that about 95 per cent of South Australians enjoy first-class filtered water as opposed to water that looks, frankly, like ginger beer or worse. That 95 per cent figure is impressive, given our very dispersed population.

We are demonstrating that, by employing sound management principles with a vision for providing an extra 100 000 South Australians with clear water, we can have both a stronger economy and a stronger community, and we can turn this into this.

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister is now pressing the chair.

ANXIETY DISORDERS UNIT

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): Will the Minister for Human Services advise how many people were on the waiting list for treatment by the Flinders Medical Centre—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the minister to remain silent so we can hear the question. I ask the member for Reynell to repeat the question.

Ms THOMPSON: Thank you, sir. Will the minister advise how many people were on the waiting list for treatment by the Flinders Medical Centre's Anxiety Disorders Unit for problems relating to gambling as at the end of last month, and what has been the average waiting time for such treatment over the last 12 months?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): The question asks for very specific information in relation to a hospital, and I will get that information.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Minerals and Energy outline what initiatives the Office of Energy Policy in South Australia is doing to reduce greenhouse emissions in South Australia?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I thank the member for Schubert for his question. My colleagues and I are well aware of the member's keen interest in the environment. The member for Schubert has been a champion for the environmental cause in his own electorate and he is particularly concerned about greenhouse emissions. I have been particularly impressed with the member for Schubert's personal record for the environment just in terms of sustainable agriculture. He now asks a question like this today, and I am sure that his constituents are very proud to have him as their elected representative.

I am pleased to be able to advise the member for Schubert of work that is occurring within government to assist in greenhouse gas emissions. That work has been championed through a new organisation within government known as Energy SA. Energy SA is a revamped unit of government. In its old guise, it was known as the Office of Energy Policy, and that organisation has been supplemented by additional funding through the state budget. Indeed, it has been allocated a further \$1.29 million. Together with the reallocation of some of the priorities within the old unit and a renaming, it is now poised to be able to provide South Australians with a service which they have been demanding and which will

assist in the drive to achieve greater utilisation and understanding of renewable and sustainable energies in South Australia.

Members can find out about the activities of this organisation. I know that the member for Ross Smith is an avid user of the internet, and I am sure that he will be pleased to know that he can find information at the address www.energy.sa.gov.au. It is a very simple site to use, and even the member for Peake would happily be able to navigate his way through and ascertain information for his constituents. I look forward to receiving feedback from the member for Peake on how he finds the site.

Energy SA is responsible for organising and overseeing a number of programs within government, and some of those are partnership programs with our colleagues the federal government. Those programs include, amongst others, the photovoltaic rebate grants which is a commonwealth funded scheme and a scheme in which Energy SA is involved as the administering and paying authority; and also the remote renewable power generation grants, a commonwealth funded scheme and one that particularly benefits members of parliament who represent communities that do not have the advantage of group connected power and require access to schemes that will assist them. In embarking upon these schemes, gone are the days when simply any remote schemes were diesel generated. This scheme is a remote renewable power scheme, and a greater focus is being placed by Energy SA on alternative energy technologies as distinct from the old diesel schemes to ensure that, as well as providing reliable, efficient, cost-effective power to remote areas, it is also assisting in the reduction of greenhouse gas emission.

Energy SA is also supporting local government and communities through energy management expertise in the Cities for Climate Change program. I know my colleague the Minister for Local Government is particularly interested in this program and many of the local councils she works with are involved in this program. It is also providing technical advisory services to industrial and commercial sectors on energy efficiency practices and new technologies, and also cost-effective fuel switching, cogeneration and self-generation options through a new sustainable energy advisory centre. The information being provided through that will be of immense assistance to South Australians in utilising sustainable technologies.

Energy SA has also increased seed funding for development and commercialisation of sustainable energy technologies and concepts. I have been particularly pleased with the eagerness of our universities in South Australia to participate in research into sustainable and renewable technologies, and I look forward on future occasions to advising this House of some of the grants provided to our tertiary institutions and also of the way in which those grants are being utilised in research to provide greater sustainable renewable technology development in South Australia, which is not only to the benefit of all South Australians but also to all Australians and indeed to those beyond our shores.

Energy SA is also involved in increased promotional educational services, including a sustainable energy awards program. This program is targeting a number of organisations within our state that already present awards, particularly building related organisations, so that with a sustainable energy award provided within those fora, it will be possible to focus architects, master builders and housing industry participants on sustainable renewable energy opportunities within their buildings and designs to bring about a greater

outcome. We would hope that such an award program will encourage a greater understanding and participation.

It is also involved in providing consumer and industry program objectives through the Sustainable Energy Advisory Committee. Energy SA is a name that will be heard of consistently within our community. Its information centre is located at 30 Wakefield Street and the public counterfront will provide the community with an opportunity to get information from the staff. I look forward on future occasions to providing the chamber with information in relation to the expertise involved in Energy SA.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Mr HILL (Kaurua): On World Environment Day, I want to talk about a couple of issues dealing with the environment. First, I would like to reflect on the trial I attended this morning, together with the Minister for Water Resources. The trial was organised by Greening Australia and sponsored by the *Advertiser* and the Environment Defenders Office. The charge was 'Reckless disregard for the Murray River' and the accused were the people of South Australia and, before an audience of several hundred children, Justice Martin of the Supreme Court heard witnesses examined by Leonie Paulson for the prosecution and Mark Griffin for the defence.

The witnesses gave evidence for and against South Australians being guilty of reckless disregard for the Murray River. It was an excellent presentation, and I think the children in attendance enjoyed it. Sadly, the citizens of South Australia were found guilty of the charge of reckless disregard for the Murray River by the jury of 12 young people. I think the audience was split, but probably a little in the other direction. Justice Martin was sympathetic to South Australians and made both the minister and me, on behalf of all South Australians, declare a bond that we would use our best endeavours to ensure that improvements only were made to the Murray River over the next number of years. It was a good way to celebrate World Environment Day and I congratulate those associated with it. It was a terrific way of getting kids involved in what can sometimes be seen as a fairly dry set of facts.

The other issue to which I want to refer is the Banksia Awards. On Saturday night, I had the pleasure of attending the Banksia Awards 2001 in Canberra as the guest of one of the corporate sponsors, the Beverage Industry Environment Council, along with about 400 people and members of parliament from every state, as well as community and environment groups from all over Australia. I was pleased to be seated at a table hosted by Marie McCaskill, a member of the board involved with the Banksia Awards.

For those who do not know, the Banksia Awards are given annually to various groups, individuals and companies who have achieved outstandingly in the area of environment protection. There are about 12 categories for nomination. I will not read them all but they cover such things as outstanding individual achievement, community group achievement, corporate responsibility and achievement, and so on, across a whole range of areas.

I congratulate the three South Australian groups represented. Sadly, only three South Australian groups were involved but there were many more from the other states. Perhaps we

should be doing something in South Australia, and I encourage the government to let South Australians know about these important awards because they are the Oscars of the environment movement.

I particularly congratulate National Parks and Wildlife of South Australia, which won the award for category 6—Bushland and waterways. Peter Alexander from that department accepted the award, and I was very pleased to congratulate him on behalf of all South Australians. National Parks won the award for the Flinders Ranges Bounceback, about which members would know from previous speeches delivered in this place. It was a well deserved award and showed that the public sector in South Australia can do very good things.

I am pleased also to note that a second company from South Australia—AQ Australia—won an award. I was pleased to congratulate Wolf Viergever from AQ Australia, which is a printing service that has a low pollution system for a waterless printing technique that reduces the amount of pollution entering the waterways. That award for AQ Australia was for category 10—Manufactured Products.

The third South Australian company present was Omnipol, a plastic recycling company. Peter Duncan, a former member of this House, represented the company at the awards. That was for infrastructure and services. That was one of the final organisations to get through to the judging. Omnipol did not win but it was good to see another South Australian company present.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Today, I pay tribute to a great South Australian, Mark Auricht, whose death has touched us all. Channel 7 News brought us regular accounts of the progress of the two South Australian climbers, Duncan Chessell and Mark Auricht, during their assault on the summit of Mount Everest. They were to be the first South Australians to achieve this feat and, in fact, Duncan did achieve his goal. However, as we sat in the comfort and safety of our homes, listening to the nightly progress reports, I do not think anyone believed that the assault would end in tragedy. Such a pioneering spirit is a dream for so many of us, and these brave young men had the support and enthusiasm of all South Australians with them.

I was not aware that Mark is the son of Dr Clive Auricht from Coffin Bay on Eyre Peninsula until I spoke with Clive only a few days before. He was very proud of his son and, when I expressed some concern, Clive reassured me that Mark was climbing with a friend, that the army was close by and that they had a satellite phone to keep in close contact in case of an emergency. He was pleased that our Premier John Olsen had given the young men a South Australian flag to be placed on the summit when they arrived.

Mark was an experienced mountain climber and was aware of the danger of his mission. During the 14 years that he spent accumulating practical experience he visited the Himalayas on many occasions. In 1995, Mark and climbing partner David Hume were the first Australians to successfully climb the Makula Peak, the fifth highest peak in the world. However, confidence, assurance and experience were insufficient to overcome the dangers of physical effort at such high altitudes as the peak of Mount Everest. Mark had a dream and a vision into which he put his utmost effort and concentration. He died fulfilling that dream.

Death comes to us all. If we could choose the manner of our death, meeting that time while doing something we liked most would be the preference for many of us. However, for Mark death came too soon and the manner of it would not lessen the grief of family and friends.

I can understand something of Mark's character through my friendship with his father, which has developed as together we pursued the obtaining of more doctors for the country regions of South Australia. Clive Auricht moved to Elliston, a remote and small country town on the west coast of Eyre Peninsula, to indulge his passion for fishing. It is the stuff of which romances are made—the kind of action one encounters in fiction rather than real life.

Dr Auricht's time at Elliston—and later at Cleve—will long be remembered in those districts. The way in which he was accepted as 'belonging' points to the friendly ease that his son enjoyed in relating to others.

Mark was an assessor and an adviser with the South Australian Rock Climbing Education Association since 1992. Abseiling was one of the activities offered during a Liberal government seminar based at McLaren Vale some years ago. I did not know at the time but one of the very pleasant young men who helped me to overcome my fear of heights and drop over a cliff on the end of a rope—not just once but twice—was Clive's son, Mark. He must have been amazed that someone could be so worried about such a small challenge.

We will remember Mark as one of those who are prepared to dream of great things and then to put in the extra effort to achieve his dreams. It is that single-mindedness that characterises those who can be termed 'great' and who rise above the average, whatever their field of endeavour. Mark Auricht is a role model for all South Australians, and on behalf of South Australians I extend sympathy to Mark's wife and stepson and to his parents, Dr Clive and Helen Auricht.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I rise today to speak about problems that my constituents are experiencing just because of administrative barriers in the departments that they deal with. One issue relates to FAYS and the payment of electricity bills, and the other issue relates to Housing Trust rent calculation when child support money is involved.

Brian and Carol Gilholme have been assessed by FAYS as being entitled to \$17 support on their electricity bill. Brian is a mature age student trying to improve the family's standing by studying, which he has been doing for three years. Carol receives the parenting allowance, because they have three children aged 12, 16 and 20. This is a family that has been through a fair bit, and they are trying to pull themselves together and get on in life.

However, they recently found that the arrangements for payment of the \$17 support on their electricity bill are getting quite ridiculous. In the distant past, and until quite recently, they have taken the bill along to FAYS and got authorisation from there that their FAYS contribution would be paid. The Gilholmes have had an ETSA card and have paid the balance of the bill through their ETSA card and all has been fine. The Gilholmes are not sure whether it is because of AGL now being the authority instead of ETSA or because of something that is happening in FAYS, but recently they have had a bill from AGL telling them that an amount of \$17.40 was outstanding. They could not understand this, because they had paid their part of the bill on time. When they went to FAYS they were told, 'Oh, it takes six weeks for us to process our part of the cheque. You should pay the whole bill, then come back to us and claim reimbursement.'

The Gilholmes are aware on FAYS information that it takes six weeks to get their \$17 back and are a bit concerned that someone does not understand that if your budget is so tight that you need that support on your ETSA bill you cannot afford to be without \$17 for six weeks just because it takes that sort of time for FAYS to write a cheque. The Gilholmes are inclined to think that it probably has something to do with the privatisation of ETSA, and that it is yet another instance of where a private company does not have the same attitude to public obligation and the importance of an electricity supply as did the publicly owned ETSA. They are finding this very frustrating, having encountered other people in the queue at FAYS who are equally frustrated by this silly administrative nonsense on the part of either FAYS or AGL.

The other issue relates to Elaine Cohen and the calculation of her Housing Trust rent. I have written to the minister about this matter, but Ms Cohen is far from satisfied with the minister's reply. Ms Cohen was required to supply the Housing Trust with evidence of her income, and she used a CentreLink statement to do this. The CentreLink statement showed that she had an entitlement to maintenance to be paid from the Child Support Agency, or those maintenance payments that are used to calculate the rate of family tax supplement, as appears in the official statement from CentreLink.

Certainly, there has been a Family Court decision that Ms Cohen is entitled to that amount of payment, but she also had a statement from the Child Support Agency showing that he had received only \$50 in the past 12 months. The Housing Trust would not accept this statement from the Child Support Agency and insisted on using the \$2 260.39 figure from CentreLink to assess Ms Cohen's rent. So, she does not know how much rent she is paying in excess, but she is quite confident that she is paying rent that she cannot afford.

She has been backwards and forwards between those three agencies, and none of them could manage to talk to each other about exactly what the situation was. CentreLink said that if it has been assessed as your entitlement then we have to show it. The Housing Trust says that if CentreLink puts it on the statement we have to charge. Child support says she has not got it, but no-one will take any notice.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Most members would know that my stance on the production, sale and consumption of cannabis is quite strong. I note what the member for Spence said here last week. He referred to what he said on the Bob Francis show, namely, that Labor's 10-plant policy was just ridiculous. Certainly, there are a lot of dreamers on the other side of the House, because if they think that 10 plants is acceptable to the people out there they have it wrong.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am pleased to hear the members for Peake and Price saying they do not agree with that. Certainly, in the few days ahead we will have a chance to have a say on this matter, and I believe it is quite wrong that we should be able to have any plants at all. I would like to see the penalties for involvement in this and other illicit drugs ramped right up, and entitlements to be made totally zero. I know the government is working on this issue, and we have seen papers. I commend the government for the work that has been done on this issue, as well as all my colleagues who have been involved in discussions and working out what is the best way forward.

I would like to share some information that I came across when reading an article in the *Business Review Weekly* a couple of weeks ago. It was a very interesting article, because it dealt with the issue of hydroponic equipment and how it has boosted the production of cannabis. Most shoppers complain about rising prices, but when it comes to buyers of marijuana—which coincidentally is Australia's leading illicit drug—they are enjoying a totally different experience. Thanks to the hydroponics revolution, high levels of production have led to a substantial fall in the price over the past 10 years. Using data from the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, the average price for marijuana has fallen 24 per cent. It is the old supply and demand scenario; growth in supply of drugs has led to falling prices.

In a study undertaken by a team of researchers at the University of Western Australia, it was found that marijuana was already a bigger industry than some sections of the alcoholic beverages sector. The value of marijuana outstrips spirits and rivals the size of domestic wine consumption. I could not believe that; it is hard to comprehend that that could be possible.

A number of economic factors appear to be at work, including higher production levels and increased quality of hydroponically grown marijuana, which has a higher potency of the active ingredient in the drug which is known as THC. I have spoken about the breeding of hybrid strains of marijuana plants that can reach maturity within four months of planting the seed with the use of hydroponics. I have stated previously that using this example one grower can produce three mature plants a year, and each plant can produce up to 5 000 smokes. That is phenomenal. That amounts to up to 15 000 smokes out of one plant every year, with an estimated street value of well over \$50 000.

We must get tougher on this, and I am pleased that this government is doing something about it. Let it be known that, where these so-called plant shops sell hydroponic equipment for the purpose of criminal activity, this government should come down hard on them. I hope it will, because we have not seen that exact position yet. We need to explore all options available. Whether a licensing system is needed requires investigation, and I am certainly in favour of having all these shops licensed. I am sick and tired of South Australia, and Adelaide, being tagged as the cannabis capital of Australia, where an absolutely thriving business in hydroponics is occurring. Action is called for now.

I also believe that some of our power shortages can be attributed to hydroponic propagation, particularly when electricity meters are bypassed and a huge amount of electricity is not only lost but also unrecorded, nor is it paid for. I wonder what the figures are with respect to the use of hydroponics for growing cannabis, and in how many instances the power meter is tampered with. Certainly, it is a serious offence to tamper with your meter, but we all know that it goes on. This issue means a lot to me. I have seen a lot of people destroyed by drugs, particularly cannabis. It is a mind altering drug; there is no doubt about that. It never should have got to this stage.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): I pretty much endorse the comments of the member for Schubert. However, I emphasise that it is not Labor's plan to have 10 plants: it is a conscience issue on this side of the House. I will be interested to see how the member for Adelaide votes with respect to this issue. I do not want to hear from the other side

of the House that we will be in any way pushing an agenda that is contrary to acting according to our own conscience.

I want to speak briefly about the government's recent showing in the *Advertiser*. Last week, a photograph of the Treasurer (Hon. Rob Lucas) wearing a Royal Australian Navy uniform appeared on the front page of the *Advertiser*. The following Saturday—

Ms Bedford interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS:—yes, that is the one—another photograph of the Treasurer and the shadow Treasurer appeared, superimposed on the heads of two boxers. This is funny and it is healthy, in a democracy, for us to make fun of our politicians. But I think it gets to the point where we have to be careful when we start computer generating photographs in papers for mass distribution. So far, the *Advertiser* has been sensible—and I congratulate the *Advertiser* on having the courage to display the letters from all the families who felt aggrieved by the uniform's being computer generated and superimposed on to the Treasurer's face and body. But I think that we are reaching the point where there should be some self-regulation and, if that is not self-imposed by the press, it will require us to legislate. It will get to the point where photographs of members of the Opposition and members of the government might be computer generated showing them shaking hands with someone they have never met. It may get to the point where someone could computer generate a photograph of the Premier with his arm around Christopher Skase, for instance, or someone accused of some sort of offence, who is prominent in the press. We have to be very careful that these photographs that are being used in the *Advertiser* are not used—

Mr Hanna: It is a very dangerous precedent.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: It is a very dangerous precedent. As I said earlier, it is good to have a bit of fun with it, but it can get dangerous. I think the *Advertiser* would be well advised—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: It gets sillier and sillier.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Every week we see a cartoon—and cartoons are fine: poking fun at politicians is okay. People realise that cartoons are not real. But photographs that are being altered, with the knowledge that we have today, look very real. In fact, I think it would be very difficult to find anyone who could tell that the photograph of the Treasurer wearing the sailor's uniform, which appeared on the front page of the *Advertiser*, was a doctored photograph. It is almost impossible—

Mr Hanna: It is an insult to sailors.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Apart from the way that people who serve in our military might have felt about that, I think that the *Advertiser* has trodden a fine line. So far, it has done it in a way that has been fun, but it can turn ugly very quickly. I stress to the editor of the *Advertiser* and his graphic design team that it is okay to have fun with this and it is healthy to poke fun at us in this way, but there has to be a point where no more can go on: otherwise, we will have to legislate. I think it is getting very dangerous. The last thing that I would want to see is a picture of a member of parliament computer generated to show them shaking hands with someone whose political views they did not agree with at all. It could be a foreign leader; it could be someone such as Pauline Hanson, for example, whom people on our side might not agree with very much at all. It might indicate a level of support that is not there. The same could apply with respect to the other side: it might involve people from overseas who come to Australia—people such as David Irving, a so-called

historian, who claims that the Holocaust never happened. I would hate to think that a photograph of him shaking someone's hand could be superimposed or altered to show him shaking hands with someone who was dramatically opposed to his views. So, we have to be very careful.

I think that all members in the House agree with respect to this issue. It is okay to poke fun, it is healthy for our democracy to make fun of politicians, but it gets to the point where it can be dangerous. I think all members would agree that, unless there is a code of conduct by designers, we could be in real trouble, and we will have to legislate to change the laws.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I find myself in total agreement with the member for Peake. I think that it would be a most unwise and quite dangerous course of action if this process is allowed to continue. Where will they draw the line? It is my understanding that to wear the uniform of the Royal Australian Navy is a privilege. People have to do a great deal of training and make a great deal of effort to reach that stage. Therefore, it should not be used for other than official purposes, in my view.

Secondly, it is the Treasurer and others today, but who else will be picked up in this process? I think that we also need to guard the families of people who are in public life, and that we need privacy laws. I have been examining previous attempts to introduce adequate privacy laws in this parliament and I am hoping, in the not too distant future, to put a proposition to this parliament, because I believe that it is long overdue. On the previous occasions, I think that undue influence and pressure was brought to bear on members of parliament by sections of the media, who have indicated that it could be used as censorship. I do not particularly hold that view and the more I think about it and the more I have researched these issues the more important I believe this matter is.

In addition, in recent days, there has been considerable publicity in relation to members of parliament and their superannuation and other related matters. I was elected to this place at a very young age and, no matter what happens, it will not affect me. But someone such as the member for Peake, and others, have to face the vagaries of a change of electoral boundaries after each election, which can have a dramatic effect on the person's ability to continue a parliamentary career, whether they are a good, bad or indifferent member of parliament. There are people who are prepared to come into this institution to give a service to the people of South Australia from all shades of opinion who may, at the time of the election, be involved in a profession, an industry or commerce where they are making very considerable progress and would have a most successful career path ahead of them, and who could be in receipt of considerably higher salaries and benefits than they would receive in parliament.

One of the reasons why it is quite proper and necessary, in my view, that there be a special arrangement relating to superannuation is to allow those people to come in, to make a contribution and then exit the parliament. Some of them will exit involuntarily, and we all know people who have had some difficulty in getting back into a reasonable source of employment. The question which I pose to those certain elements within the media who seem to work themselves up into an unnecessary and considerable lather over these matters is: if they think it is so bad, why do they not stand for public office themselves? Why do they not go through the political process and offer themselves for election and see if

they can be successful? It is all very well to stand outside and throw stones but I often think that, in many cases, it is the politics of envy at its worst.

These propositions which they are trying to make an issue of are not in the long-term interests of the people of South Australia. Importantly, they are also not in the long-term interests of the institution of parliamentary democracy and the ability of people to come into parliament and exit parliament without being forced, together with their families, to incur unnecessary penalties. If you go down this particular track you have to talk about substantial redundancy payments and guaranteed rights of employment, and that is probably a very difficult issue. I understand that ICI in the United Kingdom is one of the few public companies that has sponsored people of all shades of opinion and guaranteed them their jobs if they do not serve one term. The only other person I know of who was given some sort of guarantee is Heini Becker, when he first came here.

Time expired.

CORPORATIONS (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001* forms part of a package of corporations law Bills which follows historic negotiations between the Commonwealth and the States to place the national scheme for corporate regulation on a secure constitutional foundation. The Bill reflects the commitment of the South Australian government to achieving an effective, uniform system of corporate regulation across Australia.

To understand this Bill and the package of corporations law Bills it accompanies, it is necessary to consider the history of corporate regulation in Australia over the last 20 years.

In Australia the development of an effective system of corporate regulation has been complicated by our federal system of government. The States and Territories are sovereign entities, possessing the powers and ability to make their own laws, and despite attempts to standardise the relevant legislation, different requirements relating to corporate regulation existed in each State and Territory for many years.

From July 1982 corporate regulation in Australia was based on a cooperative scheme between the States, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth, where substantially uniform legislation applied in all jurisdictions.

Towards the end of 1980s emerging problems in the operation of the cooperative scheme, caused largely by the then Commonwealth Government's refusal to contribute its share to properly fund the operations of the joint State/Commonwealth regulator, meant that the scheme was no longer an effective means of ensuring corporate regulation in a uniform and consistent manner suitable for a changing commercial environment.

Following an attempt by the Commonwealth to unilaterally enact its own Corporations legislation, the Commonwealth, the States and the Northern Territory agreed to establish a new national scheme for the regulation of corporations, companies and securities.

This new scheme commenced operation on 1 January 1991. It is based on the substantive Commonwealth law which applies in the Australian Capital Territory, known as the Corporations Law. This law, as in force from time to time, is applied in each State and the Northern Territory. In South Australia the relevant legislation is the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990*.

In order to create a national scheme certain Commonwealth features were incorporated into the arrangements. These include the enforcement of Corporations Law offences by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), the Australian

Federal Police and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. In addition, the Federal Court was given power to hear matters arising under the Corporations Law of each State through a cross-vesting scheme contained in the Corporations legislation of the Commonwealth and the States. The national scheme is underpinned by Heads of Agreement, which were agreed on 29 June 1990, and the Corporations Agreement, an intergovernmental agreement signed by the States, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth, in September 1997.

The Corporations Agreement sets out the functions, objectives and voting arrangements relating to the administration of the Corporations Law. It establishes the Ministerial Council for Corporations which is constituted by the relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers responsible for the national scheme law. The Ministerial Council is the primary forum where matters relating to corporations, securities and corporate governance are discussed and voted on.

The current scheme, to all intent and purposes, operates on a seamless, national footing. ASIC administers the Corporations Law through regional offices in each jurisdiction. The scheme has worked remarkably well. The parties to the Corporations Agreement have, in general, complied with its spirit and letter, and, apart from issues relating to the resources allocated to ASIC Regional Offices, there has been little discord between the States and the Commonwealth about the operation of the Corporations Law in Australia.

However, difficulties associated with the current system of corporate regulation have been identified by the High Court in two significant cases. The first case was decided in June 1999. In *re Wakim: ex parte McNally* the High Court held by majority that Chapter III of the Commonwealth *Constitution* does not permit State jurisdiction to be conferred on Federal courts. Effectively, this decision removed the jurisdiction of the Federal Court in most States and Territories to resolve Corporations Law matters, unless cases fell within the court's accrued jurisdiction or in certain other circumstances, and it denied litigants a choice of forum for the resolution of such disputes.

The second case was the *Queen v. Hughes*, decided in May 2000. There the High Court held that the conferral of a power coupled with a duty on a Commonwealth officer or authority by a State law must be referable to a Commonwealth head of power. This means that, in certain circumstances, where a Commonwealth authority, such as the Director of Public Prosecutions or ASIC, has a duty under the Corporations Law, that duty must be supported by a head of power in the Commonwealth *Constitution*.

The effect of the *Hughes* decision on the administration of the Corporations Law scheme is questionable. It is the view of this Government that the administrative and enforcement activities of the relevant Commonwealth agencies, in particular ASIC and the DPP, are supported by valid heads of Commonwealth power. However, the decision has created uncertainty in some sections of the media and the business community as to whether the Corporations Law can be effectively enforced. This uncertainty has been relied upon to bring about delays in regulatory and enforcement processes and to provide a basis for challenging ASIC's power to administer the Corporations Law.

This uncertainty, and the subsequent legal challenges, prompted the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General and the Ministerial Council for Corporations to consider alternative constitutional arrangements to place the Corporations Law scheme on a more secure footing.

On 25 August 2000 Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers reached an historic 'in principle' agreement for the States to refer to the Commonwealth Parliament the power to enact the Corporations Law as a Commonwealth law and to make amendments to that law subject to the terms of the Corporations Agreement.

Following this agreement, considerable negotiation over the terms on which the States would refer power occurred. While both the States and the Commonwealth agreed on the matters to be referred, the States were concerned that appropriate protection against misuse of the referred power by the Commonwealth was incorporated into the referral agreement.

On 28 November at a special joint meeting of the Ministerial Council for Corporations and Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, State Ministers agreed on the terms of a referral Bill, and supported the Bill's introduction into the New South Wales Parliament.

On 30 November 2000, the Honourable Attorney-General for New South Wales introduced the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2000*.

Following the introduction of the Bill in New South Wales, further negotiations took place, and, on 21 December 2000, representatives of the Victorian, New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments met to resolve outstanding issues. It was unfortunate that no other State was invited to attend this meeting as these discussions resulted in agreement on the terms on which all States would be asked to refer power.

Ultimately, the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victorian Governments agreed on an amended form of the New South Wales Bill which is largely replicated in the Bill now introduced into this Parliament. The amended New South Wales Bill, was introduced into that State's Legislative Assembly on 7 March this year.

Subsequent discussions involving the remaining States has resulted in an agreement that all States would refer corporations power on the terms agreed by the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victoria. The central component of this agreement is the enactment, by all States, of legislation substantially in the form of the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001*.

The Bill reflects the commitment of the South Australian government to ensure that the uncertainty that now prevails in the business community over the future of corporate regulation in Australia is resolved as quickly as possible. The *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001* firstly enables the Commonwealth Parliament to enact, as Commonwealth laws, the proposed *Corporations Bill 2001* and the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Bill 2001* in the form of the Bills that were tabled in the New South Wales Parliament on 7 March 2001. A copy of the Commonwealth Bills, which constitute the tabled text for the purposes of this Bill, is available in the Parliamentary library for use by Members.

Secondly, the Bill enables the Commonwealth to amend the laws, or regulations made under them, in the future, as long as the amendments are confined to the matters of corporate regulation, the formation of corporations, and the regulation of financial products and services, but only to the extent of making express amendments to the Bills referred to the Commonwealth Parliament.

The Bill provides in clause 1(3) that the Act is not intended to allow for laws to be made pursuant to the amendment reference with the sole or main underlying purpose or object of regulating industrial relations matters. This exclusion is to ensure that the Commonwealth cannot use the referred powers to legislate in the area of industrial relations or to override State laws dealing with industrial relations.

The Bill provides that the reference of power is to terminate five years after the Commonwealth corporations legislation commences, or at an earlier time by proclamation. The States have agreed to give the referral for only five years because the referral of power by the States to the Commonwealth is not a permanent solution to the problems undermining the current scheme. At the request of the States, the Commonwealth has given a firm undertaking to examine long-term solutions to address the problems arising from the decisions of the High Court in *Wakim* and *Hughes*, including constitutional change. Those problems affect a number of intergovernmental legislative schemes. The States now look to the Commonwealth to explore options for constitutional amendment thoroughly and expeditiously, through the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General. It is anticipated that a decision will be made well before the expiry of the five-year period about the holding of a referendum on this matter.

The States can terminate the referral earlier, by proclamation, if, for example, the Commonwealth Parliament makes amendments to the new Corporations Act which go beyond what was envisaged when the referral was made, such as for the purpose of regulating the environment. The Bill also provides for the termination of the power of the Commonwealth to amend the referred laws, by proclamation. However, if the amendment reference only is terminated, the effect of the Commonwealth Corporations Bill is that the State would cease to be part of the new scheme unless all of the States also revoke the reference, giving six months notice of their intention to do so.

This underlines the importance of the Corporations Agreement, which will govern the scope of the referral. The Corporations Agreement is an intergovernmental agreement and in formal terms is not legally binding. However, the States place great weight on it, and have agreed to refer powers in the terms of the Bill before the House on the understanding that the Commonwealth will abide by both the spirit and the letter of the agreement.

The agreement will contain specific provisions to prevent the use of the referred powers for the purpose of regulating industrial relations, the environment or any other subject unanimously determined by the referring States. Subject to certain limitations, the

Commonwealth will be prohibited from using referred power to require persons or bodies to incorporate or operate through corporate structures. The agreement will also ensure that the States are consulted about any amendments made to the Commonwealth Corporations Act, and where the Commonwealth does not have existing constitutional power, that the States must vote on whether to approve or oppose the amendments. In addition, the agreement preserves the rights of the States to make laws that modify the operation of the Corporations Act in relation to their own activities, such as, for example, the regulation of State bodies corporate. The terms of the agreement are still being negotiated among governments, but it is anticipated that the remaining matters will be resolved in the near future.

South Australia has agreed to refer power on the terms negotiated by the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victoria on condition that the Commonwealth be unable to use the amendment reference to require persons or bodies to incorporate except where this is necessary for the regulation of companies, securities or financial products and markets. This limitation on Commonwealth power is, at present, secured by the Corporations Agreement supported by the right to terminate the references as provided for in the Bill. It is the Government's view, however, that the Commonwealth's power in this regard should also be limited by legislation. To this end the Government is negotiating with the Commonwealth and the other States on an amendment to the Bill, to be made at a convenient time once the legislation has commenced, to so limit the Commonwealth's power with respect to incorporation.

It is understood that Bills in similar terms to this Bill will be introduced into all State Parliaments around Australia. It is then envisaged that the Commonwealth Parliament will enact the *Corporations Bill 2001* and the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Bill 2001* using the powers conferred on it by this Bill and its counterparts in other States, so that the new scheme can commence as soon as possible.

Honourable members will appreciate that a number of consequential and transitional amendments to State legislation will need to be dealt with before the new scheme commences. Consequentially, separate Bills for this purpose will be introduced before the commencement of the new scheme.

The *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001*, related State legislation and the enactment by the Commonwealth Parliament of the *Corporations Bill* (Commonwealth) and the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Bill* (Commonwealth) will, with the enactment of similar legislation in all other states, ensure that our national system of corporate regulation is placed on a sound constitutional foundation and reinforce Australia's reputation as a dynamic commercial centre in the Asia-Pacific region.

I commend the bill to the House.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title and purpose of Act

Clause 1 sets out the short title and the purpose of the proposed Act. Clause 1(3) provides that nothing in the proposed Act is intended to enable the making of a law pursuant to the amendment reference with the sole or a main underlying purpose or object of regulating industrial relations matters.

Clause 2: Commencement

Clause 2 provides that the measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

Clause 3: Definitions

Clause 3 defines certain words and expressions used in the proposed Act.

Clause 4: Reference of matters

Clause 4 deals with the references to the Commonwealth Parliament. Clause 4(1) makes the references.

Clause 4(1)(a) in effect refers the text of the current Corporations Law (with appropriate amendments) to the Commonwealth Parliament, and provides for the inclusion of the referred provisions in Acts enacted in the terms, or substantially in the terms, of the tabled text (ie the text of the *Corporations Bill 2001* and the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001*). The expression 'substantially in the terms' of the tabled text will enable minor adjustments to be made to the tabled text.

Clause 4(1)(b) in effect refers matters to the Commonwealth Parliament in connection with the future amendment of the Corporations legislation.

Clause 4(2) makes it clear that the reference of a matter has effect only to the extent that the matter is not otherwise within the legislative power of the Commonwealth Parliament and to the extent that the matter is within the legislative power of the State Parliament.

Clause 4(3) removes a possible argument that one of the references might be limited by the other.

Clause 4(4) makes it clear that the State Parliament envisages that the Corporations legislation can be amended or affected by Commonwealth legislation enacted in reliance on other powers (though this may be the subject of provisions in the Corporations Agreement), that instruments under the Corporations legislation may affect the operation of that legislation otherwise than by express amendment, and that the references are not subject to any condition relating to either of those matters.

Clause 4(5) specifies the period during which a reference has effect.

Clause 5: Termination of references

Clause 5 provides that the references terminate on the fifth anniversary of the commencement of the proposed Corporations legislation, unless a proclamation is made that fixes an earlier or a later date of termination. Clause 5(4) makes it clear that the separate termination of the amendment reference does not affect laws already in place or the making of instruments under laws already in place.

Clause 6: Earlier termination of reference by proclamation

Clause 6 empowers the making of one or more proclamations to reduce the term of the references. Such a proclamation must be published at least six months in advance of the date of termination.

Clause 7: Evidence

Clause 7 provides for the accuracy of a copy of the tabled text containing the proposed Corporations legislation to be certified by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales. Such a certificate is evidence of the accuracy of the tabled text and that the text was in fact tabled as contemplated by the Bill.

Clause 8: Operation of Act

Clause 8 provides that the proposed Act has effect despite any provision of the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990* or of the laws applied by that Act, and avoids a possible argument that section 5 of that Act would otherwise prevent the Bill from affecting the operation of that Act.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

**CORPORATIONS (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS)
BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The purpose of this Bill is to enact ancillary provisions, including transitional provisions, relating to the proposed new corporations legislation to be enacted by the Commonwealth Parliament following references of matters relating to corporations made by the States under section 51(xxxvii) of the Commonwealth Constitution.

The South Australian reference is made under the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001*. That measure refers to the Commonwealth Parliament certain matters relating to corporations, corporate regulation and financial products and services. The Commonwealth proposes to enact, under the powers conferred by these references and other powers available to it, a *Corporations Act 2001* and an *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001*.

This Bill, together with the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001*, the *Corporations (Administrative Arrangements) Bill 2001* and the *Statutes Amendment (Corporations) Bill 2001*, make up the legislative package needed in South Australia for the new corporations arrangements.

I commend this bill to honourable members.

Explanation of clauses

PART 1

PRELIMINARY

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

Clause 2 provides for the proposed Act to come into operation immediately before the new Commonwealth Corporations Act.

Commencement at this time is necessary to ensure an effective transition to the new corporations arrangements.

Clause 3: Definitions

Clause 3 sets out definitions of terms used in the proposed Act.

Clause 4: Corresponding provision

Clause 4 sets out rules for determining whether provisions of old and new legislation are corresponding provisions for the purposes of the proposed Act.

Clause 5: Operation of Act

Clause 5 provides that the proposed Act has effect despite any provision of the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990* or of the laws applied by that Act, and avoids a possible argument that section 5 of that Act would otherwise prevent the Bill from affecting the operation of that Act.

PART 2

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Clause 6: National scheme laws

Clause 6 limits the application of the national scheme laws (the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990*, the Corporations Law of South Australia and the ASIC Law of South Australia) to matters arising before the beginning of the new corporations arrangements or matters arising out of such matters to the extent that those matters are not dealt with by the new Commonwealth legislation or the laws that pre-dated the national scheme laws in South Australia (the operative scheme laws).

Clause 7: Effect of section 6

Clause 7 contains provisions dealing with the effect of clause 6.

Subclause (1) applies to the limitation of operation of the national scheme laws effected by clause 6, the provisions of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901* of the Commonwealth that apply on a repeal. Thus all accrued rights and liabilities under the national scheme laws are protected and legal proceedings in respect of those rights and liabilities may be commenced or continued. The Commonwealth provisions have been chosen so that a similar result is achieved in all jurisdictions moving to the new arrangements.

Subclause (2) cancels certain accrued rights and liabilities under the national scheme laws where substituted rights and liabilities are being provided under the new Commonwealth legislation.

Subclause (3) terminates certain legal proceedings commenced under the national scheme laws where the new Commonwealth legislation has the effect of deeming equivalent proceedings to have been brought under the new legislation in the same court.

Subclause (4) ensures that a person does not have to pay in respect of the same matter a fee or levy already paid under the national scheme laws.

Subclause (5) defines 'pre-commencement right or liability' for the purposes of subclause (2).

Subclause (6) ensures that the limitation of operation of the national scheme laws effected by clause 6 does not lead to the revival of operation of laws previously superseded by the national scheme laws.

Clause 8: Certain provisions of State law taken to operate despite national scheme law

Subclause (1) clarifies the continuing operation of existing State laws that are inconsistent with the new Commonwealth legislation by overcoming any argument against the effective operation of those laws based on non-compliance with section 5 of the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990*.

Subclause (2) ensures the non-application of the new Commonwealth legislation to a matter if a previous State corporations law did not apply to the matter.

Subclause (3) allows regulations to be made disapplying subclause (1) or (2) in specified circumstances.

Subclause (4) provides a test of inconsistency for the purposes of subclause (1).

Subclause (5) preserves the operation of section 6 of the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990*.

Subclause (6) defines 'matter' and 'relevant law of the State' for the purposes of the clause.

Clause 9: Court proceedings and orders

Clause 9 provides for the continuance of certain proceedings despite the cessation of operation of the national scheme laws and for certain court orders to cease to have effect.

Clause 10: Existing rules of court continue to have effect

Clause 10 saves existing court rules made under the national scheme laws.

Clause 11: References to old/new corporations legislation or old/new ASIC legislation

Clause 11 deals with the construction of references to corporations legislation.

Subclause (1), in conjunction with the Table in the Schedule, construes references in Acts, instruments made under Acts and laws applying as State laws to the national scheme laws as including references to the new Commonwealth legislation.

Subclause (2) enables regulations to be made providing for the non-application of subclause (1) in certain cases or for subclause (1) to operate in certain cases on an exclusive, rather than an inclusive, basis.

Subclause (3) excepts certain laws from the operation of subclause (1).

Subclause (4) enables regulations to be made construing references in Acts, instruments made under Acts and laws applying as State laws.

Subclause (5) provides that express references to the new Commonwealth legislation include, in connection with past events, circumstances or things, references to the corresponding old corporations legislation of this and other jurisdictions that participated in the national scheme.

Subclause (6) enables regulations to be made providing for the non-application of subclause (5) in certain cases or for subclause (5) to operate in certain cases to construe a reference as a reference to the old corporations legislation of a specified jurisdiction only.

Clause 12: References to companies incorporation in a State or Territory

Clause 12 deals with the construction of references to certain companies in Acts, instruments made under Acts and laws applying as State laws.

Subclause (1) construes references to companies incorporated or registered under the national scheme laws as references to companies taken to be registered under the new Commonwealth legislation in Victoria or other relevant jurisdiction.

Subclause (2) construes references to foreign companies.

Subclause (3) construes references to the jurisdiction of incorporation of a company as references to the State or Territory in which the company is taken to be registered under the new Commonwealth legislation.

Subclause (4) enables regulations to be made providing for the non-application of subclause (1), (2) or (3) in certain cases or for subclause (1), (2) or (3) to operate in certain cases on an inclusive, rather than an exclusive, basis.

PART 3

APPLICATION OF COMMONWEALTH CORPORATIONS LEGISLATION TO STATE MATTERS

Clause 13: Definitions

Clause 13 defines certain terms used in the Part.

Clause 14: State provisions to which this Part applies

Clause 14 facilitates the application of the new Commonwealth legislation for the purposes of State laws in circumstances where it has no application of its own force. The effect is not to extend the operation of the Commonwealth legislation but to enable it to be applied as State law. The clause enables the use of a legislative device (a declaratory provision) which will result in either the whole, or a specified portion, of the new Commonwealth legislation being applied for the purposes of State law.

Clause 15: Effect of declaratory provisions

Clause 15 sets out the effect of particular declaratory provisions.

Clause 16: Modifications to applied law

Clause 16 makes certain modifications of the new Commonwealth legislation for the purposes of its application under this Part and enables further modifications to be made under this Act or the Act containing the declaratory provision.

Clause 17: Conferral of functions on ASIC

Clause 17 limits the circumstances in which a function may be conferred on the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) by means of a declaratory provision and ensures that, even where a function is conferred on it, ASIC is not under a duty to perform the function.

Clause 18: Conferral of functions or duties on State Courts

Clause 18 translates references in applied laws to courts as references to the Supreme Court or other specified State court.

Clause 19: Implied application of regulations and other provisions of Corporations legislation

Clause 19 applies automatically certain other provisions of the new Commonwealth legislation where a declaratory provision is used but enables the application of these additional provisions to be modified by regulations under this Act.

Clause 20: Proceedings for offences

Clause 20 deals with prosecutions under applied laws, including the procedure to be followed and the maximum penalties available.

Clause 21: Application of Corporations legislation by other means

Clause 21 makes it clear that this Part does not provide an exhaustive code of how the new Commonwealth legislation might be applied as State laws.

PART 4 GENERAL

Clause 22: Power to amend certain statutory instruments

Clause 22 enables regulations to be made under this Act consequentially amending other statutory instruments.

Clause 23: Rules of the Supreme Court

Clause 23 provides a rule-making power for the Supreme Court.

Clause 24: ASIC has certain functions and powers

Clause 24 enables the Minister, or a person authorised by the Minister, to enter into an agreement or arrangement with ASIC for functions to be performed or powers to be exercised by it as an agent of the State.

Clause 25: Outstanding property held by CAC

It has come to light that the Corporate Affairs Commission still holds in South Australia certain property of de-registered companies under the *Companies Act 1962*, which should have been previously transferred to ASIC under previous arrangements. This clause contains a mechanism to transfer the property to ASIC.

Clause 26: Regulations

Clause 25 enables regulations to be made for the purposes of the proposed Act. The regulations may modify the operation of the transitional provisions contained in Part 2 and may facilitate the operation of State laws under the regime provided by the new Commonwealth legislation.

PART 5 AMENDMENT OF CERTAIN ACTS

Clause 27: Amendment of Companies (Application of Laws) Act 1982

Clause 28: Amendment of Securities Industry (Application of Laws) Act 1981

Clause 29: Amendment of Futures Industry (Application of Laws) Act 1986

Clause 30: Amendment of Jurisdiction of Courts (Cross-vesting) Act 1987

Clause 31: Amendment of Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990

These clauses make consequential amendments to certain other Acts associated with the new scheme.

SCHEDULE Table

The Schedule contains a table of reference translations for the purposes of clause 11.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

CORPORATIONS (ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS) BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): 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 forms part of the same set of reforms as the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2001* and serves an ancillary purpose.

In the High Court decision of *The Queen v Hughes*, doubt was cast on the exercise of certain powers by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission ('ASIC'), the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and other Commonwealth agencies. Many or all actions by these Commonwealth authorities are likely to be valid, because they could be supported by the Commonwealth's legislative powers. However, the validity of each action can only be determined on a case by case basis, having regard to the particular circumstances of each action.

The difficulties arising from *Hughes'* case will not arise once the corporations legislation becomes a Commonwealth enactment.

The *Corporations (Administrative Actions) Bill 2001* will ensure that the rights of all persons are as though administrative actions taken by the Commonwealth bodies had been validly taken.

Such arrangements are vital to ensure that the multitude of activities undertaken by ASIC, from the incorporation of companies to the making of decisions to prosecute offenders, are not vulnerable to challenge.

The Bill also extends to actions taken by Commonwealth bodies under the Cooperative Scheme legislation that preceded the current Corporations law.

The Bill applies to any administrative action of an officer of the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth authority, taken under the corporations legislation, that might be invalid because the action was taken pursuant to a power or function which was conferred by a State Act, when the power or function could not have been conferred by a valid law of the Commonwealth.

The Bill provides that those actions are taken to have the same force and effect as if they had been taken by a State authority or an officer of the State.

The Bill therefore overcomes any doubts about the validity of administrative actions by Commonwealth authorities or officers under the current and previous schemes. Other jurisdictions propose to introduce similar legislation to achieve a uniform effect.

The Bill preserves rights and liabilities potentially affected by invalid administrative actions, and specifically confirms the validity of the registration or incorporation of companies under the current and previous schemes.

I commend the bill to the House.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 1 sets out the name (also called the short title) of the proposed Act.

Clause 2: Commencement

Clause 2 provides for the commencement of the proposed Act immediately before the proposed new Corporations legislation of the Commonwealth comes into operation.

Clause 3: Definitions

Clause 3 defines certain words and expressions used in the proposed Act. The expression *invalid administrative action* is defined as an administrative action that was taken before the commencement of the proposed Act by a Commonwealth authority or officer pursuant to a function or power conferred under the current or previous scheme (the *relevant function or power*), and that is invalid because its conferral on the Commonwealth authority or officer is not supported by a head of power in the Commonwealth Constitution.

Clause 4: Application and operation of Act

Clause 4 deals with the application and operation of the proposed Act. Clause 4 (1) provides that the proposed Act binds the Crown. Clause 4 (2) provides that the proposed Act has effect despite any provision of the *Corporations (South Australia) Act 1990* or of the laws applied by that Act, and avoids a possible argument that section 5 of that Act would otherwise prevent the Bill from affecting the operation of that Act. Clause 4 (3) provides that the proposed Act extends to affect rights and liabilities that are or have been the subject of legal proceedings. Clause 4 (4) provides that the proposed Act does not affect rights and liabilities arising between parties to legal proceedings heard and finally determined before the commencement of the proposed Act to the extent to which they arise from, or are affected by, an invalid administrative action.

Clause 5: Legal effect of invalid administrative actions

Clause 5 provides that every invalid administrative action has (and is deemed always to have had) the same force and effect as it would have had if it had been taken by a duly authorised State authority or officer of the State. The clause does not in terms validate administrative actions taken by Commonwealth authorities and officers, but rather attaches to the actions retrospectively the same force and effect as would have ensued had the actions been taken by State authorities and officers (a similar distinction was drawn in *The Queen v Humby, Ex parte Rooney* (1973) 129 CLR 231).

Clause 6: Rights and liabilities declared in certain cases

Clause 6 complements clause 5 and does not affect the generality of clause 5. The clause declares that the rights and liabilities of all persons are (and always have been) for all purposes the same as if every invalid administrative action had been taken by a duly authorised State authority or officer of the State.

Clause 7: Registration or incorporation of companies

Clause 7 complements clauses 5 and 6 and does not affect the generality of those clauses. The clause specifically declares that clauses 5 and 6 extend to the registration or incorporation of

companies. The formation of corporations was held by the High Court in *The State of New South Wales v The Commonwealth of Australia* (1990) 169 CLR 482 to lie outside the legislative competence of the Commonwealth Parliament.

Clause 8: This Act to apply to administrative actions as purportedly in force from time to time

Clause 8 ensures that the proposed Act does not reinstate administrative actions that, since the action was taken, have been affected by another action or process. For example, if a decision has been altered on review, the proposed Act does not reinstate the decision in its original form. The Bill applies to the decision as it is affected by later actions from time to time.

Clause 9: Corresponding authorities or officers

Clause 9 provides that it is immaterial for the purposes of the proposed Act that a Commonwealth authority or officer does not have a counterpart in the State, or that the powers and functions of State authorities or officers do not correspond to the powers and functions of Commonwealth authorities or officers.

Clause 10: Act not to give rise to liability against the State

Clause 10 provides that the proposed Act does not give rise to any liability against the State.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (CORPORATIONS) BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

The referral of the 'corporations power' to the Commonwealth, and the enactment of the new corporations legislation as a law of the Commonwealth, means that it is necessary or convenient to make a number of consequential amendments to South Australian legislation. These amendments are contained in the *Statutes Amendment (Corporations) Bill 2001*.

Generally speaking, this Bill—

- (a) amends provisions referring to the *Corporations Law*, or any part of it, so that they refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, or the relevant part of it;
- (b) corrects references to particular provisions of the *Corporations Law* so that they are read in future as references to the correct provisions of the *Corporations Act* (this includes amendments consequential on the *Corporate Law Economic Reform Program Act 1999* of the Commonwealth (CLERP));
- (c) makes similar amendments and corrections in relation to certain references to the *Companies Act 1962* and the *Companies (South Australia) Code*;
- (d) in accordance with Part 1.1A of the proposed *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, continues certain existing exemptions, exceptions and exclusions from the operation of the *Corporations Law*;
- (e) re-enacts provisions in Acts that apply particular provisions of the *Corporations Law* as if they were part of those Acts, so that the provisions continue to apply as State law;
- (f) makes other miscellaneous adjustments necessary for the new corporations scheme.

Appropriate transitional arrangements are also made by the *Corporations (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2001* (and that Bill will deal with matters that are not otherwise dealt with by this Bill).

It is anticipated that further consequential amendments will be made after the commencement of the Commonwealth legislation as part of an on-going process to up-date the statute book in relation to *Corporations Law* matters.

I commend this bill to the House.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation on a day or days to be fixed by a proclamation or proclamations. It is expected that a number of the amendments will be brought into operation just before

the commencement of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth (when the *Corporations Law* effectively becomes a law of the Commonwealth). It is necessary to exclude the potential operation of section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1915* (especially in connection with certain amendments contained in Act Number 68 of 1998, and the proposed amendment to the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2001*.)

Clause 3: Interpretation

A reference in the measure to the principal Act is a reference to the Act referred to in the heading in which the reference occurs.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 56—Statement and account to be delivered

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 65—Administrator to pay over money and deliver property to Public Trustee

These amendments alter provisions referring to the *Companies Act 1962* (or a corresponding previous enactment) so that they refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

The definition of 'company' in the principal Act currently refers to a company incorporated under a law of this State or another State or Territory. The definition will now refer to a company registered under the Commonwealth Act.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 23—Accounts

This amendment changes a reference to the *Corporations Law* to a reference to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 27—Winding up of the Corporation

This amendment updates a reference and cross-reference. It is also necessary to revise a provision relating to the winding up of the Corporation so as to now apply relevant provisions of the new Commonwealth Act as if they were provisions constituting a law of the State.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

These amendments update references to the new Commonwealth Act. Any modifications to applied provisions of the Commonwealth Act will be modifications within the meaning of Part 3 of the *Corporations (Ancillary Provisions) Act 2001*, and so section 3(5) can be repealed.

Clause 10: Insertion of s. 3A

It is proposed to provide expressly that an incorporated association is not subject to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth (or to the ASIC Act). (Other provisions of the principal Act will apply certain provisions of the Commonwealth Act as a law of the State.)

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 35—Accounts to be kept

Clause 12: Amendment of s. 37—Provisions relating to auditors acting under this Division

These amendments alter provisions referring to the *Corporations Law* so that they refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 13: Substitution of ss. 40A and 40B

Clause 14: Amendment of s. 41—Winding up of incorporated association

Clause 15: Amendment of s. 41D—Disclosure to creditors on voluntary winding up

These provisions apply certain provisions of the Commonwealth Act as a law of the State, subject to necessary or appropriate modifications.

Clause 16: Amendment of s. 41E—Penalty for contravention of applied provisions

Clause 17: Amendment of s. 49AA—Interpretation and application

Clause 18: Amendment of s. 49AF—Frauds by officers

These amendments alter provisions referring to the *Corporations Law* so that they refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth (as applied by provisions of the principal Act).

Clause 19: Amendment of s. 61—Oppressive or unreasonable acts

The amendment will apply certain provisions of the new Commonwealth Act as a law of the State, subject to necessary or appropriate modifications.

Clause 20: Amendment of s. 3—Regulations for the merging of banks

Section 3(4) currently refers to the Minister administering the *Corporations Law*. It would be inappropriate for this to be 'translated' to the Minister administering the *Corporations Act 2001*, an Act of the Commonwealth. In the circumstances, it is best to repeal the subsection.

Clause 21: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

These amendments update certain references.

Clause 22: Amendment of s. 6—Agreement with ASIC

It is intended to make it clear that the law of the State is not imposing any duty on ASIC that cannot be imposed by State law (based on the decision in *Hughes*).

Clause 23: Amendment of s. 12—Notification of changes in particulars

Clause 24: Amendment of s. 15—Reinstatement of registration

Clause 25: Amendment of s. 17—Certain convicted offenders not to use business names

Clause 26: Amendment of s. 19—Invitations to make deposits or loans

These amendments update certain references.

Clause 27: Amendment of s. 18—Accounts and audit

Section 18(3) of the principal Act currently refers to an auditor licensed under the *Companies Act 1962*. This is being updated to a reference to a registered company auditor.

Clause 28: Substitution of s. 78

Section 78 of the principal Act currently excludes community corporations from the application of the *Corporations Law*. It is necessary to revise this provision so as to now exclude the operation of the new Commonwealth Act.

Clause 29: Amendment of s. 121—Interpretation

Clause 30: Amendment of s. 138

These amendments update certain references.

Clause 31: Amendment of s. 4—Definitions

Clause 32: Substitution of Division 4 of Part 1

Clause 33: Amendment of s. 22—Existing body corporate can be registered

Clause 34: Amendment of s. 65—Representatives of bodies corporate

Clause 35: Amendment of s. 88—Orders that the Supreme Court may make

Clause 36: Amendment of s. 130—Cancellation of membership prohibited in certain circumstances

Clause 37: Amendment of s. 134—Interest on deposits and debentures

Clause 38: Amendment of s. 209—Disqualified persons

Clause 39: Amendment of s. 215—Meaning of 'officer'

Clause 40: Substitution of s. 223

Clause 41: Amendment of s. 233—Requirements for accounts and accounting records

Clause 42: Repeal of s. 235

Clause 43: Amendment of s. 257—Subordinated debt

Clause 44: Substitution of s. 258

Clause 45: Substitution of s. 261

Clause 46: Amendment of s. 270—Acquisition and disposal of assets

Clause 47: Amendment of s. 281—Unlisted companies to provide list of shareholders

Clause 48: Amendment of s. 285—Share offers to which this Division applies

Clause 49: Amendment of s. 289—Announcement of proposed takeovers concerning proposed Company

Clause 50: Amendment of s. 290—Additional disclosure requirements for offers involving conversion to company

Clause 51: Amendment of s. 301—Application for transfer

Clause 52: Amendment of s. 308—Stamp duty

Clause 53: Amendment of s. 309—Methods of winding up

Clause 54: Amendment of s. 310—Winding up on Commission's certificate

Clause 55: Substitution of s. 311

Clause 56: Amendment of s. 315—Liquidator vacancy may be filled by Commission

Clause 57: Substitution of Division 4 of Part 12

Clause 58: Repeal of s. 332

Clause 59: Substitution of s. 333

Clause 60: Amendment of s. 339—Application of Corporations Act to person appointed

Clause 61: Amendment of s. 347—Provisions for facilitating reconstructions and mergers

Clause 62: Amendment of s. 354—Disposal of consideration for shares compulsorily acquired

Clause 63: Substitution of s. 358

Clause 64: Amendment of s. 396—Privilege

Clause 65: Amendment of s. 402—Privilege

Clause 66: Amendment of Schedule 2

Clause 67: Amendment of Schedule 3

Clause 68: Amendment of Schedule 4

These amendments are all concerned with the interaction between the principal Act and the Corporations Act, as it may apply to co-operatives. Generally speaking, co-operatives are not to be subject to the Corporations Act (as is the case now in relation to the *Corporations Law*). However, it is recognised that certain aspects of the Commonwealth Act should apply to co-operatives (see section 8 of the existing Act and proposed new section 9). Certain provisions of the Commonwealth Act are also specifically applied to co-operatives by the provisions of the principal Act. In revising these provisions, the opportunity has been taken to update cross-references, where appropriate.

Clause 69: Amendment of s. 1—Short title and purpose of Act
This amendment is intended to revise clause 1 of the principal Act to make it clear that the amendment reference is not intended to enable the making of laws with the sole or main underlying purpose or object to restricting the practice of a particular profession or to trade to corporations or their employees, subject to certain specified exceptions.

Clause 70: Transitional provision
It will be made clear that the amendment to the *Corporations (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2001* is not intended to affect any law (or instrument) made before the amendment comes into force.

Clause 71: Substitution of s. 86
Section 86 of the principal Act provides that the *Companies Act 1962* does not apply to the Lyrup Village Association. It is necessary to revise this provision so as to now exclude the operation of the new Commonwealth Act.

Clause 72: Amendment of s. 3—Definitions
These amendments ensure that certain provisions are consistent with the scheme under the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth to establish a 'nexus' with the State.

Clause 73: Amendment of s. 32—Service of notices
This amendment updates a service provision in connection with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 74: Insertion of s. 6A
The *Corporations (Administrative Actions) Act 2001* is to extend in its operation to administrative actions of APRA and ASIC under this Act.

It is also intended to make it clear that the law of the State is not imposing any duties that cannot be imposed by State law (based on the decision in *Hughes*).

Clause 75: Amendment of s. 33—Matters in relation to deregistered financial bodies and societies
It is necessary to update a reference, and to apply Part 9.7 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth as a law of the State.

Clause 76: Amendment of Schedule 1
These amendments alter provisions so that they will now be consistent with the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 77: Amendment of s. 5—Establishment of the Trust
Section 5(5) of the principal Act currently excludes the Trust from the application of the *Corporations Law*. It is necessary to revise this provision so as to now exclude the application of the new Commonwealth Act.

Clause 78: Amendment of s. 78—Service of notices
This amendment updates a service provision in connection with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 79: Amendment of s. 14—Functions and powers of the Institute
This amendment alters a reference to the *Companies (South Australia) Code* so that the relevant provision will refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 80: Amendment of s. 18—Constitution of trust
Section 18(4) of the principal Act currently excludes a trust from the application of the *Corporations Law*. It is necessary to revise this provision so as to now exclude the application of the Commonwealth Act.

Clause 81: Amendment of s. 5—Interpretation
Clause 82: Amendment of s. 11—Management of Society's affairs
Clause 83: Substitution of s. 30

These amendments alter provisions so that they will now be consistent with the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 84: Repeal of s. 113
This amendment will repeal an out-dated section.
Clause 85: Amendment of s. 114—Premises of body corporate used for unlawful gaming
These amendments will revise certain definitions which currently rely on references to the *Companies Act 1962*.

Clause 86: Amendment of s. 87—Obligations in respect of take-over of corporations

This amendment alters a reference to the *Companies (South Australia) Code* so that the relevant provision will refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 87: Amendment of s. 31—Definitions
These amendments will provide consistency with the terminology now used under the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 88: Amendment of s. 22 of Sched.—Resignation and termination

Clause 89: Amendment of s. 64F of Sched.—Resignation and termination of Tasmanian member

Clause 90: Amendment of s. 70 of Sched.—Application of funds on winding up

Clause 91: Amendment of s. 77A of Sched.—Immunity of NEMMCO and network service providers

These amendments alter references to the *Corporations Law* so that the relevant provisions will refer in future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 92: Amendment of s. 74—Certain convicted offenders not to carry on business as general partners

This amendment will update a provision so as to now include a reference to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 93: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation
Clause 94: Amendment of s. 18B—Grouping of corporations

Clause 95: Amendment of s. 18D—Grouping of commonly controlled businesses

Clause 96: Amendment of s. 18I—Exclusion of persons from groups

These amendments will provide consistency with the terminology now used under the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 97: Amendment of s. 63—Service

This amendment updates a service provision in connection with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 98: Amendment of s. 35—Audit of accounts of the Auditor-General

This amendment alters a reference to the *Companies (South Australia) Code* so that the relevant provision will refer in the future to the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 99: Substitution of s. 6

Section 6 of the principal Act currently excludes a registered housing co-operative from the application of the *Corporations Law*, except as otherwise provided by the Act or regulations made under the Act. The new section will exclude the application of the Commonwealth Act. However, the regulations will be able to declare a matter relating to a registered housing co-operative to be a matter to which the new Commonwealth Act applies as a law of the State, subject to any prescribed modification.

Clause 100: Substitution of s. 59
Clause 101: Amendment of s. 73—Power to compromise with creditors

Clause 102: Amendment of s. 74—Winding up
Clause 103: Substitution of s. 82

Certain matters currently under the *Corporations Law* will continue to apply specifically to registered housing co-operatives, but now by the application of the new Commonwealth Act.

Clause 104: Amendment of Schedule

This amendment alters a provision so that it will now be consistent with the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 105: Amendment of s. 2—Interpretation

Clause 106: Amendment of s. 3C—Special rules for determining location of certain forms of intangible property

Clause 107: Amendment of s. 31B—Interpretation

Clause 108: Amendment of s. 60A—Value of property conveyed or transferred

Clause 109: Amendment of s. 71—Instruments chargeable as conveyances operating as voluntary dispositions inter vivos

Clause 110: Amendment of s. 71E—Transactions otherwise than by dutiable instrument

Clause 111: Amendment of s. 81C—Duty paid on one mortgage may be denoted as having been paid on another mortgage

Clause 112: Amendment of s. 81D—Refinancing of primary producers' loans

Clause 113: Amendment of s. 90A—Interpretation
Clause 114: Amendment of s. 90G—Transactions in South Australian securities on U.K. stock exchange

Clause 115: Amendment of s. 90T—Application of Division

Clause 116: Amendment of s. 91—Interpretation

Clause 117: Amendment of Schedule 2

These amendments are all intended to ensure that relevant provisions of the principal Act will be consistent with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 118: Amendment of s. 86—Service

This amendment updates a service provision in connection with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Clause 119: Amendment of s. 16—Power of trustee company acting in representative capacity to hold its own shares, etc.

Clause 120: Amendment of s. 19—Accounts, audits and information for investor, etc., in common funds

Clause 121: Amendment of s. 20—Information for prospective investors in common funds

These amendments are all intended to ensure that relevant provisions of the principal Act will be consistent with the new *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 31 May. Page 1741.)

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Last Thursday, the Olsen government brought down its final budget before the election. It was the Liberals' eighth budget, and it is the culmination of two full parliamentary terms of state government by a party that says it prides itself on its financial management. It is what they have been working towards, we are told, for eight years. South Australians were told to expect this budget to deliver an extra \$2 million a day—more than \$750 million a year—in additional spending on our hospitals and schools: that is what was promised by Premier Olsen. South Australians could even have looked forward to a debt free budget, we were told. That was the implication of the government's statements when it privatised ETSA and a string of other assets which the people owned but which were sold without their permission.

After all, \$2 million a day was the interest on the total state debt. South Australians might have expected an announcement that they were set to receive the cheapest electricity prices in the country: that is what John Olsen told them they would get through his introduction of the national electricity market. He said that South Australia had been made the lead legislator in the nation to win South Australia a special advantage.

South Australians would have been looking forward to a big drop in unemployment to a rate no worse than the national average. That is what we were told. John Olsen had said that we would be there by now. What did South Australians receive in the budget after eight years of Liberal government? They learnt that there were no new public hospitals beds, no cuts to waiting lists and no relief for our accident and emergency departments. They learnt that the money for our education system would be cut in real terms. They learnt also that we have a wafer thin budget surplus with debt forecast to rise. That is right: this Liberal budget forecasts an increase in state debt. Far from having the cheapest electricity in the country, we will still have the most expensive power in the national market. The budget speech did not even contain the words 'electricity prices', much less any plan to tackle the No. 1 economic threat facing business and jobs in this state.

As for jobs, the outlook is gloomy to say the least. Since July last year we have lost 11 000 jobs, and this budget predicts 1 per cent unemployment growth—not enough to significantly cut our jobless rate. This budget pronounces the government's only policy—privatisation—a failure. After

eight years of government, this budget proves that the Olsen Liberals are an almost total failure. This budget shows them to be out of touch with the electorate, and with the wrong priorities. Moreover, it failed to offer any vision or hope for the future. The very budget slogan highlights that—it itself is an admission of failure. Last year, the Treasurer said:

South Australian families now want to reap the rewards for their sacrifice—and they will.

In other words, he was set to deliver all the ETSA goodies. But one year later, the cupboard is bare. This year, after years of being told that we were in the home straight and a new dawn was coming, the Treasurer says of his budget that the budget turns a page. Turns it to what—another page, just like the one before? Of course, the promise is more of the same—that is, more privatisations and more spending on the wrong things, the wrong priorities.

The re-election of a state Liberal government would mean the privatisation of the Lotteries Commission and of more of our public hospitals—in fact, everything the Liberals have not sold so far. I am sure that John Olsen will deny these plans. He will say they are lies. He will conduct a smear campaign against anyone who will suggest it in the lead-up to the election.

I remember what was said about me when I dared to reveal in the lead-up to the 1997 election that the Olsen government would sell ETSA after the election. I was called a liar. But then again John Olsen was the man who promised South Australians before the 1997 election that he would never, ever sell ETSA. Reaction to his latest budget proves that no-one believes this government any more.

What do the Liberals expect after eight years of broken promises? But government should not be this way, and it does not have to be. Good government shares the priorities of the community that it is meant to represent. Good government shares the people's priorities, it shares their values. Good government does not promise one thing before an election and cynically do the opposite three months after the poll.

During the course of this speech in reply to the budget, I will outline some of the measures that a good government—a Labor government—would take and how Labor would have approached this budget differently. Our full, costed policies will be announced in the lead-up to the election at the same time that the government will be announcing its election policies.

This budget is a nine volume admission of the failure of privatisation at any cost as public policy. The one and only policy that the Olsen government has ever had is the outworn policy of privatisation. Today, everyone—including people who vote Liberal, and even including people who are members of the Olsen cabinet—knows that the privatisation of electricity, which the Premier regards as his greatest achievement, has failed the people of this state. Today South Australians are paying the price of John Olsen's power privatisation, because power privatisation has failed on every count:

- it has saddled businesses with price rises of up to 100 per cent that will cost jobs;
- it has failed to guarantee secure and reliable supply of electricity for South Australia;
- it has failed to protect families against the power price crisis that they face from the beginning of 2003; and
- it has failed to produce a social dividend for our schools and hospitals, and this budget itself finally attests to that fact.

This budget shows clearly that there is no ETSA privatisation bonanza for South Australians, even though John Olsen and Rob Lucas repeatedly promised that there would be. The only bonanza from the ETSA sale is for the private companies who now own what once every South Australian owned.

This government has sold South Australian taxpayer owned assets to the value of \$7.45 billion, and debt has been reduced by \$5.2 billion. However, this government has spent more than \$1 billion in redundancy packages to cut about 16 000 jobs from the public sector, and that program continues. So much for privatisation increasing jobs.

All these figures underscore the fact that there has been no ETSA lease funding bonanza. South Australians were definitely promised the world from the ETSA sale. In this budget speech the Treasurer accused others of talking about a magic pudding. The only people who ever claimed to have a financial magic pudding were John Olsen and his Liberal ministry, and it was ETSA privatisation. It promised that the ETSA privatisation would wipe out debt altogether, supply an extra \$2 million a day for our hospitals, schools and everything else, and give us cheaper power all at once.

Each and every Liberal minister stood up in this House and answered questions from Liberal backbenchers about what they would do with an extra \$2 million a day. Labor predicted no financial bonanza. Labor predicted less income in the long term with the loss of the state's biggest income producing asset, more expensive power and fewer jobs. It is a matter of record that Labor has been proven right.

South Australian businesses are left facing 90 per cent power increases from 1 July this year. Every household in this state is set to face massive increases from 1 January 2003. Now Labor welcomes the move in this budget that cuts payroll tax by \$25 million and lifts concessions for older Australians. But this budget offers no relief whatsoever to businesses—many of which do not pay payroll tax in any case—from our spiralling electricity costs. The benefit of those tax cuts will be swamped by the impact of these appalling power price rises. The seniors concessions will be swamped by similar increases from January 2003 unless action is taken. Yet there is nothing in this budget to show that the Olsen/Lucas government is doing anything serious to address this crisis. It is not just a power crisis; it is a crisis that will cost South Australian jobs.

When Labor released its 15 point plan for electricity, the Treasurer said that it was a photocopy of the government's policy. If that was so, we would expect to see some specific budgetary commitment to greater interconnection with New South Wales. But where is it? Had this been a Labor budget, there would have been a commitment to ensure the construction of an electricity interconnector to New South Wales to give this state access to cheaper base-load power from the eastern states. A commitment to get this interconnector built—regulated or unregulated—should have been the keynote of this year's budget speech, but it was not mentioned at all. Electricity was not mentioned at all. Electricity prices were not mentioned at all. Of course, a Labor government would not have sought to defer vital projects like the Riverlink interconnector. Such an interconnector would now have been up and running under Labor. That was a commitment to saving and creating jobs.

The budget's silence on electricity prices is deafening. It is the perfect illustration of what Labor has been saying for years—that the Olsen government was too focused on privatising our electricity system to actually run it properly.

If that is not the case, why has it taken so long for the Olsen government to say anything at all about changing the NEM rules relating to gaming by generators that are making super profits thanks to privatisation?

Why has it taken them so long to seek look-back clauses from AGL or to revise the hike in the maximum wholesale price of power? The Olsen government actually supported the price doubling from \$5 000 an hour to \$10 000 an hour from next April, and only now does the Premier say he regrets doing so. Why did the Olsen government write to NEMMCO in 1998 seeking a deferral of the Riverlink interconnector?

The Olsen government has claimed a benefit to this budget from the privatisation of ETSA of \$100 million. That is the Olsen government's claim, one that Labor by no means accepts. How much of that theoretical saving has been swallowed up by higher electricity prices for the 300 government sites joining the contestable market after 1 July? Those sites are our public hospitals, our largest state schools and major public buildings. Once again, the budget appears silent on this issue.

However, there were some sections of the budget that did please members of the Labor Party. There is a prediction of a surplus. Labor was pleased to see a cash based surplus for 2001-02 and for the other three out years. However, \$194 million has been brought in from the South Australian Asset Management Corporation to prop up the budget. These are the proceeds of asset sales, which the Brown-Baker Liberal administration said would only be used to retire debt. They are now being used to prop up current spending in this budget. There is also the use of \$110 million from the South Australian Government Financing Authority to hold up spending in this budget.

That said, the government has stated that this is a surplus budget. The government says that the settings it has outlined represent fiscal repair and an improving budget position. In the coming election campaign, Labor will be accepting this claim of the Olsen-Lucas government. What the government tells the public is the true financial position Labor will use and accept as the starting point and basis of its election promises. In making undertakings to the electorate, Labor has no alternative but to accept the assurance given to it by the government in this budget.

In the meantime, Labor will be doing two things over the period up to and including the election. First, we will be announcing the principles underlying the financial and budgetary policies of a future Labor government, as well as our key fiscal and budgetary pledges to South Australia. That statement will outline Labor's commitment, not just to fiscal responsibility but to an explicit charter supported by legislation requiring the government of the day to meet the highest standards of transparency and accountability. Everyone knows how bad the quality and level of financial disclosure has been under the Liberal government. It has claimed that a healthy budget position existed when it was politically expedient and then said there was a budget crisis when attempting to justify the privatisation of key assets without a mandate from South Australians.

South Australians have a right to expect accurate information on the state's financial position, allowing proper understanding of movements in revenue and expenditure, the impact of changes in spending, and how they are to be funded. Under Labor they will get just that. Labor's financial responsibility statement, to be announced in full later by the shadow Treasurer, will contain among other things:

- an explicit financial strategy. Labor will be committed to providing balanced budgets each year.
- enhanced public accountability by ensuring budget processes allocate and spend taxpayers' money according to explicit criteria and clear social and economic priorities.
- carefully targeted recurrent and capital expenditure and the assessment of spending proposals against appropriate benchmarks.

There will also be a mid-year review of the budget.

South Australians will be able to understand where there have been variations from budget estimates and why, and whether it is due to policy changes, economic conditions, parameter changes or changes in estimation. Secondly, we will be providing fully costed detail in the election campaign of all our funding promises. I outline now the nature of the parameters that will govern those firm undertakings to the electorate: first, Labor will use the government's own budget parameters to fund any election promises; secondly, we will not exceed the overall expenditure on outlays contained in this final Olsen-Lucas budget; and thirdly, Labor will fund its promises by a reordering of priorities and by cutting back on Liberal waste.

Let me make it perfectly clear: there is no pot of gold. There will be no spending spree by Labor. However, by accepting this budget's parameters, we are not accepting Liberal priorities. Labor totally rejects the Liberals' privatisation agenda. We know that John Olsen's next targets for privatisation are the Lotteries Commission and more public hospitals. I make this pledge today that not one hospital will be privatised under Labor and that the Lotteries Commission will remain in government ownership.

If Labor wins government at the next election, we will immediately form a budget expenditure review committee. Its task will be to find the hollow logs and specific areas of waste, including cutting the fat in departments such as DIT and ending SA Water's Indonesian frolic, to free up money to be reallocated to the Labor priorities of health and education. We will maintain the tax cuts and concessions announced in this budget, including the further reduction in payroll tax planned for 1 July 2002. In the next few weeks, the shadow Treasurer will detail Labor's financial responsibility bill, which will commit governments to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

Labor will spend the same total amount of money as the Liberals but on different priorities to the benefit of ordinary South Australians who deserve better. We are committed to equalling or bettering the Liberals' financial targets. The fact is plainly this: there is plenty of waste to cut. This government's outrageous approach to using taxpayer dollars for advertising is just one example. There are the railway lift-outs and advertisements, the television ads featuring the Premier but paid for by the taxpayer. Labor strongly supported the bill for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway. We helped make the project happen, which the Premier, to his credit, has repeatedly recognised in this parliament. But these ads, which were clearly attempts to promote the Premier, were over the top.

In the past few days we have heard that the Olsen government is sponsoring its fourth television program on South Australian commercial television. The lucky winner this time is Channel 10 with a youth program, called *Savvy*, paid for by the government. Channel 7 has its program, while Channel 9 has two government funded programs. Every commercial station gets a slice of the action. Today I send out a very clear message to Adelaide's television managers that

Labor will need to be convinced that this level of expenditure is justified. I want to meet with the chief executives of each channel in coming months to assess the value for money for the taxpayers in these taxpayer funded television programs. I also want to seek assurances that there has been no attempt by this government to influence editorial content through these funding arrangements—either editorial content of the programs or in other ways on the networks. In this election year, we will be watching these programs very closely.

In this budget, this year outlays are up by 1 per cent and by 1.4 per cent for 2001-02. The Olsen-Lucas budget provides very few economies on the outlays side, and this government's ability to achieve them remains open to question. They are: a \$40 million reduction in consultants; agency savings arising from a 5 per cent reduction in executive level staff receiving \$100 000 or more per year; and a 1 per cent efficiency measure on government purchased consumables, following three previous years involving the same target. This government's spending on consultants has rightly become an issue of public outrage. More than \$100 million was spent on consultants to get rid of our most valuable public asset, ETSA.

We all remember the two consultants from America with their news conference at which they produced a sheaf of dollars to explain the benefits to South Australians of selling our electricity. We know where the sheaf of dollars went: into the pockets of the consultants—more than \$100 million worth, and they stuffed it up royally. Most went to overseas as well as interstate consultants. But now the government has promised it has changed its ways, cutting \$40 million over two years. Labor will do better than that: we will cut more. We must question the Liberal government's ability to achieve even its modest cuts to consultants, given the events of just last week.

We found out that Tim Fischer had been hired on \$2 000 a day and a \$3 000 a month retainer, plus travel and accommodation expenses—apparently, we are told, just \$65 000 a year to spruik for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway when he is out on other business. The Premier said that he was unaware of Tim Fischer's pay deal. The Premier announced the deal, but apparently announced it whilst being unaware of how much Tim Fischer (his friend) was being paid.

Once again, the Premier told us that he was not in control of this government's runaway spending and its waste. This year there is a blow-out of about \$13 million in tourism. The Department of Premier and Cabinet will increase staffing levels from 280 full-time equivalents this year to 305 next year, and the department will cost nearly \$54 million to run—\$54 million to run the Premier's office—it is a total disgrace.

The Department of Industry and Trade will have a budget of \$195 million next year, up from \$159 million. This is despite the fact that budget paper 5 (volume 1, page 4.25) says that DIT will no longer be holding large sums of money to support the Alice-Darwin railway.

Employment in the Department of Treasury and Finance also goes up this year. Talk about setting an example for junior ministers! I acknowledge that this increase is partly due to an increase in the number of trainees. But, given the fact that the Electricity Reform and Sales Unit, has now been absorbed into the broader micro-economic reform function of the department, some savings could and should have been made. Meanwhile, we also have the Premier's task force, the Electricity Supply Industry Planning Council and the Office of Energy Policy. You can bet your bottom dollar that

somewhere along the way Alex Kennedy is getting her rake-off.

There is a duplication of functions between the Premier's Department and the Department of Industry and Trade. The Premier's Department contains a major projects unit and a so-called strategic policy division that duplicates similar units within the Department of Industry and Trade. However, I was glad—because it is important to recognise positives—that the government at least copied one of Labor's policies and announced that it will open a North American trade office and review the operations of other trade offices in South-East Asia.

The story of duplication goes on. There is an Information Economy Policy Office separate from other economic development agencies. While the issue of promoting new information technology is vital, there seems little justification in creating a whole new and burgeoning bureaucracy to dream up misguided and wasteful ideas such as the member for Adelaide's virtual electorate. I can understand that the member for Adelaide will be looking for a job after the election, after his decision to jump ship, but it will not be in a virtual electorate: it will be in virtually no electorate. I can assure the Minister for Government Enterprises that in estimates we will be expecting precise details on the office and on how much is in the budget for this virtual electorate that no-one wants.

Labor will be cutting the Liberals' consultants, waste and duplication and putting the money into health and education. Labor will also scrap ESAU (Emergency Services Administrative Unit), which just adds another layer of bureaucracy on our vital emergency services. Its current budget is \$14.5 million, including administrative charges of \$8.6 million. We will find savings to be spent on front-line emergency services, on firefighters, not fat cats. ESAU was originally set up to save money and in its first year had a budget of under \$1 million!

As for the promise of fewer fattish cats under the Olsen government, the number of public service executives on more than \$100 000 has doubled in just four years from 1996 to 2000. The Premier is paying the 'chiefs' more, while cutting the number of 'Indians'. Of course, he is claiming he is doing just the opposite. It is rather like the claims about hospital and health spending in the budget. This Liberal government has cut about 500 beds from our public hospitals since it came to power. Everyone was delighted to hear a week out from the budget that we would get 65 extra beds for our struggling hospitals at a cost of \$15 million. On top of that, there would be an extra \$200 million 'for nurses' and an extra \$110 million 'for doctors' over the next three years—\$310 million in total.

Unfortunately, it was all too good to be true. The government was merely announcing that the 65 beds it added during last November's bed crisis would be permanently funded. It was not an announcement of 65 extra beds: it was an announcement that the Olsen government would not cut 65 beds. The government has gone to extraordinary lengths to spin South Australians that an extra \$200 million will be spent on health and hospitals this year. The public could be forgiven for thinking that the problems in our public hospitals are over. People could think that there is \$200 million more for hospital beds, more money to ease the pressure on emergency departments, more money to reduce the long waiting lists for elective surgery and to reduce the number of operations being cancelled or more opportunities for outpatients to see a specialist.

But that is not the case. When the next ambulance goes on bypass, every South Australian will ask why things have not improved with an extra \$200 million. Apart from the \$15 million for the beds, the new money for doctors and nurses is to meet their pay rises. It is not for more operations or for cutting our waiting lists. There are no plans in this budget to help those 8 000 people on our waiting lists. The detail of this budget shows that the Liberal government plans to cut the number of outpatient services by 111 000 in our metropolitan hospitals and 7 000 in our country hospitals. The budget papers show that in our hospital emergency departments almost 50 per cent of people requiring urgent or semi-urgent treatment this year have not been treated within the recommended time.

So, why is the government trying to sell a pay rise as extra money for our hospitals? Because for the third year in a row the Premier and the Treasurer have rejected the budget bids of the Minister for Human Services. This year Labor was leaked the government's confidential 'Green Book' which sets out all the ministers' funding bids. Minister Brown's bid was for an extra \$134 million this year. This acknowledged the crisis in our hospitals, and the minister made a bid for \$50 million to deal with unacceptable delays for medical treatment; to reverse the current trend of increasing cancellations and delays for essential services; to ensure that patients can be assessed within national standards; to reduce unacceptable waiting times in emergency departments; and to reduce the growing waiting times for elective surgery. We now know that this bid was rejected.

The green book shows that the minister also asked for \$35 million to pay off debts run up by public hospitals over the last four years. Given that no funding appears in the budget to remove this crippling debt, it appears that this bid was also rejected. South Australians now want to know whether public hospitals will be required to pay back this debt at the expense of cutting more services. There is a stark contrast between Labor and Liberal when it comes to health and hospital services. For Labor they are a priority; they are core business. But, again, this government has broken its promises and ignored people's needs.

Education is clearly also not a Liberal priority. In real terms, the Olsen government has cut the education budget; it is stuck on the same amount as last year. In a real show of commitment, the budget papers say that teachers' pay rise is to be partly funded by a fall of 3 100 in the number of children attending public schools. This budget even fails to honour the commitment given by the Minister for Education in this House on 5 April that the school leaving age would be increased from the start of the 2002 school year. That promise followed a similar commitment made by the Premier on 8 October; we read it on the front page of the *Advertiser*. Last week, government members again opposed legislation introduced by the opposition to increase the school leaving age from 15 years to 16 years. But yesterday the Minister for Education could not rule it in or out, despite his statement to parliament earlier this year. If this had been a Labor budget, it would have included a commitment to raise the school leaving age to 16 years as one step in the strategy to tackle our retention rate crisis. The minister said yesterday that such a move could be funded out of the existing education budget. We will accept that claim and that funding source.

However, before you think there has been an extra investment in vocational education to cater for young people leaving school early, that sector too faces effective cuts. The annual number of student curriculum hours planned in this

budget across all vocational education is almost \$3 million lower than in the current year—a cut of 13 per cent. This and all the education cuts made by the Liberals in their previous seven budgets illustrate the government's lack of vision not only for education but also for our economic future. How do we become the smart state in the clever country if we are continually cutting education? Effectively, cutting education expenditure in this information age is like cutting defence spending in wartime.

I want to talk now about Labor initiatives. Because of the tremendous fall in the retention rate, the difference between the parties has been made perfectly clear. In 1993, 92 per cent of the state's students completed year 12—it is now down to under 60 per cent, and for boys in state schools it is about 50/50. That is why we have announced that the first reference to our social inclusion initiative will be addressing our collapsing retention rates. The concept of the social inclusion initiative is one of the measures that Labor has announced that illustrates our different priorities and our vision for practical measures to make our community a better place in which to live. The initiative will be given the task of developing not just whole of government but whole of community strategies to tackle the problems confronting us. It will include the private sector, the community sector, academics and government. It will be charged with recommending plans of action, timelines and benchmarks.

Labor has also announced other positive measures that would have been included in this budget if Labor had delivered it. I have mentioned the increase in the school leaving age, which can be funded within the existing education budget. I have also mentioned a commitment to a significant electricity interconnector to New South Wales. If public funds were needed for this, they would be taken from the Department of Industry and Trade's budget. Other initiatives would have included a commitment to establish a centre for innovation, funded from within DIT resources, to assist existing manufacturers and service industries. This is a plan to help local industry to grow and to grow jobs and it is just part of a much broader jobs and economic development strategy.

Labor would have closed at least two Asian trade offices, one in China and one in Indonesia. We are pleased that the government has taken up our plan of announcing a North American office. Labor would also end SA Water's Indonesian venture, which has cost taxpayers \$10 million so far, and no-one understands why, what the pay-off is and why the pay-off has been given. Labor would have delivered further cuts to consultants, government advertising and publicity excesses and its waste and duplication. It would also have scrapped John Olsen's virtual electorate scheme.

In the coming months, I look forward to releasing Labor's carefully costed plans for our hospitals, our schools, jobs and for the environment. As I have said, this budget sets the financial parameters within which we must and will work. However, it does not set out our priorities. Labor's priorities are fixing our hospitals, raising the standards in our schools, encouraging and securing job growth through measures such as fixing the number one issue facing our state—the electricity crisis. The Liberal budget has been welcomed by no-one. It reflects a government whose only policy—privatisation—has failed and therefore has nowhere to go. At the next election, the choice for South Australians will be clear. After this budget, for the good of this state I say: go to the polls now.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a matter of privilege. Sir, I ask you to rule whether a prima facie case exists for a breach of parliamentary privilege. I ask you, sir, to investigate whether there has been a breach of parliamentary privilege by members of the Premier's personal staff. During the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply speech, a member of the Premier's staff was accessing parliamentary media equipment to tape the leader's speech, obviously to obtain perfect audio-quality material to be used, no doubt, in some form of dirty tricks campaign or, indeed, some form of advertising during the forthcoming election.

I have confiscated that particular staff member's audio equipment. Sir, I ask that you consider this as a matter of breach of privilege. I also wish to advise that the Premier's Chief of Staff has advised me in the last five minutes that she intends to call the police following my confiscation of this tape. I will give you the tape, sir, and you can do with it as you wish. I simply ask you to rule whether a prima facie case exists for improper use of parliamentary equipment by members of the Premier's staff. It is a sad day for South Australian politics when the Premier's dirty tricks team is at work and at work in such an obviously underhand manner.

The SPEAKER: Over the years the House has followed the practices of the House of Commons because we do not have an official standing order of our own concerning the taking of recordings and/or notes in the gallery. The chair is of the view that the recording taken today was completely inappropriate and that the person using the tape would have to be very careful in their use of the tape because it was certainly not covered by parliamentary privilege as would be the official *Hansard* recording. In fact, the *Hansard* recording is kept for that very purpose. I am not sure that it was appropriate for the member to confiscate the tape but that is a matter for another authority in another place.

As we take our guidance from the House of Commons because we do not have a standing order, I make reference to Erskine May, which states:

The taking of informal notes by persons in the Strangers Gallery of the Commons, which had for long been considered an offence and punishable, is now permitted for personal purposes.

As I said earlier, I think that it is a totally inappropriate use of the tape, and it is discouraged in this parliament as one of our practices. However, in so far as it is a breach of privilege, I cannot uphold that as the case.

Mr HANNA: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I simply have a question about the protection offered by the parliament to the member concerned. It seems to me important that members who are upholding the privilege of the parliament be protected, and I therefore seek clarification of your comments about other authorities. Surely the parliament is sovereign there.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I have raised this matter of privilege and have made a ruling on the matter of privilege as I understand privilege. As it relates to this incident I rule that there is no point of order. I call on the next speaker.

Mr CONLON (Elder): I rise with no great joy to speak to this budget. Before addressing the substance of it, once again I express my disappointment at the way this government has chosen to present the budget figures, particularly for agencies. I think it is extremely ironic that just a short while ago this government announced its new stand on openness, accountability and transparency in government. I can only assume that this is newspeak, in the George Orwell sense,

because for the third successive year in the presentation of the budget figures once again we have seen a deliberate, new form of description of what you might call outcome or output signifiers. So, it is impossible to compare output expenditure in this budget with last year's budget, as it was with last year's budget compared to the previous one.

This government, supposedly committed to openness and transparency, does not present a budget that enables people to read about the funding of services in South Australia. Rather, the budget that it presents is about as easy to understand as it is to reassemble a Rubik's cube. It is a deliberate strategy to prevent the truth of this government's actions in the funding of services from being known. Again I stress I am taken aback that this government could have the hypocrisy to talk about openness and transparency and then fail the test on the most fundamental of government information, and that is the budget papers.

The only happy thing I can say about this budget is that I am very confident that it is the last—I think it is the eighth—instalment of eight years of miserable failure on the part of the Liberal Party. The people of South Australia have endured this government's budgets now for eight years. It has been eight years of cuts to services, eight years of cuts to police and eight years of cuts to schools. I might just mention my own electorate. The electorate I represent has had no fewer than two primary schools close in the past eight years, as well as one just outside the electorate used by my constituents.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr CONLON: We have the little fellow up the back interjecting. He is a former school teacher—a once and soon to be again school teacher—and you would think he would have a little more commitment to his former profession than to interrupt when we are talking about cuts to school funding. He does, because he is a loyal, if somewhat inadequate, servant of this government.

I put on the record that the people of my electorate have not forgotten the closure of their schools and the lack of any compensation for it, and they will be remembering it at the next election. It is the fourth budget for the current Premier of South Australia, after his winning an election in 1997 which, as we will again remind people, was another in his career of elections built on deceit; it was the most massive deceit of the people of South Australia. I refer of course to the promise that ETSA would not be privatised. We have addressed that issue ad nauseam and I will not repeat it here, but the people of South Australia will remember that deceit, and that is why you on that side of the House are introducing your last budget.

They have been budgets of failure. The only claim—the great claim that has been lauded in this place today—for this government is that it has achieved significant levels of debt reduction. It has; it has sold everything. Whoopee do! That is really special, isn't it? Someone worked out that, if you find everything of value owned by this state and sell it, you get money for it. That is economic genius. It must have taken them a very long time in the party room to puzzle that one out. We have seen the privatisation of ETSA against the word of the government.

Every privatisation we have seen has been bungled and has cost this state. The privatisation of the Ports Corporation was the most recent one. It was done on the run, plans were changed halfway through and interest groups were salvaged. Everything was done and there was to be no hold-up in the pursuit of getting a little extra money for the hollow log for

the election. So, the Ports Corp was sold with an obligation on the buyer to build a deep sea port with absolutely no idea how you would actually get the grain to the deep sea port. The Ports Corp sale and the deep sea port were based on what I would call the 'field of dreams' reasoning: that if you build it the grain will come. The government once again neglected the interests of the people of this state. There was no transport infrastructure and no consideration for the people of Le Fevre Peninsula; they just did it.

I will touch upon the TAB sale. We saw recently that the date had to be extended, because they are not getting anywhere near an adequate sale price for it. I say to the government in dealing with this budget that, if they are not getting an adequate sale price, do not sell it. The problem will be that this mob is desperate for money and the only way they know how to deal with financial matters in this state is to sell off everything we have taken a century to build, and I am sure they will take whatever they can get for it. I say at this time in the last budget of a government based on deceit that we will always remember the role of two former Labor members in allowing the deceit of this government to come to fruition. I talk of course of the Hon. Terry Cameron and the Hon. Trevor Crothers. Their names will be linked forever with one of the greatest deceptions exercised on the people of South Australia, and will be linked forever with their failure to keep their word to the people who got them elected. I will say no more of them than that.

The electricity privatisation has delivered to this government what it claims as its great performance, that is, the reduction of debt—but at what cost? We do know that electricity will go up in price for South Australian businesses and later for South Australian consumers by between 30 and 90 per cent. This is in a state that already has the highest electricity prices in Australia. This is an impost that many businesses in this state cannot afford. There is no joy for those businesses in this budget. The simple truth is that unless there is a remedy for the problems created by this government, businesses will close, fewer people will be employed, jobs will be lost, and the ultimate price will be a shrinking in the South Australian economy, a further decline in the size of our economy and further pressure on government incomes and services. It is a budget of total failure.

On that subject, who will ever forget the \$100 million that flowed to the ETSA consultants for this? ETSA consultants were paid \$100 million, even though the legislation and sale on which they worked so hard had to be brought back to this parliament and corrected because of mistakes that the consultants had made. No; we do not have money for police, services and schools, but we have money for ETSA consultants. It is an abject failure of this government.

No-one will ever forget the sick black humour that we experienced in this place over the past two years where minister after minister stood up and talked about what they would do with \$2 million a day. We were promised the world if ETSA was privatised. The public was told that, despite the fact that they did not like it, it should be done and they would appreciate it once they saw the benefits. We saw them. One after another, the ministers told us what they would do with their \$2 million a day. They promised us that if they sold ETSA we would all be living on Hayman Island. What we got instead was *Gilligan's Island*. Even then they did not get it right; they got the casting wrong. We did not get any professors, movie stars or Mary Annes: all we got was a whole bunch of Gilligans and a few millionaires and, let's not forget, a whole bunch of people all fighting over who should

be skipper. They are castaways, and they will soon be cast away by the electors of South Australia—and not a day too soon.

In that regard, we would at least ask them to do the decent thing this time: call the election; do not go beyond your four years, because no-one wants you. Listen to the people of South Australia and let them install again a government that will be committed to governing, because it has been a very long time since you have done so.

The budget has failed to give the things that were promised to the people of South Australia when all their assets were sold. The Leader of the Opposition has outlined the terrible waste, the mismanagement and the misgovernment of these people. We have already mentioned the consultants, and the disgraceful use of state funds. We have seen the activities in SA Water. First of all, we went around and headhunted the world to employ the highest paid public servant in South Australia's history. We paid him a few bonuses and then sacked him about a year and a half later, and had to pay him out six months in wages. I understand that he is still suing the government. That was a beauty, was it not! We sent the head of the board of SA Water around the world to headhunt this bloke whom we had to sack a year and a half later.

In the meantime, what did we do? We took South Australian taxpayers' money. We took it to West Java. We invested it up front in a speculative venture, from which we have had no return. If we do receive any returns, they will be in rupiah, one of the most unstable currencies in the world. This is the mob that, a few years ago, decided we were not competent to run a water authority in Australia, collecting Australian dollars from Australian taxpayers. We were not competent to do it. But somehow we are competent to go to West Java, put the money up front, run a water authority and collect money in rupiah. It beggars belief. The unfortunate people of Indonesia face a time when their state is on the brink of Balkanisation, it seems, and we are there investing South Australian taxpayers' money. What is wrong with these people?

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition has referred to the emergency services administration unit—a unit that was going to save money. I think last year it had a budget of about \$14.5 million, and it is growing this year—another expensive experiment by this government. I talk to the CFS and MFS people. They say that the place used to run all right when they administered it themselves. Now they have some bureaucratic monster that eats money and does not pay bills for the CFS brigades. And, of course, who will ever forget the government's grotesque waste with respect to the government radio network—a program we were locked into by a side deal of then Minister (now Premier) John Olsen so many years ago which has seen us spend \$247 million so far on a government radio network which does not appear to work properly and which, apparently—from the budget and from the comments today of Minister Lawson and Minister Brokenshire—is not adequate for our needs, anyway? We are spending extra money on what is called internal communications equipment. I am sure that, as we explore this issue in the coming weeks during the committee stage of this bill in estimates, we will find out that there are other hidden bits and pieces of extra expense in relation to this costly fiasco.

It is in the light of this that it is particularly galling to hear the Premier talk day after day about the lack of financial credentials of the Labor Party. This is the Premier who has been to West Java to see his pet project there, trying to collect

rupiah. It does beggar belief. This government is so tired that its front bench is now made up, in two cases, of people who are already semi-retired. Of course, Minister Armitage, we are told, is good enough to run Ports Corp for the people of South Australia, and other asset sales, but is not good enough for his party to remain a member of it. He could not win a seat. This is a man who has the future of South Australia's assets in his hands. And I have regard for Michael Armitage: I think he is a nice fellow. But one would have to wonder whether his mind is on the job.

The SPEAKER: 'Minister'.

Mr CONLON: The minister; I apologise. What dividends have we seen in this budget? If I might use an old Keating phrase, this was going to be the 'bringing home the bacon budget'. This was going to save the government's bacon. What have we seen? I am pleased that the Minister for Police has wandered into the chamber. We have seen an increase in police numbers. Now, there is a turn-up. The last time we had an increase in police numbers was before the 1997 election. They have a cycle. For two or three years they cut police numbers, and then it spikes up before an election. Then they go back to cutting again and spike it up before the next election.

The government wants people to believe that this time it has mended its ways: it is not a spike, and they are staying up there. We have told the government for years that it needs to recruit against attrition, and it has failed to do that. There is absolutely no reason to believe that the government will do it properly this time.

Before leaving the subject of police, I note that there is funding for extra police, but I do not note any funding for the enterprise bargain that the police are about to pursue with the government. It will be very interesting to see where that money will come from. Apparently, the Treasurer does have a hollow log somewhere that he will be dipping into later.

We have extra funding for hospitals. A good deal of that funding is to be consumed by the appointment of new nurses. Before the government takes too much credit for it, let us make it clear: the fact that we might improve levels of nursing in South Australia was forced on the government by the nurses union. The government did not want to do it; it spent many months fighting with the union to prevent it. So, let us not give too much credit for some of the increases in funding in hospitals to the largesse of this government.

At the same time, nothing has been done for our public school system—merely opposition to Labor's move to increase retention rates. We have seen a disaster in retention rates in this state. We saw (I think, from memory) the only Minister of Education who thought a good approach was to cut the school year—to save money by cutting the school year.

The track record of this government with respect to public education is appalling, and I make this point, as I have made it before: if we want to do something about social justice in this country—if we want to do something for those less well off, and if we want to do something for those who are struggling—we will improve their education standard. At the same time, if we want to do something to improve the economic performance of this state, to build a brighter future for South Australia, we will improve the education standards of our people.

This government is failing on the social justice test and on the economic test. It is a government, I repeat, of failure. It tells us that there is a surplus in the budget. We have difficulty in taking this government at its word on any issue,

but we will do so on this matter. As the opposition leader has said, we will rely on the figures that the government has provided in this budget to frame a program for government. We will govern within our means. We will govern within the budgetary settings. We will redraw our priorities for this state.

This government has been lost on so many frolics of its own in West Java, in relation to the Hindmarsh Stadium or with its consultants. We will not be doing that. We know what South Australians want, and we will address those priorities. We will be open and transparent in a way that is only a sick hypocrisy to the people on the other benches. This government, as I said, announced its newspeak version of openness and transparency: we will deliver it. We will be open. We will be transparent. People will judge us on our merits. We believe that there is a difficult task ahead for this state but we are determined to do the two things that are necessary to be able to fund government services, to be able to improve the state: we want to grow the economy and we want to change the demographic trend in this state around.

I would like to leave my time in this House not too soon, and I would like to leave it knowing that we have prevented South Australia from becoming a permanent mendicant at Premiers' conferences (or whatever their current description is). We will be seeking to build on the strengths of this great state—a state with enormous natural benefits and enormous resources, with its quality wine, its future in aquaculture, its future in high-tech and learning, its universities. I will close by saying, as I have said before—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr CONLON: I have two minutes. I did leave out some analysis of the front bench. Given that this is the last budget and this government will be judged on the budget and the performance of its ministers, I, for one, was absolutely ashamed for the South Australian Crown when the Native Title Bill was debated in this place without the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs ever calling in. That is the sort of dedication to their job of the ministers of this government.

I will close, because there is a minute left. Ralph, you had better get a move on. We realise that there are difficulties ahead. We hope to be the government after the next election. We hope to do those things that this state desperately needs. We will do it openly—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr CONLON:—and transparently, we will do it within our means and we will do it without the member for Hartley.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): In terms of this budget, as others before me have said, there are some good points that can be welcomed by the opposition. Given the make-up of my electorate—there is a significant aged population, a significant Housing Trust population and, like most electorates, a significant state school population—I believe that people will judge this budget, as they would any budget, by how it will affect their day-to-day lives. For example, if they need a public hospital bed for elective surgery or the like, are they likely to get it within a reasonable time? Will their children have a better chance of receiving a better education than they had five or more years ago? Are they likely to get affordable and decent housing? So many in my electorate rely on the Housing Trust. Will it be any easier for them in terms of obtaining a Housing Trust home, particularly those who are low wage earners? Likewise, with respect to justice and, in particular, fear of crime that pervades some elements

within my electorate, will they feel safer as a result of this budget?

When it is boiled down, in reality, the people not only of South Australia, but, I suspect, of all states, do not have great expectations of state governments these days. The power of the dollar has swung decisively over the last 100 years of our federation to the federal government. A state government, by and large, these days is an administrative unit in terms of social policy and in terms of carrying out the objectives of the national government.

Mr Hanna: It is a regional council, really.

Mr CLARKE: And, as the member for Mitchell rightly interjects, it is somewhat like a regional council, particularly in a state as small as South Australia in terms of population size. Our population was far greater than that of Western Australia at the turn of the century but now we are increasingly falling behind Western Australia.

So, let me say from the outset that, obviously, people who own their own homes and pay council rates appreciate getting an increase from \$150 to \$190, although it is not enough. The \$150 figure was set in 1990 and it has taken 11 years for it to be adjusted. So, even accounting for the rate of inflation, the extra \$40 does not make up for it, but at least it goes part of the way. It is better than no increase. Self-funded retirees, who had nothing before, get an extra \$100, and that is a bonus for them. But the fact that it is not means tested or asset tested is, I think, somewhat disappointing. I would rather give more money to those in greatest need. A person earning \$90 000 a year on an indexed pension may be able to claim up to \$100, and I think that is unfair to self-funded retirees, many of whom are in my electorate and who are former state government employees who live on their state superannuation which is barely above the pension. The fact that there is no means testing so that more money can be given to those with less is, I think, the downfall of that example.

The anomaly with respect to stamp duties payable on the principal place of residence has been put right. This applies where a person who owns their own home and is building a new one is caught by the present legislation. They must pay land tax on the new home that is only being built because they literally have not moved into it and sold the home that they are in. This current situation is unfair and the government's removal of that tax is a good move as well. As the Leader has pointed out in his speech, the payroll tax reductions are welcome as well. They are small but, nonetheless, meaningful for some.

However, as the Leader has pointed out, there is the issue of electricity prices and, in particular, the fact that this government in this budget has made no mention of the greatest issue that is facing this state at the moment, namely, the huge growth in the price of electricity and the shortfall of supply of that vital commodity. I have often wondered why we do not use the old Prices Act of 1948, which enables the government to proclaim any service to be subject to that act, and apply that proclamation to the power generators in this state in order to ensure that they cannot rip off the public. No doubt it is caught up in national competition policies and principles, as well as in a range of other things on which state governments have ceded power to the federal government, in effect, or to unelected Brussels-like bureaucracies under the national competition principles which prevent state governments from acting in the interests of their own citizens because they have signed away our right to impose price caps, as we were entitled to do under the old Prices Act of 1948. I will perhaps talk more about that later.

In terms of housing, I notice in Portfolio Statements, Budget Paper 5, Volume 2 at page 6.12, that the number of tenable dwellings held by the Housing Trust as at 30 June this year was 51 170: the target for the next 12 months is 49 610. The number of new households tenanted in the year as at 30 June this year is estimated to be 4 620, whereas the target for the next financial year is 4 200. That is a constant erosion of our public housing stock.

The change of policies implemented by this government with respect to the various requirements that have to be met in order to get a Housing Trust home is now such that really you must be in the most desperate of straits to get a Housing Trust home. I signed a letter in my electorate yesterday that was to go to the Housing Trust; it was seeking a home for a woman with a young boy who is living in a house with a father who is alcoholic and who is abusive towards not only his wife but also his young son. The son suffers from a medical disorder and there are plenty of reasons to justify why the wife and her son should be moved into this type of housing.

It is becoming increasingly more difficult for people in category 1 to be able to find public housing in sufficient time. It is a blight on our society that we cannot find a home for that family because of the shortage of public housing. It is the fault of this state government, but I also acknowledge that the state government has had to operate under the strictures of a federal government under Mr Howard, which has changed the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. No money is now provided to the states for building public housing stock. Rather it is being used to subsidise rent in private dwellings.

Another of my constituents shared a house with her mother who, however, unfortunately, died the other week. My constituent has been living there less than three months. The tenancy will not go to her, and she now has to find another house. She does not fit category 1. She is on a disability pension; she has no dependants. She cannot point out that she suffers from some horrific disease that would somehow put her into category 1. She is relatively healthy, but she is on a disability pension. She will have no hope at all of getting a Housing Trust home. She will be forced on to the private market. Even with the Centrelink assistance, there is no guarantee that she will get a house at a price that she can afford.

In a sense, she has another disability in that she has a pet dog. As you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker, a number of people who own private rental housing do not want their tenants to have any pets. That will be a further restriction for her. Of course, there is an answer. I suppose she could go out and shoot the dog. You cannot leave it at the dog pound if it is registered. You have to abandon your dog before the RSPCA will take the dog off you, because its own service is very overloaded. This woman is a disability pensioner who is in category 2. Because she has a pet dog, she will find it difficult to get a house on the private rental market. Because she is a category 2, she has virtually no hope of getting a Housing Trust home. This is happening increasingly in every electorate where there is public housing stock, and in an electorate such as mine it is more noticeable because of the sheer numbers.

With regard to health and hospitals, the same budget book (page 6.25), under the heading 'Performance indicators', gives the number of weighted outpatient occasions of service for metropolitan hospitals for the current financial year as 1 058 000. The target for the next 12 months is 947 000. Even though this government is trumpeting increases in its

expenditure on health, those patients who want to see a doctor in a public hospital will have to wait longer. The time to get an appointment will be stretched, because there has been a further cutback on the number of outpatients who can be seen next financial year. Coupled with a \$90 000 cutback on outpatient services last financial year, about 200 000 services have been cut from the budget in just two years. So the elective surgery waiting list will blow out.

In terms of police and people feeling safer in their community, I was somewhat saddened to read in the *Portside Messenger* a letter to the editor written by an approximately 80 year old pensioner lady. She wrote in commenting on a news story that the hell's angels have finally set up their clubrooms in Trafford Street in The Parks opposite The Parks health centre. In that letter to the editor of the *Portside Messenger*, this pensioner commented favourably on the hell's angels moving into The Parks, because she said she will feel safer as the hell's angels will clean out of the area people whom she would regard as somewhat undesirable.

Mr Hanna: They'll monopolise crime in the area.

Mr CLARKE: As the member for Mitchell points out, they will monopolise crime in the area and get rid of the 'riffraff', the individual criminal elements who may be in competition with the hell's angels, and that will apparently make her feel safer. It does not make the rest of society feel any safer, and it is a thing for this 80 year old pensioner to believe that the hell's angels offer her more protection than the South Australia Police, because of the inadequate police resourcing which has meant that The Parks police station is only a nine to five operation rather than 24-hour operation and with more police patrols in the area.

It is a sad indictment that an old age pensioner believes her salvation and safety depends on the hell's angels' presence rather than on the South Australian police force, particularly as we all know that the hell's angels, together with other outlaw motorcycle gangs, run prostitution and drug rackets from their clubrooms, and perpetrate a whole range of crimes against both property and individuals. However, this old pensioner feels safer with them, because she has given up on the South Australia Police being adequately resourced. It is not that they are not doing their job; she knows their resources are stretched. This budget does nothing to address her concerns in that area.

There has been a freeze on spending on education. In effect, given the rate of inflation, there is a cutback of \$36 million. That does nothing for the children in the schools in my electorate. At least half the school population in most of my schools have real learning difficulties. However, because of the federal government cutbacks in education, the national curriculum program bar has been lowered so much that only a handful of the students can avail themselves of the extra resources offered at that level; those who are just over the bar miss out entirely. From the feedback I have had from the teachers and principals, between 40 and 50 per cent of students in schools in my electorate have special needs. Perhaps they can get help for shorter periods of time, say, four or six weeks—if that. We could offer them brief intensive help and make a world of difference to their learning outcomes and to their educational opportunities. Those are the areas that figure mostly in the minds of the people I represent and in most parts of South Australia.

South Australians have the right to expect that a state government should be able to do a few things right and guarantee reasonable and ready access to public hospitals, a decent education system and a decent justice and policing

system where people can feel safe. They also have the right to expect that criminal elements will be apprehended and that they will be relatively safe from violence, either against their person or their property. If they are a low wage earner or a person without a home, they should have a reasonable expectation of being able to afford housing through the housing trust. They are not huge expectations for people to expect of their state government. It is not a huge expectation to have of the state government that it provide affordable power, water supplies and so forth to homes. They are not expecting us to be rocket scientists, to bring peace to the Middle East or anything of that nature; they simply want decent services provided in these key areas which are the prime responsibilities of state governments. If state governments fail on that point, we lose any reason or rationale for our continued existence. If we cannot provide that minimum level of decent services in those key, core areas, we ought to close up shop as a parliament or this government should surrender and hand over the reins of government to a party that will achieve those outcomes.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I support the passage of the state budget, and I will make just a few remarks about it. In relation to the people in my electorate of Mitchell, in the south-western suburbs of Adelaide, I find very little in the budget for them. Let us look at some of the key topics, and I take health as the first example. There will not be extra beds at Flinders Medical Centre, nor will there be extra beds at the Daw Park hospital, otherwise known as the Repat, and I fear that there will be a continuation of the practice of diverting people to the Royal Adelaide Hospital when things get too busy, as they frequently do, at the aforementioned hospitals.

I say that because a number of people moved into Mitchell Park or Clovelly Park particularly so they could be close to a public hospital, so, should an emergency arise and, because they have heart or respiratory problems, they expect an ambulance to get them to a hospital in five minutes rather than being delivered to the Royal Adelaide. That does not diminish the respect I have for the services provided at the Royal Adelaide Hospital but, obviously, people in Mitchell Park and Clovelly Park fully expect to be able to take advantage of the hospitals that are so close to them. Just taking that as one example, I do not see any relief for people in my area in terms of health care.

With respect to the public education system, again, the government has shown that it has other priorities. Although spending seems to have been maintained at a nominal level, in real terms spending on the public school system is going backwards, and that is a really disturbing feature of the priorities of this government.

In terms of policing, it is pleasing to note that in the past 12 months a significant number of new recruits have gone through or are going through the academy. However, it needs to be pointed out that the number of police that we are reaching now is just about level with what we had in 1993. So, for many years we were deprived of anywhere near adequate policing levels and, because it is an election year, the government has made a special effort to bump up the numbers. I am sure that, if the Liberal Party continues in office, we will see the same sort of slide in police numbers that occurred after 1993. I have no doubt that the visible presence of police is the single greatest deterrent to crime. So, if we have more police officers on the beat, whether on a bike, in a car, on a motorcycle or whatever, I have no doubt that it will be a real deterrent to criminals.

Public housing stock is another issue that is particularly relevant to the electorate of Mitchell. There is one good aspect to recent developments with respect to the Housing Trust, because Mitchell Park looks a lot better than it did 10 years ago. There is no doubt about that. The houses were really run down and it is good to see new, small homes being built, although I do not know how working class families can afford to buy them. I do not know how the kind of families who would otherwise have been in Housing Trust homes could possibly afford to buy them, but they are being purchased and the suburb is looking better.

The other side to that is that the people who are being relocated from Housing Trust homes are having to go further afield, away from the friends and services that they have enjoyed in the Mitchell Park area, and some of those people, especially those on the waiting list, will have nowhere to go for public housing because of the gross reduction in public housing stock. Over time, this will cause more and more social problems as tenants at the end of the spectrum at which there is nothing but welfare benefits upon which to subsist are forced to find their way in the private rental market. That is not to say that they are necessarily bad tenants, but there is an amount of prejudice against single parents and poor people generally, and, without the great social benefit provided by the Housing Trust over the last few decades, many of those people will be left with nowhere to go.

I deal with such people every so often when they come in the door of my electorate office. I am not talking about people who have problems with their existing Housing Trust premises but those who, literally, are homeless. It is always difficult to know what to do with them. We generally manage to work something out, but I can see that that problem will increase over time.

Perhaps the most startling feature of all in the budget is the complete lack of any reference to electricity. It is a problem that the Liberal government has created and now it seems to be running away from it. It is not offering any solutions. Labor is more positive and has more ideas in that regard, and I can only hope for the sake of the people of South Australia that we have the opportunity in government to show that we can make more inroads into the problem created by the Liberals than the Olsen government has been able to do.

Finally I want to address the topic of the proposed aquatic centre, which is to be situated on the Marion domain site. For the benefit of other members of the House, I will give them a little bit of background. The Marion council owns a large block of land immediately north of the Westfield Marion development. It is actually in the suburb of Oaklands Park but it is generally referred to as Marion. For many years the Marion council envisaged that the Marion domain would be used for a mixture of civic and retail purposes, with special features such as an aquatic centre, and there have also been ideas of educational institutions, etc.

In more recent times the council has focused on the prospect of the state government agreeing to a proposal for an aquatic centre on that site. We are not talking about a regional swimming pool facility: we are talking about a centre of international standard, a centre of excellence for aquatic sports. Unfortunately, the government has let down the Marion council and the community of people who are passionate about swimming, particularly in the southern and south-western suburbs, because it has not bitten the bullet in terms of funding the pool. It has simply tried to postpone the issue until after the next election so that it will be the incoming government's problem to address.

In order to do this, the government has provided \$1 million for consultants—yet more money which, I suggest, will be largely wasted on consultants. From the brief amount of information we can glean from the budget, it seems that the consultant's brief will be to engage the private sector in the development, building and management of the aquatic centre facility. Given the history of the Marion domain site and given the size of the project and the public benefit, as opposed to private commercial benefits which one could expect from such a facility, it seems to me that this proposal to get private developers involved is just a smokescreen.

It is just an excuse for the government not to take any action between now and the election. It is the government's way of buying off the Marion council and the supporters of the aquatic centre project with \$1 million, but nothing will happen on the ground. That is very disappointing to the locals, who, for years now, have fought to progress this development.

There is no doubt that Adelaide would benefit from an international aquatic centre, but it is certainly not in this budget. It is an issue to which we will have to return after the state election. The incoming Labor government simply will need to look at the financial mess that it has been given. This budget is a deficit budget.

It must not be forgotten that, without hundreds of millions of dollars in terms of abnormal items, this budget would be in the red, and the expenditure commitments it contains ensures that, if nothing else is done, the state budget will be a deficit budget for the next few years, thereby increasing state debt unless further programs are cut. So, this budget is fairly bleak news for South Australia, and it will present a real challenge to the incoming Labor government. However, with our different priorities—putting health care and the education of our children first—we will definitely be able to provide more for the average South Australian than this government has done.

With those comments, I am happy to support the budget, but obviously it is not what the media has dressed it up to be. I look forward to the time when we have a Labor government Treasurer to reorder the priorities so that the average South Australian can benefit from the money we have at our disposal.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I, too, rise to support the budget and, in doing so, refer to the *Sunday Mail* article headed 'Budget fails to connect'.

Mr Hanna: A very good article.

Mr SCALZI: I note the member opposite says, 'A very good article'. Perhaps he might also wish to refer to the editorial in the *Advertiser* on the day after the budget (Friday 1 June) titled 'Sure step in the right direction'. The *Sunday Mail* article reminds me of a story, and perhaps this story will illustrate the changing reactions to budgets and governments in general. It basically goes as follows.

A senator in the United States was running for office in his 20th year. He had done many good things and a lot of the constituents knew that. He was surprised one day to hear one of his friends say, 'John, you will lose the next election.' He was quite shocked and said, 'Why do you say that?' His friend replied, 'You know that Harry, with whom we went to school together, will not vote for you.' John was really concerned because Harry was a school mate and had been a loyal supporter throughout all his campaigns. So, Senator John changed his itinerary and went to the south to talk to Harry. He said, 'Harry, I have heard that you will not vote for

me.' Harry said, 'That is right.' He said, 'Harry, but we were at school together. I helped you with your homework, didn't I?' Harry said, 'Yes.'

John then said, 'When we were at university in the 1970s, you came in my car; I did not even charge you for the petrol, and that was in the days of the oil crisis.' Harry said, 'That is right.' John said, 'When you bought the farm, did I not organise with the banks to ensure that you received decent interest rates and that you did not get charged too many bank charges?' Harry said, 'That is right.' Senator John then said, 'I have been close to the family. I gave your children good references so that they were given a chance of employment, yet you will still not vote for me.' Harry said, 'That is right.' He said, 'Why?' Harry said, 'What have you done for me lately?' No matter what a government does when in office, some people will say, 'What have you done for me lately?'

Mr Hanna: Imagine what your school mates are saying.

Mr SCALZI: The member opposite has not understood the story; otherwise, he would not interject. If members recall the state of the South Australian economy in 1993, they would realise that we have come a long way. We inherited what could only be described as a financial basket case. It is no use the government's harping on about that, because people do not always want to be reminded of the past. It is up to good governments to ensure that the economy and the financial ruin is put right—and we have done that. When members consider that over 27 per cent of gross state product was going towards paying the debt, they will realise that that limits the areas in which a government can spend money. It is no different from a household spending 27 per cent of its income, its wages, on paying debt.

In fact, even Centrelink, when providing rental assistance, ensures that an individual does not pay more than 25 per cent of their income in rent, because it is difficult for an individual to pay more. It is no different from a government paying more than 25 per cent of its GSP. In reality what have we done? We have reduced that amount to under 10 per cent. What the member opposite does not understand is that when you reduce the amount from 27 per cent to under 10 per cent, you are taking the noose from around the neck of the economy. You are giving it breathing space, which means that the government can concentrate on the areas which need to be looked at; that is, health, education and social infrastructure. The government is doing that.

I refer now to the editorial on the day after the budget which states:

Mr Lucas accompanied this with payroll tax cuts and some innovative niche programs aimed at job creation. Yet this balanced budget was very far from the free-spending pork-barrel excess which so often characterises treasurers with an election looming, even one probably almost a year off.

There are probably two reasons for this frugality. South Australians would have been cynically aware and resentful of any blatant bribes. Second, and probably the real determinant, the cupboard is almost bare.

That is the truth of the matter.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

Mr SCALZI: The member opposite says that is the Premier's press release. I wonder whether he would say that about the *Advertiser* outside; that is, that it is not an adequate editorial. I would very much doubt it, because that editorial is objective. And so was the senator in Canberra when he told a 14 year old that 'If you want to increase services, you have to increase taxes.' Labor members opposite claim that this budget is inadequate but they have not given us any plans for how they would deal with the increasing needs of an ageing

population, increasing capital works and the increasing funding needed to support the social infrastructure. It can only say that this budget is not adequate. It is true that we have to look at some areas and there is no doubt that electricity prices are a problem.

Mr Hanna: It is the Achilles heel.

Mr SCALZI: The member now says that it is the Achilles heel. The way he was talking a minute ago, one would assume that it was not only the heel but the whole leg, the thighs—the whole body. I am glad he limits the government's problems to electricity. This government, the Premier and the Treasurer acknowledge that there is a problem. Unfortunately, they are problems due to national competition policy and because the market has not matured. They have to be dealt with and this government has the resolve to do so, as it did with the biggest financial disaster, the one it inherited in 1993.

When this government came to office, the unemployment rate in South Australia was over 11 per cent; it is now 7.3 per cent. Youth unemployment was a serious problem—and it is still. This government will be focusing on it as a top priority, as every state should. Members opposite fail to acknowledge that because they use it to attack the government for the sake of attacking. We have to be realistic because, as the member for Ross-Smith said, 'What state governments can do is limited.' I can assure members that the member for Ross-Smith is right: state governments are limited in what they can do. There is no doubt that federal governments of all persuasions have had a greater hold on the purse strings. However, within the limitations of what we could do as a state, we have done a lot and it is important to recognise that fact.

This government could have gone on a spending spree but that, as the editorial stated, would have been irresponsible. I am sure that members opposite would have been the first to criticise us—and rightly so. But we have not gone on a spending spree because we are realistic. We have continued to concentrate on job creation and youth employment, and we lowered the ratio of debt to gross state product to manageable levels. That has given the government a breathing space to concentrate on health, education and social infrastructure, as well as ensuring that the housing needs of those in greatest need are addressed.

The government has not only done that but it has been successful in promoting the export industry. South Australia's export industry continues to surge ahead. In the 12 months to February 2001, goods exported from South Australia increased by 20.4 per cent for a total of \$7.2 billion. It is the first time that the \$7 billion mark has been broken for any 12-month period. Investment in South Australia has increased because the government has been successful in diversifying the economy, attracting investment and ensuring that our manufacturing sector (which has played a crucial role in our exporting success) is maintained. All those things make for a healthier state. Listening to members opposite, one would think that we were back in 1993. We are not—and thank God for that.

The government has responded to the needs of the elderly—and rightly so. I was one of the first to alert the government that something had to be done about self-funded retirees. My electorate has an ageing population with a significant number of elderly citizens who might be asset rich but they are income poor. They had had no relief until this government saw fit to provide a \$40 rebate for the emergency services levy. I am pleased that they will also be assisted with

a \$100 reduction in council rates, which is also available to pensioners. Our elderly citizens have contributed much in the past and the federal and state governments have recognised that contribution. For the first time, their needs have been addressed. It has been recognised that it is not always easy to be a self-funded retiree.

It is not always understood that, whilst it might have been good for home buyers, low interest rates are a problem for someone living on their interest after retirement. Self-funded retirees may have a home in Kensington Gardens valued at a considerable sum but the charges they have to pay associated with that home when living off investment income are difficult to budget for. This government has acknowledged that and, within the constraints it has been under as a government, has tried to address the problems faced by self-funded retirees as well as continuing to acknowledge the problems of pensioners.

The government has also put greater emphasis on health with over \$200 million being put into hospitals, which is the greatest increase in recent years. This injection of money is very much needed and this government has seen fit to do it. It could not have allocated that money unless it had repaired the economy. I do not know where the opposition will get the money to fund the programs it wants to put into practice. It cannot have its cake and eat it, too. It just does not work. Sound economic management is needed before money can be spent on areas of need. There has been none of that from the opposition.

I am pleased that the government has seen fit to allocate \$550 000 to East Torrens Primary School. Members opposite would see that as a negative because Hectorville Primary School has been closed. The reality is that it is the education community that is important, not the buildings. Combining those schools has advantaged the students because they have subject choices and improved libraries. I am pleased that, with the new principal and school council, numbers have increased at East Torrens Primary School. I have seen first hand the repairs made to East Marden Primary School; I visited the school when I was first elected and saw the disrepair of that school. If members opposite do not know what was happening in my electorate, I do not know how they can be critical when they can see the improvements there.

I am sure that similar improvements have taken place throughout the state. We have had a break with being able to get finances into place. There is a future for South Australia, because we have acted responsibly. It is true that we have to look at the electricity prices, and I know that that is a top priority of the Premier and the government. Members opposite should realise that, regardless of whether or not ETSA was privatised (and perhaps it would have helped if we had not had to procrastinate for 18 months), other states have had problems with increases in prices, and we have to work together in that respect.

We have put money into the environment. In my area I am pleased about the amount of money allocated to the Linear Park and the rehabilitation that has taken place at the University of South Australia. I refer to the East Torrens *Messenger* of 18 April, which reported on a plan to restore an eroded creek. It is pleasing to see that the rehabilitation has taken place. In transport the upgrade of Lower North-East Road between Gorge Road and the Torrens River in my electorate will involve a \$220 000 upgrade. A pedestrian crossing will go across Reid Avenue to make sure that students cross safely. A lot of good things have happened.

To conclude, it is probably the budget before the next election, but it is not an election budget: it is a responsible budget. I will say to members opposite—and they would know the term—that it is time. At the next election it will be time to break the cycle of putting in Labor to create the mess and then putting the Liberals in to repair it. Members opposite will be very much aware of this, because they shout that there are no more assets to sell. This government does not want to sell more assets and did not want to sell the assets that have been sold, but you gave us no choice. It is time to break the cycle of disrepair and repair, because South Australia in the 21st century no longer has the choice to take that gamble and put Labor back in. If they spent when there were assets to sell, what will happen if they spend when there are no assets to sell? What will happen to the future of South Australia?

It is a matter not of 'What have you done for me lately?' but 'What can a Labor government do for you tomorrow'? I believe that South Australia will continue to have a better future with responsible government, which knows that you have to get the economy straight first, before you can concentrate on those needs of health, education and social infrastructure.

Ms KEY (Hanson): Tonight I would like to direct my comments with regard to the budget to the new seat of Ashford, for which I am the preselected Labor candidate. I wish to place on record my appreciation to the various local councils in that region of Ashford—the West Torrens, Marion, Mitcham and Unley councils—and report on an extremely important meeting that the Labor shadow executive held at Unley council recently. They hosted the executive so that we would be able to find out what were Unley council's issues, particularly concerning my interests with regard to the seat of Ashford and also those of preselected Labor candidate Vicki Jacobs, who I am sure will win the seat of Unley at the next state election, along with Tim Stanley, who is the Labor candidate for the federal seat of Adelaide. Without being too modest, I think that the team of the three of us should be very good representation for the residents in that area.

The City of Unley was most impressive in the way it presented their issues of concern to us. One of the areas that was of great interest to the shadow executive was the council's consideration of the city of villages concept, which is part of their plan for urban regeneration. The council is looking at working to that plan to make sure that there is appropriate development in Unley on a social, environmental and physical level. We quite often hear about the 'triple bottom line' and certainly the City of Unley understands not only that concept but also the concept of social capital, which I have discussed in this House previously.

Some pretty salient points were made by the Unley council about governance. Having ALP responsibility for the local government area, I was interested in the views put forward with regard to real partnerships. The document that Unley council provided to the shadow executive states:

If 'real' partnerships are to be achieved to obtain enhanced service delivery within our community a more collaborative and inclusive approach is sought. Our observation, thus far, is that the program is not supported by... Government Departments and Agencies particularly when it comes to the application of resources.

I hope the government minister is listening to that comment. The document continues:

The topic of Structural Reform in Local Government and indeed Council amalgamations needs to be put to rest for a period of time so that we can... get on with the job of improving the outcomes for our community.

The report goes on to talk about structural reform and the need to actually get on with the work rather than continuing to restructure. While as the shadow minister for the area I am not in a position to make any funding promises in the area of local government, I think it is important, however, that I acknowledge the Unley council's submission to the shadow executive and in particular to me.

One of the things that are absolutely obvious about local government is the number of areas that local government has now taken up and in some cases taken up again with regard to delegated powers, and also the big role that local government plays with regard to making sure that those fees, taxes and levies that they now have to collect do get passed on and meet the right target as far as resources are concerned. Unley council put up quite a persuasive argument with regard to traffic policy and management. In its document it states:

The time has arrived where it is timely for our decision makers to step back and consider what form of transport policy we need in order to serve our needs in the future. In doing so we need to be sensitive to:

- a. The impacts upon environment;
- b. The effects of transport upon other policies i.e. land use, health, education;
- c. Reducing land transfer where necessary;
- d. Develop a coordinated approach to public transport, walking and cycling in conjunction with Local Government.

They acknowledge the debate with regard to the reopening of train stations, southern O-Bahns, lower speed limits and road closures as well as traffic calming initiatives, which they say are quite often expensive. Having lived in the Unley council area in the past, I am well aware of the traffic calming initiatives that have been introduced. As much as I know that many people in this chamber think the idea of the speed humps is a good one, I have to say that personally I—perhaps curse is not the right word—certainly do not appreciate them when I am driving in the area of Unley. I do, however, stick to the speed limit—as I am sure does the member for Unley. While appreciating what the city of Unley has to say about traffic calming, my personal view is probably slightly different.

The Unley council also went on to talk about building social capital and, without taking up the time of the House today, I just mention that it is really important to see that both the research and development areas of the Unley council are obviously up to date and looking at the current concepts with regard to resource management.

The other area that was raised under the title of 'Looking after our community' was that the council acknowledged supported residential facilities and boarding houses. As the Labor Party member responsible for the housing portfolio, I know that this is a particularly important area. In the course of door knocking, this is one of the issues that is raised with me more than any other—apart from, of course, the infamous issue of fruit fly and the treatment of fruit fly within that area.

The council recognises that community development is a crucial area for that region (and, indeed, throughout the community), and talks about some of the problems that have been experienced in the area with regard to the trend away from institutional-based delivery of mental health services, and also some of the community-based support for people with mental illness in their family. I think you, Mr Acting Speaker, would have to agree that this is an issue about which the opposition has consistently talked and raised concerns. Certainly, our leader, Mike Rann, and the member for Elizabeth, our health shadow minister, have emphasised the need for us to have those community services in place. I think

that there will be some very positive responses to our election policy when it is released after the election is announced.

Aged care, as the Unley council identifies, is an area that has been of absolute importance in the area. There is a long history of involvement in the aged care field. Although this is, basically, a commonwealth responsibility with regard to funding—particularly regarding accommodation options and nursing homes, hostel and home based services—a shortage has been identified in the area.

Library funding is another issue that I know is of interest to most people in this House, and the council, quite rightly, identifies some of the problems that it has had (as have, I know, other councils in the area that I represent) in trying to keep up with the changing needs of libraries. No more do we have libraries that just provide books and magazines: they also have become absolutely crucial in training our community and giving people in the community access to information technology.

It has been very pleasing to visit the various libraries and see the use that is being made, particularly by the over 60s group, with respect to information technology, not to mention the use of libraries by younger folk. I have attended a number of sessions at the different libraries in the area, where the young people have come in for books and also to familiarise themselves with information and the wonderful amount of data that they can get from their local library.

We are dealing with the Food Bill at the moment, and one of the points that has certainly been made clear to me by the local government area is that, should the Food Bill get through in the form that we are debating at the moment, there will be some real concerns on the part of the resources of councils to be able to fulfil their responsibility (which will be an increasing responsibility), and that they have already identified in the local government area the need for extra resources. I hope that, while introducing a very important piece of legislation in the Food Bill, this is something that the government has taken into consideration. It will be interesting to hear what the Minister for Human Services has to say about the resourcing of that bill, let alone how we will deal with it.

The electorate of Ashford is concerned about a lot of issues regarding water, so I suppose it is quite interesting that the Minister for Water Resources (the member for Unley) has responsibility for the adjoining electorate of Unley. There has been a lot of discussion throughout the council areas that I represent, again, with regard to the Catchment Water Management Board—how it operates and what its interaction will be with the community. A number of areas (Wayville and West Richmond are two of the areas of concern) have potential flooding problems that I think we will have to deal with very shortly.

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

DENTAL PRACTICE BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

- No. 1. Page 6, line 6 (clause 3)—Leave out "dentures" and insert: dental prostheses
 No. 2. Page 7 (clause 3)—After line 14 insert the following definition:
 "repealed Act" means the Dentists Act 1984;
 No. 3. Page 7, line 24 (clause 3)—After "imprisonment" insert:

for 1 year or more

No. 4. Page 7 (clause 3)—After line 29 insert new subclause as follows:

(3) Without limiting the generality of the expression, a person who is not a dental practitioner will, unless exempted by the regulations, be taken to provide dental treatment through the instrumentality of a dental practitioner if the person, in the course of carrying on a business, provides services to the practitioner for which the person is entitled to receive a share in the profits or income of the practitioner's dental practice.

No. 5. Page 9, line 19 (clause 6)—Leave out "5" and insert:

6

No. 6. Page 9, line 20 (clause 6)—Leave out "2" and insert:

3

No. 7. Page 10, line 1 (clause 6)—Leave out "3" and insert:

2

No. 8. Page 10, line 6 (clause 6)—Leave out "suitable".

No. 9. Page 10 (clause 6)—After line 7 insert new subclause as follows:

(5) The requirements of qualification and nomination made by this section in relation to the appointment of a member extend to the appointment of a deputy of that member.

No. 10. Page 12, lines 28 and 29 (clause 15)—Leave out "(other than Part 5)" and insert:

other than—

(a) this power of delegation; and

(b) the power to hear and determine proceedings under Part 5.

No. 11. Page 13, line 8 (clause 16)—After "purposes of" insert: hearing and determining

No. 12. Page 13, line 15 (clause 16)—After "except in" insert: hearing and determining

No. 13. Page 13, line 17 (clause 16)—Leave out "Except in proceedings under Part 5,".

No. 14. Page 13, line 24 (clause 16)—Leave out "Except in proceedings under Part 5,".

No. 15. Page 13 (clause 16)—After line 30 insert new subclause as follows:

(6a) However, subsections (5) and (6) do not apply in relation to the hearing and determination of proceedings under Part 5 by the Board as constituted for the purposes of proceedings under that Part.

No. 16. Page 14, line 2 (clause 17)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:

"\$10 000"

No. 17. Page 17, line 22 (clause 25)—Leave out "suitable".

No. 18. Page 17 (clause 25)—After line 23 insert new subclause as follows:

(4) The requirements of qualification and nomination made by this section in relation to the appointment of a member extend to the appointment of a deputy of that member.

No. 19. Page 18, line 30 (clause 29)—After "Tribunal" insert: (not being the presiding member)

No. 20. Page 19, lines 1 to 6 (clause 29)—Leave out subclause (4) and insert:

(4) The Tribunal constituted of the presiding member may, sitting alone, deal with—

(a) preliminary, interlocutory or procedural matters; or

(b) questions of costs; or

(c) questions of law,

and may, for that purpose or as a consequence, while sitting alone, make any determination or order (including a final order) that the presiding member considers appropriate.

No. 21. Page 20, lines 10 to 13 (clause 30)—Leave out paragraphs (c) and (d) and insert:

(c) particulars of any condition or limitation that affects or restricts the person's right to provide dental treatment; and
 (d) information prescribed by the regulations,

No. 22. Page 20 (clause 30)—After line 14 insert new subclauses as follow:

(2a) The Registrar must also keep a register of the names of persons whose names have been removed for any reason (whether under this Act or any other Act or law or former Act or law) from a register referred to in subsection (1) and have not been reinstated.

(2b) The register referred to in subsection (2a)—

(a) must not include the name of any person who is dead;

(b) must include, in relation to each person on the register, a statement of—

- (i) the reason for removal of the person's name; and
- (ii) the date of removal; and
- (iii) in the case of removal consequent on suspension or disqualification—the duration of the suspension or disqualification;
- (c) must have deleted from it all information relating to any person whose name is reinstated on the appropriate register.
- No. 23. Page 20, lines 16 to 18 (clause 30)—Leave out subclauses (4) and (5).
- No. 24. Page 20, line 24 (clause 30)—After "Registrar" insert: and may be made available to the public by electronic means
- No. 25. Page 20, lines 27 and 28 (clause 30)—Leave out subclause (10).
- No. 26. Page 21, line 25 (clause 31)—Leave out "to children".
- No. 27. Page 22 (clause 32)—After line 4 insert new paragraph as follows:
 - (ca) is, unless exempted by the Board, insured in a manner and to an extent approved by the Board against civil liabilities that might be incurred by the person in the course of providing dental treatment; and
- No. 28. Page 23 (clause 33)—After line 37 insert new paragraph as follows:
 - (c) the company is, unless exempted by the Board, insured in a manner and to an extent approved by the Board against civil liabilities that might be incurred by the company in the course of providing dental treatment.
- No. 29. Page 24, line 19 (clause 34)—After "this Act" insert: (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist)
- No. 30. Page 24, line 25 (clause 34)—After "this Act" insert: (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist)
- No. 31. Page 25, lines 24 and 25 (clause 36)—Leave out subclause (2) and insert:
 - (2) The Registrar must remove from the appropriate register the name of a person—
 - (a) who dies;
 - (b) who ceases to hold a qualification required for registration on that register; or
 - (c) who ceases for any other reason to be entitled to be registered on that register; or
 - (d) who ceases to be enrolled in a course of study that provides qualifications for registration as a dental practitioner under this Act (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist); or
 - (e) whose registration on that register has been suspended or cancelled under this Act.
 - (3) The Registrar may act under subsection (2) without giving prior notice to the relevant person.
- No. 32. Page 25 (clause 37)—After line 32 insert new paragraph as follows:
 - (d) on account of the person—
 - (i) ceasing to hold a qualification required for registration on that register or otherwise ceasing to be entitled to be registered on that register; or
 - (ii) ceasing to be enrolled in a course of study that provides qualifications for registration as a dental practitioner under this Act (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist).
- No. 33. Page 26, lines 5 to 7 (clause 37)—Leave out subclause (3) and insert:
 - (3) A person who has been disqualified from being registered under this Act may, subject to the terms of the order for disqualification, apply to the Board for reinstatement of the person's name on the appropriate register.
- No. 34. Page 26, lines 22 to 26 (clause 37)—Leave out subclause (7) and insert:
 - (7) Subject to this section, the Board must reinstate on the appropriate register the name of an applicant under this section if satisfied that the applicant is eligible for registration on that register.
 - (7a) The Board may refuse to reinstate the name of the applicant on the appropriate register until all complaints (if any) laid against the applicant under this Act have been finally disposed of.
- No. 35. Page 27, line 3 (clause 38)—After "treatment" insert: , or the undertaking of any course of continuing dental education,
- No. 36. Page 28, line 6 (clause 42)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:

- \$50 000
- No. 37. Page 28, line 9 (clause 42)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 38. Page 28, line 14 (clause 43)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 39. Page 28, line 18 (clause 43)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 40. Page 28, line 22 (clause 44)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 41. Page 28, line 26 (clause 44)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 42. Page 28, line 30 (clause 44)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 43. Page 28, line 35 (clause 44)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 44. Page 29, line 8 (clause 45)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$50 000
- No. 45. Page 29 (clause 45)—After line 17 insert new subclause as follows:
 - (4a) A person who contravenes, or fails to comply with, a condition of an exemption under this section is guilty of an offence.
- Maximum penalty: \$50 000.
- No. 46. Page 29, line 27 (clause 46)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
 - \$20 000
- No. 47. Page 29, line 30 (clause 46)—Leave out "and" (first occurring) and insert:
 - or
- No. 48. Page 31, lines 5 and 6 (clause 49)—Leave out "has at some time been registered under this Act" and insert:
 - was, at the relevant time, a registered person under this Act or the repealed Act.
- No. 49. Page 31, line 25 (clause 51)—Leave out "believes" and insert:
 - suspects
- No. 50. Page 32, line 18 (clause 51)—Leave out "\$2 500" and insert:
 - \$5 000
- No. 51. Page 32, line 28 (clause 52)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:
 - \$10 000
- No. 52. Page 33, line 2 (clause 53)—After "who" insert:
 - , in the course of exercising powers under this Act
- No. 53. Page 33, line 7 (clause 53)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:
 - \$10 000
- No. 54. Page 33, line 14 (clause 54)—Leave out "\$2 500" and insert:
 - \$10 000
- No. 55. Page 33, lines 15 to 23 (clause 54)—Leave out subclause (2) and insert:
 - (2) If any of the following persons, namely—
 - (a) a health professional who has treated, or is treating, a patient who is a dental practitioner or dental student; or
 - (b) a person (including a hospital) who provides dental treatment through the instrumentality of a dental practitioner or dental student; or
 - (c) the person in charge of an educational institution in which a dental student is enrolled in a course of study that provides qualifications for registration as a dental practitioner under this Act (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist),
 is of the opinion that the practitioner or student is or may be medically unfit to provide dental treatment, the person must submit a written report to the Board setting out his or her reasons for that opinion and any other information required by the regulations.
- Maximum penalty: \$10 000.
- No. 56. Page 34, line 6 (clause 55)—Leave out paragraph (d) and insert:

- (d) impose conditions restricting the person's right to provide dental treatment; or
- (e) impose conditions requiring the person to undergo counselling or treatment or to enter into any other undertaking.
- No. 57. Page 34, lines 30 to 36 and page 35, line 1 (clause 56)—Leave out subclause (5) and insert:
- (5) If, after conducting an inquiry under this section, the Board is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that there is proper cause for taking disciplinary action against the respondent and the respondent consents to the Board exercising its powers under this subsection, the Board may, by order, do one or more of the following:
- (a) censure the respondent;
- (b) require the respondent to pay to the Board a fine not exceeding \$5 000;
- (c) impose conditions restricting the respondent's right to provide dental treatment; (d) suspend the respondent's registration for a period not exceeding 1 month.
- (5a) However, if the respondent does not consent to the Board exercising its powers under subsection (5), the Board must terminate the proceedings under this section and lay a complaint against the respondent before the Tribunal in respect of the matter.
- (5b) If—
- (a) a person has been found guilty of an offence; and
- (b) the circumstances of the offence form, in whole or in part, the subject matter of the complaint,
- the person is not liable to a fine under this section in respect of conduct giving rise to the offence.
- No. 58. Page 35, line 7 (clause 57)—Leave out "under this Act or imposed by this Act."
- No. 59. Page 35, line 17 (clause 59)—After "presiding member" insert:
- (or, in the absence of the presiding member, the deputy presiding member)
- No. 60. Page 35, line 24 (clause 59)—After "Board" insert:
- (or, in the absence of the presiding member, the deputy presiding member)
- No. 61. Page 35, line 26 (clause 59)—After "section" insert:
- (other than the member presiding over the proceedings)
- No. 62. Page 35, lines 30 to 33 (clause 59)—Leave out all the words in these lines and insert:
- (a) preliminary, interlocutory or procedural matters; or
- (b) questions of costs; or
- (c) questions of law,
- and may, for that purpose or as a consequence, while sitting alone, make any determination or order (including a final order) that the person considers appropriate.
- No. 63. Page 36, lines 27 to 37, and page 37, lines 1 and 2 (clause 60)—Leave out subclauses (1) to (3) (inclusive) and insert":
- (1) If the Board lays before the Tribunal a complaint setting out matters that are alleged to constitute grounds for disciplinary action against a person, the Tribunal must, unless it considers the complaint frivolous or vexatious, inquire into the subject matter of the complaint.
- (2) If, after conducting an inquiry under this section, the Tribunal is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that there is proper cause for taking disciplinary action against the respondent, the Tribunal may, by order, do one or more of the following:
- (a) censure the respondent;
- (b) require the respondent to pay to the Board a fine not exceeding \$20 000;
- (c) impose conditions restricting the respondent's right to provide dental treatment;
- (d) suspend the respondent's registration on a specified register for a period not exceeding 1 year;
- (e) cancel the respondent's registration on a specified register;
- (f) disqualify the respondent from being registered on a specified register.
- (3) The Tribunal may—
- (a) stipulate that a disqualification under subsection (2) is to apply—
- (i) permanently; or
- (ii) for a specified period; or
- (iii) until the fulfilment of specified conditions; or
- (iv) until further order;
- (b) stipulate that an order relating to a person is to have effect at a specified future time and impose conditions as to the

conduct of the person or the person's business until that time.

- (3a) If a person contravenes or fails to comply with a condition imposed by the Tribunal as to the conduct of the person or the person's business, the person is guilty of an offence.
- Maximum penalty: \$75 000 or imprisonment for 6 months.
- (3b) If—
- (a) a person has been found guilty of an offence; and
- (b) the circumstances of the offence form, in whole or in part, the subject matter of the complaint,
- the person is not liable to a fine under this section in respect of conduct giving rise to the offence.
- No. 64. Page 37, line 3 (clause 60)—Leave out "subsection (3)" and insert:
- subsection (2)
- No. 65. Page 37—After line 5 insert new clause as follows:
- Variation or revocation of conditions imposed by Tribunal
- 60A. (1) The Tribunal may, at any time, on application by a registered person, vary or revoke a condition imposed by the Tribunal in relation to the person's registration under this Act.
- (2) The Board is entitled to appear and be heard on an application under this section.
- No. 66. Page 37, line 22 (clause 61)—Leave out "under this Division" and insert:
- before the Tribunal
- No. 67. Page 37, lines 31 and 32 (clause 62)—Leave out "or the Registrar".
- No. 68. Page 38, lines 1 and 2 (clause 62)—Leave out "or the Registrar".
- No. 69. Page 38, line 34 (clause 62)—Leave out "or by the Registrar".
- No. 70. Page 40, line 9 (clause 65)—Leave out "reprimand administered or order" and insert:
- decision
- No. 71. Page 40 (clause 65)—After line 10 insert new subclause as follows:
- (1a) An appeal under subsection (1)(c) against a decision may be instituted by the complainant or the respondent in the proceedings in which the decision was made.
- No. 72. Page 42 (clause 68)—After line 5 insert new definitions as follow:
- "health product" means—
- (a) a pharmaceutical product; or
- (b) any other product declared by the regulations to be a health product for the purposes of this Part;
- "health service" means—
- (a) hospital services; or
- (b) medical, dental or pharmaceutical services; or
- (c) any other service declared by the regulations to be a health service for the purposes of this Part;
- No. 73. Page 42, lines 15 and 16 (clause 68)—Leave out "to be conducted under a licence" and insert:
- that consists of the provision of dental treatment
- No. 74. Page 42 (clause 68)—After line 24 insert new subclause as follows:
- (4) For the purposes of this Part, a person who holds more than 10 per cent of the issued share capital of a public company will be regarded as a person occupying a position of authority in that company.
- No. 75. Page 42, line 27 (clause 69)—Leave out "gives directions that result in the practitioner or student acting" and insert:
- directs or pressures the practitioner or student to act
- No. 76. Page 42, line 30 (clause 69)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
- \$75 000
- No. 77. Page 43, lines 2 and 3 (clause 69)—Leave out "gives directions that result in the practitioner or student acting" and insert:
- directs or pressures the practitioner or student to act
- No. 78. Page 43, line 6 (clause 69)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
- \$75 000
- No. 79. Page 43, line 10 (clause 70)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:
- \$75 000
- No. 80. Page 43—After line 10 insert new clause as follows:
- Offence to give, offer or accept benefit for referral or recommendation
- 70A. (1) A person must not give, or offer to give, a dental practitioner or a prescribed relative of a dental practitioner a

benefit as an inducement, consideration or reward for the dental practitioner—

- (a) referring a patient to, or recommending that a patient use, a health service provided by the person; or
- (b) prescribing, or recommending that a patient use, a health product manufactured, sold or supplied by the person.

Maximum penalty: \$75 000.

(2) A dental practitioner or a prescribed relative of a dental practitioner must not accept from any person a benefit offered or given as an inducement, consideration or reward for the dental practitioner—

- (a) referring a patient to, or recommending that a patient use, a health service provided by that person; or
- (b) prescribing, or recommending that a patient use, a health product manufactured, sold or supplied by that person.

Maximum penalty: \$75 000.

- (3) In this section—
"benefit" means money or any property that has a monetary value.

No. 81. Page 43, line 15 (clause 71)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:

\$20 000

No. 82. Page 43, line 20 (clause 72)—Leave out "\$10 000" and insert:

\$20 000

No. 83. Page 43—After line 20 insert new clause as follows: Dental practitioner, etc., must declare interest in prescribed business

72A. (1) A dental practitioner or prescribed relative of a dental practitioner who has an interest in a prescribed business must—

- (a) in the case of an interest that came into existence before the commencement of this section—within 1 month after the commencement of this section; or
- (b) in any other case—within 1 month after the interest comes into existence,

give to the Board prescribed information relating to the interest and the manner in which it arose.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

(2) A dental practitioner or prescribed relative of a dental practitioner who has an interest in a prescribed business must, within 1 month after a change in the nature or extent of the interest, give to the Board prescribed information relating to the change.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

(3) If a dental practitioner or prescribed relative of a dental practitioner has an interest in a prescribed business, the dental practitioner must not—

- (a) refer a patient to, or recommend that a patient use, a health service provided by that business; or
- (b) prescribe, or recommend that a patient use, a health product manufactured, sold or supplied by that business, unless the dental practitioner has informed the patient, in writing, of the interest of the practitioner or prescribed relative of the practitioner in that business.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

(4) Subject to subsection (5), a person has an interest in a prescribed business for the purposes of this section if the person is likely to derive a financial benefit, whether directly or indirectly, from the profitable conduct of the business.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4)—

- (a) a financial benefit is not derived by a dental practitioner if the benefit consists solely of reasonable fees or charges payable to the dental practitioner for dental treatment provided to patients by the practitioner; and
- (b) a person does not have an interest in a prescribed business that is carried on by a public company if the interest consists only of a shareholding in the company of less than 5 per cent of the issued share capital of the company.

(6) It is a defence to proceedings for an offence against subsection (3) and to a charge of unprofessional conduct for failure to comply with that subsection for the defendant to prove that he or she did not know and could not reasonably have been expected to know that a prescribed relative had an interest in the prescribed business to which the referral, recommendation or prescription that is the subject of the proceedings relates.

(7) In this section—

"prescribed business" means a business consisting of or involving—

- (a) the provision of a health service; or
- (b) the manufacture, sale or supply of a health product.

No. 84. Page 43, line 25 (clause 73)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:

\$10 000

No. 85. Page 43—After line 25 insert new clause as follows: Dental School must report cessation of a student's enrolment

73A. The person in charge of an educational institution must, if a dental student ceases to be enrolled at that institution in a course of study providing qualifications for registration as a dental practitioner under this Act (other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist), cause written notice of that fact to be given to the Board.

Maximum penalty: \$5 000.

No. 86. Page 43, line 30 (clause 74)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:

\$10 000

No. 87. Page 44, line 5 (clause 75)—Leave out "\$5 000" and insert:

\$10 000

No. 88. Page 44—After line 5 insert new clause as follows:

Victimisation

75A. (1) A person commits an act of victimisation against another person ("the Victim") if he or she causes detriment to the victim on the ground, or substantially on the ground, that the victim—

- (a) has disclosed or intends to disclose information; or
- (b) has made or intends to make an allegation,

that has given rise, or could give rise, to proceedings against the person under this Act.

(2) An act of victimisation under this Act may be dealt with—

- (a) as a tort; or
- (b) as if it were an act of victimisation under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984,

but, if the victim commences proceedings in a court seeking a remedy in tort, he or she cannot subsequently lodge a complaint under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and, conversely, if the victim lodges a complaint under that Act, he or she cannot subsequently commence proceedings in a court seeking a remedy in tort.

(3) Where a complaint alleging an act of victimisation under this Act has been lodged with the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity and the Commissioner is of the opinion that the subject matter of the complaint has already been adequately dealt with by a competent authority, the Commissioner may decline—to act on the complaint or to proceed further with action on the complaint.

(4) In this section—

"detriment" includes—

- (a) injury, damage or loss; or
- (b) intimidation or harassment; or
- (c) discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to the victim's employment or business; or
- (d) threats of reprisal.

No. 89. Page 45—After line 15 insert new clause as follows: Confidentiality

81A. (1) A person engaged or formerly engaged in the administration of this Act or the repealed Act must not divulge or communicate personal information obtained (whether by that person or otherwise) in the course of official duties except—

- (a) as required or authorised by or under this Act or any other Act or law; or
- (b) with the consent of the person to whom the information relates; or
- (c) in connection with the administration of this Act or the repealed Act; or
- (d) in accordance with a request of an authority responsible under the law of a place outside this State for the registration or licensing of persons who provide dental treatment, where the information is required for the proper administration of that law.

Maximum penalty: \$10 000.

(2) Subsection (1) does not prevent disclosure of statistical or other data that could not reasonably be expected to lead to the identification of any person to whom it relates.

(3) Information that has been disclosed under subsection (1) for a particular purpose must not be used for any other purpose by—

- (a) the person to whom the information was disclosed; or
 (b) any other person who gains access to the information (whether properly or improperly and whether directly or indirectly) as a result of that disclosure.

Maximum penalty: \$10 000.

No. 90. Page 48, lines 3 to 5, clause 1 (Schedule)—Leave out this clause.

No. 91. Page 49, line 17, clause 7 (Schedule)—After "this Act" insert:

(other than as a specialist or an advanced dental prosthetist)

LAND AGENTS (REGISTRATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

REAL PROPERTY (FEES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
 (Continued from page 1782.)

Ms KEY (Hanson): Before the dinner adjournment I was talking about issues in the electorate of Ashford particularly to do with the catchment subsidy scheme and other water issues. I note that the Unley council has made it known that it believes that the last round of board appointments saw only one serving local government person on the Patawalonga catchment board and, in the view of the council—and they say that this is a view not necessarily shared by others—the decisions of the board have fallen far short of the desirable outcomes for that area.

I also note that Parklands Creek, which flows through the City of Unley and through South Australian parklands, presents a particular problem to the City of Unley and residents of that community. As I said, in the Unley area of Wayville, in particular, and also Richmond and West Richmond, there seem to be some real issues with regard to flooding. That has been exacerbated by the issue that—

Mr MEIER: I rise on a point of order. I have a lot of respect for the member for Hanson and I think she is a very good member, but I would like you to rule, Mr Speaker, on the relevance of flooding in the Unley area with respect to the budget debate. It would be relevant to the grievance debate, but I find it hard to understand how it is relevant to the budget debate.

The SPEAKER: This is not a supply bill. I do not uphold the point of order.

Ms KEY: If the good member had listened to the rest of my sentence on this issue, he would know that I was talking about the catchment subsidy scheme and also the catchment water management board and the position of the council in that area with regard to flooding. I was going on to say that in the areas of West Richmond and Richmond there is a real problem with flooding, which fits in with the plans that have been put forward by both the West Torrens council and the Unley council and also part of the airport management plan as well. If these provisions are not put in place, it will cost the state a considerable amount of money to, in fact, make good the ruined premises, not only of businesses but also of residents in the area. So, I raise this issue as one of great seriousness with regard to planning and coordination.

I know that the member for Mitchell has raised the issue of the funding of an Olympic swimming facility in the Marion area. I support the campaign on his part and that of the member for Elder in making sure that we have an appropriate aquatic facility in that area. I also should say that, while the Unley council is not seeking an Olympic facility, the Unley Memorial Swimming Pool is the oldest public swimming pool facility in metropolitan Adelaide. It was constructed some 50 years ago, with the technology that was available then. I ask that the need for a major infrastructure project such as the Unley swimming pool be considered within capital funding issues.

The member for Unley may be not aware of this, but the Unley swimming pool is in the new seat of Ashford and is on the western side of Goodwood Road.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms KEY: It is interesting to note that the minister does not seem to be supporting my campaign to mention the Unley pool. I am not sure why he would not support that. I am sure that he is a supporter, so I am surprised that he is interjecting on my speech. To put this matter into context, we should remember that the whole area of sport and recreation is important, and that needs to be part of any plan for the community. The Unley council tells me that approximately 2 per cent of the City of Unley's total area is dedicated to open space. In the council's view, there is some need to make sure that as much space as possible is made available so that we have a proper percentage within the area.

I will not discuss the open space at the orphanage, because the Minister for Water Resources, the member for Unley, would get upset about my advocating that this is an important issue for the region. I am sure that he will do that in his budget speech. In summary, councils in the area I represent have taken seriously their management plan and their views for the future. Unley is a good example. There has also been good work at Marion, in particular, and at West Torrens and Mitcham. A lot of people involved are local. Not only have the residents been consulted but also they have made sure there is some local input into the future of the region. I compliment those people, particularly those in the local government area, for the time and energy they put into making sure that we have a good local community.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I want to cover a few issues, clearly all concerning the budget. I would like to begin with—

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I am sure you will pick me up the minute I stray slightly. I am in good hands. Between you and the Speaker, I am sure I will be well controlled. At the outset, I want to say that a very important speech was delivered earlier today by the Leader of the Opposition, setting out the Labor Party's response to this government's budget.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I'll be getting on to that; don't worry about that.

Mr Meier interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Goyder!

Mr FOLEY: It's all right, John; I'll be getting on to that, because I have a bit—

Mr Meier interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Goyder will not ignore the chair.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, sir. I will be getting on to that, and the member for Goyder and others who are listening can

just wait. I will make some interesting comments and observations about the dirty tricks unit of this government. From the outset, let me say that tonight the Labor Party has laid down some very important principles that we will continue to reiterate to the community in the lead-up to the state election and during that campaign. As the Leader of the Opposition has correctly outlined, we are committed to balancing the budget. For each budget over the four years of the first Rann Labor government, we will work within the financial parameters as laid down by this government in this budget and in the forward estimates. We will spend no more than this government but we will reprioritise Liberal expenditure and put that money into the priorities of the Labor Party. That will be achieved by the shifting of some Liberal programs to Labor programs, by the cutting of large amounts of government waste and by removing inefficiencies in government that clearly have built up over eight years of administration. We are confident that we will be in a position to put forward a targeted program of new spending initiatives, which will be outlined during the election campaign and which will be totally funded from within existing resources of government.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I will digress to respond to the member for Unley, who said, 'What government programs?' The leader correctly outlined tonight just one or two examples, and there are plenty. There is this government's expenditure on consultants and government-paid advertising. We have advised tonight that we will abolish the Emergency Services Administrative Unit, which is referred to as ESAU. That amazing bureaucracy, which has been put in place to administer emergency services, is another area of government inefficiency that will be removed. We have outlined a flatter and leaner structure for delivering government economic development programs that will enable us to strip out some of the costs of the economic development agencies of government.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: So more redundancies?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member the Minister for Water Resources will contain himself.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, sir. We will be looking at areas of budget growth that are not sustainable and are worthy of some finetuning. The Tourism Commission and allocations to tourism are something at which I will be looking closely with respect to efficiencies, and I can see that the member for Unley agrees and welcomes that initiative, although it is not for me to comment on any internal government tension in that area. We have noticed that, even in the Premier's own Department of the Premier and Cabinet, a significant blow-out has occurred. Staffing numbers continue to increase, and perhaps I will speak more about the Premier's office towards the end of my contribution.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: So you think you will be cutting down on the Premier's department?

Mr FOLEY: Yes, actually. The Leader of the Opposition made it clear tonight that there are a number of areas of government that we will be reducing in size. Labor will deliver financial responsibility to this state and it will deliver balanced budgets. In the course of the next couple of months, I will be outlining Labor's financial responsibility legislation, which will be introduced shortly after the election of the Labor government. As the leader pointed out, I will head the expenditure review committee of cabinet and, along with my colleagues who will join me on that committee, my task will be to go through agency by agency, line by line, budget by

budget and unit by unit, and we will strip out all the savings we need in order to fund our Labor programs, and I have no doubt that there are more than enough savings in there for—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call on members on my right to remain silent. The chair gets very short tempered with members who continue to interject after they have been called to order. The member for Hart.

Mr FOLEY: I can attest to that, sir; you do that very well. Let us talk about the budget. The budget cuts to payroll tax and the other tax relief measures are welcome. This Labor opposition is prepared to be objective and to acknowledge good initiatives. We welcome the commitment to reduce payroll tax, and those commitments will be honoured by a Labor government should we win the next election. We also welcome the increase in pensioner concessions as they relate to council rates.

However, let us balance that with the reality that the electricity price that is now being incurred by the business community more than wipes out any budgetary saving in payroll tax. With some amusement and dismay, I noticed on the weekend that the Treasurer, the discredited minister for electricity who has been censured by this House, said that the \$25 million in payroll tax cuts balances out any increases in the price of electricity. What a glib, deceptive and disingenuous response from the Treasurer, and I say that for this reason. Many users of electricity do not pay payroll tax. Many users who are using more than \$20 000 worth of electricity this year have a payroll less than the threshold, or they may be just above the threshold. How you can equate the payroll tax cut to each individual firm and make a statement that that covers the electricity cost increase is disingenuous and it is disappointing that such a statement has been made.

Let me point out that, notwithstanding these tax cuts and notwithstanding the fact that it has taken seven years for this government to address the issue of the payroll tax threshold (again contrary to what the Premier and the Treasurer would have us believe), according to Tony Harris, the former Auditor-General for New South Wales, we are still the highest taxing state in the nation. He makes it very clear that, on commonwealth grants commission data, South Australian taxation efforts have gradually moved the state from fifth place in 1996-97 to take the position of the highest taxing jurisdiction in 1999-2000. Premier Olsen is a high taxing, high spending Premier. You do not have to believe me on that, because plenty of members opposite will tell you privately that this Premier loves to spend, loves to tax. Unfortunately for taxpayers in this state, he tends to spend on things that are not the priorities of the community but priorities of his failed electoral strategy.

The issue of electricity is a critical issue and it is disappointing and indeed disheartening that the Premier has failed to make any reference to the impending electricity crisis to begin on 1 July and which will particularly hit South Australia come 1 January 2003. The budget provides for small cash surpluses over the next four years, but the budget is still in deficit on an accrual based measure. The outlays have been higher than predicted for 2000-01; outlays of \$226 million higher than budget this year, up another \$212 million for next year (that is, 1 per cent and 1.4 per cent respectively). The government has again used assets of government to prop up its budget bottom line and it has used approximately \$194 million from the bad bank to prop up the current budget, together with in excess of \$100 million from capital taken from SAFA.

This government, as it did in the previous year's budget when it used the proceeds from the sale of the Adelaide Casino, has used assets to meet its budget bottom line commitments that should have been used to retire state debt, and that is concerning. That is a development that I am sorry to see occur. It would have been my preference for that money to be used to pay off state debt, as was the intention of the former Treasurer, Stephen Baker, in some of his earlier budgets when making reference to that.

The blow-out in government agencies is a concern. When we look at the budget in its total context, clearly some areas are politically motivated in the run-up to the next state election where the government has thrown caution to the wind in its endeavour to buy back what political support it can in the community. We have seen the budget for the Department of Industry substantially increase for the next financial year with significant declines forecast in the out years. Implicit in that is that this government is out to buy any business that it can over the next six to eight months in an attempt to try to be seen as creating some investment in this state. The reality and the disappointment is that it could be done at large expense to the taxpayer. Tourism has received a \$13 million increase, funded through the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and as the Treasurer of this state that is an expenditure at which I will be looking very closely. The department of Premier and Cabinet has a budget of \$53.7 million in 2001-02 and staffing levels will rise from 280 FTEs to 305 FTEs.

In terms of the economy in general, the budget predicts that South Australia will underperform compared with the whole of Australia. Australia is expected to grow by 3.25 per cent compared with South Australia's growth rate of 2.5 per cent. From that, the government has boldly suggested that we will achieve a 1 per cent employment growth, in spite of the fact that during July and April we have actually lost 11 000 jobs in South Australia.

I note with some amusement some of the comments made of previous budgets by this Liberal government. In 1994-95—it seems like light years ago—Dean Brown said:

This is the budget for securing South Australia's future. It brings about recovery through reform which sets the economy on a track of sustainable long-term growth.

In 1995-96, Stephen Baker (then Treasurer) said:

We're coming into the home straight. The South Australian budget is being moved out of the red in the quickest and most significant turnaround in the history of South Australia.

In 1996-97, again, Stephen Baker said:

We have broken the back of debt; a responsible budget; it remains steadfastly on the course set by the government in the May 1994 financial statement.

In 1997-98, his last budget before being torn to pieces by John Olsen, Stephen Baker said:

It makes a remarkable and historic turnaround in the financial and economic fortunes of our state.

As I said, the 1997 election came along, the one which John Olsen so ruthlessly stole from Dean Brown. In his first budget, Rob Lucas said:

We are taking our state proudly into the next millennium.

In 1999-2000, Lucas mentioned 'a clear plan for the future development of our state', and in 2000-01 he said:

South Australian families now want to reap the rewards for their sacrifice, and they will.

What do we have for this budget? Apparently, we are 'turning the page'.

Year in, year out, this Liberal government, as far back as 1994-95, has deliberately attempted to convince South Australians that this was the budget that fixed our financial woes and there would be a rosy future ahead. Of course, that was not the case. Budget after budget, the government of this state has misled the public. That is a matter for this government to mention at the next election as it attempts to explain why it has promised so much but delivered so little.

I will quickly refer to a couple of issues in the few minutes that are available to me. I note that the Minister for Education is sitting here with us tonight. I am extremely disappointed by this government's decision only to partly fund the upgrade of the Ocean View College. Whilst it is clearly porkbarrelling high schools in Liberal held electorates throughout the state, it has asked the community of my electorate to accept the closure of two primary schools with a move onto one campus. Although a figure of close to \$6 million to \$7 million had been budgeted and a \$3.5 million allocation was made in the budget before, there has been no further funding. So, it is half a job, a part job.

Either this minister has deliberately deceived the people of Port Adelaide and chosen to take the money that should have been allocated to Port Adelaide and allocated it to Liberal held seats or there has been a major blunder. Either way, I expect some answers from this government, because I will tell my community that it has been poorly dealt with by this government and should reconsider whether or not the amalgamation and the closure of two primary schools is sensible. I would have thought that, from a community which said to this government, 'We will accept the closure of two primary schools and the relocation onto one campus', that we would receive priority and support from this conservative government, but unfortunately that faith was put where it should not have been. I must admit that I was guilty of believing that this government would actually care about an area such as Port Adelaide.

Mr Hill: You won't make that mistake again.

Mr FOLEY: The member for Kaurana is correct: I won't make that mistake again. I have mentioned electricity. The Premier goes to COAG on Friday. I note that today the Premier said that this was Paul Keating's model. I remind members that, at the 1993 COAG meeting, Paul Keating and the then Liberal Premiers of Victoria and New South Wales (from memory, John Fahey) and Premier Arnold and others signed off on the national electricity market, and some very broad principles were laid down as to how that market should be structured.

The architects of the model, the first ministers to get together, spent three or four years designing the market. One of the principal drivers, and the longest standing minister, was one John Wayne Olsen, who came to me year in and year out wanting me to support legislation on NECCA. John Olsen was part of the team that designed NECCA and John Olsen was part of the team—the Premier, I should say—was part of the team that designed NEMMCO. It was the Premier who accepted the market rules. The Premier of this state—as both minister and Premier—has ownership of the current structure. As I have said, to suggest that it was the result of a communique issued in 1992 is disingenuous in the extreme.

I want to comment briefly on events of earlier tonight about the dirty tricks campaign of this government. I want to make the observation that I have not seen this before in government. It is disappointing and concerning to the opposition that this government seems intent on employing people to run around and participate in dirty tricks. A certain

individual tonight, for whatever reason—but it is pretty clear to the opposition—chose to tape the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply speech on the audio system of this parliament. The Premier's Chief of Staff has told me that I am reading far too much into it. In fairness to that person, perhaps I am. But when we see a member of the Premier's staff, who is paid for by the taxpayer, using government taxpayer-funded equipment, which is plugged into this parliament's audio system, taping the Leader of the Opposition, it is for no other reason than to have a high quality piece of recording to use in a future election campaign.

Let us remember that this is the same person who was reprimanded by the Premier for creating a website Rann.dot.com. This is the same Premier's Office that said that they sacked two staff because they were sending inappropriate and quite offensive emails concerning one of my colleagues and, I am told, were also preparing one regarding myself. I am told that one of those people is now in the employ of Treasury and one is now working for a government minister. So much for those two staff being sacked.

This is also a Premier's Office that has seen the same person I dealt with today videotaping with a digital camera a speech made by the member for Taylor (the shadow minister for education) at Flinders University late last year, and we see at many committee meetings taping of the opposition, and people being followed around with video cameras and tape recorders. I am told that this is perhaps the same person who is involved with the Young Liberals, who is putting out newsletters to members encouraging them to join up for a dirty tricks team. It is in written form as a leaflet and has been released by the opposition with the express requirement to disrupt Labor candidates and to do secret things in the night.

If these are the people that the Premier wants to employ, do not be upset or surprised when the opposition react to it as we did today. In the future, we will be watching very closely the misuse of taxpayers' money. I can think of no greater abuse of taxpayers' money than the government employing individuals to participate in nothing but dirty tricks in the lead up to a state election. We will be watching this very closely because taxpayers will not accept it.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I will follow the comments made by the member for Hart: I thought the last part of his speech was a poor attempt to justify an impulsive and unwise course of action.

Mr Foley: The Speaker didn't think so.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, look, I am making this speech. If the honourable member believes that someone is operating improperly, contrary to standing orders, it is the right of any member to object and go to the Speaker. No member has the right to remove any property from any other person in this parliament. If that rule is to stand, no-one is safe in any office—no-one. It is not the rule of law. I have no right to take any recording device or piece of equipment from the member for Hart or anyone else in any part of this building.

Mr Foley: It was in the chamber.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No, that is a public part. If the honourable member for Hart thinks that he is right and is going to give himself the authority to go around this building and seize documents or equipment and if he thinks that one day he will be a minister, how would he then act? Is he going to be the arch ruler? Does he think he is above the rest of the

community? No-one else in this building would do so. I put to you, Mr Speaker, a very serious matter that wants proper investigation, when one members takes it upon himself to barge into any part of this building and remove a piece of equipment without authority. I put to you, sir, clearly and precisely: what would happen if I went to the Leader of the Opposition's office and took a piece of electronic equipment because I did not like what he or she was doing? What would happen to me? This is a fundamental matter of the rule of law. The shadow Treasurer takes it upon himself to barge around this building like a little fuhrer carrying on with sheer arrogance. Then he comes into this chamber and asks us—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member now to return to the bill.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member took it upon himself; he raised the issue. I did not intend to do so.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has made his point; I would ask him now to be good enough to return to the bill.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Mr Speaker, of course I accept your guidance, but the matter has been raised tonight in this parliament, and not by the government.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The member for Hart has two sets of rules. He wants carte blanche to do and say whatever he likes, carry on and throw his weight around, but when someone stands up and responds to it he does not like it; he objects. If the honourable member wants to carry on in that fashion we will accommodate him.

Let me return now to the budget. This budget, which has appropriated some \$7 400 million, provides badly needed services to many people in South Australia. The government has not arrived at this course of events without a great deal of hard work, agony and the need to make a lot of difficult decisions. We are waiting with bated breath to see what the alternative government in South Australia intends to put to the people of South Australia and this House.

This budget has provided assistance in a number of areas of great need and importance. The honourable member talked about partly funding schools in his area. He would know, as I do, that in my electorate a number of important amalgamation processes are taking place. The Booleroo Centre school has received \$500 000 out of \$2.5 million, which will need to be spent over the next couple of years. The important element of those decisions is that the commitment has been made, the process has been put in place and the projects will continue.

In my constituency, the work that is taking place at Quorn and on the edge of my constituency at Laura in relation to aged care facilities is most welcome. Some \$1.1 million at Quorn and \$1.4 million at Laura will provide badly needed facilities at those locations to deal with people in their declining years and allow them to live in their own surroundings, close to their friends and families.

In relation to the other important issues with which the budget deals, namely, the reduction in taxation and the balanced nature of this budget, are commendable, because they lay a foundation for us in the future to be able to create a better South Australia and provide the climate for ongoing investment and ongoing development which is so vital if we are to provide the opportunities to ensure that we maintain our standard of living.

In this state we rely upon growth and a number of very important industries, be they manufacturing, retail in the commercial sector, or mining, tourism, agriculture, fishing

or aquaculture. They are all very dependent on the attitude of government. Through this budget and other measures, this government has clearly indicated to those people that we want to assist and encourage them and see them go forward. When we make a comparison with what is taking place in other states around Australia, we see some unfortunate changes of policy which will not assist those areas.

Our challenge tonight is that we want to know where the Labor Party stands on important issues such as WorkCover. Where does it stand? What is its policy? If members opposite follow the line taken by the Bracks' government, WorkCover premiums will skyrocket. Where do members opposite stand on native title and the freeholding of land? Where do they stand? We want to know where they stand and so do the people. Where do they stand on native title? Will they continue to try to sell out leaseholders, as they did—

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, you did. Where do you stand on freeholding of land? Do you support it?

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I will talk any time you want to. There will be another opportunity. Where do members opposite stand in relation to other important issues such as the administration of the Department for Primary Industries and Resources? Where do the shadow minister and the Leader of the Opposition stand in relation to soil conservation boards? Do they want them gobbled up under the umbrella of the Department of Environment? I understand that the Leader of the Opposition was on the radio: did he say where he stands on these issues? The people want to know. The community is entitled to know. There are many other issues.

Where does the honourable member stand in relation to the development of national parks so that we can expand tourist operations? Where do members opposite stand on these issues? These are important issues which the people are entitled to know about. There is a tremendous demand for ecotourism. It has done great things for South Australia. It is providing great opportunities in the northern part of the state in my electorate. There is a need to be friendly to those operators, to encourage them and to help with facilities because the community wants to go there. The community wants sensible and reasonable facilities. They want all sorts of things. Whether it is at Innamincka or the Flinders Ranges, there is an urgent need for the tourism industry to be accommodated. The Minister for Tourism has been very supportive—and so has the government. There is a need to ensure that all sections of government are following that particular line and are proactive.

In the past we have spent large amounts of money, and this budget allocates money to ensure that we have adequate road structures in the northern and western parts of the state so that the tourists have access to it. It is a major undertaking, and those responsible have done a very good job, whether they be employees of the Department of Transport, the private contractors involved, or others, on the Birdsville Track or the Strzelecki Track. This budget provides substantial amounts of money for those projects. For example, we have allocated \$2.2 million to the Balcanoona to Arkaroola Road; \$1.9 million to the Oodnadatta Track between William Creek and Cowald Springs; \$1.9 million for the Birdsville Track between Clifton Hills and Mount Gunson; \$2 million for the Strzelecki Track between Popes Bore and the Strzelecki Crossing; money was spent between Burra and Eudunda; in my electorate, between Booleroo Centre and Jamestown; and of course the Hawker to Orreroo Road is

proceeding; and, as the member for Flinders would be aware, so is the Elliston to Lock Road.

These are important roads. I might add that I sincerely hope that the department can see its way clear to raise the causeway at Innamincka so it is not blocked off, which prevents people from crossing the creek at certain times of the year. It should be raised by a metre, which would be most helpful to the tourist industry and those communities. A number of other worthwhile initiatives are in this budget in relation to activities around rural South Australia.

The increase in funding for the Department for Primary Industries and Resources is most welcome and necessary because that department provides guidance and assistance to one of the most important sections of our economy. It is pleasing to see we are making a reasonably promising start to this season. If it is another successful year, it will provide huge amounts of revenue for the government and create opportunities for employment throughout South Australia. I am pleased the government has recognised this need.

Aquaculture in the honourable member for Flinders' electorate, and a small area in my electorate, is important and needs to be encouraged and fostered, and we have to ensure that those anti-development elements within society and all those others who are interfering with that development are not allowed to get their way. We should look at the money which has been made available to the Environment Protection Agency.

I was pleased to hear Mr Nicholas Newland on the radio this morning, saying that people have to be responsible. He was talking about OneSteel at Whyalla. I was very pleased to hear Mr Nicholas Newland say that (and I know him well: I have had dealings with Nicholas over a long period), because I have been concerned about some of the decisions that that organisation has made in recent times in my electorate. They have not been based on commonsense, for example, the attempt to make life difficult for the Port Augusta racing track—to put oil on the track—something that has caused great consternation and concern, because it is a very important employer in Port Augusta. It has been pointed out to those people (and I think the shadow minister for sport ought to be interested in this) that, if you close the racing track at Port Augusta, are you going to close down every small country golf course in South Australia? That would have been the end result. It is absolute nonsense. The unfortunate thing is that the people who were making the decisions were completely out of touch with reality.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The EPA.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: We nearly moved heaven and earth to fix the problem. That brings me to the point that we ought to have money to look very closely at these operations: when we establish organisations which are at arm's length from government, they should be responsible to some committee in the parliament because if they have to be accountable for their actions they are more likely to use commonsense. I point out to the shadow minister for the environment that the decision about the Flinders Ranges council with respect to its rubbish dump was absolutely deplorable, and this brought me clearly to the conclusion that, if we are to have an organisation such as the EPA, if we allow it to be completely hands free and not answerable to someone, we will have a problem: it does not matter which party is in government. Therefore, they should be subject to a parliamentary committee—similar to the water catchment

boards—so that, if members of the community have a problem, they have someone to go to, and these people have to account for their actions.

Mr Hill: They are responsible to the minister in New South Wales—

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: They are not here, though. The minister has limited jurisdiction here. So, that is a matter that is in the budget.

Another very important area in the budget (which I was pleased to see) was the allocation of money for the upgrade and expansion of country water supply systems, because there is an urgent need throughout rural South Australia. We have a lot of infrastructure which is old and which needs upgrading. I cite the example of Hawker, where obviously there is a great need to improve the quantity and the quality; Orroroo is in the same situation; the member for Flinders' district at Streaky Bay has a similar problem; and we have a problem with water quantity and quality across many parts of South Australia. In the future, budgets will have to provide a lot more money to address and deal with these issues. If anyone thinks that we do not have a problem with the quantity and quality of water in South Australia, they are not living in the real world. In my constituency, the difficulties that people face are brought home to me every day.

This budget has been the culmination of a great deal of hard work and effort by this government. I think people should just reflect on that. When we came to government, we were faced with a situation where debt was out of control, and people should recognise that we have reduced the net state debt by some \$4.9 billion. The savings that we have made have allowed the government to provide services and facilities to a wide section of the South Australian community. I would think that most members will applaud the fact that there has been an expansion of the road funding program. There has been a very considerable increase in the health budget, which has greatly assisted people in isolated communities, and I am pleased that the—

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member can go where he likes: I do not mind where the honourable member goes and what he looks at. I am quite happy to give my attention to those matters which I believe are important to South Australia. The construction and development of a new deep sea port at Outer Harbor will be of great benefit to the people of South Australia.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: If the honourable member wants to go and look at port facilities around the world, I hope he goes, because he may come back better informed and, for once in his life, he might say something nice and constructive about what we have done. I may be living in hope, and I was trying to be charitable to the honourable leader. He is not often charitable to anyone and it is not often that you hear him say nice things about people, but I give him the great benefit of the doubt tonight. He should go to London—I know he likes to go there—where he can look at the ports, and I will be very pleased to read his report when he comes back. I wish him well.

In the few minutes that I have left to me I want to say that I am very pleased that this government has laid the foundation so that we can make great improvements to the services available to the people of South Australia in the forthcoming years. We have a large amount of infrastructure which is many years old and needs upgrading. The assets of SA Water are massive and are expensive to maintain and, therefore,

there is a need for further investment. We have a massive road construction system. In regard to the school bus system in South Australia, I am delighted that the government is providing money to air condition school buses, because it is long overdue. I give great credit to the people at Leigh Creek and Nepabunna who have fought a very strong campaign to achieve that objective.

I commend the Minister for Education for the amount of money that has been spent in rural South Australia. I have found him to be a most constructive minister: when you bring an issue to the minister, you can be assured that you will get a prompt and speedy response. I am delighted that money has been spent on bringing together the kindergarten services at Peterborough and the excellent school facilities at Booleroo Centre, which is one of the best schools in South Australia. Its scholastic record and ability to get employment for students after they leave school is as good as any in South Australia.

I am delighted at the upgrading of the Orroroo school: that is another good community that works hard for its school. This is in addition to what the minister's department did last year in Hawker. I hope that the minister keeps up the good work, because we look forward to the next parliament when he will be back, further developing education for the benefit of all South Australians.

I am delighted to support the budget because it is the culmination of responsible hard work by this government, which is in stark contrast to its predecessor which wrecked the economy and blew out the overdraft.

Mr HILL (Kaurana): I am delighted to follow my friend the member for Stuart. I always appreciate his contributions. While I do not often agree with very much that he says, especially about the environment, I respect his right to strongly express his prejudices in this place. I will come to a couple of the issues that he raised during the course of my remarks.

The Leader of the Opposition and the shadow treasurer both mentioned the fact that the Treasurer had referred to this budget as one which was 'turning the page'. It seems to me that there are not too many pages left in the book that this budget is in. In fact, I think that there is probably only one page left, and that is the page where we see that the Treasurer digs into the hollow logs at some stage a few weeks or a few months before the next election to come out with another bag of tricks, promises and pork-barrelling along the same lines as referred to by the member for Stuart in relation to his own electorate. This is really the last page in the government's book. It has been in office now for eight years. The people of South Australia are ready for an election. This is really the election budget. It has gone down like a lead balloon. They have only one set of tricks left, that is, to get into the hollow logs. It will be interesting to see how they attempt to spend those funds in the next few months.

I wanted to speak tonight in particular about the environmental issues in this budget. It is clear in the budget, as it is in all the operations of this government in relation to the environment, that it has a confused environmental strategy. It has deliberately divided up the environment territory amongst three ministers: the Minister for Environment and Heritage, of course; the Minister for Water Resources; and the Minister for Primary Industries, the Deputy Premier. The Minister for Primary Industries deals with natural resource issues such as soil and the like; the Minister for Water Resources has all the water resource issues; and the Minister

for Environment covers national parks, the Environment Protection Agency, and so on.

It is no wonder that the government is looking at introducing an integrated resource management bill, which includes establishing a new bureaucracy—another expensive bureaucracy—to try to bring together all those issues in a sensible way. A good report has been produced by a committee from the other place which has looked at all the soil and water boards and made recommendations about how they could best be managed. Clearly the process the government is looking at through integrated resource management is sensible but the mechanism it is attempting to put in place is an expensive and unnecessary one. It is made necessary by the fact that the government has a disaggregated approach to environmental issues. The three ministers are a bit like the three monkeys who could see no evil, speak no evil and hear no evil. In this case, the three ministers—Kerin, Brindal and Evans—can hear no good, see no good or speak no good, because when it comes to environmental matters they are not performing very well at all.

In addition, on the weekend, I was astonished to see the Minister for Urban Planning announce a new park in Adelaide, involving about \$20 million for a new coastal parkland called The Parks Agenda 21. I was surprised that the Minister for Environment had not been invited along to that announcement and that it was not his responsibility. I cannot understand why parks, which are part of the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Environment, are now with the Minister for Urban Planning. In addition, last week Minister Kerin announced funding—although only for investigation—of marine protected areas, something which is very much needed in South Australia. However, it was done by Minister Kerin, not by Minister Evans.

In addition, last week in a pre-budget announcement, the Minister for Minerals and Energy announced subsidies for solar hot water heating systems. So, last week there were three major announcements to do with the environment, and the Minister for Environment had nothing to do with any one of them. You have to ask: what is going on in this government in terms of environmental management? Iain Evans, the Minister for Environment, is being left out of key issues. He appears to be alienated from his party. I know from talking to the odd backbencher and from members of the Liberal Party that he is offside with many of them. Part of the reason for that is his preoccupation with his own needs and interests, in particular his own interest in being re-elected in his seat of Davenport. I do not know whether he knows this, but he is known amongst the backbench and in his own department as not the Minister for Environment but the minister for Davenport, because all his announcements and actions really relate to his attempts to get back into that seat where he is being challenged very strongly by the Democrats—and by the Labor candidate, too, I might say.

It is interesting to note that tomorrow, as part of World Environment Day, the minister is making his major World Environment Day announcement in what is now part of the member for Fisher's electorate which is being transferred to Minister Evans. That just indicates where he is coming from and the kind of priority he has. Unfortunately, this may be good for his re-election chances but it is no good for the environmental issues and concerns of the state, because they are being neglected. The hard issues are not being addressed by Minister Evans, and they certainly have not been addressed in this budget.

Members would have noted the minister's inept response to my question in question time today in relation to native vegetation. A report that was published some two years ago made some substantial recommendations about how the Native Vegetation Act should be amended. The report said that the current rules were not working and that clearance was happening on an illegal basis and very little could be done to stop it. Strong recommendations were made about changes. That was two years ago and, when I asked the minister about it, he said that government members were still considering it because they were divided. We know that they are divided about it and that is because the member for Stuart has very strong views about native vegetation. He does not want it to be protected: he would allow anyone to clear what they will. He has been able to exert sufficient pressure within the Liberal Party room so the minister has not been able to proceed with what would be sensible recommendations, and there is nothing in the budget to address that.

When looking at the budget, particularly the environment sections, it is interesting to note some of the devices that have been used by the minister to make it difficult to find out what is really going on. I note that in this year's budget the output classes in the environment portfolio have once again changed. I think that, in the four years that I have been here and the four budgets that I have dealt with, each time the material that describes what is in the budget has been changed, so it is very difficult to compare one year with previous years. One does not really know what is going on. The output changes reflect once again another reorganisation of the department, and I know from talking with officers of the department that morale is low, and it is no wonder when they have to go through a reorganisation on a yearly basis.

The other thing that I point out to the House in relation to the way in which the environment budget papers are presented is that it is interesting to compare the targets for last year under the output classes with the highlights for the current year. One would have thought that the targets for last year would appear as achievements under the highlights for the year 2000-01, but that is not the case. In fact, it is often the case that last year's targets are not commented on at all or, if they are, they are commented on in a watered down version.

I will give just one example. In 2000-01 under 'Environment protection', this was given as a target: 'Implement the watershed protection strategy to improve water quality in the Mount Lofty Ranges catchment area'. That is a pretty clear target—we are going to implement a strategy to improve water quality. When one looks at the achievements or highlights for last year, which have been produced in this most recent budget paper, this is what appears: 'Establish the Mount Lofty watershed protection office and release state-of-the-catchment report'. They said they were going to implement a strategy but all they did was open an office and produce another report. This is a government and a minister who are obsessed with having reports and inquiries but who do not actually do anything for the environment. I give that as one example.

Let us look at the budget with respect to National Parks and Wildlife, in particular, and this is an output area that has been changed quite dramatically. A range of things have been put together in this section that were hitherto in their own sections. For example, animal welfare and native vegetation services have been included. However, if we compare like with like, it would appear that this year approximately \$81 million is available for those services compared with

about \$75 million last year. That would appear to be an increase of about \$6 million but, when one looks through the notes of the budget papers it is pretty clear that funding from previous years has not been fully acquitted and it has been rolled over into this year's budget, or it relates to some federal funding or grants that have not been properly acquitted. What appears to be a growth in funding will be proved to be either neutral funding or perhaps a small deficit.

Interestingly, there appears to be more money for coastal protection. The minister issued a press release saying that there would be over \$7 million for Adelaide coast protection. On reading that one would think that is good, that there is \$7 million in this budget, but that \$7 million is over four years. It is interesting to view the minister's language, because he said:

Protection of Adelaide's precious coastline has been given priority by the state government with more than \$7 million over the next four years allocated in this year's state budget.

I would like to know how you can allocate \$7 million over four years in this year's state budget. Clearly, you cannot. All you can do is allocate what is in this state budget this year, and that is a quarter of that \$7 million—\$1.75 million. Whether or not those figures will there be next year, the year after or the year after that is problematic.

So, there is a small amount of money, but a large amount of that money appears to be for sand replenishment, and it is my bet that this is sand replenishment in association with West Beach. When we look in detail at what is presented as an increase in funding and an addition to the protection of our coast, we find that it is not very much money and a lot of that money is really going to fix up a problem which the government created by allowing some crazy development on the coast.

Looking at the Environment Protection Agency, it is interesting to note that one of the targets for the year 2001-2002 is 'implement changes arising from amendment of the EPA act'. There is no legislation yet before the House in relation to this act. This has been another issue, along with native vegetation, which has been before the government for several years. The government has been most unwilling to act on this. It is very reluctant to take the hard decisions that are needed.

The member for Stuart in his contribution said that you have to make sure that you have an EPA which is subject to ministerial direction, or direction by some higher authority. This may be true, but what you need is an EPA which has teeth, which has a direction, which has autonomy and which is able get on with the job. I believe that members of the EPA that we have at the moment have all the best intentions in the world, but they do not have the resources or the autonomy to do the job that they need to do.

It is interesting to look at the output classes in relation to the EPA. We note that output class 1, 'Environment Protection' has had a minor cut from \$9.8 million to \$9.26 million. I am not too sure how this is a commitment to environment protection. Under output 1.2, 'Environment protection compliance services', there is a large growth from \$4.46 million to \$11.25 million, yet the targets are much the same as for the previous year. I have a question in my mind about what this extra funding is for, and I will be interested to hear the minister's response during estimates.

Under output 1.3, 'Environment protection monitoring and evaluation services', is a decline from \$6.2 million to \$5 million. So, there is a bit more money in the EPA, and I need to know where it is going. One interesting thing to note

is that on the revenue side there is a note in the budget saying 'excess water fees for the EPA have increased from \$200 000 to \$2.3 million over the course of the two budgets'. I will be curious to know what that is about.

Heritage conservation has a small increase in funding. The Botanic Gardens is a curious case, and I need to know more detail from the minister. In last year's budget, the Botanic Gardens was allocated \$7.8 million. This year it is only allocated \$810 000. I cannot believe that there is a \$7 million cut to the Botanic Gardens. There must be some reason for this different figure, and I will be curious to learn from the minister what that is about.

Under output class 6, 'Environmental and geographic information and knowledge', a little more money has been allocated. Once again, this is an output class whose name has been changed. A little more money has been allocated to the administration of crown lands as well. Under 'Coordination and advice'—and this is political advice—and 'Regulatory review', it is interesting to note that there is quite a substantial increase from \$1.7 million to \$3.2 million. In particular, in policy and advice, the Minister for Environment is now spending \$2.6 million a year, up from \$729 000. That is about \$2 million extra for policy and advice—and I imagine a lot of that is political advice.

When you look at the environment budget, you see that this year's budget will be \$129.758 million for the environment (that is taking out the sport and recreation factors from the combined budget papers), compared to last year's \$123 million. It is about \$6 million extra. A lot of that could be explained from the carryovers, the slippages and the new duties that have been taken over by the department, but we will try to work out all those things during estimates.

It is interesting to note that the minister in his office now has a staff of 13.2, which is an increase of 5.2 over the past year. That is a fairly substantial increase in what I guess are political minders in the minister's staff. I will be asking questions about that. By point of comparison, the water resources minister, who has much smaller responsibilities, has 11 staff members. There are about 24 staff members between the two of them.

So, there is a large increase there and there is a large section of government money going into that political operation. Overall, the environment budget will have an operating deficit of \$5 million in 2001-2002. I will also be asking substantial questions of the minister during estimates about what his plans are for native vegetation, the EPA and wilderness protection—all areas which have been sitting on the drawing board for a long time. I will be asking about coastal protection and MPAs and I will also be asking about the substantial amount of resources that his department puts into public relations.

Briefly, dealing with the water portfolio, this is a steady-as-you-go portfolio, and it includes money under the National Action Plan for Salinity, but there is not very much that is new in here from the state government's point of view. There is no bold vision and no new direction; there is nothing about new programs to help clean up the lower reaches of the Murray, for example; and there is nothing about irrigation efficiency. I think it is disappointing.

I will complete my comments today by referring to the answer in question time that the Minister for Mines and Energy gave in relation to EnergySA. He made much of his department's new commitment to sustainability. I had someone who helps me try to obtain some information about EnergySA today. We looked on the government's web page,

found EnergySA and clicked on 'solar hot water' and 'photovoltaic' under 'rebates and grants' to find out what the details were in the budget in relation to this issue. When we did that we got a large printed sign saying 'Error: 1. File does not exist; or 2. Directory does not exist; or 3. Permissions are incorrect.' This is the government's web site for EnergySA: you click on 'solar rebates' and you are told that there is an error or that the file does not exist.

So, I then had somebody ring up the minister's office to obtain some information. I have to say that the person phoning did not say that they were ringing on my behalf, so I hope whoever said this will not be in trouble. The person on the phone said, 'We don't have any information at the moment. There will be a three to four week wait. We are waiting for fact sheets. We are not sure how much people will be entitled to and we are not sure how it will be administered.' So, this grand new vision for making South Australia a solar powered state really has nothing substantial behind it. There is nothing in the budget papers that I can find to indicate how much money is going into this program and, when ringing the department or looking on the web site, that information is not available.

One final point that I would make is that also on the minister's web site, the Department for Primary Industries and Resources is listed as the lead organisation for greenhouse gas. Yet, last year when I asked the question in estimates, Minister Evans told me that he was the lead minister. I will be interested to find out in estimates this year who, in fact, is leading the charge on this important issue.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): It is salutary to pause occasionally and reflect on the achievements that have brought us to where we are as a state. Debate on the state budget gives us this opportunity. Once an itch has been scratched, it is forgotten. So it often is with achievements. The past year has seen South Australia rise to a AA+ credit rating in financial markets due to the retiring of some of the massive debt that the Liberal government inherited from Labor.

To put that in terms that everyone can understand, I indicate that, after Labor's financial disasters, South Australia was in debt to the tune of \$6 416 for every man, woman and child in the state. That figure has been reduced to just \$ 2 006, or 7 per cent of the gross state product, compared with a crippling 27 per cent under Labor. Additionally, \$1.2 billion has been paid off the unfunded public sector superannuation liability which stood at \$3.73 billion at 30 June 1993. This burgeoning liability was a millstone around the necks of South Australians, a millstone that would only get heavier and more crippling with the passage of time.

The Liberal government's responsible financial management is turning around that situation. The government has a policy to fund accruing new service superannuation liabilities each year and has done so since 1994-95. This is in addition to providing funding towards meeting the superannuation liabilities accrued—and unfunded—as at 30 June 1994. Superannuants expect to receive their superannuation entitlements. Yet the situation that Labor oversaw was one that could have grown to the point where the state could not pay entitlements.

Moving towards fully funded superannuation is just one of the many responsible acts of the Liberal government in paying off the debts that surfaced at every turn—like the \$14 million CFS debt inherited by this government. Along with the retirement of debt, the Liberal government has kept

down taxes and charges. South Australia is expected to remain the third lowest of the states in terms of tax revenue per capita in 2000-01. Seniors in our community have been recognised with the allocation of \$7.7 million to increase concession payments on local government rates for pensioners, lifting the ceiling from \$150 to \$190. For the first time, concessions of \$100 will be provided to seniors and self-funded retirees. Workers compensation premiums for small businesses in South Australia are much lower than in Labor states.

A business presentation in Melbourne in March coincided with the announcement that South Australia's economy grew against the national trends and that South Australian WorkCover levies were cut again, also against national trends, saving South Australian businesses \$86 million. Business confidence has increased as a result of the state government's good financial management. Small businesses will be pleased that there is payroll tax relief in the 2001 budget with the tax rate falling from 1 July this year. In addition, the threshold has been increased, so fewer businesses will have to pay this tax on jobs at all. Hopefully, it can be abolished altogether over the next few years.

There are ten hospitals in my electorate. They are an essential part of a community. They are one of the means of retaining a doctor in a district and therefore the people. Since being elected in December 1993, the government has poured almost \$24 million into the redevelopment of the Port Lincoln regional hospital and the Ceduna hospital. All of the other eight have had upgrades of some kind. Again, this reflects the parlous state of the hospital system which was in urgent need of capital investment and replacement of outdated machines when the Liberal government came to office.

Better equipment means that residents in my electorate can access care without the financial cost of travelling to Adelaide or the greater cost of relocating to Adelaide. Human Services Minister, Dean Brown, earlier this year allocated additional funding to Port Lincoln health services to support home dialysis. The funds were the government's response to a priority need identified in a review of country renal services.

Eyre Regional Health Services will spend more than \$23 million this financial year on a combination of acute, community health and aged care services. The year's increase of more than \$500 000 addresses waiting times experienced by orthopaedic and ophthalmology patients at the Port Lincoln hospital; ear, nose and throat surgery at the Ceduna hospital; renal disease at Port Lincoln and Ceduna; mental health services; and staff recruitment and retention. Extra funding has also been allocated to further reduce dental waiting lists.

I commend the cooperation of Transport SA (under Minister Di Laidlaw), the federal government and the state government for developing emergency airstrips along the Eyre Highway. The emergency landing places make use of the sealed roadway as part of the runway thus allowing an efficient use of funds. The Eyre Highway is the main road across Australia from west to east. Therefore, these runways are an essential component of protection for the travelling public.

The Liberal government believes that rural people deserve the same access to health services as those who live in the metropolis. The government introduced mobile breast screening units which have greatly assisted in reducing the death rate in 50 to 69 year old women by 20 per cent and by 10 per cent in older women. Mobile breast screening units to

give country women the protection that this preventative measure affords was one of my platforms when I was first elected. This is another area that was neglected by Labor.

Under the Liberal government, record numbers of people are now being admitted to public hospitals, more people are being treated in emergency departments and more people receive outpatient services, yet this is not the picture that the media and the opposition give to the public. Admissions to public hospitals have increased by about 24 per cent in the past six years. The number of people treated in emergency departments is up by around 20 per cent and out-patient attendances have increased by about 13 per cent. This increase in the number of people going through the public health system, coupled with the government's increased spending in the health sector, recognises that quality of life at all ages is important, including the quality of life of the seniors in our community. That is why this government has the number of approved aged places in South Australia at its highest ever level at 14 000 places.

Australia is entering the period predicted by statistics several decades ago where the demand for aged-care places in nursing homes and hospitals will increase substantially. Labor governments did not look to the future, hence individuals and families are put under stress when waiting for a placement. I take this opportunity to praise the work being done in this field of aged care in my electorate. We have 10 centres where aged care is available covering independent hostel accommodation to full nursing care. Additionally, many people remain in their homes supported by a range of community care projects.

In fact, the government has recently approved 707 new community aged-care packages to assist more elderly people to remain in their home by providing the necessary supports. This budget gives aged care a boost with \$1.2 million in new aged-care facilities at Tumby Bay Hospital and \$900 000 for aged-care facilities at the Cummins Hospital, a grand total of \$2.1 million for 20 new beds, plus supporting facilities. Education is another itch where misleading and inaccurate information could deceive the public. Unfortunately, the chief effect of this misinformation is to denigrate the work being done in our schools and tertiary institutions—in fact, over the whole range of education and training institutions.

The Liberal government has increased spending in this portfolio by more than 25 per cent since it came to office. That is a somewhat different story to that which the Education Union, the South Australian branch in particular, puts out and which Labor Party members, who must know that the union stance is incorrect, support. On the school front in Flinders, Cleve Pre-School, Wudinna Area School and Kirton Point and Port Lincoln primary schools have received additional funds in the budget to continue upgrading programs in those schools. My long awaited Ceduna Area School has an initial amount of \$250 000 for planning of the first stage of its redevelopment, with a promise of \$5 million for work to start next year on replacing some facilities and redeveloping or upgrading others.

In this budget, \$2.5 million has been allocated to target a drug education program in schools across the state over the next four years. The amount spent per student in South Australia has increased to \$6 187. Retention rates have increased to 64.8 per cent, which rises to 74.9 per cent when part-time student enrolments are included. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics do not include part-time students and the Democrats, the ALP and the teachers' union also conveniently ignore them. It is unfair to the young

people of South Australia for Labor and its federal leader to keep labelling our part-time students as 'drop-outs' when this is obviously not the case.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data puts South Australia's student-teacher ratio at 14:8, better than the national average of 14:9, and the ratio for non-government schools at 15:4. South Australia has the best secondary student-teacher ratio of all mainland states and a better primary student-teacher ratio than New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. Personally, I am excited about the extra advantages that this government has provided for people in my electorate. The Lincoln Marine Science Centre, a division of the Flinders University, was established only six years ago but has already undergone several expansions in that time.

The centre, in conjunction with the local TAFE campus, provides a variety of tertiary courses that can be accessed by the general public. These tertiary institutions are attracting overseas students—a trend that is likely to increase in the future. Capital works and maintenance expenditure is also significantly higher than the Labor government's. The increase in the last financial year was substantial. I am certainly noticing the change in my electorate. Partnerships 21 is providing flexibility and funding that schools have not enjoyed previously. Access to special events and training is costly for country students and often prevents their participating.

Elliston Area School has adopted the policy of supporting students who achieve at a state level and who, without that support, would be unable to develop to their fullest potential. The support is for academic, sporting or other achievements. I also commend the Hon. Malcolm Buckby (Minister for Education and Children's Services) on the incentives his department provides to attract high quality teachers to country areas.

Roads were more of a sore than an itch in rural regions. I am proud that the Liberal government has reduced that sore to an itch in my electorate. We have had more action on roads than at any previous comparable period. People living on what was the longest unsealed arterial road in the state, the Lock-Elliston Road—and one that I understand the Labor Party said it would never seal—are pleased to hear that \$1.75 million has been allocated for the continuation of the sealing program. This equates to another 15 kilometres with only a further 20 kilometres to complete the seal at a cost of just over \$100 000 per kilometre. This is in addition to the funding to continue the widening of the Lincoln Highway.

These successes have encouraged people to look at what can be done in their district and this has brought about extensive lobbying. As a result, \$100 000 was allocated to the Lipson-Ungarra Road as part of the special state black spot allocation, with a further \$455 000 being contributed by the local community and District Council of Tumby Bay. I am continuing to lobby for special local roads funding for this road in the next allocation. The Bratten Way, which links Cummins with Mount Hope, received \$456 000 which, again, was matched by the Lower Eyre Peninsula District Council. Another allocation from the minister's local roads initiative has been requested. Local roads are not normally a state responsibility but the minister has recognised their importance with this funding.

I am pleased that my lobbying for unemployed people to gain concessions on country bus services has been successful. Until now, these concessions have applied only to metropolitan buses. Country bus operators will be pleased also that the

government will abolish the route licence fees that traditionally have been paid by country operators. My thanks go to the minister, Diana Laidlaw, for listening.

With a coastline longer than Tasmania, anything connected with the sea has implications for my electorate. The state government's program of handing jetties to local government for the benefit of the community is proceeding. The upgrading of the Elliston jetty (at a cost of \$125 000) and the Port Lincoln jetty (\$455 000) has been completed. Mount Dutton Bay jetty is to be upgraded this financial year. Boat ramps and navigation beacons around Eyre Peninsula have been funded by the boating facilities levy.

In this budget, another \$1 million has been provided for fisheries compliance, and I am hopeful that more officers will be allocated to Eyre Peninsula. I believe that expansion of staff is appropriate to cope with the extra work generated by the success of the aquaculture and fishery industries in my electorate. A new offshore patrol vessel is to be purchased which I am sure will be seen in Eyre Peninsula waters.

The state government has a proven record of care for the environment and much of this work is done without fanfare or publicity. One instance is the \$300 000 provided for the installation of waste water treatment systems at three coastal centres, including Port Lincoln, to treat the recycle run-off water from the town's boat yards and slipways. In this budget, householders who switch to solar-powered hot water systems will receive a \$700 rebate. This rebate will apply to new and existing homes where owners decide to replace a gas or electricity powered system with a solar system.

The Liberal government has been adding to the state's national parks and reserves, which are a recreational and environmental resource for the people of South Australia as well as for the visitors who come especially to enjoy these places. Gawler Ranges Park is one of these areas. Good news for this park's supporters is the \$200 000 to establish visitor infrastructure and services in the park.

The Liberal government is deeply indebted to and appreciative of all volunteers and the work they do in improving the safety and quality of life for all South Australians. An office for volunteers will be established and will operate in the same way as the Office for the Ageing and the Office for the Status of Women.

The Flinders electorate has so many success stories that it is difficult to choose. The South Australian Seahorse Marine Services, pioneered by Tracy and David Warland, is the only seahorse farm on mainland Australia. This business now exports to several overseas countries. Gawler Ranges Safaris (principals Geoff and Mick Scholz) operating out of Wudinna and Ocean Eco Tours (principals Alan and Trish Payne), based at Bairds Bay, are two tourism businesses that are attracting international renown.

These success stores are helped by the Liberal government's positive financial management that has brought back hope, optimism and initiative to the people of South Australia, particularly those who live in the regions. Tourism gets an injection of funding in this budget with various infrastructure projects to be developed, including \$800 000 for the Head of the Bight—a site that is internationally renowned as one of the best Southern Right Whale viewing areas in the world.

The government has committed almost \$50 million extra towards industry development. These include tourism infrastructure of \$5.1 million, and \$2 million to the Farmed Seafood Development. In addition, \$632 000 has been allocated to a new innovation and entrepreneurs program

aimed at raising awareness about the importance of innovation. The Regional Development Infrastructure Fund receives \$15.5 million, while the regional development boards get an injection of \$500 000. The FarmBiz Program is set to continue with \$24 million funding over the next three years from the state and federal governments.

Premier Olsen, during the May cabinet meeting at Cummins on Eyre Peninsula, acknowledged that regional and rural South Australia generates two thirds of the state's export income and a quarter of the manufacturing turnover. The Liberal government's strong emphasis on regional South Australia is reaping dividends for the whole state. The recent announcement of the establishment of a Services SA shop in Port Lincoln will be enhanced by the development of federal government rural transaction centres. The Coffin Bay Progress Association is holding a public meeting to begin planning an application for a transaction centre there. Wudinna and Elliston are also assessing this opportunity.

Sporting clubs will benefit from an additional \$17 million over the next three years to ensure that all communities have an opportunity for participation with the provision of adequate facilities. I am particularly proud that the electorate of Eyre Peninsula is a key contributor to the state's recovery and future. With only 2.3 per cent of the state's population we produce 60 per cent of the state's seafood and 40 per cent of the grain, with 93 per cent of these products being exported. The government's policy has been to encourage diversification of the state's economic base. This policy is now starting to produce results. Sustainable agriculture and sustainable fishing and seafood industries ensure that these industries will not only continue but also will grow into the future.

I am excited that sustainable power generation in the form of wind farming is coming on stream. This is another segment of the platform I worked on prior to and since being elected. I can foresee unlimited possibilities for the development and use of sustainable energy, especially in the viability for water desalination to provide a reliable water supply in my electorate. I acknowledge the millions of dollars the Liberal government has put into the upgrading of ETSA infrastructure prior to the lease sale of the utility. Again we inherited out-of-date infrastructure on which maintenance has been neglected. The rise in electricity consumption both in my electorate and across the state is being met.

Time expired.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):

Many members of the government have talked about the difficult decisions and the pain the Liberal government has had to endure in reducing the debt and getting to the stage of this budget. There has been no pain by this government and no difficult decisions. The pain has all been borne by the people of South Australia. To reduce debt the government has simply sold assets: that is it, pure and simple. It has sold off the water supply, the electricity supply and is about to sell off the Ports Corporation, the TAB and, if it had its way, the Lotteries Commission and the rest of our hospital system. This has meant long-term pain for the citizens of South Australia, not the government of South Australia. The long-term pain that the citizens of South Australia has is increased water prices, for example. They were promised reductions of 20 per cent, but they have had increases of over 30 per cent. They were promised a reduction in power prices and we see that business already has power increases of between 30 and 80 per cent.

We have also seen the emergency services levy imposed in order to pay for the Motorola contract signed by the Premier. All along the track of this government, the pain has been to the citizens of South Australia. Indeed, today we heard the Minister for Education and Children's Services saying how the debt per person in South Australia had been reduced from \$7 000 to \$2 000, but in order to pay for that the people of South Australia pay more every year, year in year out, on their water, electricity, motor registration, the emergency services levy and other taxes and charges that have been imposed on them, such as water catchment and other levies. Those levies and charges are flat rates; they fall much more heavily on the people least able to pay for those taxes and charges. The pain is not for the government: the pain is for the people of South Australia, and I can tell the government that they are not happy about it.

The \$2 million a day that the government promised as the dividend of the ETSA sale has been nowhere near realised, and the people of South Australia know that. They do not have better health services; they do not have better education services; and they do not have better police services. They have decreased services, decreased numbers of public servants, decreased employment, and decreased standards of health and education, and all this time they are paying more in taxes and charges. They are not convinced by this government rhetoric. They know that this budget does not deliver the ETSA dividends that it was supposed to deliver. All they see is that this government has paid over \$100 million in consultants' fees in order to sell an asset that has resulted in increased prices and reduced maintenance and services.

The people do not believe that the government has delivered, and the government has not delivered. It is not all perception: this government has not delivered. It has not made the difficult decisions. Rather, it has followed an ideological path of reducing public servants and selling off state assets that have been built up over many years. The people of South Australia are not happy about it.

In particular, the people in rural and regional South Australia are not happy about this government. The government has painted this budget as providing dramatically increased benefits to rural and regional South Australia but, in fact, after the devastation of the first term when services in rural and regional South Australia were reduced dramatically, when depots and country offices were closed down, when many country towns were devastated by the loss of Public Service employment and year upon year of difficult decisions for rural people in South Australia, the government is now trying to make amends. It is putting on a cosmetic appearance by saying that it is returning money to rural and regional Australia, but that is not true.

It has taken away recurrent services and put back a bit of funding. It has double counted funding, bolstered funding by matching commonwealth funds, and included \$17 million in recreational services when that \$17 million covers the state. It has established an Office of Regional Affairs, which is an almost purely cosmetic office, and it has provided a small increase for the regional development boards, but it has done nothing significant. It has not put in a commitment to rural and regional South Australia, and this has severely disappointed those people in rural South Australia who thought the Liberal government was their government. In fact, that is not true; it is not the government of people of South Australia, small business or rural South Australia: it is the government that has made the difficult decisions on behalf of big business in this state.

The government has been a complete failure in terms of high taxing and low service delivery, and in selling off assets which have built up over many years and which will take many years to recover. It has provided no vision for the future, no direction as to how we in this state will recover. It has bought in call service centres that we now see failing almost month by month: it has not locked in those forward looking industries. It has not provided the education to keep industries here, to attract industries and, indeed, to keep our own talented South Australians in this state.

One can go anywhere in South Australia, in rural South Australia in particular, and ask whether they can keep their children in this state, and the answer is no. The answer is that anyone with any talent, ability and education level is attracted interstate or overseas. It is an extremely poor record for this government and, on behalf of South Australians, I am extremely disappointed by two terms of a Liberal government. We as a Labor opposition are being pushed to provide policies, answers and ways in which this state may recover.

In the directions statements we have produced in the budget reply produced by the leader, we have attempted to do so. The Premier has been leading the charge almost on his own: obviously, he does not trust his frontbench, much less his backbench; he has provided all the running. Indeed, I sympathise with him: he has a lacklustre front-bench and an even more lacklustre backbench, and I am quite certain that, if Labor were to take power after the next election, at least we would start from a better base, because we have some talent and ability on both the backbench and the frontbench. We would not be relying on one person alone to carry the government.

Once again, I reiterate my deep disappointment with this budget on behalf of my electorate, which comprises many people who have borne most of the pain of this ideologically driven assets sale and user-pays philosophy, and on behalf of rural and regional Australians who have been battered for four or five years and who have seen a last-minute and pathetic attempt to redress the imbalance that was caused previously.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): In many quarters the budget has been described as 'dull as dishwater', and for a very good reason: there is no headroom in this budget and there was never going to be, because all the promises that were made as part of the privatisation of electricity assets were never going to come to the fore. All the silly questions about \$2 million a day were nothing more than political stunts at the time, because that money was never going to exist.

The privatisation of the ETSA assets was going to reduce our debt and, therefore, our interest payments. At the same time, of course, it was going to cut off a revenue stream. The difference between the two was going to be about \$100 million, which was already spent. So, there was no headroom, no opportunities to do anything new or different, but there is an enormous amount of downside, of course, because the people who actually purchased those assets wanted to maximise their return on that investment, increase shareholder value and increase profits.

What we have done is shift a debt from the public to the private sector and, in the short term, to the Liberal Party's heartland: to small and medium-sized businesses in this state which are now going to be contestable and, from 1 July, will pay considerable increases in electricity prices—if they can get a contract. I have heard from one small business today that they cannot even get a contract. The four suppliers have

told a contestable customer that they will not enter into a contract. Two of them have said they will give the information in writing; the other two said, 'No, we will tell you verbally.' What it means for this small business is that from 1 July they will be supplied with electricity from AGL on a default tariff, which means they will only know in a two month time slot what they will pay. In every two month time slot, it will be considerably more than a contract price. It could be as much as an 80 to 100 per cent increase in prices and, in the summer, it could be an increase of 200 or 300 times. This is a disgraceful set of circumstances. Again, it was all part of maximising the return on sales of the assets and handing over that asset to private enterprise that was then going to maximise profits and shareholder value.

Another thing I would like to bring to the attention of the House is the cynical way in which capital works are dealt with in the budget. I think it is a sad hoax on people who expect better. One of the sad hoaxes we have been playing for at least three years is on the families of people with disabilities and on the people themselves. For three years now we have been promising them a new high school and to put them into facilities of at least an equivalent standard to able-bodied students. Unfortunately, the young people in my area who do have mental and physical disabilities have been housed in absolutely appalling, second-rate conditions.

In the 1999-2000 budget, we said that in April 2000 we would commence the upgrading of the Gordon Education Centre and we would have it completed by August 2000. A year later, in the budget of 2000-01 what did we tell the same families? We told them that we would commence the upgrade in October 2001 and complete it in April 2002. Interestingly, this year we have told them that, although we will complete it by April next year, we will pay for only half of it in this budget. How will we pay \$763 000 out of \$1.3 million? I am not sure where the rest will come from.

We have pulled the same hoax on the families of our primary school children in East Gambier. For three consecutive years we have been telling East Gambier people that we will upgrade the primary school and bring onto the one site an integrated child-care facility to replace both the existing Lake Terrace and Pick Avenue kindergartens. Sadly, three years later we are still telling those people we will be doing something yet, with the money allocated, it is not possible to bring the Pick Avenue child-care centre onto the site. But we have not told the Pick Avenue board or the parents of the children that are in day care. Quite frankly, it will not happen. It will need to be part of phase 2 some time in the future.

It is sad when we actually manipulate capital budgets in that way and create expectations year after year in our communities. I do not think we have to present budgets that way. I think it is also an indictment on the very process that fails to quickly facilitate the capital development once the money has been promised. We find years of delay within the bureaucracy. We need to rethink the way in which we tell that message. In the second and third years we ought to say, 'Failed to do what we said we would do; we are sorry, but we hope to do it this year.' In the following year we ought to say, 'We humbly apologise for letting down the communities again, but we hope to do it this year.' At least we ought to have the decency to apologise to the people for whom we have created this unfair expectation. But what do we do? We rebadge it as a new initiative and say, 'Aren't we good people. We will do this for you.' I think that reflects badly on the budget process and the leadership in this place.

I was disappointed that we are still failing to embrace an urban renewal project in the South-East. I have had this discussion with the minister a number of times. I am hopeful that at some stage, before too much longer, we will acknowledge that there is significantly downgraded housing stock in the east of Mount Gambier. It is having a significant impact on the families that live there. We need to do a lot for those families in terms of not only the physical environment but also the services we offer them. We located a hospital and a TAFE facility on the other side of town, and we isolated those people from those facilities. They do not necessarily have private transport, and public transport is not available. So, we need to rethink the way in which we deliver services. We can do that as part of the east school redevelopment but, again, it has been impossible to get other agencies to see the broader opportunities that exist in upgrading the east school. Also, we are failing to receive recognition that we need a major input into the housing stock.

We heard from the minister earlier this year that, as from the start of next year, we would increase the compulsory school leaving age from 15 to 16, which I think is a very good move, yet there is no money in the budget for that initiative. I hope that there will not be any reneging on that initiative, and I am waiting to hear from the minister in the next couple of days as to how he intends to keep that promise on track. Interestingly, he will be held accountable in this House for that promise, because the opposition has a motion on the books to that effect—which is only there to complement the commitment that the minister gave us, anyway.

Sadly, I see no money in the budget and, of course, significant resources will be required to increase the compulsory school leaving age from 15 to 16. It is one thing to increase the compulsory leaving age by a year: it is another thing to offer a range of educational training alternatives in that final year. That will need a redressing of the whole curriculum, and it will need a redressing of the facilities available to deliver that curriculum and, sadly, I cannot see that happening within the budget. I mentioned AGL and contestability, and I hope that we do not find too many small and medium sized businesses out of contract on 1 July, because that will pose significant financial difficulties for them.

I wish to refer briefly to the associated matter of fuel prices. As members know, this matter has been referred to a parliamentary select committee. A lot of the evidence that that committee is hearing will be brought before this House at the appropriate time. Interestingly, we have already put to rest a number of myths. One of those myths is that one of the reasons why people pay more for fuel in the country is freight. Interestingly enough, to deliver fuel from Adelaide to Mount Gambier costs about 2.7¢ or 2.8¢ a litre, yet the state government subsidises that transport by 3.3¢ a litre. You make money out of the government by delivering fuel to Mount Gambier and to Whyalla. Yet the people in Mount Gambier and Whyalla are told that one of the reasons why they pay more is the transport costs. Is that not interesting?

Another interesting thing is that today in Adelaide, as members would have noticed, unleaded petrol was as low as 87.3¢ a litre, which is a significant number of cents—maybe 8¢ or 9¢—below the wholesale price. How can people be delivering petrol at a wholesale price to their outlets in the country at 8¢ or 9¢ more than they are selling out of one of the same badged outlets in the city retail? There are some fundamental flaws in the way in which we structure fuel pricing in this state. It will become a significant issue, and I certainly look forward to our committee reporting when we

conclude our deliberations. But, importantly, I wanted to put on the record tonight that it is an absolute hoax to tell country people that one reason why they pay more for the fuel is the freight: you actually make money out of it.

As I said earlier, it is a dull and boring budget. It had to be a dull and boring budget: there was no money in it; and there was no head room in it. There was never \$2 million a day and, honestly, the people of South Australia were conned in that sales pitch, in the same way as they continue to be conned in the way in which we present our capital budget. I hope that, if one thing comes out of this, it is that we reappraise the whole way in which we present the budget so that it is honest and truly reflects what we have done, what we said we would do and what we intend to do in the budget year.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): I endorse the comments of the member for Gordon, who is an eminently good member of parliament and who, without fear or favour, fights for his constituents in Mount Gambier after they had been sorely let down by the former Liberal candidate who stood at the last election. They have turned to a better candidate, but I am sure they will choose a Labor candidate at the next election.

I want to comment briefly on the remarks made by the member for Stuart (Hon. G.M. Gunn) in this House earlier regarding the dirty tricks campaign being waged by the government. I find it amazing that a person of Graham Gunn's calibre would come into this place—

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order. I think the honourable member has been here long enough to know that he should refer to members by their electorates, not by their names.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The member for Peake will refer to members by their electorates.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and thank you for pausing the clock during that frivolous point of order. If the member for Finnis was listening to my speech, he would know that I corrected myself. I will continue anyway, but I thank him for pulling me up on that point.

The member for Stuart gets angry at the opposition for finding out about a dirty tricks campaign: he is upset with us for finding out that there is a dirty tricks campaign going on. In his speech he said that no member in this place would do the sort of things of which the shadow treasurer is accusing the Premier's staff. I remember that, nearly a year ago, a speech of the Leader of the Opposition turned up in a grievance debate speech by the member for Bragg. It had disappeared from his desk at a function at which two members of the Liberal Party were present. It was stolen from his table and turned up here in a speech to try to embarrass the opposition. They now say, 'We wouldn't possibly get involved in these sorts of dirty tricks.' The person Simon Cope, who works for the Premier, is the same person who is in charge of the mikerann.com incident, and who follows Labor shadow ministers with digital cameras recording their speeches, and is the same person who, in breach of standing orders, hid in the public gallery recording the speeches of members of parliament to be used in television advertising during the next election campaign.

But who is their defender? The member for Stuart comes in, himself grubby. Who is the person who tips the bucket on members of parliament whenever he gets the chance? The

member for Stuart. If there is anything racy, anything with which he thinks he can attack someone personally, who gets up? The member for Stuart. He is always the first one into the gutter and the last to leave. I am sure that many members opposite have a lot of respect for the tactics and modus operandi of the member for Stuart, but we do not. On this side, we like to play it straight—a straight bat every time. I am not going to take advice—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KOUTSANTONIS:—from someone who is the only member of parliament that I know of who has—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peake will get back to the matters being dealt with in the bill before the House.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: We hear their comments about this being an honest, open and clear budget. What do they do on the first day we have an opportunity to talk about this budget? They record our speeches in secret, in the dark, hiding in the public gallery. This is the same party that puts out brochures at the universities—

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Might we have discussion about the budget instead of some unfortunate action which a member opposite took earlier today?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The chair has already made the member for Peake aware of the need to get back to the issues within the legislation we are currently debating.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you for pausing the clock again: I appreciate your patience, Mr Deputy Speaker. Members of parliament are paid a great deal of money from the budget and more is expected from them. The behaviour of the member for Stuart is absolutely disgraceful. His is the same political party—

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I rise on a point of order. This debate is supposed to be a genuine debate about the budget; we had an unfortunate occurrence, and poor old Tom—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member has made his point. I uphold the point of order, and I once again request the member for Peake to come back to matters relating to the budget.

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order. The salaries and emoluments of members of parliament are paid for out of the budget and, if the member for Peake wishes as part of his budget debate to reflect on the contributions of members of parliament and of their worth to the community generally, it appears to me to be within the parameters of the overall debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith has drawn a pretty wide bow, I would suggest. I would again, for the sake of the sanity of the House, ask the member for Peake to refer to matters in the budget.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I will not fall for the same grubby tricks members opposite fall into every time they get a chance. I will not be putting out pamphlets at the universities asking for students to do secret things in the night and disrupt Labor candidates—

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: On a point of order, sir: you have already ruled on the matter of relevance; we could go on with this for 15 minutes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! For the last time the chair asks the member for Peake to refer to matters within the budget.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: On the budget, after the disgraceful behaviour of members opposite, I will talk quickly about the government's record on financial management. This is a government that boasts fiscal management and responsible management. Members of the government think that they are sensible. They say that they are not going to spend like drunken sailors, which is an insult to our proud men and women who serve in the Royal Australian Navy. Members of the government owe them an apology. But Alan Mitchell—

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Come on!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: The member for Peake is reflecting on a position that could not be controlled by a member of this place, and I ask him to withdraw that reflection.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order. The member for Peake has already referred to that issue in a speech in this place earlier today.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: No, Mr Deputy Speaker, I was referring to comments made by the Treasurer, that they were not going to spend like drunken sailors—words from the Treasurer's own mouth in discussing his budget. If you think that the Treasurer discussing his own budget is out of order, please show me the standing order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peake.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. When talking about spending like drunken sailors, I think that the government owes an apology to every man and woman who serves in the Royal Australian Navy. If you had been listening to my remarks, you would know that. I know from personal experience of the backbench it is pretty hard to hear what is going on. It is not as easy as it is on the front bench, but maybe you will get used to it eventually. A very good article was written by Alan Mitchell in the Australian *Financial Review* (page 11). He writes some very interesting words about the budget. He states:

Unfortunately for the residents of South Australia, this is almost as good as it gets. The state's Treasurer, Rob Lucas, yesterday claimed to be opening a new chapter in fiscal management—
ha!—

Having repaired the Budget after the disaster of the State Bank of SA, then allegedly having restructured the state's finances, now the Olsen Government was ready to 'reinvest in our future'.

They were the words of the Treasurer; he was going to 'reinvest in our future'. But Alan Mitchell points out:

There's just one small problem: even on the amalgam of regular and abnormal items that make up the Budget, the SA Government is still only managing an underlying cash surplus of \$2 million.

But in its own financial calculations, the *Financial Review* finds that the budget has a cash deficit of \$59 million. Alan Mitchell goes on to explain this clever accounting that the government takes up.

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: If you listen—I know it is hard from the backbench—and if you are patient, you'll hear it. Mr Mitchell states:

Needless to say, the true bottom line is a good deal less impressive. Indeed, the government finance statistics, tucked away at the back of the budget papers, show that Mr Lucas has scored an unenviable trifecta.

On every measure of the standard system of national budget accounting, the South Australian Government's Budget is in deficit.

On every national budgeting principle the state government's budget is in deficit. But this is the government that comes in here and says, 'We're great financial managers. Leave it to us, we'll take care of everything.' What has the *Financial Review*, a respected economic commentator on state and national budgets—no real friend of the Labor Party—come out and said? What has it come out and done to this government's budget? It goes on:

Its true cash deficit is \$59 million. Its accrual fiscal balance, which shows the general government sector's net borrowing requirement, is in deficit to the tune of \$209 million.

The Government is even in recurrent deficit. Revenues will not cover its accruing recurrent costs. The net operating deficit for the general Government sector will be \$38 million in the coming fiscal year.

None of which would be regarded as particularly serious if South Australia were not already one of the highest taxing States. . .

This government is running around saying that it has cut taxes, but the truth is that we are one of the highest taxing states in the land.

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: We are the highest taxing state in the land, but this government, with clever accounting, is going around saying, 'No, we are actually one of the lowest taxing states. We have lower taxes.' The fact is that we are not.

Mr Conlon: You cannot believe a thing they tell you.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: No, that's right. Mr Mitchell goes on to say that the government's surpluses are based on revenues that they have not yet received and on growth estimates that are very optimistic. Given today's growth figures, I think that the government's budget is already in disarray, just from that, but I am no economist and I am no expert. I will leave it to the shadow Treasurer, who is an expert on the economy, to give us the caucus rundown of what is going on. I will give the government some credit. It has reduced debt, and it is very important to reduce debt, but at what cost?

Mr McEwen interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Exactly. The member for Gordon makes a very important point. The government has shifted debt. We have remained one of the highest taxing states in the land, and the government has shifted debt rather than bring it down. In this very budget it is using money from privatisation that was promised in the last parliament to pay off debt to provide a surplus.

Members interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I know that the former Deputy Premier, who is in disgrace on the back bench, thinks this is funny, but the truth is that the *Financial Review* has found you out. Alan Wood, no mate of ours from the *Australian*, has found you out, and the *Sunday Mail*, through Craig Clarke and other investigators, has found you out. It is only a matter of time before the *Advertiser* finds you out. The TV channels have found you out. You are frauds; you are economic vandals.

You guys came into parliament in 1993 after the State Bank disaster thinking, 'We can do no worse,' so you get away behaving like fiscal vandals. After the next election, when the member for Bragg is retired on a beachfront somewhere and when other members of parliament are looking for jobs, we will be left to clean up the mess, but we will not be fiscal vandals.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I have not had the time that the member for Waite has had to go to university and study a

degree while being a backbencher: I have been out serving my electorate. I know that I am not an expert on the economy like he is. It seems to me that every article I read in the *Financial Review* suggests that this budget is a fraud: it is not a surplus at all. The great tragedy of this budget is education spending. The great tragedy is investment in the future. What is the most important thing we could possibly do for future South Australians? Invest in education.

Ms Hurley: Opportunity.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Opportunity. Education frees the shackles of oppression. People like Joe Scalzi, the member for Hartley, who was a teacher, should realise the importance of education, but no, he supports a government that has provided no real increase in education spending in the last three years. The residents of Hartley will not be fooled a third time.

The member for Waite sits here and talks about the importance of education, so much so that he put himself through an education while being a member of the House. He went out and got a degree, and I am very proud of him for that—congratulations, well done—but he supports a budget that does not invest in the future of our schools for the next four years. The government does not support investment in education, but he supports the budget. Of course, the Democrats will win that seat, so it will not be a real problem.

Members interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Here we go. The honourable member has been elevated to high office again. Mr Acting Speaker, disgraced former minister and member for Bragg, I say to the member for Schubert that the member for Gordon made a very good point about fuel prices in the country and about the subsidies that are given to transporters of freight.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Your select committee. We will see what the member does about it. The member for Schubert has been a member of this House for a very long time. His constituents are suffering and what is he doing about it? Has the member for Schubert called for the lowering of the excise on petrol prices? I have not heard him calling for a lowering of the excise. I do not recall the member for Schubert calling for any cuts in subsidies to country fuel users. No. The member for Gordon was the only one fighting for country residents. However, I will say that—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Exactly. I do not have the Democrats breathing down my neck. I want to finish off with a few points relating to my electorate. My electorate is very disappointed with the state government budget, and I will tell members why. This government has allocated almost no money at all to new works, new infrastructure, or new capital investment in the electorate of West Torrens—not one bit. The most important areas for West Torrens are the QEH, the Westpac centre at Lockleys and the airport. What has the government done with the airport? Nothing. The airport is still sitting idle and with no new terminal being built. Westpac is at risk, and this minister's running of the health system has degraded the QEH.

The minister has announced over and over again new capital investment at the QEH, but it has not yet started. There have been no increases to bed numbers and dental waiting lists are up. Pensioners who need dentures are having to wait up to 25 years to get dentures so they can eat. These are war veterans who are waiting up to 25 years because of cuts to the state scheme under this minister. Six constituents approached me after visiting the dentist. They require lower

dentures and need surgery. They have approached the commonwealth and the state for assistance and received nothing. Out of the entire commonwealth and state budgets, only six veterans throughout Australia are entitled to undergo surgery for these dentures. How many South Australians were treated last year? None. How many South Australians were treated the year before? None.

What is our health minister doing? Absolutely nothing. He sits there, blames Canberra for all his problems and takes no responsibility for the decay of our health system. He is the one who should be held accountable for what is happening in our health system, not the federal government. It should be laid squarely on the state minister. The fact is that members of this government will be held accountable for what is going on. An election is imminent, and I am sure the Independents have lost their patience with the government after this budget. It has done nothing for their electorates to fix up the financial mismanagement or to repair debt—nothing whatsoever. It has sold off our assets. Small business is in crisis because of the escalating cost for electricity, and residents will be hit next year as well. Of course, this government will bear the brunt of their anger. I will be supporting the allocation of moneys for the budget, but I think the government could have done a lot better. However, given its talent pool, it cannot do it.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I move:

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

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT SAFETY

The Legislative Council transmitted the following resolution in which it requested the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

That it be an instruction to the committee to extend its terms of reference to require it to consider and report upon the National Road Safety Strategy 2001-10 and the National Road Safety Action Plan 2001 and 2002.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate resumed.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for recognising me, because I was sitting here listening to members opposite—

The ACTING SPEAKER (The Hon. G.A. Ingerson): There is a point of order. The member for Peake.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: It was quite clear that the member for Chaffey had the call first, sir. She was up way before the member for Waite was and, of course, there is procedure and practice within this House.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you. We will move on. One of the things that I have listened to with great interest as the opposition addressed the budget is the fact that, obviously, not very many of the members opposite have read it. It is quite apparent from listening to the member for Peake and a couple of other members that they have not opened many of the pages because if they had, and particularly if they had referred to budget paper No 1, page 6, they would have noticed that in 1993-94 the budget deficit under a Labor government was nearly \$300 million a year. What was it doing? It was running a household which was spending

\$300 million a year more, each year, than it was bringing in as income. A wonderful situation. As they read the budget papers, the members opposite have selectively overlooked a fact that is not missed by the people of South Australia, which is that we inherited from the Labor government over \$9 billion worth of chaos which we have had to try to sort out.

We have listened to members opposite lament that we have had new revenue measures: we have had an emergency services levy; and we have had other forms of revenue increase—CPI increases, etc. They are lamenting the fact that these measures have been taken. They seem to have completely absolved themselves of any responsibility for the fact that those measures were even necessary. Let me say that if there is one criticism that I would expect from members opposite it would be, ‘Why didn’t you do it earlier? Why didn’t you introduce emergency services levies in 1994 and 1995? Why didn’t you move to sell ETSA in 1994 when we were on our backs, crippled, when what had gone wrong in this state was still fresh in everyone’s minds?’ I have not heard that one from members opposite.

Over the last seven years, we have managed extremely responsible budgets. With two governments, year by year, we have nibbled away responsibly at this debt that Labor left us. If any member opposite bothered to read the budget papers and looked at the underlying deficit reduction from 1993 through to 1997, during the first three or four years of our government, they would note that in those first three or four years spectacular results were achieved. They would also notice that we are now running a balanced budget.

No; that seems to have slipped by the opposition. It has not noticed that. Instead, we have all this waffle about a so-called crisis in education and health. Let me point out to the House how delighted the vast majority of my constituents in the seat of Waite are with the outcome that has been achieved in this budget. I will give some examples. In health alone, the government has hired 200 additional nurses. This government inherited wreckage from Labor in 1993. Our hospitals were literally falling down around the state’s ears; the infrastructure was wrecked and the health system was in chaos. We are now at a point where we are hiring 200 new nurses at \$8 million per annum; our mental health strategy has just received an extra \$2 million; funds have been provided for additional winter beds and emergency department workloads—\$15 million this financial year alone; and the private dental purchase scheme has injected \$4 million over two years. In my constituency I have the Repatriation General Hospital and I look forward to some of those benefits coming into my constituency.

I also look forward to the constituents of Waite having access to improved services at the Flinders Medical Centre. We are making this possible. Our government and our minister have provided the funding. We have boosted employment and economic development. Employment and youth programs will receive \$34 million over four years. Strategic industry support programs will be expanded with more than \$78 million over four years. Where is all of this from the opposition? They do not seem to have read that little bit in the budget papers.

The Adelaide to Darwin railway—our gateway to Asia—has been funded with \$5.2 million over four years. What did successive Labor governments do about it? Absolutely nothing! It would have been two upsetting for the maritime unions in the eastern states. We could not possibly have a rail link to a private port in Darwin.

In terms of policing, under this budget the government has arranged for 90 extra police officers and a dedicated call centre—putting police back on the street and targeting illicit drugs. We have made the link between drugs and crime. What has the opposition done? It has done nothing but waffle about the budget. What would you do? What extra would you provide and how would you fund it? How many extra police would you hire? How would you combat the problem of drugs? It seems that the opposition’s only solution is to make sure that everybody can grow 10 hydroponically generated cannabis plants so that we can become the cannabis manufacturing centre of—

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Well, I don’t know. Is that still the Labor Party’s policy?

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I’m sorry, but you introduced it. There may be something very exciting coming forward on that. I note that there are a couple of private member’s bills on the *Notice Paper*. I look forward to all members opposite supporting change to that legislation so that we can tackle the problem of marijuana production, bikie gangs and drugs and crime. Let us hear your policy on that. We are doing something about that in this budget.

We are investing in public transport. Additional bus, tram and train services are being provided, and we are extending the Metroticket system. The Belair line runs through my constituency of Waite. My constituents look forward to being able to access those improved bus and rail services. We are delivering where it matters to people who need services.

We are improving the environment. The Minister for the Environment and Heritage has just initiated an absolutely spectacular second generation parklands scheme in the Mount Lofty Ranges called the Greater Mount Lofty Park: Yurrebilla. It is a fantastic initiative. If you had read the *Advertiser* yesterday, you would have seen that Minister Laidlaw in another place has announced a new linear park to be built along the coastal fringes of the city. Where has the money come from? It has come from this budget. We have done more for the environment than the Labor Party and the Democrats have even dreamt about. What did you do when you were in office? I will tell you what you did: you allowed the hills face zone to be desecrated. You enabled the hills face zone, which is largely in my constituency, to be peppered with developments which now make large parts of it an eyesore. You allowed planning rules which provided for an unbridled explosion of vineyards, orchards and all sorts of developments in the hills face zone to which people are now objecting. That is what you delivered. Thank you for that! The Labor Party and the Democrats delivered that. We are now trying to address the issues. This budget has taken a step in the right direction. Thanks for the damage that you did to the environment in the hills face zone in my electorate of Waite, but we will fix it. We will keep working on it, despite the \$9 billion worth of debt that you left us.

An honourable member interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. G.A. Ingerson): Order! The honourable member is out of order, and he knows that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The salinity and water quality initiatives announced in this budget amount to more than \$100 million over seven years. I have already mentioned the metropolitan beach management programs worth nearly \$7 million, and the marine protection areas program across the state will receive \$800 000 per annum. I now refer to

regional development in our country areas. Country water quality improvements amount to \$32.8 million.

We are actually embracing through IT 2002 new interactive ways of delivering services to communities in remote locations through Services SA. It is a very exciting program. I urge the Australian Labor Party and the Democrats to pick up the budget papers, have a good read of them and find out about Services SA, because they might learn something. If ever they are in government they might be able to continue that program and make it better. Who knows? We have provided the innovation and the new ideas and we are implementing the new programs in this budget. These are the parts that you have chosen not to read to the House or to pass on to your constituents.

We are supporting the needs of older South Australians. Local government rate concessions and extensions amount to \$7.7 million this year. Progressive implementation of the Moving Ahead strategy gets \$1 million per annum. Extensions to Home and Community Care programs amount to almost \$3 million. We are promoting literacy and physical wellbeing: Early Years Literacy Strategy, \$5.6 million; and Active for Life Schools Physical Education Program, \$16 million. Where were members opposite when the Treasurer was delivering the budget statement? Fast asleep or something! I am not hearing anything about this, or about the positives that have flowed from it, during contributions to the House from opposition members. Payroll tax—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The shadow minister for education says, 'There wasn't much.' I have a map on the wall in my office, and when people complain—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I beg your pardon; I will give the credit to another member. People come into my office and, from time to time, have a grizzle. I like to say to them, 'Look, sir (or madam), could you please touch the country on the wall where you would rather get sick and go to hospital? Can you please touch the country on this map where you would rather have your children or your grandchildren educated?' I am yet to see anyone touch any other country on the map. The reality is that we have one of the finest education systems in the country and one of the finest education systems in the world.

Our health system is, by and large, up there with the very best globally. The opposition knows that. We are quivering about the edges and whipping up hysteria where it need not be whipped up. Payroll tax initiatives of 6 per cent down to 5.75 per cent, and from July 2002 down even further, will provide very significant advantages to business. As someone who has come from the business community, let me tell members how overdue and how welcome that is. We realise that private enterprise, small business, generates jobs. We realise that if you help business in these positive ways, as this budget does, it will help create jobs for people, which creates lives for families.

What ideas does the Labor Party have? Let's double union membership; let's get out there and hire more public servants; let's substantially increase the number of people on the public payroll and we'll pay for it (heaven knows from where) from taxpayer funding! We like to create real jobs, not just hire people to shuffle paper from one table to another to sort of sop up the unemployed and not gainfully engage them in productive work in the Public Service but to hide the reality—the reality being that private enterprise gets smoth-

ered. That is what tends to happen under Labor governments, and we are seeing it in Victoria as we speak.

The least benefits to small businesses below \$50 000, which will be exempt from stamp duty from January 2002, are quite significant. We are delivering real benefits in a very targeted way to businesses so that they can make jobs happen for people. Financial institutions duty is being abolished from July 2001. This has not been easy. We have had to struggle to put these initiatives in place because, guess what: we have had to pay off over \$9 billion worth of debt and take over a household that was running at \$300 million a year in arrears. That is what members opposite delivered.

It really tickles my fancy to sit and listen to members opposite, as if they are experts on fiscal management who are going to revolutionise the way things are done—take the public accounts and, without any new revenue measures, fulfil all these dreams they have in bed at night. There will be no pain for the taxpayers of South Australia; the world will be a beautiful place under a Labor government; there will be money for all and apples on every tree! The people of South Australia know that that is absolute arrant nonsense. Members on the government benches know that it is laughable and, really, so do members opposite.

If opposition members were serious about critiquing this budget their responses would be far more articulate and would demonstrate a much closer scrutiny of each volume of the budget. I look forward during estimates to hearing members opposite incisively examine, scrutinise, pull apart and find holes in the budget papers, but I suspect that they will not find many holes. That is why we are getting generalities from members opposite—sort of hip-shooting comments, not delving into the figures, not spelling out what they would do or where they would put their priorities, and not critiquing the focus that the government has taken in each portfolio statement and highlighting how they would change it. There has not been any of that. Instead, it is all this general socialist waffle that we hear from time to time about how much brighter the world would be if a Labor government gets its hands on the Treasury benches once again. Well, the people of South Australia will not buy it. The people at Waite will not buy it. They will be reading this debate and closely looking for actual positives and indications from the opposition as to how it might construct its budget. We have not seen much of that so far.

All the measures I have mentioned are positives and have been achieved after a great deal of pain. Even the emergency services levy on fixed property is to be adjusted to maintain it at a constant level of revenue collection. We have even managed to do that, but do we hear any congratulations from members opposite? No, we do not because they cannot quite grasp the mantle. They cannot quite realise that what has been achieved by Premier Brown and Stephen Baker and then by Premier Olsen and Treasurer Lucas is nothing short of a small miracle. How it must have been in 1994 when our government sat there and looked at those books and said, 'How on earth will we dig ourselves out of this hole?' I just do not know how my colleague Dean Brown managed that daunting task back in 1994; it must have been quite breathtaking.

In my constituency of Waite, where there are a large number of elderly people, we particularly welcome the concessions for the aged and the increase in existing council rate concessions that extended the eligibility criteria for those concessions to include self-funded retirees. These people have done the hard yards, they have provided for their retirement and they are often the forgotten people. They are

the people that the Labor Party forgets because it thinks that they are wealthy. It is very easy for me to wander around Waite pointing out to people that the Labor Party does not care about them. Why should the Labor Party care about the people in Waite? It keeps referring to us as the leafy suburbs; we are all supposed to be incredibly wealthy and our schools do not need any attention.

Guess what this budget did? It allocated \$500 000 to Urrbrae High School towards a \$20 million rebuild. Urrbrae High School was totally neglected under Labor administration. This government provided further funding for the \$1.7 million rebuild at Mitcham Girls High School, and that is on top of the almost \$1 million for Netherby Kindergarten. This government is actually out there investing. It seems that children in Waite do not matter because apparently they live in leafy streets, apparently their parents are so wealthy that their children do not matter. In particular, families in my constituency who happen to send their kids to private schools matter even less. The federal Labor government has already made it clear what it thinks about people who send their children to private schools: they are the lowest of the low; they do not even matter. It just whips their funding away because those kids do not count. Let us not have any of this equity stuff; let us have none of this one rule for all families; let us just forget about it.

As I wander around the streets of Waite explaining to my constituents what is in this budget for them and what might be in it if the Labor Party ever gets hold of the Treasury benches, I do not think I will have too much trouble. I know, because I regularly wander within and visit the schools, the Repat General Hospital and the various other government-funded services in my area. I saw what they looked like when we came to government and when I came into this place. Colonel Light Gardens Primary School bares a striking resemblance to what it looked like when I was there in 1959. What did Labor governments do for Colonel Light Gardens Primary School? Absolutely nothing. It let these schools languish. Our budget has provided for them—and not only that, we have balanced the budget, provided capital works, addressed the needs of the elderly, the children, the sick and the vulnerable. Working within a very tight budgetary framework, thanks to the chaos we inherited from Labor, we have come up with a budget that provides a win, win outcome for as many people as could be achieved in the budgetary circumstances. Okay, we sold ETSA; we could have got more for it—you would not let us; but the outcome that has been achieved is a good outcome for all.

Mrs MAYWALD (Chaffey): I rise tonight to talk about the positives in this budget. I believe there have been some positives and that there is a sensible element to this budget, that is, that we have seen therein a very targeted effort in relation to delivering some outcomes in certain areas, particularly in the regions, that have long been awaited. It is interesting that, whilst there in the regions will benefit from the targeted way in which the government has allocated these limited funds, this budget clearly highlights one thing: that there is no pot of gold at the end of the privatisation rainbow. Unfortunately, the budget goodies have been overshadowed by the crisis now facing South Australian businesses in relation to electricity.

First and foremost, I will talk about the highlights in my region. In Chaffey we have seen a commitment to the Loxton High School upgrade of \$3.9 million over two years. That upgrade has been lobbied for by the community for over 20

years. For 20 years the community of Loxton have been working on successive governments to achieve an upgrade to a school that has been falling down around them. One of the problems that has been faced in achieving a successful outcome to its lobbying effort is the fact that the community has been so diligent in managing and maintaining the buildings to the extent that they have been held together with glue and tape, and have been jacked up on an annual basis as the rooms sink. This is a real testament to the fact that the efforts of the Loxton community have resulted in a two year commitment to the upgrade of its high school.

The Renmark Paringa District Hospital has also been a winner out of the budget and it has seen the first upgrade in patient accommodation in 30 years with this commitment. We are hoping to have work on this proposal started by the end of the year. The initial planning stages are well under way, and we are expecting that to be completed in August. I again commend the community of Renmark Paringa, which has worked hard over a number of years to see this upgrade come to fruition. I also thank both the Minister for Education and Children's Services and the Minister for Human Services for their commitment to these two communities.

The Renmark Paringa Hotel is also making a substantial contribution to the upgrade of its hospital. As a result of the efforts of the Renmark Hotel—a community based hotel—it supports a \$20 000 donation to the hospital per annum over the next 10 years towards this project. That is a tremendous commitment, although I am not sure that they will be able to met that commitment now with its electricity bill rising by \$3 000 per month without any opportunity for it to raise further funds. I am quite concerned about whether or not the Renmark Hotel will be in a position to commit to that funding objective.

Also very applaudable is the government's effort, and the Minister for Water Resources has made a strong commitment, along with the Minister for Primary Industries and Resources and the Minister for Environment, to support a bid to see the Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology relocated from Mildura to the Riverland. This initiative has been driven by the community in the Riverland, which saw an opportunity when the tenure for the premises where the CRC is currently located was expiring. With the tenure expiring there was an opportunity for South Australia to look at putting forward a proposal to the Cooperative Research Centre Board to attract that centre to move into South Australia.

There are a lot of synergies in the Riverland that support this move. We have demonstrated very strong support from a community basis, from our local action planning groups, water catchment boards and other persons within the region who are involved in research in other areas, such as the Australian Landscape Trust. We have a group of people who together are putting forward to government from a local perspective the benefits that this will bring to South Australia. I believe this is a real opportunity to see the realisation of the government's initiative in the state water plan to see a centre of excellence for research on water issues in this state.

It coincides with a move within the Riverland community to establish a university campus within the region and also the Australian Landscape Trust commitment to invest in an environment centre at Renmark to the value of \$1.2 million, supported by a federal tourism grant of \$400 000 and a potential NHT grant of \$400 000 towards a centre of excellence. The budget commits the government to seven years of ongoing support for the operation of such a centre,

and I believe that we have a very good chance of attracting that centre to the Riverland, which would be a terrific coup for the region.

The Paringa community has also benefited from the announcement in this budget that they are to get filtered water. Members would recall that over the past three or four years the state government has committed to building water filtration plants right along the river communities. Unfortunately, as fantastic they are, the plants have provided water for the immediate major town consumers, but just outside those towns a number of smaller communities are still required to access water directly from the river, and that certainly has not been ideal in any shape or form. This is the first move that we have had towards supporting the expansion of that program in the other Riverland towns. I look forward to a future announcement when Glossop, Ramco and other small communities outside the major towns in the Riverland can also benefit from what people in the city take for granted, namely, clean, clear water.

As I mentioned, these are the good things that the budget has delivered. There has also been an emphasis on the primary industry sector, with a significant increase in funding to primary industries. I believe this is recognition of the hard work and effort of our agricultural, horticultural and aquaculture communities, which are leading the charge to turn the economy of this state around, in spite of what might be done in this place. I believe that this is only just. Given that 60 per cent of the state's export income comes from the regional areas, it is appropriate that the government should be supporting research and programs for developing export markets and also best practice in relation to irrigation management and the like, and ensuring that South Australian producers can compete in the national and international arena. These are the good things in the budget.

Unfortunately, the power crisis has overshadowed these achievements. It is unfortunate that we see no mention within the budget of the electricity issue. What 2 800 to 3 000 businesses in South Australia are facing is totally unacceptable, in my view, and I think it is irresponsible of this government to suggest that businesses should lie down and take what is being dished out, particularly from a government that purports to have the interests of the business community at heart. I think the Olsen government is kidding itself if it believes that South Australians will accept its attempts to pin the blame for the electricity pricing debacle wholly and solely on the national electricity market, when privatising our assets has compounded the problem.

It was entirely the Olsen government's responsibility to prepare South Australia for entry into the national electricity market, and it chose to create a submarket in this state to force up the sale price of our generators, and this in turn has resulted in the exorbitant price increases now faced by South Australian businesses. This is a very sad indictment on a government that purports to support those very people.

I would like to go back over the record and talk about what has led to where we are going with electricity prices. On 17 March 1998, very soon after the government first announced that it intended to sell our assets, in one of my contributions to the debate I said:

All that a sale of ETSA would achieve is the transfer of a burden of debt payment from South Australian taxpayers as a group to a more select group within the same South Australian community. I refer of course to electricity consumers.

That quote comes from *Hansard* of 17 March 1998. Why is it that an individual sitting on the crossbenches, without the

resources of government, could predict that this was where we were headed? Three years down the track, we now face exactly that. In July 1998, in my contribution to the debate on the sale of the assets, I said:

Of course, if ETSA and Optima were sold to achieve a reduction in the state debt level and interest bill, the burden of the debt is only being shoved around the state's financial balance sheet. The burden of debt will simply be transferred from the government sector to South Australian electricity consumers. It might look like good politics to the government, but it is an unacceptable abrogation of its financial and budgetary responsibilities.

Speaking about this sale proposal on an earlier occasion I said:

To achieve a selling price which reflects anything like the true capital value of ETSA and Optima assets, the government would either have to allow a purchaser to increase electricity prices substantially or underwrite the new owner's profits.

We now know exactly what the government did: it allowed the purchasers to increase electricity prices substantially. I also made a contribution on Wednesday 1 July 1998, when I said:

There is every prospect that the proposed bureaucratic regulators of the national electricity market will ensure that competition is sufficiently limited to guarantee the owners of the assets a return on their investment in the assets. That is exactly what is happening now.

That is what I said in this place two years ago, and I would like to reiterate that I do not have the resources available to me, yet I could see back then where the multitude of consultants that the government employed were taking this state. The advice that was being given to government on the whole sale process was fundamentally flawed, because the agenda under which those consultants were employed was to maximise the sale price of ETSA. Their agenda was not to look after the interests of South Australian electricity consumers. That is also evident from the fact that they received a success fee based on the final sale price.

It is really quite interesting then to go on to the next year, June 1999, when the concluding day came and the Electricity (Restructuring) Bill was passed through this House. I want to put on the record again my comments then, because it is interesting to note that, 18 months down the track, exactly what I thought would happen has occurred. I stated:

The people of South Australia will be sorely disappointed when we do not have \$2 million a day to start spending on all sorts of other things. The people of South Australia will be very disappointed when we still have a debt come next budget time. We may have a reduced debt, but we will still have a debt. The expectation in the electorate is that, if we sell ETSA, we are going into the next millennium debt free. What rubbish! The expectation in the electorate is also that we will have this huge bucket of money to spend and that this state will all of a sudden go forth and conquer the world. This leasing option of ETSA and Optima assets is not the panacea for this state's financial problems.

That was Thursday 10 June 1999, yet today we are looking at a budget that reflects exactly that position. We do not have the pot of gold at the end of the privatisation rainbow that we were promised: we have nothing like it. Our businesses are facing exorbitant price increases in their electricity costs. Our businesses are going to struggle to be able to meet their demands over the next five years because of the way in which they have had a gun held to their heads, and they are now locked into contracts at extremely high prices—unacceptably high prices.

The business sector is out there floundering, not knowing what to do. People do not know where to go for advice: they do not know whom to go to for an insight into what they should expect in the future. What they are being told by the

electricity suppliers or retailers is, 'Sign up, or else. Sign up or you'll go on a default contract. Sign up within seven days for one year, three years or five years,' and, in many instances, they are being given the option of five years only: 'We can quote you on one year if you like, but it would be far too expensive for you and you'll not be able to afford it.'

Is this what a Liberal government is all about? Is this what a Liberal government is prepared to impose upon the very sector that it purports to have at heart? I think it is a sad indictment on the policy decisions that were made in relation to the privatisation of our assets back in 1998, and I only hope that some people will be heeding the messages that are coming through from the business sector and that this government gets its head out of the sand and recognises the fact that the only way in which we can move forward from this debacle is through government intervention in the marketplace. It will take a brave government and it will take some hard decision making and soul searching, because, first and foremost, the very people who made the decisions have to recognise they are partly responsible for our present situation.

It will also require someone to come in and take on the issue as a full-time responsibility. I still believe—and I hope—that the Premier will heed the calls for the power matter to be taken out of the Treasurer's hands and be delivered into the hands of an individual who has energy as their sole purpose, so that person can look at the options for the interests of South Australia and not for the interests of those people who made decisions that they are not prepared to go back on.

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I would like to make a few comments tonight about the budget. I guess the beauty of the budget is in the eye of the beholder. We have heard comments on both sides of the House. When listening to the comments, one could think that we were talking about different budgets—but, of course, we are not. I am mindful of the comments which have just made by the member for Chaffey and which were made earlier by the member for Gordon—both Independent members, of course—who have drawn some very realistic comments about the deficiencies and disappointments of this budget. This budget reminded me somewhat of the reaction that the Howard budget received. There is clearly a mixture and I will acknowledge some positive things that are in this budget, particularly in areas for which I have shadow ministerial portfolio. It is important when analysing the budget that we point out not only what we dislike but also some positives. Quite clearly, there were some things in the federal budget which could be praised but, overall, as a general package, it does not lead us anywhere. It has elements that well and truly demonstrate that it is a budget which has been earmarked for an election year and I will highlight a couple of issues during my contribution. Overall, generally it is a package that has let down the taxpayers of South Australia. The Leader of the Opposition has already made a very succinct speech about where he sees the direction and the importance that an alternative government would have in reprioritising the priorities. Obviously, we will have to work to the parameters of this particular economic that has been put down before us. As the member for Chaffey said in her contribution (and the member for Gordon might have made the same point), the debt has been transferred to consumers of electricity. We have highlighted time and again our concerns with the privatisation agenda of this government.

I might say that we are awaiting the outcome of the TAB sale, which comes under one of my shadow portfolio areas. We have called for a commitment from the government that it will not sell the TAB unless it can assure the taxpayers of South Australia that it will make a profit from such a sale. It already has been put on the record that \$18.5 million of taxpayers' money (conditional on the sale) will go to the racing industry. The minister has acknowledged that up to \$17.5 million will go to redundancies, and in excess of \$5 million to consultants. So, we are looking at a potential package of \$40 million or more. And, of course, in recent weeks we have had the speculation of revised figures for the sale of the TAB. I hope that the government will give us a guarantee that, unless it can make a profit on this (taking into account those figures I have just mentioned), the TAB will not be sold. Let us not forget that we are talking about an asset which brings in \$60 million, or thereabouts, to the taxpayers of South Australia, \$33 million of which goes to the racing industry and \$27 million to the taxpayer. So, this is an annual profit of \$60 million as a result of the government's owning the TAB.

We are disappointed, and we have said so already, so I will not dwell on it or go into detail, because a number of speakers have done so already. The Leader of the Opposition and the shadow treasurer have already spoken about our concerns with regard to health and education. We are concerned about the cut to education in real terms. We are concerned about some of the funding, which I am sure the shadow minister for health will discuss in greater detail in regard to the public hospitals. These are two areas which certainly will be a great priority, and which need to be a significant priority for a Labor government when we come to power. I have spoken previously about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the western suburbs. Once again, we are concerned about the lack of forward funding in the budget for that hospital. Overall, it is a very gloomy outlook for jobs; it is very patchy. It is something in which we cannot have confidence and, generally speaking, I believe that the budget fails the taxpayers of South Australia.

I said that I would touch upon some of the areas for which I have portfolio responsibility. In the area of the public sector, some 16 000 jobs have gone: \$1 billion has been paid out in redundancy packages, and that program continues. That is highlighted in the budget. We remain very concerned about the way in which this government has treated the Public Service.

In the area of occupational health and safety, I welcome the announcement by the Hon. Robert Lawson in another place of an extra \$1 million that has been made available for safety inspectors. I hope that, with respect to the commitment to improving the health and safety of all South Australians at work, this money is really put to maximum use. It is important that we have inspectors out there at the coalface. That is the role of inspectors, and we will be looking carefully at the way in which this money is put to use. We hope that it is put to maximum use so that we can achieve a good result from that additional \$1 million which has been made available for safety inspectors, which we see as being critically important in that area of occupational health, safety and welfare.

It is true that last year, I think it was, as a parliament, we increased the penalties for transgressions under that act, and the only way in which these types of transgressions can be policed is if we have inspectors at the coalface. That is essential, and I hope that that money is used in the way it should be used. I also would like to commend the government

for making available some additional money for recreation and sport. It is a bit late coming, but better late than never. It is perhaps somewhat ironic that we have an announcement of an extra \$17 million over three years in recreation and sports facilities at a community level. It is a pity that money of this nature was not made available earlier in the life of this government. Recreation and sport is a very small component of the budget. More money was made available some time ago (I think about 12 months ago, or thereabouts; it might have been a bit longer) for active club grants; that money was doubled at the time.

This is \$17 million in addition to about \$10 million per annum for recreation and sport, so that is a significant increase. It will be important that the minister lays down the detail of how that money will be made available to the community. It is very important that it goes in the right way to the right areas at the grass roots level. The opposition welcomes this and will be monitoring it closely. As I said, we are disappointed that it was not done earlier but, nonetheless, it is pleasing that that money has been made available.

As are all members, I guess, I am still working my way through parts of the budget. I know that the member for Waite was a bit scratchy on it tonight: as he made his insignificant contribution, it was quite obvious that he is still trawling through the budget. However, I have not found anything in it about racing, which is another of the portfolio areas of the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. I know that he is very passionate about racing so I look forward to finding something in the budget about racing, particularly about his Office for Racing—how it is funded and the good work that it is doing in the racing industry.

I also notice that the government announced that \$1 million will be provided for work to be done in conjunction with the private sector for a new aquatic centre. Needless to say, the swimming community and the recreation and sport community hoped and believed that there would be something much bigger in the budget with respect to either a new state level aquatic centre or a total upgrade of the centre at North Adelaide. So, it will be interesting how this is worked through by the government in its dying days in office.

In conclusion, I give credit where it is due and I welcome the reductions in payroll tax that were announced, which are very important to the business community. Some areas will not be helped because they are exempt from payroll tax but, of course, many businesses will be helped. Pensioner concessions for council rates is another area. These things need to be acknowledged in the spirit of welcoming some elements from a bipartisan point of view.

So, overall, I think this is a very patchy document. I think it generally lets South Australians down: it lets the business sector down. It highlights, once again, that the Olsen Liberal government is a big spender and a big taxer—there is little doubt about that. There is no defence to that. It has been pointed out time and time again. The Leader of the Opposition has highlighted that, as an alternative government, we will provide balanced budgets year in and year out, that there will be public accountability and that our programs will be fully costed. We look forward to the opportunity to prove to the broad electorate that we can and will achieve that outcome when we come to government. With those few remarks, I look forward to the passage of this bill.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr WRIGHT: I said I would not take my full time, and nor should I, on an august occasion like this. I know that there has been a bit of excitement in the building today, but

it is important that members do not get over-tired. It is important that I do not keep members longer than is necessary. I can see that the member for Ross Smith is getting a bit agitated because I am not taking my full time but, in the spirit of cooperation within the House, I encourage other members to do the same.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I cannot believe the tone of the speeches we have heard in this House today. I was in this place in the period from 1990 to 1993 under the previous Labor government. I could not believe the rubbish and the drivel that came from members opposite tonight. In 1990, I sat here as a new member of parliament in total disbelief. It was a government that was in total and absolute denial that there were any problems. At the time, Premier Bannon signed the national competition policy and for the national electricity grid. Of course, he went out when the State Bank bubble burst. Then we had Premier Arnold. He was a good chap, and I still have a lot of time for him. However, the government was in so much trouble that it was a government that was totally in denial.

Projects just fell over like grass in the wind. Projects such as Scrimber cost \$60 million, and hardly a whimper was heard. The Remm Centre cost millions of dollars, as did 333 Collins Street, Melbourne; the State Bank; and on it went. We ended up with a debt of \$9 billion. It is hard to bear the criticisms of members opposite tonight, given that the debt is now \$3.3 billion.

Mr Hanna: And rising.

Mr VENNING: Look where it has come from. The member for Mitchell has said that it is rising. If you get back into power, it will obviously rise, because you do not know which way is up. We have brought debt down. I wonder what is coming next. The budget is a respectable document, because it goes to where the needs are. It is a budget that is starting to return to the people some sort of comfort and assistance, after they have gone through some torrid financial times.

It is the same with any business, whether it be private or commercial, your home or mine: if you are in this sort of debt, what do you do? You have to get your debt paid off. You and your family go through hard times so that you have a workable bank balance and are not fully in hock and so that you do not end up having everything repossessed.

Every member in this House has various levels of economic management expertise. However, when they come in here, they seem to think the rules change. Well, they do not. The rules are exactly the same: you do not spend what you do not have, and you must keep your spending under control. If you have a \$9 billion debt, you certainly are out of control.

The tone of the speeches—particularly the Deputy Leader's speech tonight—was that 'we have been two irresponsible governments' and 'we have not brought debt under control'. Where has she been? I cannot believe that a person with some credibility can utter rubbish like that. It is absolute trash.

The leader said in his speech that he would not be spending any more money. Where will all the money come from for all these extra projects that all these members have talked about this afternoon and this evening? Where will the money come from if members opposite do not plan to spend any more? The only thing members opposite want to do is increase spending. If members opposite are responsible, what will they cut from this budget line? Where is their bravery?

Where is their courage? Put it in *Hansard*! They have plenty of opportunities to do so tonight and tomorrow so that we can all see where their priorities lie. I will tell members where they lie: in just plain, pure, base politics. They cannot believe what they are saying, because we certainly do not.

The member for Peake spoke a lot of rubbish tonight. Members ought to get a tape recorder and have a listen to what he said. It is absolute rubbish. He carried on. Surely he does not believe what he said. I will have great delight in reading the *Hansard* and circulating some of that. Where has he been for the last six or seven years? In cloud cuckoo land. I know things could be a little better now. We have an odd problem or two, particularly this power price increase. I will not run away from the truth of that matter. It hurts me as much as it does anybody else. But, for opposition members to come in here and say that this government has not been responsible, that we have not addressed debt and that we have not been doing the right thing for the people of South Australia is a total load of irresponsible rubbish. Members opposite should be more responsible than that. If members opposite are not going to spend any more money and if they are not going to increase taxes, where will the money come from?

The member for Peake went on about petrol prices and what the member for Gordon said this evening. Then he had a go at me. As I walked through the door into the chamber, he lined me up. I assure the member for Peake that, if that is what he carries on with, I will not bother coming in here again when he is speaking. I will not come in here to be picked on. I will not suffer that nonsense. I happen to be on the select committee, too, and I learnt at exactly the same time as the member for Gordon what the deals were.

People living 100 kilometres out are entitled to 3¢ per litre from the government, and it costs the fuel companies about 2.7¢ per litre to get it there, so they are making money. We are learning but several select committees before this one, both here and in other states, have identified the problems with fuel pricing and nothing has been done about it. I am happy to support the member for Gordon to make sure that this select committee can do something about it.

The member for Napier, the deputy leader, is a member of the select committee, so for her to say that over the past six years we have wasted opportunities and slugged country people for petrol is a complete fallacy. Just check the budget, because we are spending a lot of money on roads. Opposition members should look at our road expenditure and then look at their record for the last six years that they were in government. They were going right down the tube with their petrol moneys; they were fleecing country people and city people; and their road expenditure was almost zero.

The only thing that I got out of Minister Blevins when he was minister responsible for transport was to bituminise the road from Spalding to Booborowie. It was done in 1½ kilometre strips because that was all the money he had. It took five goes to get the six kilometres sealed. I was grateful at the time because it was the only roadworks going on. Within 18 months of our coming to government the following year, we did the 87 kilometres all the way from Morgan to Burra. You beat that! You tell me one project you did the whole time you were in government.

I will say that there is one project that the Labor government did well, and that was the dual carriageway from Adelaide to Port Wakefield. That is the only thing which I recall and which I use regularly where Labor spent money, and it is an asset that we can all appreciate. I have a long way

to go before I can see anything else from those Labor years that is a long-lasting and useful asset.

The Hon. Dean Brown: The Port Wakefield Road was a federal government initiative.

Mr VENNING: It was a federal government initiative. The minister has put me right. I am sorry; I gave them an accolade that I should not have. I tried to be generous but, I am sorry, I cannot even do that, but the intention was there.

Ms Stevens: The Hills freeway and the tunnel was a federal government initiative, too.

Mr VENNING: I didn't say it wasn't, but we pushed the federal government to make that happen, didn't we? Look at the public works. I turn now to the excellent news that I have had for the Barossa Valley—the region I represent. The best news was the announcement that we are to get a new hospital. Everybody knows that there has been a fair bit of angst about the hospitals in my electorate, but I am very pleased that the minister and the government have announced a new \$12 million hospital.

Ms Stevens: That doesn't mean that you are going to get it.

Mr VENNING: You make sure if you are in government that you deliver it. Will you? Will you deliver if you are in government?

Ms Stevens interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Come on! You're the shadow minister. Put it on the record now. I'll wait. Will you build it?

Mr HANNA: I rise on a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. I believe that the member for the Schubert is not addressing members of the opposition by their correct title.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. G.A. Ingerson): The member for Schubert.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ross Smith knows that he is out of order.

Mr VENNING: I ask the member for Elizabeth whether she will back that promise. If you are in government, will you build the Barossa hospital?

Ms Stevens: I am going to build the Lyell McEwin and I am going to build the Queen Elizabeth.

Mr VENNING: Will you build the Barossa hospital? For the record, the member refuses to say. The government has said that it will and that it will take us until 2003 or 2004 to put it there. I am very pleased, even though it will take us three years. We will use that time constructively to ensure we get the right design, the right plan, the right costing, the right contractor and everything else, because we have waited 80 years for this new hospital and we will make sure that it happens. We are very pleased that, at last, after a fair bit of angst, Minister Brown, who is present this evening, has promised that we will eventually have it—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, the member for Ross Smith!

Mr VENNING: In relation to the future of the Tanunda Hospital, I hope that it will remain as a health facility but not for acute care. I believe that it could serve our community in the aged care area. It has been a long battle for me as the local member and sometimes it has been a little frustrating that we have had to wait so long for this decision. The most important thing of all is that this project is now locked in from this government's point of view, and I hope for any future government. I have asked the member for Elizabeth, the shadow minister for health, and I ask her again to honour this

commitment—I hope that she will—because the people in the Barossa will be very—

Ms Stevens: I have not got a very good example to follow, have I?

Mr VENNING: I hope that the shadow minister is honourable and that she would honour the promise that we have put in the budget. I thank all those involved in this outcome, particularly the Barossa Health Board, doctors, staff and the community. We must also not forget the very responsible and constructive assistance given by our local media. I have to say that they could have plastered me a lot more than they have, but they have been pretty good about it. I pay tribute to Minister Brown and also Premier Olsen for bringing this about.

I also want to clarify the fact that in the budget there was some concern over the words that this was a 'partnerships SA initiative'. I am pleased that the minister clarified that with me, explaining that, whilst the new Barossa Hospital at Nuriootpa is being assessed for construction with private finance, if that finance is not feasible, cabinet has agreed to fund it from the normal capital works funds of the budget. The assessment for private funding will not delay the construction. The new hospitals at both Mount Gambier and Port Augusta were constructed using private funds and the hospitals are still operated by the government. I was very pleased with those assurances.

The other two projects in the budget about which my constituents are extremely pleased—and I thank the Minister for Education very much—are, firstly, the additions to the Angaston Primary School which involves a major upgrade at a total cost of \$1.94 million and which will commence in February 2002. Angaston has been missing out and this school was really in need of a major upgrade. I am very pleased that their patience has paid off, because now we have this amount of money for the upgrading and redevelopment of the school, including the existing pre-school facility and the provision of new teaching and support teaching facilities.

Secondly, the Kapunda Primary School is to have a major heritage building upgrade. I was pleased the minister gave his assurance, even though it does not appear in the budget paper. It is a total cost of \$1.3 million and will commence in 2002-03. There is \$800 000 in 2002-03 and \$500 000 in the second year. This has been a hard one because the Kapunda Primary School has this magnificent heritage building. This has been looked at over several budgets but it was thought to be too hard, a lot of money on one building, but I am pleased that eventually someone has bitten the bullet and we will now see this beautiful old building upgraded. It is a disgrace as it is. It has very poor working conditions in that it is dark and dank and very unpleasant for the children.

For Gomersal Road, which is a favourite subject of mine, there is a total of \$5.9 million; \$3 million has been allocated this year and \$2.9 million next year. It is expected to be completed early next year. The notices went out yesterday, because the road officially started this week. I am very pleased that we are under way after such a long campaign. In relation to the Barossa water supply, there is a system upgrade of \$6.7 million—\$6.3 million having been allocated this year and completion by 2002—to transport water licences to Barossa Infrastructure Limited from the Murray River to the Barossa Valley to augment the existing supplies. This is the government's part of a \$34 million project, the rest of which is being funded by the growers and irrigators themselves. It is a magnificent project and it will be the lifeblood of the Barossa Valley. I thank Minister Armitage and the

Premier very much indeed for making this project come about. It is probably the success story in the Barossa of the last 25 years. And we will have it operating by the end of the year. I am very pleased about that.

Inclusion of the Brenton Langbein Theatre, which we can call the Barossa Convention Centre, on the Country Arts South Australia circuit will cost an extra \$50 000 a year, and this will give us seven or eight performances a year, which will usually be live. This is very good news indeed because, as you know, Mr Acting Speaker, being the person who made the Barossa Convention Centre a reality when you were the minister, your gift actually created it. The challenge for the community now is to make sure that it pays its way. These seven or eight extra activities a year at the centre through the Country Arts circuit will not only provide enjoyment for the local people but will assist in paying for the running costs of this magnificent theatre. I thank you again, Mr Acting Speaker, as the member for Bragg and minister at the time: that building should have your name on it.

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I certainly will. I will put this on the record and make sure that Minister Brown gets a mention on the building somewhere because he started it all.

Ms Stevens interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am very pleased with the announcements that have been made relating to country roads funding—right across the state and with no politics involved and no whiteboards. These roads have been upgraded according to the needs and the demands. I have had a very good go even though I did not feature all that well in this budget, but I received plenty from the previous budget: Gomersal Road was provided for in last year's budget. Country roads funding is certainly a credit and any fair minded person driving around the state would know that many of our roads are being upgraded. That is something that did not happen under the previous government.

There is also assistance for country bus operators and passengers, particularly pensioners and unemployed people. I am very pleased about that, because I have always had difficulty with bus services in my electorate.

Mr Clarke: When was the last time you caught a bus?

Mr VENNING: Last week to be exact, in Mannum.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I did. I will give you the details. We have seen passenger services come under some scrutiny and threat because of rising costs. We saw the Mannum to Adelaide service cancelled temporarily but, thanks to the minister, we have seen it reinstated. These initiatives will make it easier not only for our users—that is, pensioners and unemployed people—but also for the operators.

I note that the Tanunda Art Gallery received a mention. The guidelines are still being negotiated but there are some positive signs in that regard. We are still working on it.

To be fair-minded and to be constructive, I believe that my people in the electorate of Schubert have fared well in this budget. Like everybody else, they have had a pretty difficult time during the last five years. We are now seeing some rewards. I believe that the budget is good, financially responsible and, above all, fair.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): It is a pleasure to follow the member for Schubert. Perhaps he might—

Mr Venning interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: Good; I am pleased he is going to listen, because I will spend my time tonight comparing some of the

allocations under the budget, particularly in relation to health services, with what the minister asked for, and then we will see how well we did. I must say that, for all the big talking and the press releases of recent days and in question time today, it is important to note how the budget rates with the bid from the Department for Human Services and the minister. It is particularly important in the context of this area, because health services are the number one concern of voters by a country mile and were to be, supposedly, a major beneficiary of the privatisation of ETSA.

I will get straight into it. I refer to the green book and the bids by the Minister for Human Services. The first heading is: to improve the quality of health care for South Australians and reduce unacceptable delays in medical treatment. It is pleasing to note that the minister admits that these delays are unacceptable, as we know they are. In fact, the opposition highlighted this fact just last week when we talked about the current waiting lists for people wanting elective surgery in South Australian hospitals. There are now over 8 000 people waiting. This is a 40 per cent increase since 1997 when, according to the government, there were going to be increased opportunities for elective surgery.

In the minister's budget bid it is stated that this was a high priority last year and that the situation has deteriorated markedly over the past year. Of course it has. The minister's bid was \$50 million for this year, plus \$8 million for a winter bed strategy, plus \$35 million, plus—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: Yes, minister, you got \$15 million. The minister actually asked for \$58 million plus \$35 million, which is nearly \$100 million, and he got \$15 million. Is that a good minister or is this a government where health is not a priority? What the minister did get was \$15 million to maintain—not increase—the 69 beds that he was forced to put on in November when things were running out of control in our metropolitan hospitals. So, those beds will not be cut. That is essentially the result of the \$15 million about which the minister trumpeted earlier this week: 'We are not going to cut the 69 beds that we put in in November.'

What else do we see when we look quickly at the government papers? We see that outpatient services are to be cut, so that this year 111 000 outpatient services will be cut from metropolitan hospitals, and in country hospitals there will be 7 000 fewer outpatient services. I say to the member for Schubert, who is so keen to have his new hospital, people will unfortunately not be able to get outpatient appointments because they will be cut by 7 000 this year in country areas.

That is an interesting strategy by a government that is concerned about waiting lists, because if you cut outpatient appointments people cannot even get to see a specialist and therefore they cannot even get on a waiting list. What a tricky way of controlling waiting lists: you set up another waiting list even to get an outpatient appointment. That is the game this year.

The minister was pleased to proudly announce how he would put some funding into patient assisted transport, which is an important issue in country areas. I point out to the member for Schubert that this will probably be the case in his electorate. It is certainly the case in other country areas. It would be great to have extra patient assisted transport, but it is such a pity that the outpatient appointments will not be there for the people to attend.

I want to speak briefly about the debt issue, because that is something on which we tried to get information from the minister today. The minister asked for \$35 million in his

budget bid to write off the debt of our hospitals that has been accumulating over recent years. We have been assured on a number of occasions by the minister that this debt will be tackled in some way and not just allowed to continue. For instance, in estimates last year the minister said:

The hospitals have created a debt and are responsible for that debt. We are still working with them on how they handle that debt. I point out that, if we suddenly forgive all the debt, they will create a debt every year.

As if the hospitals run around trying to create a debt—come on! On 3 April this year the minister said:

The department has got to the point where it wants to resolve that issue—

that is the debt—

and certainly there are discussions going on with Treasury at present as part of the bilaterals for the budget next year.

Today, of course, after knowing that nothing happened in relation to the debt, the minister said:

The department has picked up the debt and we have covered it in cash terms for the last four years.

So, nothing has been done by this government to address this matter. Today, I revealed that at least two of our metropolitan hospitals have run out of money for this year. They do not have enough money to get to the end of June without cutting services. They are going to incur another \$5 million debt, yet no effort has been made—despite all the assurances of the current minister—by this government to deal properly with this matter. What will happen, of course, is that we will win government and we will have to pick up the pieces and sort out the \$35 million plus mess, whatever it gets to, by the time of the next election. Of course, it will continue as it has because, as the minister keeps telling us, in spite of the fact that he does not get the amount of money that is required for our hospitals, the demand by the community for health services continues to grow.

Let us look at dental treatment. The minister has been lauding his great advances in reducing the waiting list from about 100 000 to about 82 000 because, at last, after four or five years of inaction and disregard—and we can now see the minister leaving; he really cannot stand the heat when his poor budget results are put in front of him. He has to slink out of this chamber with his case. He is slinking out now, unable to face the music and sit and take it like we have to every day in question time when he continually pulls different figures out of the hat which just do not add up. Anyway, back to dental. The minister spent a lot of time this week saying how great he has been in reducing dental waiting lists to 82 000. Terrific! Well done, minister. It is good to see that some small gains were made over the last year but 82 000 people are still waiting. Let us return to what the minister wanted to do with dental. He asked in his budget bid for \$2 million each year for four years to continue the scheme he started this year.

The minister also asked for \$3 million for three years to enable minimum standards of access to be achieved within three years. In other words, the extra \$3 million for three years was really going to cut those waiting lists fast to make up for the years when, of course, he did nothing. What did he get? He got \$2 million for one year only—he asked for \$17 million. So much for the priority the government gives to dental care.

Let us look at mental health because that was another issue the minister talked about today. The minister's bid was \$5 million in 2001-02—\$5 million per annum for the next

three years. Also, in relation to a new integrated mental health rehabilitation model for Glenside, \$.5 million this year and also for 2002-03. Additional suicide counselling, \$.2 million per annum for three years. The total of all of that is \$16.6 million over three years. The minister got \$2 million and he expects us to be grateful for that. He expects us to say, 'What a great job you have done.' Well, it is a long way down from the original bid. Members opposite obviously have not seen the minister's bids. We have a copy of the bids and we have read the comments and know how serious the comments are in relation to health matters in this state. When one sees what actually eventuates, one can see how shallow the government's commitment is.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: It is a hell of a lot better than it was in 1993.

Ms STEVENS: What an absolutely ridiculous and ignorant statement by the member for Bright. The minister is great on announcements in relation to capital works, and we have the same things again. We have seen it over the last five years or so with the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwen Health Service, where small amounts of money have been funded each year. I will not go into more detail because we have talked about it in detail in terms of Public Works reports on those capital works programs. It is one thing to make announcements; it is quite another to deliver the project. The minister is great on announcements but very poor on delivery.

For example, in relation to two health projects, funding of \$4.9 million for the Northern Community Health Centre at Elizabeth was announced in the 1996-97 budget. That is five years ago, and it is not yet even on the drawing board. There was also funding of \$7.5 million for the psychiatric unit at Flinders Medical Centre which was announced in 1998-99 and which has also fallen off completely and is nowhere to be seen.

Returning to the minister's green book bid, I want to focus on another very important area, namely, child protection. Under the heading 'Support for early intervention services and appropriate linkages', the minister asked for \$2 million per annum for four years for increased support to tier 1 and tier 2 cases of suspected child abuse. Members would know that tier 1 and tier 2 cases of child abuse are the urgent to extremely urgent cases. As far as I can see, the minister did not get any of that money.

The minister asked for \$4.5 million per annum for the next three years to improve services to guardianship of the minister's children (in other words, wards of the state), who are some of the most vulnerable young people in South Australia. As far as I can see at this point, that is nowhere to be seen. He also asked for funding for Parenting SA of \$500 000 per annum for four years. Guess what—this is the one he got. So, we will continue to get lots of really nice pamphlets on how to be good parents, but the really critical issues of child abuse, child protection and care of wards of the state go by the board. What a telling set of priorities on the part of the government!

In relation to programs for older people, the opposition welcomes the concessions for pensioners and self-funded retirees set out in the budget. It is not before time. When this government came to power in 1993, one of the promises it made was to review concessions. I think some of that work has been done since 1993, but it was never released until this budget. It outlines some changes to, and increases in, concessions to older people, and that is pleasing to see.

I am pleased to see that the government matched the HACC allocation from the commonwealth—it did not increase it but matched it—so in matching the commonwealth's \$4.3 million with the \$2.7 million from the state we were able to get an extra \$7 million in the home and community care program. I was pleased to see the funding for the moving ahead project—\$1 million of state money—and I am pleased to see that this is to be put towards transition accommodation for older people leaving hospitals. We know that it is a major issue. The early discharge of people who require care and who have not been able to get it and are sent home too early has been a significant problem, as has been the issue of the number of older people who should not be in hospital but should be more appropriately accommodated in other facilities.

Finally, I listened to the minister being interviewed on the ABC yesterday about the budget. Some of the statements he made were breathtaking. Matthew Abraham, one of the people who interviewed him, appeared surprised by some of the minister's comments. In particular the minister said on the ABC yesterday that there had been no cuts in health funding and that substantial additional money had been put into health. From memory Matthew Abraham, the commentator, said something like, 'Minister, you are surely not saying that there have been no cuts to health over the time this government has been in office?' The minister avoided answering that direct question.

It is quite incredible that this minister could actually be dishonest enough to try to hoodwink the community into thinking that there had been no cuts to health services in this state over recent years. It is amazing that he could be so dishonest to try to suggest that. The South Australian community is not stupid enough to believe it because they are the ones who actually experience the cuts, the long waits and the fact that they cannot get their surgery and that they have to wait in accident and emergency and cannot get outpatient appointments. They are the ones who experience it.

To recap in terms of health cuts, from 1994 to 2000 Liberal budgets focused on cutting expenditure on health and hospitals, with an exception prior to the 1997 election—funny that! The first four Liberal budgets when Dean Brown was the Premier cut a total of \$230 million in real terms from health. The then health minister said that health had to make savings of \$70 million a day. I well remember the estimates hearings where he trumpeted his success in doing that. It was in 1997, just before a state election, that John Olsen announced a \$45 million boost for health, which meant that hospitals could provide more services.

However, that did not last. The cuts started again in the 1998 budget when leaked departmental papers revealed that hospital growth funding had been cut by \$30 million, and that is the pattern that has been set and entrenched in South Australia.

Time expired.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): What an interesting evening it has been tonight. I came into the House this afternoon to listen to the Leader of the Opposition present his reply to the government's budget and I expected great things because the opposition has been very up front in saying that it cannot wait to get to an election. I was expecting the Leader of the Opposition to put down in front of the people of South Australia and the parliament some alternatives and some of the things he would have done, some of the things he would do and some of the things the Labor Party see as being

important to the people of South Australia that are not already being done by this government.

Ms Rankine: And he did!

Mr WILLIAMS: 'And he did,' the member interjects. I made some notes of his speech, and I looked through them a few minutes ago and I see that he said very little. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition said so little tonight that his number two man took exception to the fact that somebody might wish to quote him verbatim. A few members, including the member for Peake, took exception that somebody might want to quote the Leader of the Opposition verbatim. They were so disappointed with his speech that they did not want anybody to be able to quote him. That says a lot about the leader's contribution here tonight. In fact, I pity the poor old Leader of the Opposition. It must be getting close to an election; the member for Hart is in election mode. He is in leadership mode. He has decided to scuttle the leader's budget reply this evening by bringing in a red herring and making sure the leader does not get on to the front pages of the press tomorrow.

Allow me to address some of the substance of the budget and some of the lack of substance in the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition. The leader spent an inordinate amount of time talking about electricity and electricity prices, as have a lot of members. Of course, this is a very serious issue for the state of South Australia.

Mr Clarke: What are you going to do about it?

Mr WILLIAMS: To answer the interjection from the member for Ross Smith, one thing I would not be doing is throwing \$20 million of taxpayers' money towards Riverlink. The reason Riverlink is not happening is not for want of capital: it is not happening for a whole range of other reasons. It was very interesting that the Leader of the Opposition has shifted his ground a long way with regard to Riverlink, electricity and the interconnect. The leader said tonight that the Labor opposition would be trying to get an interstate interconnect, regulated or unregulated. That is what the leader said this afternoon. It might be news to the leader, but my understanding is that MurrayLink, which is due to deliver some 220 megawatts of power into South Australia via an unregulated asset, is already under way. It is being built by private capital and is already under way, yet the Leader of the Opposition wants to spend \$20 million of taxpayers' money and throw it at Riverlink, which does not need any money. All of a sudden he has shifted ground and said: 'We want an interconnect, regulated or unregulated.'

Maybe the Leader of the Opposition has seen the light on power but, regulated or unregulated, 220 megawatts of power coming into South Australia via Riverlink will not solve this state's problems. It is well under 10 per cent of our peak requirements. On days of peak requirement, that 10 per cent of power might make a small difference, but I do not believe it will have a serious impact on electricity prices whatsoever. We do need further capacity in South Australia, and the opposition is well aware that within the past 2½ years in-state generation capacity has increased in South Australia by some 30 per cent. Three times the amount of power that Riverlink would deliver is now being delivered by generators in South Australia. The opposition would have us believe that Riverlink would have a significant impact. In the Leader of the Opposition's lengthy address the only other thing worth commenting on is that he said that there is no pot of gold. How accurate; there is no pot of gold.

From the way opposition shadow ministers would have the community believe they would be throwing money at every

problem that they could possibly identify, you would think that there were truckloads of pots of gold. But the leader, in a rare moment of truthfulness this afternoon, acknowledged that there is no pot of gold. That is why this budget has been largely and roundly described as being a responsible budget. Some have said that it is boring. This is the sort of 'boring' that I like. I much prefer 'boring' to the sorts of budgets that came from previous Labor governments, the sorts of fiscal disasters that this state underwent during the 1980s and early 1990s. I will have 'boring' any day.

In the unfortunate event of a Labor government happening to come into office, the leader said that it would step in from where we left the budget position. I want to highlight to this House where this state would be without the policies that have been instituted by this government over the past seven years. Where would we be? The reduction of the state debt, as the Treasurer proclaimed would happen and has been able to confirm in recent times, has put at least \$100 million into the bottom line of the budget. There are some 16 000 to 17 000 fewer public servants employed in South Australia today: that is another \$500 million to \$600 million.

Our state credit rating has increased from AA to AA plus: at least another \$20 million plus. Those three items alone mean that the budget that we have today, the budget that we have in this upcoming fiscal year, is at least \$670 million better off than it would have been if a Labor government had been in power over the past seven years and got virtually everything right bar those three items. We are already almost three-quarters of a billion dollars better off than we would have been under Labor—and that is without all the nonsensical spending splurges that they would have had in the meantime and which they would have if they had the opportunity in the future.

That is part of the big picture. What we have been able to do in South Australia over recent years is rebuild the economy. We have rebuilt the fiscal position of the government and rebuilt the economy. We have rebuilt jobs. We now have more people employed in this state than we have ever had before. On top of that, to maintain our competitive position with the other states, particularly those on the eastern seaboard, we are reducing WorkCover payments over the last and next fiscal year by some \$108 million and we are reducing payroll tax—two of the most insidious taxes on employment.

We are going to ensure that the employment growth in this state improves, and improves relative to that in other states. The unemployment rate in South Australia at the moment is around 7.2 per cent, with the national unemployment rate about 6.9 per cent. It has been many a year, if ever, since the unemployment rate in South Australia was so close to the national average: certainly not when the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Employment—minister for unemployment would probably be a better description.

If it does nothing else, South Australia must maintain its competitive edge as far as its cost base with other states is concerned. That is why it is imperative that we maintain the budget in a sound fiscal position. The per capita tax take in South Australia is now some 25 per cent less than it is in New South Wales, and we know that wage rates in South Australia are significantly less than they are in New South Wales and Victoria. That is because South Australians are paying considerably less in taxation, because their costs of living here, their costs of housing, food and transport are significantly less.

It is important that the government of South Australia does everything it can to ensure that situation remains. That is why we will out-compete those other states when it comes to developing new industries, attracting new industries or having industries relocate from those states into South Australia. We have significant disadvantages in South Australia such as low population and distance from larger population centres. As members know, electricity prices intrinsically will remain higher in South Australia than in other states, so we have to maintain that cost advantage.

I will highlight what has happened in my electorate of MacKillop. We have an absolutely booming economy at the moment. One of our biggest problems is the lack of housing for workers who are attracted to the area because of the low unemployment rate. That is a serious problem for some of the communities in my electorate. It is a fantastic problem to have. It is one of the best problems that a government could ever face, but it is a problem. This government is in the situation where it can at last redress some of the inequities that occurred during the years of previous Labor governments. In my electorate I am delighted that more money has been spent on roads because, as the economy grows in country areas—and this is happening right across the state, as the member for Schubert said a few minutes ago—it is important that we keep upgrading the road infrastructure to meet the demand of the booming economy.

I am also delighted that within my electorate in the South-East—and generally—it has been identified that there is an unmet need for aged care places. The commonwealth government has ensured that the bed licences will be made available, and I am delighted that this government has been able to make capital funding available to ensure that the bricks and mortar are put into place so that the bed licences are utilised. I expect that the economy will continue to boom in the South-East and that it will continue to put pressure on infrastructure. I am absolutely certain that the government will be meeting those infrastructure pressures. The budget, as I have said, is not only responsible but also very sound. It puts South Australia into a very sound position to move on in this century. I am delighted to support the budget and I am sure that, even though it has not been framed as an election budget, come election time it will stand this government in very good stead.

Ms RANKINE (Wright): Once again, this government has shown quite clearly that it has no understanding of the wants, the needs and the aspirations of the people it was elected to govern. Once again, this government has totally missed the mark. There is little doubt that the government is in crisis. Just as we saw the federal government attempt with its budget, this government is trying to claw its way back into the public's favour with its cash handouts. Let me say that it has well and truly missed the mark. It has shown, once again, how little it knows about what is important to our community.

You would think by now that the Premier, the Treasurer and members of this government would have realised that what is important to the people of this state are the very fundamental things that were once—that is, before we suffered the Howard government federally and this Liberal state government in South Australia—taken for granted, such as the security of being able to access quality health care when needed; to be assured that our young people will have access to the best possible education; that we, all of us, young and old, are safe in our homes; and that there is job security and hope for a decent future.

What the people of this state want and have not had in this government is fairness, equity and justice. The people of this state do not want handouts, but they want to know and to be assured that when they need a hand, when the most vulnerable in our society need a hand, it will be there. They strongly reject this government's survival of the fittest mentality. They reject this government's philosophy of every person for themselves—except of course if you are a rich mate wanting to get richer.

This government has consistently shown that it has its priorities wrong but, sadly, it just does not get it. We have heard from the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Elizabeth about how our health services and hospitals have suffered under this government. We have heard about the massive waiting lists; about no extra hospital beds. What we got instead was trickery in the budget: the re-announcing of beds already provided. The very real effect of this, of course, is that our people suffer, our elderly suffer and our children suffer. There is nothing more distressing than hearing the pleas of elderly residents who have waited 18 months for a hip replacement and who suffered constant pain, only to be told that the wait will continue, or to be told by elderly residents that they have a two year wait for dental treatment—treatment that they should be able to get now. But this clearly is not a priority of this government, and our community knows it.

As welcome as the increased concessions on council rates is for older South Australians, the government needs to know that they are not so easily bought. The sum of \$40 a year for those currently on pensioner concessions is not a replacement for proper and adequate health care. They cannot be bought with a few pieces of silver. They know now where the government's priorities lie, and it is not their priorities.

The member for Hanson addressed the effects of this government's policies on our public housing. South Australia's public housing was once the envy of every state in Australia. Under this Liberal government, public housing has been decimated. While they try to put a positive spin on it, every year we see public housing stocks depleted, along with the withdrawal of support for those in need of private housing. In the 1999-2000 budget papers, the government indicated current stocks of public housing at 53 300, with an estimated target for 2000-01 of 52 350. That is 950 fewer houses and aged units. However, the budget papers this year indicate an estimate of 51 170 for the 2000-01 year. That is 2 130 fewer than indicated in the budget, with the target for 2001-02 being 49 610. That is 3 960 fewer Housing Trust public housing units than in 1999-2000. It is no wonder that public housing is in crisis and that the trust has been forced into a situation where it prioritises priority cases; that is, the only people who are housed now are people in absolute crisis situations. Housing is a fundamental requirement for any decent society, yet this government is doing its best by stealth to shift from a viable, decent public housing system to a welfare based system that does not, and cannot, cope.

As we have also heard in previous speeches, this budget is full of ruses. For example, in the section dealing with community housing, the government has recognised an increase in housing costs over the next 12 months as a result of the introduction of the GST and the increased demand following the introduction of the \$14 000 first home owner's grant. It is estimated that the cost of community houses will increase by \$3 000—not an unreasonable assessment. Yet in relation to new trust units, they estimate a drop in cost of some \$7 740. How can this be, if the market in South

Australia is on the increase? There are a number of questions in that calculation that really do need to be answered.

There are a number of other issues in relation to housing which can, and will, be raised at a later date, but let me now address the issue of education. Nothing else has quite the same impact on the future of a community, on a state, on a nation, than the quality of the education provided to its young people. Education must be a priority of any responsible government, but it is clearly not a priority of this government. There are no extra funds for education. Not only are there no extra funds, but there is not even the same amount in real terms. In the budget of all budgets, when we have all been waiting for this government to bring home the bacon, it effectively cut the education budget in real terms. While federally we see a Liberal government massively increasing support to elite private schools, here in South Australia this Liberal government is effectively reducing the education opportunities for our young people in public schools. It is a scandal which will impact on our society in the years to come. Sadly, it will also result in a major impact on the life opportunities of thousands of young people.

This government has spent an enormous amount of time and resources shifting the responsibility for education. It wants pseudo private schools. It wants responsibility for nothing. For many government members, their wish will come true at the next election, let me say. They are cutting, in real terms, government support for public education and shifting the responsibility for the outcomes onto the community.

The government claims that the retention rates are wrong and that, rather than there being a massive drop in the number of young people—particularly boys—completing year 12, 92 per cent of 15 to 19 year olds are either in school, vocational education, tertiary education or employment. They do not tell us what constitutes employment. How many hours a week are these young people working? What sorts of jobs have these 15 to 19 year olds accessed? We all know the answers to these questions. These young people are in jobs without a future—jobs that will not be there for them as they get older. All the evidence shows, quite clearly, that those who get the best jobs have had the best education.

If this government was serious about the education and future of our young, it would honour its commitment to raising the leaving age. But, as with most things, we hear the words from the government but we do not see them matched with action. The excuse put forward last week was that you do not need to go to school to be a success. I think I even heard a member opposite refer to the success of the member for Elder, despite leaving high school early and returning as an adult to gain tertiary qualifications. Let me say (and I am sure that the member for Elder would agree with me) that that is the hard road. It is the road that the member for Elder took, and so did I, at a time when it was possible. But let us be realistic: it is much harder and much further out of reach now, after the implementation of federal Liberal policies, to access tertiary education as an adult, particularly if you have other responsibilities. A lack of education and the restriction of access to education severely limits life opportunities. Because some have been able to overcome this disadvantage is no excuse.

We all know that under this government and its much-touted Focus 21 policing strategy, crime has escalated. The government promised to substantially increase police numbers in the lead-up to the 1997 election but, as with the majority of its promises, it did the opposite. It cut police

numbers, closed police stations, withdrew police vehicles and tried at the same time to convince the community that it had a vision for the future—that it was taking policing in South Australia into the 21st century. Actually, crime rates increased substantially across the board to such an extent that the government has been embarrassed into announcing additional police numbers this year. As with many of their born again policies, it is too little too late. The rot has set in.

In my electorate, thousands of people have pleaded with this government to honour its promise to provide a new police patrol base which it promised when it closed down the Para Hills division and moved the Tea Tree Gully patrols into the Para Hills station. We all know what has happened—nothing. There have been nothing but excuses and delaying tactics in the hope that people will forget. Once again, this government underestimates the intelligence of the community.

I was pleased to see in the budget that this government intends to provide a new fire station at Golden Grove. Interestingly, the reasons for the relocation to Golden Grove are the same reasons I have been arguing for the police patrol base to be located in this area and the very same reasons why the ambulance service is being relocated from Modbury. But, again, there is no consistency, no real reason and no real detail. I am concerned that this promise will go the same way as so many of this government's promises—literally up in smoke.

Jobs and job security are, again, a fundamental of any decent society. We heard the Leader of the Opposition tonight talk about the millions of dollars that this government has thrown about in the so-called quest for jobs but, in reality, funds have been squandered and literally thousands of jobs have been lost.

Suddenly, too, industry is singing a different tune in relation to our power supply and the privatisation of ETSA. There is little doubt that the privatisation of ETSA will cost us not only in dollar terms but also in jobs. However, that was always going to be the case. What has this government delivered for small business—our long-suffering, much neglected small businesses? For the vast majority, absolutely nothing. The vast majority will not benefit from heralded payroll tax cuts and have again been left high and dry. Make no mistake, just like home owners and industry, they will feel the pinch when hit by the power price hikes.

I look forward to the estimate committee hearings when these issues can be explored in far greater detail. I look forward to examining a budget that was supposed to compensate for the pain suffered over the past eight years—cuts to our hospitals, schools and police, and the loss of thousands of jobs. The South Australian community now knows the government was never going to deliver on its promises. The community now knows that this is a government that cannot be trusted. It has been an economic vandal. It has presided over the destruction or sale of our state's most valuable assets.

The quality of this budget can be assessed by the fact that so few members on the government side have been prepared to speak to it, to put their names to it. Those who have, have stood up and listed the highlights going into their electorates; in other words, they are pork-barrelling to try to save their political skins. If this Treasurer can be described as Captain Sensible, surely the crew he is in charge of can be much more aptly described as McHale's Navy.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): Many of my colleagues have spoken already of the horror of members on this side of the

House at what we find in this budget and our disappointment for the people of South Australia. Despite the promises that this budget would deliver on health, education and jobs and \$2 million a day in relief, it just has not materialised. To be putting forward in an election year a budget that presents to education a cut in real terms is extraordinary and shows bad planning and bad management on behalf of this government. Given all the pain we have gone through over the past seven years, we were promised that there would be a significant pay-off in this budget; it has not materialised.

With the sale of all those assets—the privatisation of ETSA and the like—we were promised that we would have the cheapest electricity in the nation. We were also told that, with the outsourcing of water, we would have cheaper water prices, and we have seen nothing of the sort. We have an electricity crisis because, as from 1 July, business faces a massive increase in the cost of electricity, and that will be passed on through the community generally.

Even though there has been \$7.5 billion worth of asset privatisation, we have seen the debt reduced by only around \$5 billion. We see \$1 billion go towards paying for redundancy packages for public servants. The loss of those public servants has brought about a massive decrease to employment as well as a massive decrease in the level of service being experienced by people in the South Australian community. The government is trying in vain to purport the budget as being in surplus, but nobody is believing that—least of all the people who it thought it could hoodwink with this budget, the people of South Australia.

This government is a high taxing and high spending government, but the spending is not in the right areas. We are not seeing it go where it is needed. We are seeing it in government waste and in its failure to target industry assistance. It is spending on the wrong priorities; it is spending on icons that are monuments to this government but not on the things that matter to real people in the community, the people who are suffering as a result of the cuts in the budget.

I want to concentrate tonight on the basics of the education budget. The budget estimates are coming up and we will look at the education budget in further detail, but I want to set the scene a little. Members might remember in the last state election campaign in 1997 promises of additional spending on education and then, straight after the campaign, there was the biggest cut in a long time to education in this state, a three-year budget cut.

In 1998, I got hold of a copy of the government's budget strategy, which was later confirmed, much to the embarrassment of the government, and I remind people of what the government set about putting in place with the three-year budget strategy that was documented at that time. Obviously it was a strategy and there have been a few changes around the edges, but I just remind members of what the government had in mind for the people of South Australia straight after an election campaign in which it promised extra spending.

The total budget task for those three years came to the following figures: \$48.6 million in 1998-99; \$62.8 million in 1999-2000; and \$69.6 million in 2000-01. The minister tried to say it did not really mean cuts, that the figures were much smaller than that, but I was able to produce the government's savings strategy, which listed a whole lot of areas that it planned to cut. Remember the shorter school year, closing every school in the state for a week to save \$3 million; a cut of \$1 million in adult re-entry; the freeze in the grants to public schools—\$6.4 million in 1998-99, \$13 million in

1999-2000 and \$19.5 million in 2000-01; the rationalisation (they mean 'cutting') of school bus services in country regions, which was keenly felt in the regions; acquitting portion of the state recurrent contribution under the national child-care strategy—very shifty—\$500 000; and a massive cut to TAFE institutes.

TAFE SA took a \$5.9 million cut in 1998-99, \$10.4 million the following year and \$11.9 million in 2000-01. The institutes themselves suffered a massive cut of over \$9.5 million, which has impacted massively on their capacity to provide the training that we need to skill our work force and our community. The government can fiddle with the figures as much as it wants, but it is pretty much there in black and white in the budget papers.

In question time today, the minister said that he was to be congratulated because he is spending a quarter of the budget on education. We used to spend more than that. Spending on education as a proportion of the available funds is decreasing, and let me give members an idea of that. In the 1997-98 budget, \$1 909 million was budgeted out of a total outlay of \$6 349 million. In other words, 30 per cent of the pie was to be allocated to education.

Then we changed to accrual accounting, and progressively over the years the government came up with various ways to hide (or attempt to hide) the impact of the cuts, but they were there. In 1998-99, the estimated result for education spending was \$1 803.7 million out of a total outlay of \$6 416.4 million (roughly 28 per cent of the budget)—a decrease. In the following year, 1999-2000, there was a difference from \$1 831.3 million out of a total outlay of \$6 865.2 million, or only 27 per cent. So there was a decrease. Of course, we saw the massive cuts kick in for the three year period between 1998 and 2000. That was not delivered. The estimated result for 1999-2000 was \$1 685 million out of a total outlay of \$7 182 million, or roughly 23 per cent.

Then we see in this year's budget an allocation of \$1 803 million, which is exactly what the budget papers show was spent last year. Of course, that has come down to just under 24 per cent of the budget. The minister stands up in parliament and asks, 'Are we not good? It is a quarter of the budget.' We used to put in a lot more money than that. The capital works budget shows a similarly distressing picture. For example, in 1999-2000, \$80 million was budgeted and the estimated result according to the budget papers was \$80 million. On the surface, it would appear that that money was all spent on what was planned, but that is not what happened. The majority of the new works in the schools sector announced in that budget were not undertaken. The money was spent but it was not spent on capital works, as the government was saying it was. The amount was increased in the 2000-01 budget to \$84 million, but in these budget papers we find that the estimated result for 2000-01 is only \$69 million. Again, there is an underspending on the budget allocation. This year it is planning a \$98 million capital works budget but \$30 million of that relates to new works being re-announced: \$30 million worth of capital works announced last year was not even started.

How can you believe the budget figures of this government when clearly it uses trickery to hide what it is really doing? The press announcements are nice, but the reality is that, according to its own budget figures, the government is not spending the funds that it should be spending on education. In the House today I asked the minister about the reduction, by three million, of student training hours in the post secondary vocational educational and training sector, as

indicated by the budget papers. Whereas the estimated outcome was 23 million hours this year, it is planning to provide only 20 million hours next year. The minister's reply to that was to issue a very carefully worded response saying, 'No student who is enrolled in a course will receive fewer hours instruction as a result of the budget changes.'

What the minister did not say was that many fewer students will be trained. What he is really saying is that students who are currently enrolled will be okay, but what about the new places that should be offered? Of course, they cannot be. They are cutting 3 million hours out of the 23 million hours that they provided this year; and, of course, there is a \$28 million cut to that line in the budget to accompany that, which is very significant indeed. It is particularly disappointing, because the government knows that there is a need. In fact, the green book with the minister's budget bids has an item which says that expanded vocational education and training is needed. In the column containing his budget bids the minister says:

As demand increases and/or changes, new funding is required for VET.

That is the point of view that he put to executive government. Instead, he received a cut of 3 million student training hours. That is very significant and it will impact on our ability to provide that skills training for our work force and our students.

There was no new money in the budget: \$1 803 million was budgeted for education: last year \$1 803 million was spent. As I said last night on TV, there has been increased pressure through wage rises for teachers that have been agreed to but have not been accounted for in those figures that I have just mentioned. The government's excuse is that there will be 3 100 fewer students, intimating that this lesser number of students is solely the result of an ageing population. However, it is clear, when one looks at what is happening in our schools, that students are progressively dropping out of our public school system. The figures on increased enrolments in the non-government schools sector over past years have shown that and, when one starts with a certain number of 14, 15 or 16 year olds in one year and several of them have disappeared the next year, this cannot be explained away as being due to an ageing population, which the government is trying to do.

It is very quick to grab the headlines about raising the school leaving age: in March 1999, on the front page of the *Advertiser*, John Olsen said that the government would be looking at raising the age to 17 at that time. Under the heading 'New age for our schools: students face extra two years', John Olsen was quoted in the article as saying that students were four times more likely to get a job if they completed year 12 than if they left earlier. But, again, there was no commitment to increasing teacher numbers or funding the proposal, only an acknowledgment that there was strong pressure from the community to move in that direction.

Again, in October last year the government grabbed the *Sunday Mail* headline with, 'School leaving age raised from 15 to 16', with the Premier claiming that '2 250 South Australian students aged 15 dropped out of school last year' and confirming that state cabinet had approved the move. Yet, the government voted against Labor's bill to raise the school leaving age back in 1997, and they indicated last week that they would be voting against our move again today. So, there is no commitment at all to that measure. It is government by press release. It is easy to give statements to

the newspapers and grab the headlines on the premise that it will give the impression that there is activity taking place when actually nothing is being followed through.

The government has been exposed for the fraudulent operator that it really is. This is all too tricky: the attempts to hide what is really going on in the budget figures, the evasive non-answers to questions. In the end, this is far too mean, for all the pain and for all the promises that the government has made about bringing home the bacon and investing in education. It just has not been delivered. This is a very depressing budget for education, because the future of our children depends on what happens today in our schools. As far as the government is concerned, there is no extra money for education and, after all the pain that it has put us through, that is a real disappointment.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the House to sit beyond midnight.

Motion carried.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): As a number of my colleagues have said, this budget is very deceptive, but during the Estimates Committees the real figures will, hopefully, be revealed. This budget offers no relief in terms of the way forward for employment, health, education or housing. There will be no relief for hospitals and dental waiting lists and no reduction in class sizes. In total, it delivers little or no relief for many of the thousands of families throughout South Australia who have been struggling to make ends meet during the life of this state Liberal government.

The Olsen government has a history of pulling the wool over the eyes of the general public. It says one thing and does another. The budget statement is no different. Careful perusal of this budget shows how deceptive the government is. How can the Treasurer or Premier claim to have handed down a balanced budget? It is simply nonsense and a cruel hoax on South Australians who have been driven to despair by the incompetence of this government.

Throughout the term of this Liberal government we have seen one budget blow-out after another. This includes the Motorola deal; the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium fiasco, which runs into millions of dollars and which is now under investigation by the Auditor-General; and bungles with the emergency service tax, and the list goes on. The state government has been dishonest and deceptive with the people of South Australia since and prior to the last state election.

The Premier told the big lie that he would not sell our public electricity industry assets. Three months after the 1997 state election, the announcement of the intention to sell our electricity industry was made. Was any mention made of the electricity industry and the problems that we are now experiencing in the budget? None at all. So, why did the Premier make this decision? Nothing had changed with our power industry from the time he said he would not sell ETSA until the time he said that he would sell ETSA, which was just some three months or so after that state election. Simply, the Premier knew that he could not win the 1997 state election with a platform of selling our electricity assets because the figures would not stack up. He knew that the people of this state would not support the sale so he deceived industry and domestic consumers. Consumers of electricity are now paying—or in the case of domestic consumers about to pay—an awful price for this deception.

John Olsen trumpeted that, with the sale of our electricity assets, South Australians would be the beneficiaries of \$2 million a day, which would be channelled into important areas of social spending such as health, education, police, the environment and other areas. Well, that was a farce. We still have a substantial state debt and there is no \$2 million today to invest in the areas of education, health and so on.

The state government ignored or failed to heed the advice of professional economists within the state who were warning that, for South Australia to get a net fiscal gain from the privatisation of our electricity assets, the overall sale price would have to be around \$10 billion. This warning included that the state needed to benefit by \$6 billion, and preferably \$7 billion, if the state's economy was to have a net benefit. The actual sale price, of course, was much lower than that. The report by economists Spoehr and Quiggin stated:

The sale price of \$7 billion would be required to compensate taxpayers for the loss of income from ETSA. Even under a projection incorporating price reductions and loss of market share a break-even price of \$6 billion is required. Under a projection in which revenue growth is maintained in line with state gross product, privatisation would entail losses of more than \$1 billion in the first 10 years.

The government has embarked on a fire sale of public assets as a strategy to develop the state's economy. We have seen John Olsen sell off assets way below their real value. More importantly, the state has now lost the income streams from those assets, which were essential for spending on social wage, such as health and welfare, education, jobs and vocational training to name but a few.

Business and small business have been a big loser in the privatisation of our electricity assets. No longer can they rely upon a reliable and cost-effective supply of state power. As from 1 July (and we already know the difficulties that businesses are having in gaining contracts), their increases will be something between 30 per cent and perhaps up to 90 per cent, depending on the contract that they negotiate. As I said, was the electricity crisis mentioned in the budget? Not a single word was mentioned by either the Premier or the Treasurer.

The convention industry sector, which attracts some \$540 million to the state and which is a major employer, will also have its competitive position eroded by the increase in our power prices. This was confirmed by Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority Chief Executive Martin Winter in the *Advertiser* on 26 April this year. He said:

This will impact on the number we attract to this state. The price increases will be passed on to the user. It is very unfortunate that it has not been managed better by the government. What you need is not subsidies in terms of tax relief but long-term solutions which will offset economic damage.

In another example, the Hyatt Hotel, which supplies power to the Convention Centre, is reported to be in:

... damage control, expecting a 40 per cent increase in their already \$1.5 million power bill.

I have also heard that major retailers are legally prevented from passing on the electricity increases to their tenants in shopping centres. It is quite a worry that management for these retail shopping centres have informed some of their tenants that management cannot guarantee that they will be able to provide power to tenants after 1 July this year. If that is correct, it is a shocking indictment on the government's bungling and an example of how not to assist industry to be cost competitive.

The government's own electricity independent regulator, Mr Owens, has been critical of the state government policy

drift. Mr Owens was reported on 24 May this year as saying that the Olsen government's electricity task force was:

... 'struggling' and on a 'steep learning curve' with no 'insights that are going to have any impact on the market price in the short to medium term'.

Recent announcements from the government that new electricity generating plant and equipment is to be built has also come under fire from Mr Owens. He has said that announcements of extra generators and extra interconnection planned for South Australia does not mean that any of them will happen. At the time of the announcement, Mr Owens said that he received only one licence application despite all the announcements and stories about new generators and interconnectors. He said that none of the new announcements had approached him for a licence application.

It is an extraordinary state of affairs when the public, in effect, is told by the government's own electricity independent regulator that announcements by industry and the government over development projects might be nothing more than a mirage. This is the sign of a very desperate government that has lost the plot and the confidence of statutory industry authorities. Given the government's propensity for repeating previously announced budget proposals on each occasion and with as much fervour as if they were new announcements, I can understand the electricity regulator's scepticism and concern.

The difference between the current Olsen Liberal government and the Playford Liberals of the 1940s and the Labor Dunstan government era is that Playford and Dunstan strategically sought to consolidate a state budget surplus by offering reliable and cheap public resources and infrastructure such as power to attract industry and jobs. Keeping business infrastructure costs such as electricity down for business meant that it allowed the government more flexibility to implement a fairer tax system to industry. This government has done exactly the reverse of the Playford and Dunstan governments.

A Rann Labor government will recognise—and does recognise—the importance of the government being a player in the distribution of electricity. When Labor wins the next state election—and I am sure that it will—if there is no adequate system to supply competitive priced electricity, as the leader has said, Labor will ensure that a major interconnection with New South Wales is built—regulated or unregulated—and will seek private industry investment and a funding link with New South Wales, and it will improve major upgrades of interconnectors with Victoria. This is about active policy intervention and real leadership.

This state's Liberals have no resources and no assets left to trade because they have just about sold it all. They are not showing any signs of leadership to industry or our community. We all recall the photograph of the Treasurer in the *Advertiser* wearing his hat; well these Liberals are Captain Rudderless under John Olsen's premiership. They lurch from one crisis to another. Consequently, the private sector demands tax relief from the government to offset extra costs because the government's privatisation agenda has caused a great deal of additional expense to business and to our community. Industry will not be attracted to an illiterate and educationally unskilled population. That is where we are heading with this government's direction. Jobs and job development must be the lifeblood of any budget, yet I can see little hope in either of the state or federal government's budgets to alleviate unemployment in South Australia.

The May job figures show that there has been an increase in the rate of unemployment from 6.9 per cent to 7.5 per cent, the highest since June last year, and although I welcome, as does everyone else, new jobs that have been created, we also know that many jobs have been lost throughout the last year. In fact the government's own data shows that there have been eight consecutive months of jobs losses. I have looked in the budget papers for an announcement on increased apprenticeships and traineeships, but I see little that will alter the current trend of unemployment in South Australia over the next 12 months.

In the *Advertiser* in May of this year I read a letter to the editor from one of my constituents who lives in Windsor Gardens and whose son was seeking job training through Centrelink. As both parents are working, the lad unfortunately could not get any assistance. Compounding the problem was that he could not get access to training programs either because he had to have been unemployed for six months or more. I know that Centrelink is a federal government department, but it is symptomatic of the problems and obstacles many families come across. After losing a job it would seem much more sensible to have access to these programs as quickly as possible to avoid young people falling into the trap in which many long-term unemployed people find themselves, such as the loss of job search enthusiasm and the onset of demoralisation and hopelessness. When this happens there is little wonder that working parents feel that their teenagers are being punished because they, the parents, are fortunate to have a job.

While we were told that there was an increase in the health budget, I believe this is to be examined. Even if there is, it is highly unlikely that there will be any inroads into the appalling hospital waiting lists for elective surgery or for those people waiting for dental surgery. Elderly people such as those in my electorate—Walter from Hampstead Gardens, Ronald from Windsor Gardens and William from Holden Hill—contacted my office recently, inquiring about dental assistance. Previously they were told that they would have to wait up to two to three years to get any service. They did not know anything about the pensioner denture scheme and I am happy to say that Walter at least has been able to get some emergency treatment without having to pay full fees—fees which are beyond the means of most folk on the aged pension or other benefits.

Sadly, this budget does not provide much hope for people in the general community, particularly those on low incomes, and most people who are on low incomes are going backwards very quickly.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): In beginning my remarks tonight I recognise Kurna land, and Kurna people as the traditional owners and custodians of this land where parliament now sits and pay respect to the traditional and contemporary heritage of all the indigenous peoples of this state and nation.

The South Australian budget of 2001 should be an important beacon of the direction and values of this state. It should give hope and optimism to the citizens of my electorate of Florey and all people around the state, whether they be pensioners, self-funded retirees, workers, small business operators, families or young people. It should mark significant progress towards this parliament's goals for a better, more harmonious and prosperous state. It should do honour to all of us in this chamber and all the people we represent.

But it is with sadness more than anger that I rise to speak of the frustration I feel when I scrutinise this budget for the assistance and meaning it will give to the people of my community—the Florey electorate. Where are the bold initiatives? Where is the vision we can point to as being the direction for South Australia? Where is the creative and potent leadership that will restore our confidence and give us pride and a sense of cohesion? The issues for the South Australian community remain: employment, health, education and public safety. This budget is preoccupied with the short-term; with the government saying, 'We're better than you' to the opposition; with constant harking back to the past as if it absolves them of responsibility for the future; and with a narrow-minded approach to scrutinising the pennies and ignoring the long-term protection of the pounds. This is a budget from a government that has forgotten that we live in a society, not just an economy. It has, as the *Sunday Mail* broadcast statewide this week, missed the mark. It has no master plan for business and development and is undeniably disappointing on the health front.

My concern with the budget is for and on behalf of the citizens and taxpayers of Florey, and I must consider this budget from their perspective. People in Florey pay our taxes, GST and all the various state taxes and imposts. We have the right to expect tangible benefits that reflect our priorities and needs and a budget within which we can identify and point to specific items of relevance to the needs of our community, family and friends. This budget ignores the people of Florey. It has the rhetoric, the polly-speak, the magicians' graphs and pages of statistics but, as taxpayers, we know when we look around us whether or not it has any substance for us in our daily lives.

Let us look behind the rhetoric for what this budget does not do for Florey. We read of increased spending on police, but we know that the police remain desperately under-resourced and that recruitment barely keeps pace with the decline in police numbers since this government took office. Where is the new police station the people of our local service area require and deserve but apparently still have to wait for? There is not even a mention of a plan to budget towards this much needed community facility in my electorate, the second biggest regional metropolitan area. People have the right to expect policing to be about prevention, public safety and community well-being, a cohesive approach and targeted distribution of resources, not just about a residual model of police as the last port of call. We need a new police station in my area, and I will continue to campaign on this until it is a proper budget priority.

We also need to address the lack of affordable housing. As full employment rates continue to decline, income that can be allocated to rent decreases, leaving many families in dire circumstances, prey to the inflated rents of the private market. They are paying off someone else's mortgage, not their own. Housing Trust purchases and renovations will not go anywhere near meeting the demand. Whilst the First Home Owners Scheme will put some people in housing, this funding could have contributed to the building industry in other ways by providing much needed public housing to address the waiting lists. We once had the best public housing policies in the nation. We are now a state that cannot house all its people, with ever lengthening waiting lists reflecting the despair endured by those least able to absorb the rising costs of living. A state that cannot house its people has a government that has lost its way.

We read of that chilling admission of failure by this government and its federal counterparts in the budget speech itself, as follows:

South Australia continues to have persistently higher youth unemployment than the national average.

What does this budget do to help the young unemployed? Where are the bold and decisive interventions that will secure and advance the economic and social base of this state—its young people over the coming years? Where is the support for the young unemployed in Modbury? It is a litany of more of the same lacklustre, ‘trust the market’ approach from this out of touch bunch of failures on the government benches. Our TAFE facilities, especially the institute at Modbury, are second to none in the nation. Where do they figure in the budget as the pivot for training and support for younger and older people and, in particular, those of the northern suburbs? Where has our hospitality training pre-eminence gone from the Torrens Valley Institute, its link to a vibrant tourism strategy and the support for cultural tourism and arts and community service training? Preoccupation with saving \$40 million of consultancy largesse is trumpeted as a budget highlight, which is like claiming victory out of reducing the number of leeches feeding at the blood bank.

Trying to contain the worst excesses of the failure of this government to curtail the spending blow-outs which have followed its misguided and mismanaged privatisation and outsourcing frenzy after taking office in this state is not a policy initiative to be proud of: it is a budget in reverse. Again, it is about the past rather than creating the future. Where is strategy to provide pathways for young trainee intake programs to a permanent and highly skilled public sector? Where are the incentives to help young people gain entrepreneurial skills and work with community, local government and business? Where will young people in Florey draw their inspiration? From this mean spirited government which lacks vision and a sense of excitement and flair? I do not think so.

There is budget hype about infrastructure support, but again I look at this through the eyes of my constituents and I ask, ‘Where is the budget priority for the pressing urban design issues in Modbury?’ We have pedestrians—often elderly and with health issues—dodging traffic to get through the dangerous maze of the roundabout adjacent to Tea Tree Plaza and the Modbury Hospital and other local government offices that they must visit. We have urgent public transport needs with both environmental and social justice benefits which fail to be addressed in my community. Instead, watch the unseemly parade jumping on board the dream of the gravy train to Darwin, which many fear will not pay its way. It was a great idea, sure; but it was not even theirs. It was a bold vision of that icon, Whitlam, and those before him which was promised to us many years ago and which has been so badly bungled. Now this post federation dream of a vibrant nation has been dragged down by the pettiness we see perpetuated in the budget this year.

Health can no longer be treated with the contempt that has become commonplace in this state. We remain at crisis point, and the correlation between unemployment and poor health outcomes is proven and has been recognised by the commonwealth government, and remains ignored at our peril. The future impact of this alone has the capacity to blow health budgets off the Richter scale. We read daily in the press about waiting lists and lack of services, and I see examples of it almost daily in my electorate office, as do most of us.

The damage being done to the health and wellbeing of South Australians by the inept inaction of this government is a disgrace. Never in our wildest dreams would any of us have thought that we would see the health standards of this state’s hospital system dragged down to where we no longer have enough beds for those who need them; where waiting lists are chronic, and patient care is compromised. I note that Bronwyn Bishop, a federal minister whom I do not usually have reason to quote or agree with, spoke on Adelaide radio a matter of days ago condemning this government for its dishonesty over health funding. It is not just the people of Florey and the rest of the South Australian public but their own federal counterparts who do not even trust the government and its spin on health issues now.

In Florey we have the Modbury Hospital and the anxiety created when it was handed to Healthscope. Where are the reports about performance and standards? How do we know and measure what is happening within the Modbury Hospital? As taxpayers and concerned citizens we have the right to know what is happening there. We have the right to know if it is performing to expected levels and whether this government’s promises to my electorate, of continued high standards and no change to services as they were at the time of the handover, are now being honoured.

Where is the accountability? The stories I hear from residents are concerning, but there is a silence and an inability in this government to respond to community concern. Every person in Florey (and, indeed every South Australian) has the human right to adequate, timely and appropriate high quality health services. If we cannot get that right, all the chasing after interstate businesses, tax breaks for the rich, or events and photo opportunities are as shallow as the backwater we are left stagnating in by this government’s lack of passion and lack of nerve.

But that is not apparent in all areas. The Hindmarsh stadium, for instance, is a real boost to soccer fans around the state, and no-one would begrudge them that. But I advise the reality in Florey is that other sports, women’s sports in particular, struggle for their fair share. Callisthenics is a sport I would especially like to mention. The Leader of the Opposition accompanied me to a recent competition by the Ridgehaven club that I support. There are many other clubs in my area, representative of many dedicated families and talented young people from the north-eastern suburbs who strive to perform at the elite level of their sport and who must develop their talents in the Royalty Theatre, so long in need of a basic upgrade of amenities, accessible and functioning change rooms and toilet facilities that embrace current standards at the very least while conserving heritage requirements.

It is not much to ask for, for the large numbers of young girls and their families who come along to watch their progress at competitions. This does not even include the impression left on visiting interstate teams who travel to Adelaide regularly. Some members may mock this example of inequity in their ignorance of the participation levels of this sport, in the top end of town style, but it is an example of an important part of the daily lives of the citizens that they and I represent and a way they can be supported and their lot made better.

That is the test of your budget, colleagues on the other side: not the neat little technical tables you inflict on us from your out-of-touch ivory towers. Our schools need support more than ever before. We read often now of boys’ learning falling behind; of the decline in the higher education partici-

pation rate of indigenous students; and of the increasing exodus of those who can afford it to the private system in pursuit of what should be the birthright of every child in South Australia: access to a viable, high standard, well respected education system.

Where is the accountability for our education dollar? This government has joined with its federal counterparts to blame teachers, students and even parents for the declining faith in schools. How perverse can that be when they were elected to manage our education system for the most precious asset we could have in laying the ground work for the future prosperity of the most valuable resource of our economy and our society?

I pay great tribute to the thousands of gifted, committed, hard working and often forgotten South Australians—our teachers and school support staff. As with our health professionals, we rely on their goodwill to maintain the system. They acknowledge, as do many education professionals and parents, that not enough has been put into early education. Research shows that the early years are vital and the most important, and that importance is not reflected in budget allocations.

The public and, indeed, independent and church-based schools in my electorate work hard for the community. They deserve better recognition in this budget and, again, trying to pass the buck to the commonwealth will not wash. In my electorate we expected more from this budget, with the hope that, after hanging on for so long, we may after all be heading somewhere better, in fact moving forward. In Florey, the families with a role in caring for aged, infirmed or disabled loved ones expected recognition and tangible support for the load they carry on behalf of us all. They save us millions of dollars across the board yet are forced to ration ever decreasing funding and diminishing resources.

The volunteers who work tirelessly simply to maintain rather than, as it once was, to enhance services, the elderly who have made the community what it is today, and our young people all expected a leadership budget that would take us forward as a community with pride and energy. The working people of my community had a right to expect to be able to say, 'Yes, I can feel that this state budget is at work in supporting in real terms my family budget by the lessening of this charge or this fee or in the provision of greater availability of services like public transport.'

My community in Florey had a right to expect a vision of prosperity, of job growth, of health and hospital resurgence, of an economy able to support itself and to build for social wellbeing. Well, nothing is all bad. Some budget initiatives are welcome while others, unfortunately, do not address the reality of life in South Australia in 2001. I am saddened that this budget represents no more than the myopic trappings of an elite bunch desperate to hold out and hang onto office—out of touch and out of time. Mr Lucas, portrayed in the media as Captain of the Good Ship Lollipop, is taking us all for suckers and is nothing but the messenger for a sad, old, tired ship of fools.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I move:

That this bill be referred to the estimates committees.

Motion carried.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I move:

That the House note grievances.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12.27 a.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 6 June at 2 p.m.