

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 3 July 2001

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following bills:

Corporations (Administrative Actions),
Corporations (Ancillary Provisions),
Corporations (Commonwealth Powers),
Dental Practice,
Real Property (Fees) Amendment,
Statutes Amendment (Corporations).

MEMBERS, DEATH

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

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the deaths of Mr Allan Robert Burdon and Mr George Thomas Whitten, both former members of the House of Assembly, and places on record its appreciation for their long and meritorious service; and that, as a mark of respect to their memory, the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

South Australians, particularly those in the South-East, were saddened to learn of the passing of Allan Burdon, the member for Mount Gambier from 1962 to July 1975. Mr Burdon passed away on 18 June. He was 86 years of age. Prior to entering politics, he was a saw milling supervisor with the Woods and Forests Department. He was a union representative for the Timber Workers Union and a secretary of the Mount Burr branch of the ALP sub-branch.

Mr Burdon also served as a member of the Mount Gambier City Council and the District Council of Beachport. He was prominent in several community organisations in the Mount Gambier area, including the Mount Gambier Technical College. A very keen sportsman, he served as President of the Mount Gambier and District Cricket Association and the North Gambier Football Club. He was also Vice President of the South Eastern Border Football League.

During his parliamentary service, Allan was a member of the Land Settlement Committee and was its Chairman for two years. He was also Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees for 18 months prior to leaving parliament. In 1974 he was the South Australian delegate to the 20th general conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Sri Lanka.

Mr Burdon was a constant advocate of reductions in electricity tariffs in country areas, often stating his view that country people should be provided with government services at the same price as their city counterparts. He was also an advocate for the decentralisation of industry in the country, particularly within his Mount Gambier electorate. Allan Burdon was highly regarded within the Mount Gambier community. He was also highly regarded on both sides of parliament.

Allan's wife Mildred predeceased him. Our sympathies go to, and our thoughts are with, Allan's children—John, Josephine and Rosslyn—also, Stephanie, Leon and their families, his six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Also, it is with a sense of sadness that I continue to speak in the chamber today in relation to the condolence motion for

George Whitten, who passed away on 28 June aged 79 years. I am sure that many members of the House will rise today to take an opportunity to pay tribute to George and formally place on record their appreciation for his life and achievements.

George was born in Broken Hill on 20 June 1922. The son of a miner, he was to be significantly influenced by the Great Depression during his formative years. In 1939, aged 17, George started his career at the Islington Railway Workshops, which is where he was also to begin his lifelong association with the union movement. George was Vice President of the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths Society, a forerunner to the Manufacturing Workers Union. He eventually rose to hold the position of State Party Organiser and State Secretary of the Australian Labor Party.

George was elected to the House of Assembly in 1975, representing the electorate of Price, a seat he was to hold for the next 10 years. During his parliamentary career, George was to hold a number of positions, including Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee.

George also devoted time to pursuits and interests outside his parliamentary responsibilities as patron to a number of sporting clubs, particularly in the Port Adelaide area. George has left a considerable, indelible mark upon the state and its people whom he served. I well remember him—he was a member during my early years in this House. He was always a polite, courteous and obliging person. I well remember those characteristics about him and his nature, which were to be commended.

On behalf of the government, I extend our condolences to George's family—Myrle, Stephen, Graeme and John, his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to support the Premier's remarks about both Allan Burdon and George Whitten in this condolence motion. I had the privilege of knowing both Allan Burdon and George Whitten.

Allan, as the Premier has mentioned, held the seat of Mount Gambier for Labor from 1962 until 1975. He won the seat in a by-election following the death of the ALP incumbent, Ron Ralston. I was looking through Allan Burdon's maiden speech, and it contained quite a degree of good humour. He talked about the by-election campaign, saying:

Promises to the South-East at election time by the present government have become rather a joke with the question, 'What will be the next one?' We have had paraded before us the wonders of Australia's first atomic powerhouse at Lake Leake and the establishment of a deep sea port in various areas along the south-eastern coast, about the only place not suggested for it being in the Blue Lake.

Of course, as the Premier mentioned, Allan had a deep interest in education, as a member of the Mount Gambier Technical College Council. That is certainly also reflected in Allan Burdon's maiden speech. He said:

Education, in all its forms, is an urgent matter, and I plead with the government to exert every influence and bring all possible pressure on the commonwealth government to obtain sufficient money for our educational needs. Every day wasted in not adequately educating our youth is a crime for which we may yet pay dearly. Tuition fees for adult education have been arbitrarily increased. I protest, and plead that they be reviewed and decreased soon. The increased fees have forced many young workers on low wages to stop studying. It is a crying shame that nowadays young people—including young married people—should be deprived of study because of increased fees.

I guess the issues just keep on going on generation after generation.

Allan held the seat for Labor at four subsequent elections, winning 65 per cent of the vote in 1973, finally being defeated by Harold Allison in 1975 in the election which Dunstan called during the time of the federal Labor government's unpopularity, and when the Dunstan government was returned by one seat.

Like many Labor people in the South-East, Allan worked in the timber industry. He was, when he entered parliament, a sawmilling supervisor with the Woods and Forests Department. Allan was born into a well known Millicent family and was educated at the Convent of Mercy, which is now Saint Anthony's School. He was married and had three children. He began work at the Mount Burr sawmill when it opened in 1931. Allan then transferred to the state government's Mount Gambier mill, where he was active in working to protect the rights of fellow timber workers. Allan lived in Mount Gambier until his death recently at the age of 86. He was very involved and active in civic affairs, and served as a member of both the Mount Gambier City Council and the District Council of Beachport. He was an active Justice of the Peace and, as the Premier said, a very keen sportsman, with involvement in various cricket associations and football clubs, and he was a keen fisherman.

In parliament, Allan was a strong and effective advocate for the South-East of this state, and he served a term as Chairman of Committees. My colleague in another place, Terry Roberts, knew Allan well and spoke of him highly as a strong advocate for timber industry workers and the supporters of the rights of recreational fishermen. I certainly met Allan on a number of occasions when I worked for Premiers Don Dunstan and Des Corcoran, and I know that he was held in high esteem and affection by them both. On behalf of the Australian Labor Party, my condolences go to Allan's family and friends.

I also would like to speak about George Whitten, whose funeral will be held tomorrow. George was the member for the seat of Price between July 1975 and December 1985, and retired because of the ALP's then age rule. He replaced Paddy Ryan, the then Speaker of the House, as member for Price, and was in turn replaced by the current member for Price, Murray De Laine. He was Chair of the Public Works Committee. George worked as a boilermaker at the Islington Railway Workshops from 1939. He held a variety of positions within the Boilermakers' and Blacksmiths' Union (which was later to become the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union), until he accepted a temporary position as organiser with the South Australian branch of the ALP, replacing David Combe. When Mick Young moved on to federal politics, George became secretary of the state branch of the ALP during the high point of the Dunstan government, a position which he held for two years, until he entered parliament. So, George was, in fact, around at the time of the 1973 election and then again, of course, as state secretary, for the difficult election in 1975.

George was married and had four children, 14 grandchildren and one great grandchild and, tragically, George's devoted wife Rhoda died just three weeks ago. George was a true Labor stalwart; loyalty was the word that you would most associate with George. He loved the Port, he loved his people, and he always stood up for the underdog. He was never a person who sought high office, but he was always willing to serve when called upon to do so. As the Premier has remarked, George was someone about whom never a bad

word was spoken. George liked people and people liked him. Yet, he was open and forthright; he called a spade a spade. You knew where you stood with George.

He served the Labor Party diligently and faithfully for all his working life and even as a retired member could be seen around the corridors of Parliament House until recently, offering gentle advice and guidance. He would ring up members—including me—to talk about issues. He would always stop us in Parliament House to inquire about our families and continued to be active in the sub-branch of his area. I know that the member for Price, Murray De Laine, will refer to that; they have had a close association over many years.

George was passionate about railways as a form of transport and took every opportunity both inside and outside the parliament to encourage and cajole others to support improvements to our rail infrastructure. Indeed, his maiden speech was about the railways bill. It was a defence of the railways transfer bill and spoke of the importance of railways to our state and nation. George was greatly impressed by the railway systems of Great Britain and Japan and thought that Australia should be doing much more to improve our railways along similar lines. George's electorate contained many people whom he described as underprivileged. He believed that the best way to provide support to the poorest sections of our community was through the provision of low cost public housing. He believed that the poorest in our society would never have the resources to save for a deposit on a house and that the South Australian Housing Trust provided the only option for affordable housing. It is interesting that in his maiden speech George talked about what the Labor Party and socialism were about—and I will quote directly. He said:

That includes the care of the sick, aged and infirm; the provision of assistance to allow for the education of our children; the protection that is provided for consumers with price control; the protection against unfair practices; the subsidies on farm produce as applied to wheat, butter, sugar and so on; the provision of low-cost housing, and the assistance to the under-privileged.

I was proud to know George Whitten. I served briefly with him on the Public Works Standing Committee and also knew him during the time of the Duncan and Corcoran governments. Again, he was held in high esteem by his colleagues and comrades. I extend my sincerest condolences and those of the ALP and state opposition to George's children—Myrle, Stephen, Graeme and John—and the rest of his family and many friends. I know that the member for Price, George's successor, will take up the comments on behalf of our side of the House as a close personal friend.

Mr McEWEN (Gordon): I rise in support of the Premier's motion expressing deep regret at the death of Allan Robert Burdon. Allan was a giant of a man, but he was a caring, gentle and quietly spoken man. Often when I thought of Allan I thought that still waters run deep. Interestingly enough, Allan regretted the fact that he was the only member of the electorate of Mount Gambier since 1938 who was actually defeated at an election. Mount Gambier first became an electorate in the election of 19 March 1938, when Jack Fletcher, an Independent, was elected. Unfortunately, Jack committed suicide in 1946 and, as the Leader of the Opposition said, Ron Ralston won the by-election. Six years later Ron died, and in a by-election Allan was successful and went on to serve for about 23 years.

In 1975, he was defeated by Harold Allison although, interestingly enough, not even Harold believed he had any chance of winning that election. I was one member of the Liberal Party who cast around at that time to find a candidate, but we could not find one because nobody thought that the seat was winnable. Little were we to know, when we were casting around for a candidate in June and July of that year, what was going to happen in the next few months both federally and at a state level.

Gough Whitlam was quickly losing support and at the same time, in a most remarkable decision, Premier Dunstan decided to put all the crane trucks off the road. They were all highly illegal and they should never have been on the road, but, because of their being put off the road, all the logs stopped going to the mills, and that meant that all the Timber Workers Union people were out of work. Allan was not a happy man and, even in those circumstances, he lost by only 50 votes.

It is interesting to note that, in the whole history of that electorate, there have been two Labor and two Independent representatives, as well as one Liberal representative, and remarkable things must happen for the loyalty of that seat to change. The people were tremendously loyal to Allan over many years.

I first met Allan Burdon in 1972, when I played football for North Gambier. Allan took me under his wing at that stage, and even until recently, if I wanted to talk to Allan about anything, I knew where to find him on a Saturday afternoon, and quite often I would wander up to him at the football and ask him how he felt about different local issues. He always gave very good counsel.

The one thing about Allan was that, when Mildred died, he went downhill very quickly, and that said a lot about the partnership and about Allan's not wanting to live on his own any more. He slipped very quickly in the last 12 months. I will always remember him fondly. He always gave good counsel; he was always very loyal to the electorate; and, as much as he was a loyal union man and a loyal Labor man, he was prepared to put local issues first. He was a great role model, and I will miss the counsel that I would often seek on a Saturday afternoon.

Mr De LAINE (Price): I am pleased to speak in this condolence motion for two long-serving, very loyal Labor Party members. Allan Robert Burdon passed away on 18 June aged 86 years. Allan was the ALP member for Mount Gambier in this parliament from 15 December 1962 until 12 July 1975. As has been mentioned, he won the seat in a by-election in December 1962 following the death of the sitting ALP member, Ron Ralston.

Allan was born in Millicent in 1914 and began his working life as a teenager at the Mount Burr timber mill in its first year of operation in 1931. The state government later established a mill at Mount Gambier, and Allan transferred to that facility and became very active in trade union matters, being a union representative for the Timber Workers Union. He founded the South Australian Amateur Fishermen's Association and was a strong advocate for timber industry workers and was a supporter of the rights of recreational fishermen or, in today's terms, fishers.

Before entering parliament, Allan was a member of the Mount Gambier City Council, a member of the District Council of Beachport and Secretary of the local sub-branch of the ALP, the Mount Burr branch. During his parliamentary career, Allan was for many years a member of the Parliamen-

tary Land Settlement Committee, and he was Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees from 1973 until his retirement in 1975.

As the Premier and the leader have mentioned, Allan was an advocate for the reduction in electricity tariffs and also for water and sewerage rates for the Mount Gambier area, and he also advocated the decentralisation of industry in the country, particularly in the Mount Gambier area.

I did not know Allan particularly well, because I met and spoke with him only a few times, but he impressed me as being a quiet, friendly and compassionate man. Former parliamentary colleagues agree with my assessment and tell me that he was well liked and respected by members of all parties. On behalf of the ALP caucus, I extend sincere condolences to members of his family.

I speak now about my predecessor, George Thomas Whitten, who passed away on 28 June aged 79 years. George was the member for Price in this parliament from 12 July 1975 until 6 December 1985, when he retired. He was born in Broken Hill on 26 June 1922. He served his apprenticeship as a boilermaker at the Islington Railway Workshops and continued to work there until he became a full-time official in the Australian Labor Party. He was a member of the Metal Workers Union—the union has changed its name several times over the years—and remained a member for all those years. In fact, he was still a financial member of the AMWU at the time of his death. He was elected as a state ALP organiser in 1973 and when Mick Young entered federal parliament in 1974 as the member for Port Adelaide, George was elected to replace him as state ALP Secretary.

In 1975, with the retirement of John 'Paddy' Ryan, Speaker of the House of Assembly, George won preselection for the seat of Price. He was elected to state parliament on 12 July 1975 and held the seat for 10½ years. He was replaced by me on 7 December 1985. George was Chairman of the Public Works Committee of this parliament until his retirement in 1985. In recent years since his retirement, George was also President of the ALP Retired Members Association which held regular luncheons and functions in the House. I was privileged to send out meeting notices and so on, on behalf of George. George was a very good friend and loyal supporter of mine over the past 16 years, which I valued greatly. He was a rock-solid and loyal union and ALP member with very definite views about social justice issues; there were no shades of grey with George—it was either black or white.

After the war, George, together with his beloved wife Rhoda, built his own house. As it was just after the war had ended, materials were very hard to get. I remember George telling me that every weekend—and some nights—he and Rhoda used to ride their bikes over to their block of land in Athol Park and that they actually hand made every brick in the house. As it was impossible to get reinforcing rods at that time, he scrounged the scrap metal to use for the foundations of the house.

I think that the major blow to George's failing health was the death of his wife Rhoda just 18 days before he passed away. I called in to see George on Monday of last week and he was still numb with grief from the loss of Rhoda. His old colleague and very close friend, former Premier Des Corcoran, together with his wife Carmel, called in to see him last Tuesday, which was the day after I visited him. They took a birthday cake for him because it was his seventy-ninth birthday. Des and Carmel spent several hours with him, and that must have meant a lot to George.

On behalf of the ALP caucus, I extend sincere condolences to George and Rhoda's children—Myrle, Stephen, Graeme and John—their 14 grandchildren and their great grandson Jack on their sad double loss.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I did not know Allan Burdon personally, but as with all my colleagues who have spoken—the Leader and party whip, the Premier, and others—I pass on condolences.

I also want to briefly mention George Whitten. I knew George for all my time in the Labor Party. When, as a young person, I joined the Port Adelaide branch of the ALP in the very early 1980s, there were a number of characters and members, not only Mick Young, Fred Cook, and others, but particularly George, who was very active in the branch. He retired shortly after I joined the party but he was very active in all the years that followed.

I think George hardly missed a federal electorate council meeting of the ALP in Port Adelaide, which were held on Sunday mornings. I was one of a number of younger members of the branch who were always wanting to shift the meeting times from 10 a.m. on Sundays to what we thought was perhaps a more appropriate time to meet—after work or something—but George and many of the longstanding members of the branch would have none of that. On two or three occasions when I attempted to suggest politely that we move the meeting to an evening, George and others quickly pointed out that Sunday mornings once a month in Port Adelaide was very important for the Port Adelaide branch of the Labor Party—and that tradition continues.

As the whip has mentioned, George was a long-serving member in his electorate. His commitment to the Port Adelaide branch of the ALP—and to the branch in general—was quite extraordinary. He worked on polling booths for many elections right up until recent years. I know my wife (who works in the party office) has mentioned that George was always ready to volunteer to assist in the party office whenever work was required to be done at election time.

I was told by the office of the federal member for Port Adelaide, Rob Sawford, that, since the sad passing of George's wife Rhoda only three or so weeks ago, George had been in the office only as late as last week inquiring when the next branch meeting of the Port Adelaide FEC was to take place, so that he could fit it into his schedule. The local branch of the Port Adelaide Labor Party meant a lot to George, and our branch owes very much to George and his wife, Rhoda, for the time, effort and commitment they gave to our branch. On behalf of my wife, Cathy, and myself, I offer our condolences to Myrle, Stephen, Graeme, John and their families.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): Although Mr Burdon was not known to me, I was introduced to him after he had befriended my younger brother at the time that my younger brother was first appointed as head of the new marketing division in the Woods and Forests Department in 1970—or it might have been a little earlier than that, I am not sure. At that time, my brother was a very young man and Mr Burdon befriended him because he had just arrived in Mount Gambier, and Mr Burdon, being the member, was keen to see some progress made in the way in which products of the Woods and Forests Department were properly sold; and I guess he was also keen to see anyone who came to make their home in Mount Gambier happily settle there.

Notwithstanding that, George Whitten, I did know better, if only because, in the first instance, his son Terry was teaching at one of the schools in my electorate and George always upon seeing me asked me—or, if not asked me, gave me some snippet of information—about the East Murray Area School and the surrounding community, I guess to illustrate to me that he thought it important that members understand what was going on in their electorates and the various communities of which they were comprised, whether they were communities by association in urban settings or communities by geographic determination in rural areas. George visited that area on occasions and always paid me the courtesy of letting me know of his intention to do so, which, indeed, is more than I can say these days—so much so that we might as well not bother to tell each other when we will be in each other's electorate: no-one seems to bother me too much. I acknowledge that some ministers are meticulous in that regard, but other ministers and members do not care.

In any case, one of the remarks I wish to make about George was the certainty with which he answered people in Murray Bridge, when, as Chairman of the Public Works Committee, he chaired the hearing taking evidence on the proposed construction of a prison to be known as Mobilong Prison. At that meeting, he reassured the people of Murray Bridge not once, not twice, but many times that it was a medium security prison and, over the last week, it has been drawn to my attention by the people in the community that that has been observed as much in the breach as it has been in compliance since that time. I recall the first occasion when prisoners who should not have been incarcerated at Mobilong were placed there. I saw George in parliament one Tuesday morning just after that, and he told me that he thought it was a mistake of the government to breach the commitment it gave the Murray Bridge community, and he said that again when, on a subsequent occasion, the same thing happened.

That illustrates that George, to me and to everyone I know who knew him, was a man of integrity. He said what he meant and meant what he said, and if he said he would do it, he did. Whether or not you might like it, you knew where you stood and you understood what the consequence would be if you chose to fly in the face of any trust he might have given you. I never did, but I know others who found themselves given a lecture over their failure to keep their word and their trust. So, I see the death of George Whitten as a real loss, as one of the Labor Party's gentlemen who were true to their word. I trust, too, that the Labor Party can rediscover more such people, because they serve the community well.

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): I would like to speak briefly in support of the condolence motion. Unfortunately, I did not know Allan Burdon, but naturally I would like to pass on my regrets and sympathy to the family. However, I did know George Whitten, and I was very proud to know him and his family.

It would be fair to say that George Whitten was a working class hero, a boilermaker by trade and a unionist all his life. George went from the Islington railways to the ALP office as an organiser in 1973 and had the great experience of working under Mick Young, who was the then State Secretary for some 12 months.

It would also be reasonable to say that perhaps no other State Secretary of the ALP, either in South Australia or nationally, had quite the effect that Mick Young had in ALP circles, both in South Australia and at a national level, even before he got into the parliament. But let me assure members

that George was a wonderful person to be there with Mick, because Mick was a big picture man and George Whitten was certainly a person who was able to follow through some of the tasks that Mick so ably and superbly put in place.

George became State Secretary—he was a very good Secretary—but he only had a short period of time because he entered parliament in 1975 as the member for Price and served in here for approximately 10½ years. Undoubtedly, George was all the things that have been said by all the people who have spoken before me. In some regards, I suppose he was a little of what has been highlighted just recently with respect to Gil Langley: George was an old-fashioned, grassroots Labor member of parliament.

George took very sincerely and seriously his responsibilities as a local member of parliament. He was a great friend to all in his local community. He was a very popular member of parliament. He believed all through his life, either as a unionist, an official of the ALP or as a member of parliament that the best way to get results and the best way to get things achieved was by working together with people. And working together with people was George Whitten's great hallmark throughout his working life.

Upon retirement, George certainly continued on, as the member for Hart and the member for Price have said, very seriously with his responsibilities as a member of the ALP. I well remember that George's retirement preceded my return from Kadina. When I came back from Kadina, I went to work for Mick Young, who was then a federal member of parliament. My responsibilities involved a number of tasks, including campaigns, surveys, price watch, fundraisers—you name it—and Mick was certainly a very active local member of parliament in addition to his other responsibilities.

George Whitten was always at the forefront. He never missed a local fundraiser or any campaign activity, not just on election day but all the work that had to be done. In those days, we did not have the advantages that we now enjoy with regard to current technology. A lot of what we take for granted used to be done by hand. George Whitten, his wife and family were always present at working bees. They were wonderful supporters of Mick Young and the ALP, and George never forget his grassroots.

Approximately three weeks ago I attended Mrs Whitten's funeral, and little did I realise that this would come so quickly. It is a very sad event for us in the Labor Party, because George Whitten really did show us all in those days, as a unionist, as an official of the ALP and then, following that, by his great service to the local electorate and to the ALP, what our responsibilities are as a member of parliament. I think we take those on board very seriously.

George will be a role model not only for this parliament but also for many members of parliament who come in after us. I am proud on behalf of not only myself but also my family to say that George Whitten was a great personal friend who provided a lot of support and advice not only to me personally but also to the ALP generally. It is a sad day for us all, and obviously I would like to extend my family's sympathies to the Whitten family.

Mr HILL (Kuarna): I join in the condolence motion to both Allan Burdon and George Whitten's families. I did not know Allan Burdon, either, so I will not talk about his life. However, I would like to say a few things about George Whitten's life.

I first met George, I think, in 1980 or 1981 when, as a teacher at Woodville High School and as the local SAIT rep,

I arranged a public meeting to protest the appalling cuts to education funds by the then Minister for Education, Harold Allison. George, as the local member, dutifully turned up and listened to my arguments, then gave a speech on behalf of the opposition and engaged in debate about the issues of education. So, I got to know him at that early stage, and I thought he was a very supportive and kindly local member. Then, when my career followed his, to some extent (I became an organiser and then state secretary), George was frequently there to advise me on how to do both those jobs and to tell me when he thought I was doing them incorrectly or not with the appropriate vigour. So, I appreciated his help from time to time.

I know that George had a very keen sense of Labor Party history. He told me that once, when he was an organiser and the party was shifting offices, the then secretary—I am not sure whether it was David Combe or Mick Young or Howard O'Neil—basically binned a whole lot of old documents going back 40 or 50 years (all the party records and paraphernalia: it was just so much old trash), and George would go behind the scenes and try to gather much of it back to save it for posterity.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HILL: No, they were not burning—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HILL: So, George had a very fine sense of Labor Party history. He was a true member of the Labor Party all of his life. As members have said, he worked in the railway workshop from, I think, about 1939 at Islington. He became a member of the Labor Party in 1949; he was an active member of the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths Union before it became the AMWU, which he subsequently joined; he was party organiser in 1973 and party secretary in 1974—he had a much more rapid rise through the ranks than I experienced, I can assure members; and he was the member for Price in 1975 and was in that position until he retired in 1985. After his retirement, as members have already said, he was an active member of the Labor Party and, certainly, an active member of the association of retired members of this House: he was often seen in the rooms of this chamber and I know that he treasured his friendship with former members, and with current members as well.

I would like to read a couple of brief things which I think sum up George's views. In his maiden speech, which was made on 7 August 1975—and he was given the honour of moving the Address in Reply to the governor's speech—he talked about the election campaign that had just been run and he was quite strong in his criticism of the other side and their campaigning techniques. He spoke at length about the importance of the railway issue, because that was a central issue in the election campaign, and then he started to talk about socialism. He said:

Much has been said about socialism during the past few months.

Then he went on to define it. He said:

That includes the care of the sick, aged and infirm; the provision of assistance to allow for the education of our children; the protection that is provided for consumers with price control; the protection against unfair practices; the subsidies on farm produce as applied to wheat, butter, sugar and so on; the provision of low cost housing and the assistance to the underprivileged. They are all forms of socialism so, I say, let us have much more socialism.

I think we know the kinds of views George had, and he kept those views all of his life.

On his retirement from parliament—and I thought this was telling, also—George reflected on the fact that he was leaving

the House and, unlike so many members who, when they leave parliament for one reason or another, are bitter about the circumstances under which they leave, he was full of praise for the party and for the person who was to follow him, who was Jack Wright. He said:

As far as I am concerned, the people of Price could have no better member. Jack has been a member of parliament for more than 10 years; he has been a minister of the Crown for five years; and, of course, he has been an active member of the labour movement for nearly 40 years. Having been a worker myself and having represented the interests of workers, both in the trade union movement and parliament, he has as good a grasp of the needs and wishes of the people in a seat like Price.

So, generous to the end of his political career, he was a fine Labor man and we will miss him very much.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): Much has already been said about George's history, so I will not recount it. I also would like to express my sympathy and send my condolences to members of the Whitten family on the loss of George. I first met George when he was an organiser in the ALP back in 1973. I joined the Labor Party as a 14 year old in 1966, and in those days I was also a delegate at various times for my sub-branch. At that time, of course, we had the card vote in the Labor Party and, as a delegate for the Torrens South sub-branch (as I think it was) in those days, I believe I had 30 votes compared to the AWU, which had about 12 000 or so votes. So, that was the measure of my influence with respect to the running of the Labor Party in terms of the card vote. Mr Whitten had no need, if you like, to seek to curry favour or spend any time with a person who, at worst, could deliver 30 votes out of a card vote of, I think, about 160 000 votes. I posed no particular threat—not that I was a threat to George Whitten, because he was such a decent human being.

What I mean by that is that when I went to see him as a rather young, callow, sub-branch secretary and delegate, there was no need for the officers to make appointments to see him, as an organiser or state secretary. You walked in to Trades Hall and it was, 'Good day George'; 'Good day Ralph. How are you? Come in and have a bit of a talk.' It was very informal. You did not have to worry about what you discussed with him. Whatever you discussed with him was held in confidence and, basically, I mainly sat in his office from time to time and listened to the history of the Labor Party, rather than anything else, because he had been so much part of the Labor Party, both as a party and as an industrial movement, for so many years.

I also want to pay regard to George for the time he spent as a member of parliament. He entered parliament and, again, he could quite easily not have bothered two hoots with someone like me. I was at that time only a junior official in an unaffiliated union, still a sub-branch delegate, with a handful of votes out of 160 000-odd card votes. There was no need for him to extend the types of courtesies that he did not just to me but to many other people in similar circumstances. What I always appreciated, and particularly when I became Deputy Leader of the Opposition, was that when you attended sub-branch meetings—whether it be at Price or the Port Adelaide Federal Electorate Committee meetings at Port Adelaide—you always saw George at those meetings, and he would actively participate in the internal debates and affairs of the Labor Party. He was not someone who joined the Labor Party, participated in its affairs, became a member of parliament and then, upon retiring, disappeared off the scene. He quite happily participated in fundraising activities after he had retired, and he also participated in talking to younger

members of the Labor Party, if they wanted to listen to him, about the history and culture of the Labor Party and about the times in which he grew up.

I again would like to record my appreciation for George Whitten and pass on my condolences to his family, as I do to Allan Burdon's family also. Unfortunately, like the member for Lee, I did not have the opportunity to know Allan well—other than perhaps a fleeting opportunity to meet him occasionally. Because he was a country member, you did not see him as often as you saw metropolitan members. However, I am well aware of his contributions to the Labor Party in holding a seat such as Mount Gambier for many years. If we had not had the big march and protests against the Whitlam government in 1975, and the unpopularity of the federal Labor government at that time, I am sure that he would have maintained his seat in parliament and, unfortunately, from Harold Allison's point of view, denied his chance of entering this parliament for many years to come, had he had that opportunity.

The SPEAKER: I thank those members who have made a contribution to the debate this afternoon. I will ensure that a copy of the *Hansard* is communicated to the families of our former colleagues. I ask all members to support the motion by standing in their places.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.50 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.]

NATIVE BIRDS

A petition signed by 18 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to repeal the proclamation permitting the unlimited destruction by commercial horticulturalists of protected native birds, was presented by the Hon. J.W. Olsen.

Petition received.

WANGANEEN, Mr G.

A petition signed by 657 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to establish an inquiry into the death of Grant Wanganeen and review police training, deployment and liaison procedures, was presented by Ms Bedford.

Petition received.

FIREWORKS

A petition signed by 71 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 Hanna.

Petition received.

TOW TRUCK OPERATORS

A petition signed by 603 residents of South Australia, requesting that the House urge the government to regulate the operations of tow truck operators in the Mount Gambier area, was presented by Mr McEwen.

Petition received.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In reply to **Ms BEDFORD** (31 May).

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: There is broad agreement that a single 1800 entry point to accessing domestic violence services is needed by the South Australian community. Details of the implementation are currently being finalised.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has been facilitating ongoing discussions between Domestic Violence Crisis Service, the Crisis Response and Child Abuse Service, and the Adelaide Central Mission to develop a model incorporating the views and experiences of the key providers.

These discussions are proving constructive and it is anticipated that a pilot model and implementation timeframe will be developed by 1 July 2001.

All agencies involved are committed to identifying a coordinated model which will provide a single 1800 number extending access for the broadest range of people in the community affected by domestic violence. This will include improved access for country callers particularly women requiring the expertise of the crisis service that are currently required to ring a normal telephone service at STD rates. Development of protocols, standards and operating procedures to enable the application of such a model are being discussed.

Further information will be available following the completion of the pilot. A review is inappropriate at this time.

BRANCHED BROOMRAPE

In reply to **Mr LEWIS** (15 May).

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Branched broomrape first came to the attention of government in 1992. At that point surveys suggested the spread of branched broomrape was quite limited and the Animal and Plant Control Commission (APCC) instigated a program of eradication.

National funding was obtained for an enlarged eradication program in 1999. Part of this program called for an extended survey outside the known areas of branched broomrape at that time.

During these surveys it was discovered that the spread of branched broomrape was more extensive than anticipated. The strategically sound decision was made to set aside the eradication objective until evidence could be gathered about the spread of branched broomrape across Australia, as well as the quarantine area, to make an informed decision about its management.

Procedures, including quarantine, were set in place to both contain branched broomrape and maintain national and international market confidence in the quality of a broad range of produce.

This market assurance applies to not only produce from the branched broomrape area but also to international marketing of Australian produce.

Surveys to determine the presence of branched broomrape can only be undertaken in spring when flowering heads are above ground.

Extensive surveys of South Australia undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources (PIRSA) and APCC staff and surveys of high risk properties by Natural Resources and Environment in Victoria only discovered branched broomrape around the existing quarantine area.

PIRSA and national bodies concerned with this problem are reasonably confident that branched broomrape is confined to this region of Australia. To date branched broomrape infestations of 1300 hectares have been discovered in 17,000 hectares of paddock on 130 properties.

All the properties are within a 70 km x 70 km area adjacent Murray Bridge. Preparations are under way for the spring surveys of quarantined and linked properties.

The national decision making groups involved with branched broomrape required a certain amount of information about the spread of this weed before they could make an informed decision at a national level.

The national policy, adopted by ARMCANZ at its March meeting, is to support an eradication program, recognising this is a long term objective.

This decision takes into consideration the threat that branched broomrape is to both production and marketing of Australian produce. The program will be continually reviewed.

All states and the commonwealth have contributed to a branched broomrape eradication program by providing a total of over \$1.9 million for the next financial year. The Grain Research Development Committee is supporting applied research projects by contributing \$930,000 over the next three financial years.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. J.W. Olsen)—

Fees Regulation Act—Regulations—Water, Sewerage Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

Fisheries—

Abalone Fees
Blue Crab Fees
Daily Limits
Fish Processor Deliveries
General Fees
Lakes and Coorong Fees
Marine Scale Fish Fees
Miscellaneous Fees
Prawn Fees
River Fishery Fees
Rock Lobster Fees

Primary Industry Funding Schemes—

Langhorne Creek Wine
Riverland Wine

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

Development—

Environmental Significance
Extension of System Improvement
Significant Trees—Time Extension

Medical Practitioners—Fees

Motor Vehicles—National Consistency

Road Traffic—

Dictionary Variation
Miscellaneous Definitions
Standard Conditions
Vehicle Standard Rule—Steering

South Australian Co-operative and Community

Housing—

Commonwealth Application

Public Subscription

South Australian Health Commission—Fees

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

Remuneration Tribunal—Determination and Report—

Auditor-General, Electoral Commissioner, Employee Ombudsman and Ombudsman—Telephone Rental and Calls Allowance

Regulations under the following Acts—

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare—

Amusement Structures

Sewerage—Connection and Other Charges

Waterworks—Charges

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

RESI Corporation Charter—June 2001

Regulations under the following Acts—

Public Corporations—Bio Innovation SA

Public Finance and Audit—TABCO

Superannuation—Revised

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

Associations Incorporation—Law Modifications

Building Work Contractors—Exemptions

Co-operatives—Corporations Law

Corporations (Ancillary Provisions)—Reference

Emergency Services Funding—Remissions

Environment Protection—Water

Land and Business (Sale and Conveyancing)—Acting for Parties

Legal Practitioners—Commonwealth Act

Liquor Licensing—Dry Areas—Meningie
 Real Property—Stamp Duties
 Security and Investigation Agents—Auditor
 Trustee—Inspectors
 Rules of Court—
 District Court—Custody
 Magistrates Court (Civil)—E-mail
 Supreme Court—
 Applications
 Corporations Law Rules 2000 (South Australia)—
 Review Amendments
 Supreme Court Criminal—Custody

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

Water Resources Act—Regulations—Murray Plan
 Extension

By the Minister for Employment and Training (Hon. M.K. Brindal)—

Vocational Education Employment and Training Board—
 Report, 2000

By the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Hon. W.A. Matthew)—

Gas Act—Regulations—Codes.

BODY ORGANS AND TISSUE

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

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Following my advice to the parliamentary estimates committee last week concerning the retention of body organs and tissue, I have received new and separate allegations concerning practices in the retention of body organs and tissues. The allegations were very serious indeed and, following receipt of them, I consulted the Attorney-General and the Crown Solicitor.

Following those discussions, I asked the Solicitor-General, Mr Brad Selway QC, to undertake a full investigation into these allegations. He will take evidence in confidence to determine whether, in the light of these allegations, there has been a possible breach of law, a breach of medical ethics or a breach of the Public Sector Management Act. The Solicitor-General will report to me as soon as possible on whether there is substance to the allegations and whether there is a need for a fuller inquiry. I will keep the House informed.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I bring up the 153rd report of the committee, on the Bionomics Limited Research Laboratory and Office Facilities—Status Report, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

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

That the report be published.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

BODY ORGANS AND TISSUE

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Is the Minister for Human Services satisfied that appropriate ethical protocols are in place at medical schools to cover the surgical use and eventual disposal of the remains of persons

who have generously left their bodies for medical research, and will medical schools be included in the inquiry by the Solicitor-General, Brad Selway? The minister would be aware that community-minded citizens generously leave their bodies and organs to university medical schools for research and for the surgical training of medical students. I understand that, at the conclusion of 12 months, the families of persons who have donated their remains to medical research are offered the opportunity of a service and burial for the deceased at the university's expense. Considering the recent controversies, families want assurances that the entire process is conducted ethically and with the utmost dignity.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): The issues raised are of grave concern to the broader community and they are major issues. The leader has raised an interesting point, and I will touch on that in a moment, in terms of what occurs where consent is given. I have looked at the consent form as agreed which was introduced in this state in 1990. That consent form is reasonably detailed in terms of the person who is giving consent to ensure that they have the appropriate authorisation and, in fact, that they are the appropriate next of kin. In many cases, at least since 1990, consent has been given. However, in relation to the more recent allegations, a lot of the concern arises, consent having been given, about what happened to some of the organs and tissues after the burial. They are some of the issues that need to be looked at, and they are being looked at specifically in terms of allegations. They are much broader issues that need to be examined, and I believe that there needs to be considerable public input into that discussion. The leader raised the issue as to whether Brad Selway QC was specifically investigating that issue; the answer is no. He is specifically investigating allegations which have been made or which may include the two universities in those broader allegations, because there is a very close interface between the universities, the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Flinders Medical Centre.

When talking to the media earlier today, I raised these very important issues. Although consent is one issue, and has been reasonably well dealt with, I believe that consent forms should be further refined and, in fact, that was one of the issues that I raised last week, wherein I have asked the department to look at that consent form again and cover it in more detail, perhaps including greater explanation so that people signing the consent form have a far clearer understanding of what may happen to the tissues or organs after consent has been given for their use. It may be that we need to differentiate as to the type of use for which consent has been given. Let us face it, there are many people, and a growing number of people, in the community who decide to donate their organs—maybe to help another person—and that is very valuable indeed in relation to kidney and corneal transplants, and so on. The government has been actively encouraging that donation of organs so that they can be used for medical purposes, particularly to donate to other people.

There is the issue of autopsy and how it interfaces with any requirements and investigations involving the Coroner. These are very profound and significant issues that, I think it is fair to say, have been inadequately addressed throughout the whole of Australia and, I suspect, in other countries as well. Certainly, some of the practices that have been revealed—and some go back a number of years—are unacceptable and unsatisfactory and should not be allowed to continue. I suspect that many of those practices no longer continue—and I hope that none of them continue. That is

partly what the examination and investigation by Brad Selway is about, because that is certainly what some of the allegations involved.

I think we need to clearly understand that, first, there is an investigation specifically into issues surrounding certain allegations that have been made (and I will leave that to Brad Selway QC, the Solicitor-General, to deal with) and the subsequent issues about whether the consent form is adequate; secondly, consent having been given, whether the people concerned are appropriately informed and understand the purpose for which consent has been given; and, thirdly, consent having been given and the knowledge and understanding of the person concerned clarified, whether the medical profession has clear standards and ethics as to what to do with organs or tissues that may be retained beyond the burial or cremation of the body.

They are the issues that now need to be dealt with. I assure members of the House that we are dealing with those issues. Some of them are being dealt with nationally, and certainly we are dealing with them in South Australia as well. We have set up—and I mentioned this to the estimates committee—an ethics committee within the Department of Human Services, and one of the matters with which they are dealing is this very issue. I highlight that this is an issue of which the broader community must have some understanding and in which it must be involved in any decisions that are finally taken.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Will the Premier inform the House of the latest assessments of South Australia's economy and how the State's economy has performed during the national economic slowdown of the past six months, particularly with reference to the performance of the state's exports?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): We have seen in recent months very good economic data indicating the growth of the South Australian economy, and only yesterday the *Advertiser* reported that, based on Access Economics and ABS figures, we clearly are outperforming every other state in Australia. Further to those reports, in the last 24 hours the latest export figures have been released. Not only do they continue the recent economic good news but also they show that our export growth is not only spectacularly high but it also continues to accelerate.

Over the last seven or eight years, the government has had a deliberate policy of developing an export culture and focus through our trade missions and offices overseas; and through export facilitation programs and support within the South Australian economy through Department of Industry and Trade and relevant other agencies such as Primary Industries and others, we have attempted to grow the export markets from our state.

In the 12 months to April, South Australia's overseas merchandise exports grew by 29 per cent to \$7.81 billion. Not only did our merchandise exports grow in that 12 months but every successive 12 month period is also setting a new record for export levels. It was not until last financial year (1999-2000) that exports topped \$6 billion for the first time. Now, 12 months later in 2000-01, it looks as though they will make \$8 billion.

Growth experience in 1999-2000 was 14.1 per cent; in calendar year 2000, 17.5 per cent; and 29 per cent in the year to April 2001. We are also outstripping national export growth again. In the 12 months to April, national merchan-

dise export growth was 26 per cent. In the month of April, national exports fell by 3.3 per cent, whereas they increased by 2.9 per cent in South Australia. Growth continues to be high in two key industry areas. In the 12 months, wine is up 24 per cent to \$1.07 billion, and, importantly, cars and car parts are up 50 per cent to \$1.3 billion.

What is particularly noticeable over the longer term is the hard evidence in the changed composition of South Australia's exports to transforming our economy. Manufactured exports are now 71 per cent of all exports at \$5.54 billion. Less than five years ago (1995-96), they were only 61 per cent. This represents more than a doubling of dollar value of manufactured exports over that time.

Total exports have now more than doubled under the government. The 1993-94 figure was \$3.89 billion. In the last three years, growth has accelerated substantially with 57 per cent growth since 1997-98. Export figures follow the latest Access Economics business outlook report released this week, which shows that South Australia has been the fastest growing state in the nation in the past 12 months. That is important to emphasise, because it really does demonstrate the contrast between the economic circumstances today and those we inherited in 1993. South Australia has been the fastest growing state in the nation in the past 12 months. That is an undisputable fact.

We are now an investment destination and our existing industries are more export focused than they have ever been. That translates into jobs, long-term jobs, with security. That is why we have had this focus on developing and expanding an export culture. Access Economics, which generally has been a bit short of the mark when assessing South Australia's success, notes that there are important positives looking ahead. I mention that simply because they have had to upgrade their forecasts once or twice a year to bring their figures up to date with the performance of the South Australian economy. But there are important positives looking ahead.

They nominate the Adelaide to Darwin railway, increased defence spending, increased wine crops, gas exploration and the federal tax changes that should help new car sales, in particular helping Mitsubishi to secure its future. Much has changed in the course of the last eight years. Much has changed for the economy. We are now back on the radar screen for private sector investment.

Starting this week, businesses in the state also will enjoy the largest payroll tax cuts in this state's history. Starting on 1 July, the budget measures see the rate cut from 6 per cent to 5.75 per cent, a saving of \$24.5 million to business over the coming year. That comes on top of the savings and benefits of \$108 million in a full year as a result of WorkCover savings.

Again, this underscores how sound financial management creates the climate for jobs; it creates the climate for South Australians to grasp their opportunities. The leadership that has been put in place in developing export focus to create a diversified economy, to underpin financial growth and investment in our state, is delivering jobs for South Australians, because that is how we have been able to strip some 5 per cent off the unemployment queues in this state. We are now within .5 per cent of the national figure, something that was only a goal or a dream some five to eight years ago. Those circumstances do not happen overnight without good policy settings being put in place.

What we are seeing is the result of some difficult decisions, right and responsible decisions being put in place, and

the benefits rolling out for the South Australian community. At the end of the line, the benefits are jobs for more South Australians and greater job security.

BODY ORGANS AND TISSUE

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Will the Minister for Human Services detail to the parliament the allegations about autopsies and body parts that he has referred to the Solicitor-General and say what are the terms of reference for this new investigation, and will the minister give an undertaking to release the Solicitor-General's report? These allegations are reported to be of grave concern to the community and are so serious that the minister has said that he will not rule out a royal commission.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I will deal one by one with each of those three or four questions. As to whether I will outline to the House the exact allegations, no, I will not. It is inappropriate to do so for several reasons. First, it may prejudice the inquiry itself. Secondly, there are individuals named in the allegations and it would be inappropriate therefore to reveal those names. I have handed to the Solicitor-General the full letter that was given to me by the person who raised the allegations, and I have asked him to complete the investigation as soon as possible.

As I have indicated in my ministerial statement to the House this afternoon, the Solicitor-General will look at whether there is substance behind the allegations and, if there is, he may well recommend a further in-depth inquiry or investigation, depending on the nature of the potential concerns that are raised. I have highlighted that it may be legal issues, it may be medical ethics issues or it may be a breach of the Public Sector Management Act that may well decide the nature of any further investigation.

In terms of making available the Solicitor-General's report at the end of this, that would again depend on what he recommends. If he recommends a further investigation and if, in fact, some of the material in his report would prejudice any further investigation, then, clearly, it would be inappropriate to undertake one. However, the Solicitor-General is the most senior lawyer in this state and is independent of the government of the day, and I will seek his advice and take his advice. I want the report to be as wide as possible to ensure that the public understands what is being investigated, etc., and what the findings are, but at the same time it is important to protect natural justice and any further investigation that may be undertaken. Therefore, I assure the honourable member that I will take advice from the Solicitor-General in terms of the exact nature of the investigation or the findings. I am happy to release details of my letter to the Solicitor-General which formally commissions him in this investigation.

HEALTH CARE

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): My question is also directed to the Minister for Human Services. Could the minister inform the House how quality in health care will benefit from increased investment in information technology? Each of our hospitals has within it a research and development centre of excellence, sometimes of international standing. These centres are, I understand, breaking new ground in medical science but also provide vital support to services.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): In the coming year, we will invest significant resources in ensuring that we continue to make improvements in information technology within the Department of Human Services and, particularly, in the health care area. I thank the member for Waite for this important question. It was an issue that came up on many occasions during the estimates committees. In fact, the member for Elizabeth raised the issue in a number of questions. I was amazed to find that she appeared to take the view of a troglodyte and was saying that we should not spend any money at all.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: She was arguing the case that we should not spend any money at all in terms of information technology within the health sector. Here is a department with a budget of \$2 700 million and she did not want money spent, for instance, on OACIS, which has already been trialled for a number of years in the renal units and has worked very effectively indeed. It links both the public hospitals and the private hospitals and it gives the clinicians timely information about their patients. The national committee on quality chaired by Professor Baraclough said that better information technology on patients was the biggest single area where improvement could be made in quality of health care, yet during the estimates committees the member for Elizabeth argued against this very line.

Last week, while visiting Port Augusta, I went to Pika Wiya, which is the Aboriginal health service. I was very impressed, indeed, to see the extent to which they are using very simple computer technology to ensure that they now provide much more effective services to a large number of additional clients within that health service. They provide information across a whole range of areas, including programs concerning diabetes, nutrition, baby care, child care and other general health issues.

OACIS will have a huge impact on the quality of health care within our hospital systems, because it will mean that, for the first time, across the public hospitals, and ultimately across private hospitals if they choose to participate, timely information will be available, particularly when a patient comes in who previously has been in that hospital or in some other hospital and received some medication. It will be one way of very quickly checking what medication that patient may be taking and making sure that, if a new prescription is required, there is no conflict between the new prescription and the existing medication. That is one of the areas where problems occur, particularly as so many different medications are now available.

This year, we are also putting funds into a wide area network. The wide area network links the Housing Trust offices back to the head office, and it links together the Family and Youth Service offices back to regional head offices, or regional offices and the head office. We are also doing it with community health. Within the human services area, we probably have the least developed information technology system of any government department: we have been spending less than 1 per cent on information technology. I should have thought there would be applause for the fact that we are trying to link the offices together and provide timely information. Through doing so, we have found that we are able to service a significantly increased number of people.

One piece of technology that we have tried in this area is what is called thin client technology. This technology has been operating in the Housing Trust, where there are 650 terminals all linking into the main computer. About 450 of

those terminals are what they describe as dumb terminals, and the other 200 are PCs. With respect to the dumb terminal, the software is downloaded every time it is switched on, so at the beginning of the day one would download the software. We have found that we are able to reduce the capital costs up front very substantially. We are also able to reduce the annual operating costs. In fact, we are saving about \$1 200 for every seat in terms of operating costs each year and, at the same time, we have found that the breakdowns and the down time of the terminals has been reduced to virtually zero instead of a much higher figure if PCs were involved.

We are also finding that the client is very happy indeed. It is called thin client technology because it is cheaper and very efficient. In fact, our site here at the South Australian Housing Trust is now one of the key reference points for various companies around the world that come here and look at this technology. We are now running out this thin client technology in the community health area, in the FAYS area and in the Housing Trust area, and it has been widely applauded by the staff. I highlight that all of this is about delivering better services, more timely services and more services to the public.

BODY ORGANS AND TISSUE

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): Following the announcement by the Minister for Human Services that his department and the Solicitor-General had moved to secure and protect evidence at all hospitals and the IMVS, can the minister guarantee that no records have been destroyed since issues about the inappropriate removal and retention of organs and tissues were raised earlier this year?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I cannot give guarantees about any document or something that may have been destroyed since the beginning of this year. Some of those matters relate to issues now being investigated by the Solicitor-General. However, I can indicate that, before announcing yesterday the investigation by the Solicitor-General, I took the advice of the Crown Solicitor and the Solicitor-General to make sure that we moved to protect specimens, records and tissues.

We issued an instruction to all the incorporated Health Commission bodies and the IMVS. I met last night on other matters with the CEOs and chairs of the major hospitals. That was the first issue I raised with them to make sure they secured it, and they were moving to do so. Therefore, the government has certainly considered this issue. We saw it as an important issue and once the investigation was announced we moved to protect those documents, records and specimens as quickly as possible.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Premier update the House on recent significant announcements and decisions on South Australia's electricity and gas supply, particularly the decision of AGL to build a powerhouse at Hallett and the \$160 million NRG Flinders investment at Port Augusta?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I thank the member for his question. I know of his particular interest because of the substantial generating facilities in his electorate. No doubt he would have been delighted to see the announcement by NRG recently of the \$100 million plus additional expenditure in Port Augusta. As a result of the COAG meeting recently we were able to secure a number of key points for further

investigation as it relates to the national electricity market. As I have indicated to the House on previous occasions, the market as it was modelled is not acting and responding as all thought it would. With the support of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, for the first time since the advent of the market, the states and territories have moved to regain some control and policy direction over the market. I make that point, because Liberal and Labor governments are at one in relation to getting some policy control and direction of this market.

Whether the assets are in private or government hands, the national market as it is today is not working and is having similar implications in the various states. Last month's Premiers' Conference established a national review of the market and the creation of a ministerial council to oversee the review of the operation of the market. At the COAG meeting I made it clear, and Queensland Labor Premier Beattie held a similar view, that I am not prepared to recommit South Australia to the contestable time frame which will see residential consumers come onto the national market in January 2003. Last week the council met for the first time and, again, with South Australia's urging, agreed to set a September deadline on the decision for the interconnection between South Australia and New South Wales. Just as importantly, a November deadline for a decision has been set on the Snowy to Victoria interconnector. That is important to bring additional generating capacity into Victoria.

Last week we had some welcome news. The national electricity market company NEMMCO indicated that South Australia should have enough power supply to avoid supply related blackouts this coming summer. That is important, because NEMMCO also indicated that even if only half the proposed extra generating projects are completed, there should still be enough reserve power capacity for the coming summer, despite the fact that we are seeing an escalation in electricity demand. As our economy grows and expands, the demand increases and in some instances we have seen a fourfold increase in the demand for electricity in our marketplace. In that respect we are accelerating at a faster rate than other states of Australia. In one context, it is a good problem to have. In fact, NEMMCO reported that enough reserves are already in place for the combined Victorian and South Australian regions up to mid January 2002, even if no new generation is commissioned in this time.

As I have indicated, the good news was highlighted by the NRG Flinders announcement that it will spend more than \$100 million to extend the life of the 240 megawatt Playford power station at Port Augusta beyond 2004. Not only will that expenditure mean underpinning that generating capacity, but jobs will also be created in the construction and installation phase. That will have beneficial spin-offs for not only the Port Augusta community but also for fabrication, construction and employment within the South Australian economy. Also, a \$12 million to \$13 million upgrade of South Australia's electricity equipment such as transformers and fuses is well under way and will be completed before the summer period.

The Minister for Minerals and Energy has indicated that Duke Energy and GPU Gas Net have formed an alliance to build a 670 kilometre natural gas pipeline from Victoria to South Australia, and that brings extra competition into the marketplace. The key fuel source for our electricity generation is gas. Having a competitive gas supply in the future will give confidence for investment, for additional base load generating capacity, and will also lead to more efficient fuels and greenhouse friendly electricity generation in our state.

South Australia has been proactive in dealing with this issue broadly on two fronts: by taking the national market head on and calling for policy oversight, management and some restructuring; and by actively encouraging extra generation and interconnection into the state, and in two years we have overseen a 30 per cent growth in electricity capacity in our state. That, coupled with other investments on the horizon, clearly indicates that the market, immature as it is today, is starting to respond to the market trends and opportunities for tomorrow.

BODY ORGANS AND TISSUE

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): My question is directed to the Minister for Human Services. What were the terms of reference for the investigation conducted earlier this year by the minister's department into the collection and retention of organs which was revealed in the estimates committee last week? Is the minister satisfied that that investigation accurately reflected on practices in South Australian hospitals and institutions, and will the minister now release any report of that investigation?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): The honourable member needs to appreciate that there have been a number of different investigations. Some of those arose from letters that were sent to me after this issue was raised in New South Wales and overseas. Basically, after it became a public issue in New South Wales, a number of people raised issues with me, so we asked for an investigation on each of the cases that came up. I also asked the department to determine whether organs and tissues were being held where consent had not been obtained—that was my specific request—and the department prepared a reply for me on that.

In terms of some of the specific letters that were received and where I asked investigations to be carried out, some of those were ongoing for quite some time because a number of answers came back but that left further questions that had to be answered as to what had occurred with some of the organs that had been retained and whether consent had been obtained. Members must appreciate that some of these cases go back a number of years, one in particular being 15 or 16 years ago, and the records for this involved hospitals that no longer exist. We have seen the merger of the Adelaide Children's Hospital and the Queen Victoria Hospital into the Women's and Children's Hospital since then, and that has made it all the more difficult to identify where the records might be and what information is available in those records.

A number of different investigations were undertaken and some of them are still under way at present. There was not just one major investigation, there was a series of investigations, and I am sure that, because of the nature of this, new requests will come in and further investigations will get under way. The issue that was raised yesterday concerned specific allegations that were made and, because of the nature of those allegations, I asked for a formal inquiry through the Solicitor-General. In terms of the matter the honourable member has raised, I stress the fact that there have been a number of personalised investigations and the specific request was made as to whether organs were being held for which consent had not been obtained.

WORKCOVER

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr SCALZI: You can't help yourself, can you? Will the minister advise as to the relative performance of WorkCover?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I thank the member for Hartley for his question relating to WorkCover, which is obviously of enormous interest to both industry and workers. The recent performance of WorkCover is stellar and can be summarised as a \$108 million reduction in costs to business and a fully-funded scheme, which is extremely important in today's context. Also, there are clear and very innovative public information and education campaigns backed up by grants aimed quite specifically at preventing workplace injury, and they have indeed been successful in that they have led to fewer workplace injuries. In fact, there has been a 20 per cent reduction in total claims in the last five years, despite the fact that the labour work force has increased by 10 per cent. That is a very important figure: a 20 per cent reduction in total claims, despite the fact that the number of potential claimants has grown by 10 per cent.

Lastly, it is important to acknowledge that it has a benefit structure system that is recognised as one of the most generous in the country, with relatively high levels of entitlements payable for longer duration in South Australia than for other schemes. Clearly, that means that employers and employees are benefiting from WorkCover's very positive outlook at the moment.

However, I detect a cloud on the horizon; that cloud looks to me as if members opposite increasingly would want to follow their colleagues down disastrous paths for WorkCover if they were to take their lead from interstate colleagues. On ABC radio on 28 June, the member for Lee was asked the direct question: would Labor increase the WorkCover premiums. The member for Lee's answer was, 'No, not necessarily.' The member for Lee, because he is nodding, has identified the potential for increased WorkCover premiums under a potential Labor government. It was not a slip of the tongue or something that the member for Lee regretted: rather, it is actually part of one of the as yet unheard policies. This sent a shudder through the business community because increased WorkCover costs would actually lead to an increase in liability and threaten the very basis of the WorkCover scheme.

As we speak, that situation is very real for members of the employer and employee communities in the Labor states on our eastern seaboard. In Victoria, under the Bracks Labor government, employer levies have increased by almost 17 per cent. The Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry has estimated that this increased impost on Victorian employers will result in up to 5 000 job losses. Well, that is a terrific policy, Mr Bracks!

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart! The House will come back to order.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: With the reintroduction of common law claims and an increase in claims liability, the Victorian scheme's unfunded liability has blown out to \$1.1 billion, and that is a funding ratio of 81 per cent compared to our fully-funded position. This is the stark contrast facing employees in Victoria and is one of which the member for Lee is in favour. Under the Carr Labor government, a similar situation can be seen in New South Wales, where the unfunded liability is \$1.6 billion.

As I pointed out, WorkCover in South Australia is in a rosy state. It has good prevention programs; it has high

benefits to employees; and it has just given a reduction to employers so that they can invest in new plant, employ more people and grow their businesses. The future under that sort of a regime looks positive for WorkCover, provided careful, prudent, sensible management continues to balance finely the interest of the employers and the employees.

HINDMARSH SOCCER STADIUM

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Speaker tell the House whether the motion passed by this House on 28 November last year—that the Auditor-General's report into the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium project will be published and distributed upon presentation to the Speaker—remains valid in the future when parliament is not sitting, including after the parliament is prorogued and, if necessary, during the next state election?

The SPEAKER: I have a view on it at the moment. I would rather give it some thought. I will come back to the House after I research it. I am particularly concerned with the leader's reference to the period after parliament is prorogued and want to give him a correct response. I will take advice and come back to the House at the earliest opportunity.

SUPERANNUATION FUNDS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): My question is directed to the Premier. Has the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia contributed any money whatsoever to the development work being undertaken on The Old Treasury Buildings?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): I will have to seek an answer to the question, which I will do, and I will bring back a reply to the member as soon as possible.

MOTOROLA

Mr CONLON (Elder): Will the Premier commit to releasing the Clayton inquiry report into the Motorola affair within 24 hours of its being received by the Attorney-General, whether or not parliament is sitting, whether or not parliament has been prorogued and whether or not it is during the period of the state election campaign?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN (Premier): All the reports will be out in the public arena well before the election campaign because it is March next year—it is not September as the opposition is trying to pump up.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hart!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest members come to order!

WASTE WATER

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Will the Minister for Water Resources advise the House of the action that the government is taking to both harness and make better use of treated waste water and storm water in South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources): This government recognises water as a vital

resource for South Australians and we are committed to ensuring all the state's water resources are managed in a well considered, coordinated and sustainable manner. In particular, our leading edge knowledge in wetlands creation and aquifer storage and recovery is beginning to deliver real benefits for the community. Last week I went to Northgate (which I believe is in the member for Ross Smith's electorate) to launch the latest ASR development—

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: They were confident that they would vote for him at the next election, so I am not sure; I think it is the new electorate. This project, which will harness the equivalent of 110 Olympic size swimming pools of water each winter for reuse during the hotter months, is backed by the Port Adelaide Enfield Council and A.V. Jennings, and drew upon the expertise and knowledge of the Department of Water Resources. Through it, winter stormwater is filtered through a series of five wetlands before being injected back more than 90 metres to the aquifer below. A number of innovative smaller scale stormwater source control projects have also been built, including the environmentally friendly car park and ASR schemes for St Elizabeth Church at Oaklands Park, the launch of which I believe the Premier and the member for Bright attended.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: My department is also investigating a number of innovative policy concepts with the potential of helping local government increase the re-use of water in building developments and in reducing flooding potential.

Last week—and I come to the interjection—I had a meeting with the chief executive officers of the cities of Adelaide, West Torrens, Burnside and Mitcham to discuss flooding events in Unley in recent months which also have consequences for neighbouring councils. Unfortunately, the Unley CEO was overseas, so he was an apology. The meeting followed the formation of the State Flood Plain Management Committee which, among other things, will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various parties, be they state or local government, catchment authorities or other authorities, in flood prevention and mitigation. The committee has already had two meetings and a number of working groups have also been set up.

The Patawalonga catchment board is also taking a lead role in funding a review of the 1984 flood management plan, and flood risk mapping work is being undertaken and will be completed late in the year.

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Ross Smith!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: This study is vital given the enormous changes that have occurred in the catchment since the mid-80s, including changes to run-off higher up in the council catchment because of urban infill and changes to the drainage networks undertaken by councils. The updated flood risk mapping report will provide vital information that will enable us to develop a master drainage plan to address all flooding issues right across the Patawalonga catchment. As I said earlier, the flooding problems experienced in January and last month are substantially broader than the situation involving just the Unley area, and in fact it is a matter of great concern to the downstream West Torrens council area. However, I am confident that, with a concerted joint approach, my department and the government, together with local government, can put to use much of this valuable water resource which on occasions has caused so much damage.

FISHERIES POLICY DIRECTOR

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries. During estimates, in answer to a question about the appointment of a fisheries policy director, one of the minister's staff said that both major fishing industry bodies in South Australia are represented on the interview panel for that position. Can the minister advise the composition of that interview panel?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): That was the advice given by the officers on the day. As the member probably knows, the appointment of executive directors within departments is a matter for the CEO and ministers are not to interfere.

EXPORTS, RURAL AND REGIONAL

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House the significance of South Australia's rural and regional areas in achieving continued economic success for the state, particularly in terms of export growth?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Deputy Premier): Certainly the member for Flinders' beloved Eyre Peninsula is making a major contribution to the export growth that the Premier outlined in reply to the first question today. The export performance for the last 12 months to the end of April has been outstanding, and we are all proud of the contribution that regional areas have actually made to that performance. Once again, the wine industry is the star act, achieving another 24 per cent increase over the 12 months. It is really bringing a lot of prosperity to many regions within the state. Added to that are the contributions made by some other industries, such as the meat industry, which is up by 56 per cent—a real recovery; wheat, up by 25 per cent; wool, up by 36 per cent; fishing, up by 15 per cent; and mining, up by 31 per cent.

Of course, in relation to the grain industry, five record seasons in six years means that rural areas are making a major contribution. That is not just a major contribution to exports but also a contribution to employment and prosperity in many areas across the state. There are some good basic reasons for that happening. Entrepreneurs in the regions are adopting a far greater export culture than they had in the past; a commitment to R&D technology within South Australia is delivering results; there have been substantial improvements in land use and a lot of value-adding has been introduced over the last few years; industry has a focus on key premium markets; and exporters, through a range of means, are working collaboratively through delegations with some of the industry chambers and with forums such as Food Adelaide to ensure that we tackle the high value markets in order to maximise returns. Of course, a focus on new industries, as the member for Flinders is well aware, through the involvement of aquaculture on Eyre Peninsula is also building the figures quickly. The figures are great news but these are not just figures on paper: they are starting to deliver a real difference in regional areas of South Australia.

FRUIT FLY

Ms KEY (Hanson): My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries and Resources. On 30 May this year the Environment, Resources and Development Committee was told by Mr Barry Windle, Director of Food

and Fibre, that it was the intention of both the CEO, Dennis Mutton, and the minister to engage an external, independent consultant to lead a broad-ranging and comprehensive review of the state's fruit fly program for both the Mediterranean and the Queensland fruit flies. Mr Windle also reported not only that the consultant would lead the review process but that the community reference panel—a stakeholder reference panel—would also be established. Can the minister outline the process undertaken to engage a consultant and say who the successful independent consultant is; how much has been budgeted for this review; the terms of reference; the expected completion date of the review; and the members of the community stakeholders reference group?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I advise the House that, on questions without notice, it is usual to ask one question. The chair is tolerant of perhaps one, two or three questions, but a question such as that would be far better being put on notice.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Minister for Primary Industries and Resources): I thank the member for an important question. Obviously, it was a very detailed question, and I will get that information. The consultant has been appointed, and I will obtain the name for the member: I knew it a couple of weeks ago but I do not want to make a mistake, as she would understand. We would like to have the report and start moving by the end of August so that measures are well and truly in place by next year. But, basically, we want to have a good look at all the operations as they have taken place in the past. We want to take the whole operation apart, have a look at the world's best way of doing a lot of the fruit fly work, fit sterile Mediterranean fruit fly into the program to try to reduce the amount of spraying, and look at education and communication—the whole box and dice. We need to keep South Australia free from Mediterranean fruit fly—there is no doubt about that—and, for that to be sustainable, we will have to do so in a way that is acceptable to the general public. I fully understand that. I make a commitment to the House that that review will be extremely thorough and that, at the other end of the review, there will be an operation next year which meets the needs of both industry and home gardeners by keeping fruit fly out but which also meets the expectations of today's community.

SOLAR HOT WATER REBATE SCHEME

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Can the Minister for Minerals and Energy inform the House of the details of the level of public response to the government's new solar hot water rebate scheme?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I thank the member for Colton for his question. All my colleagues on this side are well aware of the member for Colton's keen, enthusiastic interest in the environment, particularly in the area of solar energy. I have much pleasure in advising the House, in response to the member's question, that the scheme—which officially commenced just two days ago and is administered by Energy SA—had resulted in 434 inquiries as at noon today regarding the rebate. The fact that 434 South Australians have responded enthusiastically to the program to date is indeed a strong indication that South Australians want and are enthusiastically embracing such a scheme.

Under the scheme, South Australian residents who purchase a new solar hot water system, or retro-fit kit, for domestic purposes and install it at their principal place of

residence are eligible for a rebate of either \$500 or \$700, depending upon the type of system that they install, and subject to the system's fitting specified categories. The government is making an information package available to any person considering the purchase of a solar hot water system, and those 434 inquirers would have had the opportunity to have such a package sent to them.

The package outlines the program as well as the criteria that apply to be eligible for the rebate. Application forms are conveniently available on the internet and are also available in hard copy format, either over the telephone from Energy SA or, alternatively, through personal visit to the Energy SA advisory centre on the ground floor of 101 Grenfell Street in the city. Once the solar hot water system, or retro-fit kit, has been installed, owners have two options: they can either complete an application form, send it to Energy SA and have their rebate sent to them; or, alternatively, they can lodge their application form with the manufacturer or installer, who will, if they wish, provide the rebate up-front and lodge the form subsequently. If the manufacturer or supplier does that, eligibility criteria assessment is their responsibility: if they make a mistake, it is at their risk. But, importantly, despite that, manufacturers and suppliers have been very keen to participate in the scheme in this manner. We expect that this will contribute to a strong uptake of South Australians wanting to take advantage of this rebate.

In addition to the government rebate, South Australians can also receive a further rebate or compensation benefit from the installation of solar hot water systems because they are also eligible for renewable energy credits which have applied since 1 April to a whole variety of renewable technologies. At the moment, each renewable energy credit has a market value of between \$25 and \$30. As an example, a 220 litre Solahart system at this time receives 17 credits—so, 17 credits at a sale price of \$25 to \$30 each is giving South Australians further incentive to install solar hot water systems which are now competitive with conventional systems.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I wish to speak about a group in our community which is doing an amazing job under very difficult circumstances, and that is grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. It appears that this group is, unfortunately, increasing as families break down. With the emphasis on keeping families together in some way, even if it is not the immediate family, the grandparents are very quickly brought into situations where children are in distress.

These situations arise for many reasons, none of them pleasant. It can be because of violence in the children's home, alcohol or drug abuse, the death of a parent or the illness of a parent. This would be a long-term illness which means that the parent is no longer able to care for their child. Sometimes the arrangement is made almost informally. One of the grandparents I have met who is in this circumstance received a call from their six year old grandson on a Sunday, and the child said, 'Granddad, come and get me.' This six year old child had been chucked out of the home by his parents, and could think only of his grandparents as someone who could care for him and give him some form of home. Imagine the impact on both a child and grandparents, when they have to

go and pick up a child on a Sunday afternoon, clothe them, feed them and accommodate them.

There are many areas where government programs, both commonwealth and state, do not take account of the sort of situation that arises when grandparents are suddenly faced with caring for their grandchildren. The financial area, of course, is the one that is felt most acutely. Eligibility for Centrelink payments does not really fit into the situation that these grandparents experience. Many of these people have retired or are approaching retirement. They have made financial decisions on the basis of what they would expect to do in their old age, not on the basis of having to engage in the extra expense that having children in the home means. This comes at a basic level in terms of housing also. Grandparents have often downsized their home and, suddenly, they find that they have to accommodate one, two, three or even more children in a small home.

There are problems, as we all know, with public housing, and grandparents who have not been awarded formal custody of their grandchildren by the Family Court have even greater difficulties in obtaining housing through the Housing Trust than do those who have formal custody. The issue of formal custody and legal guardianship presents so many difficulties for grandparents. Some people have found that they have to take out loans to pay legal bills in order to gain some status under the Family Court so that they can do simple things such as sign medical consent forms or take their grandchildren interstate or overseas.

Education is complex, as are all areas of caring for a child. We know that the task of parenting is difficult when a person is young and energetic, but when people are at a stage in life when their own health might be fading and when they have put aside much of the day-to-day cunning that is needed in dealing with children, grandparents can be faced with incredibly difficult situations. Schools do not always have the resources available to deal with the difficult behaviour of some of these children after the trauma that they have been through. It is often difficult for the grandparents to gain access to the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service. Its waiting lists are extremely long, as we know.

Grandparents have the extra stress of trying to parent these children and trying to support them through a very different education system from the one they knew, while still trying to maintain a life of their own. As one can imagine, over-50s centres do not have child-care facilities. Grandparents often lose their own social contacts with their own friends—it is difficult to undertake joint activities when the grandparent has to race off at 3 o'clock to collect children.

Time expired.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am pleased to take part in this grievance debate—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: And I am delighted that the honourable member is here. He is obviously somewhat agitated because his guiding light, the honourable member for Spence, has suffered a severe rebuff in his involvement with the Australian Workers Union elections. I have here a copy of the Australian Electoral Commission summary of the election. It is headed 'Australian Workers Union Greater South Australian Branch', and is dated 26 June 2001 by the returning officer.

The honourable member for Spence spent a great deal of time and effort campaigning for this election and if this is a result of his election campaigning the honourable member for

Ross Smith will bolt it in at the next election. I think that he does not have much to fear—

Mr Atkinson: You won't be here.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: We know that the honourable member and his little friends are spending thousands of dollars of the Shop Assistants Union's money—all those kids out there working at McDonald's and those sorts of places are paying their union fees and the member for Spence and his colleagues are out there spending it, to have someone run around the state trying to make a good fellow of himself. I do not want to get sidetracked, because I have four minutes, and I think it is important—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Venning): Order! The member for Peake is out of order.

Mr Atkinson: He'll have you for supper. You won't be here.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Atkinson: All good things come to an end.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The member for Spence is out of order.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is dead right, the member for Spence. In this ballot that the honourable member for Spence became involved in—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: We have already had a statutory declaration to say that the honourable member was out there. In the ballot for the position of Branch Secretary, Delegate to National Executive and Delegate to National Conference, Mr O'Connor received 1 239 votes. Mr Hanson, the incumbent, received 2 505; he doubled the vote. Let me go on. With respect to the Branch Assistant Secretary, the member for Spence's candidate, Mr Thomas, received 1 272 votes and Mr Frank Mateos received 2 468 votes. Then we go down—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No, I am just keeping the House up to date, because this has created a great deal of interest. Then we come down to the Organiser, Branch Executive. All the candidates supported by the honourable member missed out, and those who were elected were Mr Braithwaite, Mr Kane, Mr Degenhardt and so on. Then we come down to Vice President. They had to elect two, and we have Ian Charles Nitz and John Howard O'Neill, and the honourable member's colleagues again missed out. Then, of course, we come to the branch executives, and they missed out again. There were up to 11 positions, and they missed out. The same took place with respect to the position of Delegate to the National Conference. Mr Christopher Brown was elected and the honourable member's—

Mr Atkinson: I supported him.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is the only one. He got one. We have seen the honourable member's how-to-vote card. It was a most interesting result and, obviously, the honourable member for Ross Smith will be sleeping a lot easier knowing that the campaigning tactics of the member for Spence have failed miserably. The second matter that I want to talk about today is—

Mr Atkinson: There is another? Have you finished on that one?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I think that we have put on the record what is necessary. The other matter is that I think that members of this House ought to wholeheartedly support the freeholding of all tourist land. When people want to develop land for tourist operations, they should not have to put up

with native title claims or other sorts of activities that will stop them from investing in and expanding their operations because, at the end of the day, it is very important—and we know that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition tried to do a job on the farmers in relation to that, the perpetual leaseholders. We know that. She went running off to the Farmers Federation wanting them to back off, we know all that, and we will tell all the perpetual leaseholders at the appropriate time. But it is very important—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is all right for the honourable member.

Time expired.

Mr SNELLING (Playford): When parliament last sat I spoke about the powers given by the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1983 to medical practitioners to retain tissues in the event of a coronial autopsy. What I was not in a position to reveal at that time was that this became apparent to me because of an inquiry from a constituent, Mrs Pina Arcangeli, whose daughter was killed quite tragically in a car accident in 1982. Mrs Arcangeli has since decided to go public with her story. Her daughter Julie, who was killed on Montague Road in 1982, was taken to hospital and pronounced dead.

A coronial autopsy was conducted without the knowledge of Mrs Arcangeli. Mrs Arcangeli discovered that this autopsy had been done only when she came to prepare her daughter's body for burial. This quite traumatised her at the time. She made complaints and she thought that was the end of the matter. Earlier this year, because of the furor in New South Wales and the United Kingdom about the retention of organs, she made some inquiries, only to discover that this had in fact happened in the case of her own daughter. It turned out that her daughter's brain had been retained and later destroyed and that other tissues had been kept and remained in storage. I am happy to say that those other tissues that were in storage have been returned to Mrs Arcangeli and have been committed for burial.

The minister must address this obvious flaw in the Transplantation and Anatomy Act that gives such broad powers for the retention of tissues in the event of a coronial autopsy. These are powers to retain tissues for purposes other than establishing cause of death. I think that, provided it is done with the knowledge of the next of kin for the purposes of establishing cause of death, retaining tissues is probably reasonable, but the act goes much further than that and gives these very broad powers to retain tissues for scientific and therapeutic purposes. The act further needs to enshrine as a principle that tissues should be retained only with either the prior consent of the person who has died or the consent of the senior next of kin, for purposes other than establishing cause of death.

I think it would be a great shame if this affair resulted in a general loss of confidence in the post-mortem procedure. I for one firmly believe that the post-mortem is an essential part of good medical practice in establishing cause of death, determining if a patient received the very best medical treatment and establishing whether future deaths can be prevented, but using autopsy as an opportunity to harvest organs for purposes other than establishing cause of death is a breach of trust. I look forward to the minister's bringing to this House some firm proposals to end this practice so that no more grieving mothers are put through what my constituent,

Mrs Arcangeli, has had to go through over the past few months.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Members may recall that a year ago this week I presented to this House some petitions signed by more than 3 800 persons objecting to a proposal to construct two seawalls and to deny free and unrestricted access along the foreshore of the Cape Elizabeth area in the northern part of Yorke Peninsula. I must say that I am very pleased that the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning, the Hon. Diana Laidlaw, has now announced that tenure of the beach and Crown land will not be transferred to the group which was seeking to build those seawalls and restrict public access, namely, Earth Sanctuaries. As a result, public access to the beach is now assured for future generations. It has been a long saga. In fact, it goes back to 1993, when the previous council, the District Council of Central Yorke Peninsula, was involved, receiving petitions from persons in the Cape Elizabeth area.

For the information of members, the group Tiparra Sanctuary, which was owned by Earth Sanctuaries Limited, sought permission to construct two walls, one north of Cape Elizabeth and some 3.5 kilometres south of Port Hughes extending into the sea for 540 metres, and southern wall, some 120 metres in length, to enable them to have an extensive sanctuary area. The proposal may have sounded as being one of interest for the area, but I can assure you that it had major repercussions, principally because it would exclude access to more than 20 kilometres of beach by the general public. I for one could not support such a proposal when in my opinion the beach is there for public access and is a publicly owned part of this state and this country. I certainly was totally opposed to blocking the free access to the beach in the Cape Elizabeth area.

Members or persons who have been to the Cape Elizabeth area would note that it contains some of the most beautiful and pristine beaches on Yorke Peninsula. I had the opportunity to visit there again on Friday of last week and to be with one of the persons who has done so much to seek to protect that area, namely, Mr Terry Wilkinson. I thank Mr Wilkinson for all he has done over quite some years now. I know that he is very pleased that the minister has announced that tenure of the beach and Crown land will not be transferred to Earth Sanctuaries. This means that any Development Assessment Commission assessment of the proposal for the construction of the seawalls will not now proceed. In fact, I have been informed that Earth Sanctuaries has now withdrawn the application for development from the Development Assessment Commission.

This situation has required a lot of work and effort. I took the Minister for Environment and Heritage there well over a year ago to look at the area personally and show him, together with some others, exactly what the beach and the area were like and to suggest alternative proposals. The minister considered the results of his observation in due course and, in more recent times, the Minister for Urban Planning has had to make the final decision. It has been a long saga and I believe the decision has been made in the best interests of the people of South Australia and Yorke Peninsula. I am pleased that at least free and unrestricted access to the beach can now continue for future generations.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Fairly recently this parliament passed a raft of new road traffic laws complying with national road laws. I strongly

supported those laws and think the establishment of national road rules is a very practical step. However, while more or less in common use, some of those rules were not well understood by the motoring public. In particular, the rules regarding roundabouts are obviously not well understood by motorists. Many motorists are unaware of the new traffic laws, and the fact that some people are still not complying with those new laws has recently attracted some media publicity.

There is a great deal of confusion about when you should use indicators on a roundabout, as well as when you are entering and exiting a roundabout. Constituents who have come to see me about this are most unhappy with the way motorists are not obeying this law, and they are also most unhappy with the quality of advice that is available from the department of road transport on this matter. They are asking for clear, widely available explanations of these important road traffic laws. It is interesting that, when the government seems very willing to put out colour pamphlets to publicise government activities, when we see a series of TV ads in prime time featuring and indeed promoting the Premier, and when we have sponsorship of TV programs and therefore a great deal of money being spent on basically empty promotional exercises for the government, we have yet to see any sorely needed programs that explain traffic rules and regulations, particularly regarding roundabouts.

This is one application of TV and other advertising on which the opposition would not quarrel with the government's spending a great deal of money so that the citizens of South Australia understand road traffic laws and obey them and so that everyone knows clearly where they are going. However, the government chooses not to spend its money on this sort of advertising: it chooses to spend it on purely puff pieces and promotional advertising, and I think that is a very great shame. There has been a long-term trend in the reduction of fatalities on the road but there is still a great deal of trouble with road accidents, particularly serious road accidents, leading to injury and economic loss.

For the government to spend money not on such worthy educational programs but on promotional pieces is an illustration of how little the government takes seriously the idea of informing the public through its advertising dollars. The Labor Party has called on the government many times to develop appropriate guidelines with the Auditor-General to get some bipartisan action on advertising, and this is an example of where the public is crying out for some information and not getting it from the government.

The government could do quite a lot more to educate drivers. A great deal of money is collected through fines for speeding and other road traffic infringements, and the RAA and other organisations have long complained that not enough of that is put back into motorists. The education of drivers, particularly those who have transgressed in a serious way, is one way in which the government could look to improve conditions on our roads and to reduce the incidence of road trauma and accidents. Several very interesting education programs have been suggested, and I think that this is one area at which governments could have a serious look.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources): I grieve today not in my capacity as Minister for Water Resources, although it is a related matter, but as member for Unley about the recent flooding events in a series of creeks around Unley. It has been a major trauma to many of my electors, and it arises partly because of historic

happenstance and unfortunately also because of a series of situations which might with hindsight have been avoided.

As you, Mr Deputy Speaker, would know, for some years governments, including those prior to this government, have pursued a policy of urban infill and that, among other developments in the city of Adelaide, has meant that the historic creeks now quite clearly flow at greater capacity. At peak times, the flow in the creeks is probably greater than it has been at any time taking into account prior European settlement. That is because of the roads, because of the roofs and because of the increasing proximity of houses. Where once in Burnside or Unley a suburban block may have measured 100 by 150 and a house roof covered a quarter of that area, now it is most likely that there will be two or three house roofs and paving covering the entire block, and that results in almost 100 per cent run-off from that block and many other blocks like it in the area.

The consequences of that downstream the residents of Unley have had cause to rue. Some of the creeks are now running so high that the drains off major roads such as Unley Road cease to function. The water runs higher than the outlet for the drain—

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson: Are you saying that Bragg is sending water down to you?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: In response to the member for Bragg's interjection, it is difficult to apportion blame, but in fairness to the honourable member I acknowledge that I attended with him the opening of a water retention basin in Glenside—I believe that you, sir, may have been minister—and the City Manager of Burnside told me last week that, because of that water retention, they are discharging into the Adelaide parklands similar volumes of water as would have been discharged by the creek in the 1960s. So, it is not fair for me to say simplistically that Burnside is responsible—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Peake is in the chamber, and I am glad he is, because I am told that the last rainfall event was about 15 minutes short of a disaster for his electorate. The problem for his electorate and mine is that the creeks come out of Burnside and the slight uplands areas of the eastern suburbs, but the area between Unley, the member for Peake's electorate and discharge to the sea is very flat, so if the creeks in those areas start to overflow they can overflow over vast distances and cause massive damage.

The purpose of this grievance is to highlight the problem and to point out again to the House, as I did in reply to a question in question time, that it behoves members like myself in my capacity as member for Unley and the member for Peake to join in working with local government. The member for Peake asked by way of interjection in question time, which I did not answer, 'Who is responsible?', and it is quite clear that the primary responsibility for flood mitigation and the prevention of flood damage rests with local government. It is a statutory responsibility. It may well be that the catchment management boards have an additional responsibility, but I believe—and only a court of law can test it—that would be minimal. However, it does not mean that the catchment management board, I as the present Minister for Water Resources and every member in this House should not seek to work with local government to come up with better solutions.

The member for Norwood has joined us and, in the estimates committee, the honourable member asked a number of questions on these issues, and I will repeat what I said to her on that occasion. The catchment management subsidy

scheme was a small scheme which in some ways may well have contributed to this problem because of the quantity of money involved. Rather than take a whole of catchment approach, by taking a council-by-council approach, the problem was fixed in one area but, by fixing a problem in one area, it is often simply transferred to a lower stream area. In question time I was speaking about the fact that we need a combined effort.

Time expired.

PROTECTION OF MARINE WATERS (PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

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

Australia is a signatory to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships ("MARPOL") and Australian States are expected to implement MARPOL resolutions once ratified. South Australia has, to date, met its obligations through the *Protection of Marine Waters (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1987* (previously known as the *Pollution of Waters by Oil and Noxious Substances Act 1987*) and the regulations made under that Act.

This legislation has, for some time, implemented Annexes I and II of MARPOL, which deal with pollution by oil and pollution by noxious liquid substances carried in bulk. Annex III of MARPOL, which relates to the disposal of harmful substances carried by sea in packaged form, and Annex V of MARPOL, which regulates the disposal of garbage, were adopted by the amendments in the *Pollution of Waters by Oil and Noxious Substances (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 1998*, which came into operation on 10 September 2000 in accordance with section 7(5) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1915*.

The International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code contains the desired labelling, packaging and stowage requirements for numerous harmful substances necessary for the effective implementation of Annex III but as the Code is not made under State or Commonwealth legislation it cannot be adopted with the existing regulation making powers. An amendment to the regulation making powers of the Act is therefore necessary to enable the highly technical and prescriptive standards of the Code to be adopted and incorporated in the regulations under the Act.

The purpose of the *Protection of Marine Waters (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2001* is to make the necessary amendments to the regulation making powers of the Act and to introduce other provisions to improve the general effectiveness of the Act. These provisions are described below.

The Bill amends the definition of a "prescribed incident" that requires reporting to include such incidents as a grounding or fire, which may lead to the pollution of State waters. This is necessary to remain consistent with amendments to Protocol 1 of MARPOL.

The Bill also addresses problems in prosecuting the master and owner of a vessel which spills oil or a noxious liquid substance as a result of damage to a vessel caused through negligence. Currently, under MARPOL, the master and owner of a ship are essentially only liable to prosecution if they acted with intent to cause damage, or acted recklessly and with knowledge that damage would probably result. This means that acts that are merely negligent currently do not give rise to liability for prosecution under the MARPOL Convention.

An example of an incident that could be attributed to the negligence of the master or owner of a vessel would be where damage to the vessel occurs as a result of the navigation of the vessel in State waters without appropriate navigation charts for the area. Another example is that of negligence by omission to undertake routine maintenance of a vessel which subsequently suffers damage as a result of the omission. South Australia has experienced both of these scenarios in recent times but fortunately on those occasions no oil was spilt.

In 1998 the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) advised that there had been little response from the other international parties to MARPOL in support of the issue of negligence. However, AMSA advised that the New Zealand legislation, which adopts MARPOL, approached the issue of negligence from a different perspective. I am advised that amendments to Commonwealth legislation were introduced into the Federal Parliament on 4 April 2001 to address the issue of negligence along similar lines to that of New Zealand.

Queensland's Parliament amended the Queensland *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995* in mid 2000 to address, amongst other things, the issue of negligence.

In light of the Queensland legislation, and the proposed Commonwealth amendments, an amendment to the South Australian Act, at this time, to address negligence is appropriate.

The Bill also establishes a maximum corporate penalty of \$1 000 000 for the discharge of oil or oily mixture into State waters from an apparatus which is defined in the Act as a pipeline, a structure on land or a receptacle used for the storage of oil used in the exploration for or recovery of oil. Whilst pollution from an apparatus is not covered by MARPOL, it is appropriate that the proposed penalty be the same as that applicable to pollution of State waters by oil or noxious substances from a ship.

In the event of an oil or hazardous substance spill in State waters the Government responds using the South Australian Marine Spill Contingency Action Plan to contain the spill, mitigate damage to the environment and clean-up the spill. The Bill provides indemnity from liability for Crown employees and agents directed to take action under the Plan.

The Government will consider whether any further amendments to the *Protection of Marine Waters (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1987* are required after the completion of legal proceedings against Mobil for the July 1999 oil spill at Port Stanvac. In the interim, this legislation will further strengthen the accountability of those involved in the operation of vessels, or other apparatus, for any pollution which may result from their actions.

I commend this bill to honourable members.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 8—Prohibition of discharge of oil or oily mixtures into State waters

Section 8 of the current Act provides, subject to three exceptions, that the master and owner of a ship are guilty of an offence if there is a discharge of oil into State waters. One of the exceptions, is if the oil escaped in consequence of damage, other than intentional damage, to the ship or its equipment. Intentional damage is defined as damage arising in circumstances in which the master or owner of the ship acted with intent to cause the damage or acted recklessly with knowledge that damage would probably result. The proposed amendment provides that if the damage arises as the result of a negligent act or omission on the part of the master or owner of the ship then, as in the situation where the damage is intentional damage, the master and owner will be guilty of an offence. The proposed amendment also makes the master and owner guilty of an offence if the intentional, reckless or negligent damage resulted from an action of an employee or agent of the master or owner.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 18—Prohibition of discharge of substances into State waters

This clause provides the same amendment to section 18 as clause 3 provides to section 8 but whereas section 8 deals with the discharge of oil into State waters, section 18 is in relation to the discharge of a noxious liquid substance.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 25A—Duty to report certain incidents
Section 25A of the principal Act provides the manner in which a 'prescribed incident' must be notified. The proposed amendment broadens the definition of a 'prescribed incident'.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 26—Discharge of oil into waters from vehicles, etc.

Clause 6 alters the current penalty for the discharge of oil from an apparatus into State waters from a flat penalty of \$200 000 to a penalty of \$200 000 if the offender is a natural person and \$1 000 000 if the offender is a body corporate.

Clause 7: Insertion of s. 28A

Clause 7 inserts a new provision into the Act to provide for a *South Australian Marine Spill Contingency Action Plan*. This Plan is to set out the action to be taken where there has been or there is likely to be a discharge to which the Act applies.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 40—Immunity

The current Act provides for the immunity of inspectors acting under the Act. The proposed clause extends this immunity to any other employee or agent of the Crown engaged in the administration or enforcement of the Act for an act or omission in good faith in the exercise or purported exercise of a power or in the discharge or purported discharge of a duty under the Act. A liability that would ordinarily attach to a person attaches instead to the Crown.

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 43—Prescribing matters by reference to other instruments

Section 43 of the principal Act provides that regulations or orders under the Act may make provision for a matter by applying, adopting or incorporating any regulations, rules, codes, orders, instructions or other subordinate legislation made, determined or issued under any other Act or under any Commonwealth Act. Clause 9 proposes extending this to include any code published by the International Maritime Organisation. The clause also provides that if a document is applied, adopted or incorporated in the regulations or orders a copy of it must be kept available for inspection by members of the public at an office determined by the Minister, and evidence of its contents may be given in any legal proceedings by production of a document apparently certified by the Minister to be a true copy of the document.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

A quorum having been formed:

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GROUND WATER RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH-EAST

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee be extended until Wednesday 25 July.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON (Bragg): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

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

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): It gives me great pleasure to rise to talk about the estimates committees hearings that were held detailing expenditure by the government. I was on the estimates committee when corrections

minister Brokenshire and his Chief Executive Officer, John Paget, were asked questions.

I have been contacted by a number of current and former prison guards who work in correctional services who say that correctional services are in crisis. They have talked about our prisons being in crisis. They have talked about the doubling up in cells. I have been told of paedophiles being housed together in the same cell and of prisoners being forced to sleep on the floor. I have been told that the operations of kitchens in prisons are so bad that lock downs have become more frequent because of the threat of riots. I have been told of prisoners being held at Mobilong prison when the local community was told that such criminals would not be held there.

I was told of a number of situations that led me to ask the minister a number of questions and, to be quite honest, I received satisfactory answers from the Chief Executive Officer, John Paget, but unsatisfactory answers from the minister. One example that I raised was the procedure of counselling prisoners in Yatala when they are caught with drugs in their cells. After a search of a cell in which drugs of a non-intravenous type are found, such as cannabis or something that is taken orally, rather than the drugs being confiscated and the prisoners being reprimanded, with the matter then being reported to the police, prisoners are simply sat at the end of their beds by the prison staff and asked, 'Did you have a hard day? Did you receive a phone call from outside the system perhaps from a member of the family that has caused you problems?' or, 'Why have you taken these drugs? Is there any way that we can help?' Those are the questions prisoners are asked rather than questions they should be asked, such as, 'Who supplied the drugs? Where did you get them?' and charges being laid.

The minister speaks very eloquently about how Labor is soft on drugs and has no real law and order policy but the current government's policy is to allow prisoners to smoke drugs in their cells. The minister was quite shocked—as was the Attorney-General—by the honest answers given by John Paget during the estimates committees when speaking about the two different policies towards drugs. It was an astonishing admission by the government. I am not sure whether the minister is aware of the policy in the prison system that any intravenous drugs found in the prisons are immediately confiscated and charges are laid but that, with any other form of drugs found, such as cannabis and so on, more often than not no charges are laid. This is a totally unacceptable form of law enforcement in our prisons under the current minister's watch—and it has to end. We see the hypocrisy of the minister's getting up in this House and talking about Labor's apparent lack of commitment to getting drugs off our streets and reducing the number of marijuana plants people can grow in their backyards when, in his own prisons, the use of drugs is not properly dealt with.

Another issue that I understand is of great importance to corrections officers working in the system, who are under great stress and hardship, is the number of people working in the kitchens who have sexually transmitted diseases. I am not saying that people should be discriminated against because they have a sexually transmitted disease but some diseases are so transmittable and infectious that people with these diseases should not be working with food. Even though the Correctional Services Department has a policy of complete secrecy about who has sexually transmittable diseases, these things have a way of getting around a prison through the nurses, doctors, staff or whoever. No system is foolproof, as

the government would know with the leaks that come out with its cabinet submissions.

Currently, there are prisoners who have diseases such as hepatitis working in the kitchens. This has caused many problems in our prison system and at times has put the lives of correctional services officers at risk during riots because of violence breaking out as a result of prisoners working in the kitchens. I am not saying that people with the HIV virus cannot work with food, because that is obviously not true. With proper treatment, people with HIV can obviously lead quite a normal life without the level of prejudice that is unfortunately otherwise attached to it. The problem we have is that the minister and the government do not even acknowledge the problems in our prison system.

I was told another interesting fact by prison guards relating to a social worker employed by Correctional Services who, I understand, was caught having an affair with a prisoner—and I will not mention any names—and has been put off work for three months with pay while under investigation. I understand that this social worker has been quite substantially compromised within our prison system with regard to bringing contraband into the prison. I hope that the minister deals with this matter personally and gets involved. I understand that some prisoners—as publicised in the *Advertiser*—have brought mobile telephones and SIM cards into our prisons. In fact, one prisoner had a laptop computer with a modem in their prison cell close to the cell of a person who had a mobile telephone.

The prison was aware that this person had a laptop and a modem but were unconcerned because they thought that the prisoner had no access to a telephone line to transmit emails or access the internet. I have no evidence but I understand that the matter is under investigation. I will dig more deeply into that matter but I believe that an investigation is taking place into whether or not these two prisoners colluded to form a web site so as to communicate via email with overseas drug traffickers bringing drugs into Australia. If it is true that a prisoner can have a laptop with a modem in their cell with access to the internet, this minister has a lot to answer for in relation to the government's law and order policy and the way prisoners are treated. Under a Labor government, I can tell you there will be no laptops with modems and mobile telephones in prisons. This laptop was not sneaked into the prison; the bureaucracy was aware that the prisoner had a laptop and a modem—and that is a disgrace.

Another account I have heard from within our prison system relates to the incarceration of former magistrate, Liddy, who I understand is being kept in solitary confinement on suicide watch in G Division (I may be wrong as to whether or not it is G Division) under 24 hour surveillance. Until Mr Liddy's incarceration in Yatala, the practice for prisoners on 24 hour surveillance suicide watch was that they were held in a padded cell with a perspex glass door (or something similar that is see-through) with the cell light on and a prison guard sitting outside the cell observing the prisoner 24 hours a day. When Mr Liddy was put in the cell and the light was left on overnight, someone ordered that an infra-red night vision camera be installed in the cell so that lights could be turned off and Mr Liddy could get some sleep—a night light for Mr Liddy!

During the estimates committees, we were told that the reason that the night vision camera was put in the cell was so that the guard would not have to sit outside the cell for 24 hours a day because he could be better utilised elsewhere. It has now come to my knowledge that even though the night

vision camera has been installed at great expense to the taxpayer, the prison guard is still sitting there for surveillance 24 hours a day. If I am wrong about this, I will apologise. I will be the first to get up and say that I was wrong. So far, though, I have had no evidence that I am wrong about these accusations. Our prison system is in dire need of help.

Rather than grandstanding and talking about how Labor is soft on crime and drugs, maybe the minister should look in his own backyard and at his own policies and what is happening in his prison system. No-one wants to see drugs in our prisons or the brave men and women who work in Correctional Services put at risk because of bad management. No-one wants to see preferential treatment for prisoners because the government has a secret policy of allowing prisoners to smoke drugs. That is a disgrace. I think the minister probably agrees with me and I hope he does something about it, because I am very concerned about the way we are treating our prisoners. Any member of the public caught with narcotics or drugs would be charged and arrested but, for prisoners caught with non-intravenous drugs, a different policy applies. That is simply not acceptable, and I think most government backbenchers would agree with me.

I think that very few people would agree that we should be allowing drugs in our prisons. We hear a lot of hype and propaganda from the government's media unit about how the government is tough on drugs and how hard it is working to keep drugs out of our prison system. During the estimates committees, we heard a very different story. I think it is outrageous.

Another issue that comes out of the estimates committees relates to flooding and stormwater management raised by the member for Unley. During its term, this government has cut by half the allocation of grants to councils for stormwater management. The member for Unley's electorate, my electorate of Peake and the inner western suburbs are at serious risk of flood. Only two weeks ago, the western suburbs were about 15 minutes away from complete and utter disaster. If that rain had continued and we had had a one in 25 year rain event, our stormwater system would not have coped: West Beach, Lockleys, Mile End and Cowandilla would have been under water. The simple reason for this is the Patawalonga and the extension to the Adelaide Airport runway. The government and this Premier talked about increasing exports, increasing tourism and making the airport a focus. They were all very good ideas, but very short-sighted vision, because, due to the way in which they managed the extension to the runway, they put nearly 10 000 homes at risk of flooding. The Patawalonga Creek was filled in to extend the runway and no measures were taken to take care of the excess stormwater run-off.

I am not saying it is all the responsibility of the government. Obviously, councils and planning laws have a lot to do with the way in which we manage our stormwater. The member for Unley made a very good point when he said that 30 years ago most people had rainwater tanks on their quarter acre block, so much of the run-off was being stored in people's backyards. Unfortunately, today's engineers when building homes work out the fastest way of getting the water off the property and into our stormwater system. It cannot cope, and we are finding a banking up of water. Currently, the West Torrens Council, in partnership with the state government, is laying a series of stormwater pipes in the Brooklyn Park area to cope with this problem. However, they cannot use those pipes because they are closed and, if they had opened them two weeks ago, West Beach would have been

flooded completely. I am not talking about people's front yards being flooded; rather, I am talking about their being up to their knees in water.

The problem we have is that West Beach is on a slightly higher gradient than the Adelaide Airport. The water has nowhere to go. Even when it is not raining at West Beach but it is raining farther up, the water does not necessarily flow down from the roads; the stormwater pipes overflow out onto the road and into their homes. The problem the residents have is that their insurance will not cover them for this; and, if the insurance companies do cover them, whom do they sue? The state government will blame local government, and local government will blame the state government.

I believe the person responsible for the great problems of flooding in Unley and West Torrens is Minister Laidlaw. When Minister Laidlaw oversaw the extension of the runway, she did not make adequate provision for stormwater run-off. It is her responsibility; the buck stops with her. Neither the council nor the member for Unley caused this problem; Minister Laidlaw did. Minister Laidlaw has to step up to the plate and say 'I am responsible for this; I will fix it.' The council is doing everything it can. It is working with residents and with me—I have a good working relationship with the council—to ensure that we do what we can in relation to stormwater management.

Currently, the West Torrens Council is sitting on funds that it cannot use because it cannot get agreement from the state government on how to spend this money to alleviate stormwater management. The Minister for Transport has to take responsibility for the mistakes she has made in not adequately coping with the stormwater run-off because of the Patawalonga Creek's being filled in. The state government should be taking this on, but of course it will not do so. It will leave it to us to fix when we are in government after the next election, but we have to start now.

I am encouraged by the words of the member for Unley in his grievance debate about working with local government, because he and I both have excellent working relationships with our two local mayors—we are all very good, close personal friends—and we want to work together for the betterment of both our constituencies. Unfortunately, Minister Laidlaw does not have such a good working relationship with the local councils and is trying to bury her head in the sand and not take responsibility for what is happening in terms of stormwater management.

The other point I raise about estimates is the nature of the questioning. I was quite disappointed with the questioning that I heard from government members. Quite obviously, it was an orchestrated response to the government's budget. Government members would walk in with their folders containing numbered questions which had been written for them by the respective departments and the minister—dorothy dixer questions asking silly inane questions about their own budget. It is pathetic and embarrassing. Not only is it embarrassing that backbenchers are being forced to ask these questions but it is also embarrassing for the government.

I believe that estimates committees should work properly. I believe that we should have real scrutiny. It is the one chance we all get to question departments and ministers. I believe that we should be able to direct questions to public servants. I think ministers should take a back seat when it comes to answering questions sometimes and allow public servants to do all the talking, so that we can get some real answers and get some of the politics out of estimates.

The member for MacKillop is sitting there with a smirk on his face. The member for MacKillop might be in opposition one day, and he might be sitting on this side of the chamber during estimates thinking, 'This is all very frustrating. I want some real answers to some real problems.' Not only is not being able to get real answers very frustrating for you but it is also very frustrating for your constituents. After all, in the final analysis, when everything is said and done, we represent the people who elect us, that is, our constituents. We want to ask ministers some real questions, and they are not all about political gain.

Another point I raise briefly about estimates is the stunning announcement that Minister Laidlaw made about releasing an extra 15 access taxi plates. She did not have any consultation with any of the companies or the industry whatsoever. She did not speak to SATA (South Australian Taxi Association), Independent Taxis, United Yellow Taxis, Suburban Taxis or to any of the stakeholders in the industry about what this would do.

The real problem with access taxis and the waiting times is not the drivers or the number of access plates; it is the way in which the system is administered through the radio rooms at Yellow Cabs. The performance criteria are contained within the contract which the government is keeping hidden from the industry. No prosecutions have been launched. The performance criteria are not being met by the company. The government should step in and force Yellow Cabs to do its job properly and distribute work as fast as it can. A lot of taxi drivers are very upset about the way in which they have been treated by this minister.

The minister, in answering a Dorothy Dixer from the member for Hartley regarding her opinion about having access cabs, announced in estimates that an extra 15 taxis had been released into the system. To do this without any consultation is an outrageous way to govern. The government has been talking about introducing a formula to release taxis and following a baseline formula so that there is no question about whether or not we need more taxi plates. The government will not do this. It concerns me that the government is making policy on the run without consultation.

It is just another example of Minister Laidlaw's incompetence in terms of her handling of the transport portfolio. I think that she is a very bad minister and that she needs to get her act together very quickly before real people lose real jobs. It is okay for her to sit in her office and make decisions about people's lives, but the fact is that the people who are running access cabs are going broke; they are losing money, and they should not be.

Time expired.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My comments today will be quite brief, but I would like to make a couple of comments about some comments made by the member for Peake a few moments ago when he referred to my smirking at some of his statements. I had to smirk at his statement that he thought we should get politics out of estimates—fantastic!

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: It would be delightful to get the politics out of estimates. It would be great to get the politics out of parliament, but the chance of that happening is about the same as getting the politics out of estimates. I agree with some of the sentiments expressed by the member for Peake about estimates and the way in which they are run. I think that quite a bit of parliament's time is wasted in estimates. I sat in on two of the estimates committees during the question-

ing of the Treasurer and the Minister for Water Resources. In particular, I thought the way in which the opposition asked its questions on the day that the Treasurer was under scrutiny was an absolute disgrace and debacle.

For about the first hour the shadow Treasurer asked the Treasurer about matters relating to the federal government and the federal budget. It was nothing to do with the state budget whatsoever, and in fact the outrageous allegations that the shadow Treasurer made in that line of questioning were proved to be quite erroneous, and I think the shadow treasurer had an amount of egg on his face during the following couple of days.

The member for Peake also said that he thought that the minister should take a back seat and that he should have the opportunity to question the bureaucrats. I think his comment was that he wanted real answers to real questions. First, it would have been delightful and estimates would have been much more enthralling for me sitting on the government side of the estimates committee if there had been some real questions from the opposition. In fact, my experience in estimates this year was that the opposition was more than somewhat lacking. I thought their questioning was very shallow, showed a distinct lack of preparation and, certainly, in my opinion, did not get to the nub of exposing what they might say are problems with the way this administration is going about its business.

In fact, the proof of the good work of this administration has been coming out through the media and through the answers to questions by the various ministers on a daily basis. Yesterday's *Advertiser* proclaimed that the South Australian economy is frisky, I think was the word. The *Advertiser* acknowledged that the South Australian economy is outperforming every economy in the nation. That is borne out by the figures and the facts from various agencies that collect statistics on economic matters—independent economic analysis organisations such as Access Economics and the various universities which, from time to time, publish figures. These figures show that, for about 12 months at least, South Australia has indeed moved from the rust-bucket status that it enjoyed at the closure of the last Labor government's term to where we are now, some seven or eight years later.

So, it is no wonder that the opposition in the estimates committee this year had great difficulty laying any punches on the various ministers and coming up with any in-depth questions. It had great difficulty—in fact, it had no success at all—in embarrassing any of the ministers, as is its wont. It is no surprise that the economy is going so well—almost all of the government agencies are performing well and the ministry is doing a great job. In fact, the government is doing a great job: it has turned South Australia around and the state now is performing exceedingly well across all areas.

One area that I highlight is some figures that have just come to light. I know that the Minister for Education is often asked questions about, and the shadow spokesman and other members of the opposition continually talk about, retention rates in the South Australian education system and continuously try to put about the misinformation that retention rates in South Australia are falling and are way below the national average. In fact, at last it has been acknowledged officially by statistics which have only been produced in the last couple of weeks—although those of us who had been looking at these statistics had been aware of this for some time—that, in fact, our retention rate in South Australia is somewhere just over 80 per cent, at least two or three percentage points above the national average. Again, the facts certainly belie some of

the things that have been coming out in the press releases, etc., of opposition spokesmen on various agencies.

I said that I did not want to go on for too long. I congratulate the member for Peake for suggesting that we should try to get the politics out of estimates and have real answers to real questions. It would be fantastic but I do not think it is going to happen. However, I guess I have filled in a couple of minutes to allow the shadow Treasurer to get into the House to have his go, so I will defer to him and sit down. One other thing that I say, though, is that, in the two estimates committees that I was involved in, the government members, in fact, deferred to the opposition and asked very few questions to give the opposition full rein to ask as many questions as they possibly could. In fact, in both of the committees that I sat on—with the Treasurer and with the Minister for Water Resources—the opposition exhausted its questions quite early in the piece. I thought that government members were very kind to the opposition in allowing them to get in as many questions as they possibly could.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: I said that in the two committees that I was on such was the case. I wanted to put that on the record. So, I will conclude my remarks and listen with interest to what some of the opposition members say in their contributions to this debate.

Mr FOLEY (Hart): What a pleasure it is to follow a contribution from the member for MacKillop! I did not hear the early part of it so this is relevant to only the few minutes that I heard: his contribution lacked obvious political point scoring and was a somewhat measured and considered response. What a pleasure! The fact that there was no-one here listening probably had a fair bit to do with it, but perhaps we are entering that period of pre-election when we are all reflecting on where we may be—

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: I am not going for 20 minutes. I have unlimited time, actually, because I am the lead speaker, but I intend to go for only a few minutes because I think much has been said about this budget and many of my colleagues, I am sure, also want to make a brief contribution, so brief I shall be.

As we saw in the estimates committees, it was the usual form of the government to frustrate the opposition—drag out answers; throw in the dorothy dix questions; just simply grind the day through; just simply let the clock tick over; and 'Let's throw a few dorothy dixers into the mix to try to prevent as much embarrassment to the government as possible.' We understand the tactics of the government. Having been on estimates committees now for eight long years, to say that I have tired of the process of being in opposition in respect of the estimates committees would be an understatement. I look forward, should we be successful at the next election, to ensuring that members of the Liberal Party suffer a similar fate of boredom and tedious estimates committees, because I intend to deliver to the opposition, should we win government, exactly what they have given us in the last eight years—a drawn out process but one that is necessary in our system of government.

I make a few points about the budget. I think what is clear from the estimates committee process is that this is a government in pre-election mode that has pulled every dollar it can find out of every hollow log. It has taken some risks in terms of its assumptions about the economy and taken some risks in the way that it has allocated some of the moneys to

try to bolster a budget bottom line that is clearly a budget bottom line under considerable stress. As I said in the budget estimates committee with the Treasurer, we accept the government's budget parameters and we accept the balances that it has put in place in this budget cycle and in the forward estimates. Those parameters, should Labor win office, will be our parameters: your balances will be our balances. The challenge for Labor—and a challenge that I look forward to taking on and one that I believe can be met—will be to reallocate, from within those parameters, existing resources from existing resources, to allocate from Liberal priorities to Labor priorities.

In a budget of enormous proportions—there is no doubt that this is a budget of significant size—I believe there is enough wastage in the Liberal Party's policies and priorities and enough opportunities for a carefully crafted Labor budget to reallocate money from Liberal priorities to Labor priorities. In doing so, we will ensure that we are able at the next state election to offer an agenda and policy that we believe will win the support of the community and will be underpinned by very tight fiscal discipline with very strong financial management principles, and that will be extremely well constructed and will ensure that the Labor Party in this state is noted and applauded for its very strong financial discipline.

I repeat, as the Leader of the Opposition has said on many occasions, that we will balance our budget: we are committed to that. We will deliver financial certainty to this state. We will be a prudent, careful and cautious government when it comes to this state's finances, and the public can have every confidence in a Labor government to deliver good financial management. Of course, in acknowledging that, there are a number of areas of government expenditure that concern the opposition, a number of areas where this government has been extremely wasteful, not just the obvious ones that have been up in shining lights, such as the government radio network contract blowing out to the tune of tens of millions of dollars, the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium debacle and the wasteful expenditure on that soccer stadium, and the list goes on—and there are new ones developing all the time.

It has been reported very infrequently, and very little comment has been made by the Minister for the Arts about the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, an organisation that, under this government, has lost \$10 million. Some \$10 million has been lost through mismanagement of a number of productions over the course of this term of the Liberal government. When I was in Estimates Committee B, I noticed that the Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Diana Laidlaw, was going off her brain at the Leader of the Opposition for having the temerity to raise the scandal that is the \$10 million loss attributed to the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. The Minister for the Arts should be feeling very sensitive about this issue. She should be feeling very worried, because it is an appalling example of incompetent ministerial oversight for that centre's management and board to have lost up to, I am told, \$10 million. The Minister for the Arts has been negligent in the highest degree in allowing this loss to occur. But, if the minister thinks that she is above criticism and that the former board and the former management of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust are above scrutiny, I say to the Hon. Diana Laidlaw: bad luck.

I will just give this message. For the remaining months of this parliament, I intend to scrutinise very closely the operations of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust and the reasons for the loss of \$10 million and the incompetent handling of this issue by the Minister for the Arts—whether

it be on the Economic and Finance Committee of this state parliament or whether it be in this chamber or in any other forum. The Minister for the Arts has presided over a financial scandal that has gone largely unreported, and I will not stop at ensuring that we get to the bottom of what has been a very sorry state. If people want a better example of Liberal priorities versus Labor priorities, I pose this question: is it better to have spent \$10 million on failed ventures at the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust or is it better to have spent that money on hospitals, schools and police? The Minister for the Arts can get all sensitive, all emotional and quite distraught at the notion that she will be put under scrutiny on this issue, but I say: bad luck, minister, because we are coming. We will scrutinise this issue, and the minister will not be allowed to just sail through this term of government without being held accountable for those losses.

It also was disturbing to find that the last Adelaide Festival of Arts has reported a loss in excess of \$1 million. If it is good enough for other areas of government, if it is good enough for members opposite, if it is good enough for the Minister for Tourism and the Minister for Emergency Services to cop scrutiny for the appalling losses for which they have been responsible, it will be appropriate for this minister. I think that her behaviour on that committee when the Leader of the Opposition, quite rightly, asked the appropriate questions, was just bizarre.

I acknowledge that a lot of what we are talking about occurred under the previous board, under previous management, and that the current management is having to grapple with this problem. My criticism is not of them. My criticism is not of those who are trying to fix the problem: my criticism is of those who caused the problem. But my ultimate criticism is of a minister who has allowed this to happen and has tried to keep it a secret, who has tried to keep it under wraps and out of the public eye, and who has danced around this issue for too long. It is time that she was brought to account. As the alternative Treasurer of this state, and someone whose job it will be to look for areas of savings, it is appropriate that I take this issue on, and do so with some gusto.

There is a pattern here, of course—and I think more will be revealed about this matter over the coming weeks. There is a critical link between the losses attributed to the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust and another area of government that, to this stage, we understand has lost upwards of \$7 million. I am talking about SA Water. Through the Economic and Finance Committee and the estimates committees we have found out about the Indonesian frolic, where SA Water, under the chairmanship of one James Porter (former senior Liberal member for Barker), as Chairman of SA Water, has spent up to \$7 million chasing some rainbow in Indonesia, some sort of windfall profit stream to come from Indonesia. In doing so, it has spent \$7 million of taxpayers' money. I suspect that, as we will discover in the days and weeks ahead, there will be no return out of that venture. That is lost money; it is a scandal. But the link is that he was also Chairman of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. Mr James Porter was the chairman of an organisation that lost \$10 million in the early to mid 1990s.

So, Mr James Porter—former Liberal member, mate of this government—is now known as 'the \$17 million man'. Through the two organisations that he has chaired—two organisations that he was put on by his Liberal mates, who felt sorry for him after having knifed him in the seat of Barker—Mr Porter has delivered to this state \$17 million of wasted taxpayer expenditure on two of the organisations that

he has chaired. He is no longer Chairman of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, for obvious reasons. At least, the minister belatedly must have acknowledged and realised that this man is incompetent, that he is not good value to taxpayers, that he has cost us \$17 million: let us get rid of him! Let us see what the Minister for Government Enterprises does with Mr Porter's position as Chairman of SA Water.

As we go through these areas—whether it is Hindmarsh, the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, SA Water, the government radio network contract, areas of expenditure in the Department of Industry and Trade, department after department, portfolio after portfolio—we see that this is a wasteful government, a government which has squandered tens of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money and for which it will be held accountable at the next state election. It will be held accountable for presiding over the largest asset sale in this state's history, the largest reduction in public service numbers, but still running a stressed budget with a stressed bottom line and having wasted tens of millions of dollars in a number of areas. The opposition looks forward to the challenge of the next election, and it looks forward to the challenge should we be successful at that election.

It is interesting to note who is running scared. The Premier is running scared. He said it again today. He has said it at every opportunity, 'I am not going to the polls until March.' He will extend the tenure of this parliament by six months. He can do that under a quirk of our Electoral Act. He will take every moment of that time available to him because John Olsen, the Premier of this state, is running scared. He is not prepared to go to the punters, the voters of this state, at the due date.

He wants to cling on to government until the last possible day because his ministers, those facing the chop, perhaps want to maximise their superannuation opportunities. Maybe that is what it is: perhaps members opposite want to get an extra thousand or two per year out of their superannuation. That may be what they are on about, but it is not good for the governance of this state. It is not good for economic certainty.

It is not good for the taxpayers of this state to be frozen in time because this Premier is too scared to go to the polls. He is unable to fix the electricity crisis in this state. He is unable to solve a number of the problems in this state. Just perhaps like Dean Brown said in this parliament in 1993, when the then Leader of the Opposition was speculating on when Labor Premier Lynn Arnold might go to a state election, the then Leader of the Opposition, on the *Hansard* record, speculated that maybe one of the reasons Premier Arnold might want to go beyond his four year mark was because he wants to maximise his parliamentary superannuation. That is what Dean Brown said in 1993. I have the *Hansard* record.

I simply pose the question to members opposite: is this why you want to go on for an extra six months? I do not know. Dean Brown thought it might have been a reason back in 1993. I just simply return the question to you. We will have to wait and see over the months ahead. This state needs certainty, economic opportunity, decisive government and strong leadership, all of which is not being offered opposite but which will be offered by an alternative Labor government.

So, not only the Leader of the Opposition, but also my colleagues, all our candidates and I relish the opportunity when 'Chicken Little', Premier Olsen, finally gets up the courage to go to the polls. We look forward to that opportunity. We will meet the challenge, and I think the voters of South

Australia will recognise that they long for good governance and will deliver victory to the Labor Party.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Hart because he leaves so much. This gentleman happened to be involved in the last Labor government as a chief adviser to the premier and, before that, the minister—

Mr Foley: A friend of yours.

Mr VENNING: Yes, a friend of mine. In fact, I was an adviser to him. The honourable member comes in here and asks, 'Who is running scared?' I can assure the honourable member that it is not the government. Today we heard fantastic news. It is in the paper and it is on the record: the economic performance of this state is the best in Australia—and the member for Hart is going to leave the chamber! I cannot understand the member for Hart. Here is a young man with some promise, but I have told him time and again that he has blown his opportunities. He is the person that the CEO of the Adelaide City Council, Ms Law, talks about when she refers to the continual carping, criticism, denigration and the knocking by the people of this state. I have to say that the person leading the charge is none other than the member for Hart. You can overdo it, and I believe that the member for Hart has done so.

I know that an opposition has to have front men. It has to investigate the government and put the government on notice, and it has to challenge the government. But the way the member for Hart has chosen to do it, not only here but also in the media, he has gone too far. In fact, if he was half as smart, he should have shared the load with some of his colleagues. Why does he not get the member for Kaurana to help him with the criticism? I will tell you why. The member for Kaurana is too smart for that. He is sitting back there looking untouched, unscathed and clean, ready for when the big day comes, when the leadership is offered. He will move in and get the crown, and the poor member for Hart will be left out there still gnashing and lashing and frothing at the mouth. I feel a little sorry for him, because he is a young man and may be here a long time. He has blown it. I have told him several times both inside and outside this chamber that you have to be constructive when you criticise. If you criticise, at the same time you must put up what your alternative is—but we never hear that.

I believe the criticism from the opposition that we are hearing at the moment is quite unwarranted. In particular, I noticed during the estimates committees (and I was on most of them and chaired a couple of them) some of the criticisms coming from the other side. One that particularly annoyed me was criticism of the \$100 000 we are spending toward subsidising production of the *Discovery* program on Channel 7. Over two years I believe this is an absolute bargain. The program is a great success and certainly highlights the tourism assets of our state. Every time I go to a tourism venture now, guess what I hear from every tourism operator who gets on the stage? The Labor Party gets a proper slugging for that comment; it has gone through the whole tourism industry. I would have thought we were spending at least \$100 000 per annum but, no: it is over two years. Leader Rann has the audacity to say we are wasting the money. In the area I represent this went down like a lead balloon. I cannot believe that the leader had the temerity and very poor judgment to make that comment without finding out exactly what the deal was, because I think we have an excellent deal. In South Australia we are served very well not only by the

Discovery program but also by the *Postcards* program. These are two very successful programs that highlight tourism in South Australia.

We are enjoying unprecedented economic success in South Australia, as the Premier highlighted today and as was reported in the paper yesterday or the day before. It is unbelievable that South Australia now leads Australia in the improvement to its economy—and why? It is because of our industries, because we are back to work and because our WorkCover is the best around Australia. There are so many good news stories. You cannot refute that when you consider what it was like in 1993. The member for Hart said he wants to return to good government. Just consider what Labor left and consider what the situation is today.

I do not stand here and prattle platitudes; I am not standing here mouthing platitudes: I am talking about fact. I want briefly to return to the fact that I am very pleased that some of our long-term projects and ambitions are coming to fruition in this last budget. Particularly, I want to refer to my own electorate, which is a very important part of the power source of the success of the state, as most people would realise, with the wine, tourism and food industries and all that goes with them. It really is a powerhouse at the moment, and is probably helping other regions to drive our state upwards. It is indeed an honour to represent it. One of the biggest announcements enjoyed by my constituents was the announcement of a new Barossa Valley hospital, costing some \$12 million. It has drawn criticism from the other side because it is three years away and there are no actual dollars in this budget. I am the first to realise that, but you do not just build hospitals in 12 months. They must be planned and must go through all the accreditation before you put them on the ground.

I as the member will work to achieve this hospital. The first thing I wanted was a commitment. We have that; we have the announcement. I challenge the opposition: if by some quirk of fate you should win the next election, will you build that new hospital for the people of the Barossa? I will annoy you every day that we have left of this parliament until you tell me whether you will build that new facility. We have been waiting for it for all these years, and it will cost \$12 million. Our government has said we will; what about you? I have asked the member for Elizabeth several times, both here and outside, 'Will you build this new facility?' There has been deathly silence. Silence says to me that you will not. I will certainly be pushing. I want to know about not only this policy; what about all the other policies? If you will cut government programs, tell us where. Look at them and tell me what you will cut. It is all very well to say you will streamline it; you tell me us how you will streamline it, by how much, where and when. It is all very well to stand there, wave your finger and mouth platitudes; you tell us where.

I was also very appreciative of the \$1.5 million that has been set aside for the Angaston Primary School, which has been waiting for an upgrade for many years. Also, the Kapunda Primary School has magnificent heritage buildings. For many years governments have ignored it because, being a heritage building, it is too hard; it involved too much expense on one building. I very much appreciate Minister Buckby's announcement that we will spend \$1.3 million commencing in 2002-03, with \$800 000 in the first year and \$500 000 in the second. That is the trouble: we have these magnificent buildings, but they cost a fortune to upgrade. To knock them down would be unheard of. You cannot knock them down in a historic place like Kapunda. This building

very much highlights the heritage of the district. It was always going to be hard, but I am pleased that the minister has given us that announcement.

We have heard ad nauseam about Gomersal Road; I have talked about it in this place until the cows came home. Work is under way out there and funding is in this budget. It will make a tremendous difference to those coming to and from the Barossa. It will take 10 minutes off their travelling time, and the most important thing is safety. You will be able to drive the Barossa Valley Way without battling with heavy trucks. It will change the whole quality of life for people living there. This and the clean water that we have now enjoyed for the past three years will be two of the most important issues that people of the Barossa will appreciate long after I am no longer in this place.

The Barossa water supply system upgrade will cost \$6.7 million, which will go toward increasing the supply from the Mannum to Adelaide system to the Warren reservoir. From the Warren reservoir we have the new privately funded scheme called the Barossa Infrastructure Limited (BIL). It is a new, privately funded irrigation scheme which is worth \$34 million and which is another first for South Australia. They are laying the pipes right now so that we can have this alternative watering system for the Barossa Valley. This \$6.7 million is the government's contribution to upgrade the pumps and infrastructure to get the water from Mannum to Adelaide—which is not filtered, because it is filtered when it gets to Adelaide—into the Warren reservoir and then on with the growers' infrastructure via BIL to the vineyards. Its being dirty water, it is commonsense not to put filtered water on vineyards. It is another great win.

I think most members have been to the Brenton Langbein Theatre, which is the Barossa Convention Centre; it is a magnificent structure. I am very pleased to see the inclusion of this facility on the Country Arts South Australia circuit. It does not involve a lot of money, but it now means that the people of the Barossa can go along and see performances where they could not previously.

Without putting anybody down, I am amazed that some of the people in the Barossa do not travel. I have spoken to some people who have not been to Adelaide in 10 years, and they live one hour from it. They do not know what the performing arts are. They do not travel and do not see the wonders of the city that we see weekly. Now they will have the opportunity to see world-class performances about 10 minutes from home. That is what Country Arts SA is all about. Even though it is not a lot of money, I am pleased that the locals can now enjoy what other South Australians take for granted.

I certainly do appreciate the ongoing road funding under the country road funding program. One that the opposition may know about—again, in the event that by some quirk of fate they get into government—is the heavy vehicle bypass around Adelaide. It is essential to try to get these trucks out of the tunnels off Glen Osmond Road. They can bypass Murray Bridge, Cambrai, Sedan, Truro, Kapunda, Tarlee and Balaklava, back onto the highway. That is quite a shorter bypass. I am very pleased because that will also assist the locals. I add briefly that the assistance given to country bus operators is very much appreciated because those people have spoken to me and the minister a lot about this issue and I am pleased that we have been able to help them.

Finally, I mention the Tanunda art gallery, which is still being negotiated, but I am very pleased that the minister has said that funds are available for that. As soon as the local

council has the agreement decided, the Tanunda art gallery will be created in the old Tanunda Soldiers Memorial Hall. I am very pleased that various ministers have considered my electorate very favourably and, after 7½ years of Liberal government, my area has certainly appreciated it. I am confident that we can go to the election with a very good chance of winning it.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): We have just undertaken a limited examination of the budget through the estimates committee process. In the course of that examination, a number of matters were investigated by the opposition but there were many details on which there was no time to pursue questions. I want to extract just one issue and deal with it before we finally approve the Appropriation Bill today. I refer to the million dollars that has been set aside for consultants to investigate the possibility of private sector involvement in the building of an aquatic centre at Marion.

I am on the record as saying that Adelaide could well do with an aquatic centre of an international standard and I am also on the record as saying that at this time the Marion domain site is a really good place for such a venue. There was the opportunity in this state budget to commit to the building of such an aquatic centre, and the community and a number of local figures, including councillors and local MPs, have been pushing for this project, but unfortunately the government simply did not find the money in this budget to proceed with it.

It has tried to buy off the Marion council by providing \$1 million in the budget. That million dollars is earmarked for consultants, supposedly to encourage private sector investment to build an aquatic centre complex at Marion. I suspect that the real reasoning on the part of the government is simply to string people along until after the election when it will not be the incumbent government's problem, because it has a pretty good idea that it will not be on the Treasury benches at that stage.

Unfortunately, the opposition is not in a position to pledge the building of the pool. The government says that it will pick up the tab in three years' time but, as I have said, the Liberal Party will not be in government at that time. Compounding the problem is the fact that this is essentially a deficit budget, once abnormal items are taken out of it, and it really sets the sails of South Australia on the course of deficit budgets over the next couple of years. We on the Labor side of the House are very well aware of the financial strictures that the mismanagement of public finances by the current government has created.

The present position is that we have no realistic promise of a pool but that will not stop the local swimming community, the Marion council and me campaigning for the pool. I know that I will be just one voice within a government that will be operating in a very tight budgetary environment and I am very proud of the fact that health and education are Labor's top priorities. I know that from day one the cabinet ministers will be looking to cut the budgets and programs within their own agencies so that we will have more money to spend on those most important things. Where recreational facilities come into the picture is unclear at this stage.

This is a golden opportunity that has been missed. I can only restate my commitment to the campaign for something like an aquatic centre on the Marion domain site because I think it is an excellent site for such a venture. However, we have to be realistic and admit that this opportunity has been passed up by the current government so we are back at square

one. We have earmarked \$1 million in the budget for consultants but the history of money wasted on consultants by this government does not inspire confidence. I finish on a positive note: I wish the Marion council, the SWIAC committee and others in the swimming community all the best in the pursuit of this goal for a decent aquatic centre facility in the south-western suburbs of Adelaide.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): As we on the opposition side have listened to members of the government talk about their budget, we have been chastised yet again for carping and negativity. I put on the record my response to that, which is that we welcome every step that is taken to improve this state. We want better for this state than is happening at the moment. We know the state can do better with good leadership, good accountability and a government that supports the people rather than chastising them all the time. However, whenever I hear about some development, I think of those people in my community who are not sharing in whatever gains we are making as a state.

I was horrified two weeks ago to find out just how much the work force participation rate in this state has fallen during the period of this government. While around Australia participation in the work force has been staying about the same overall, in this state 3.5 per cent of the work force has given up—they are not participating in the work force any more. I doubt that too many of them are living in luxury. I think that most of them are living on various forms of Centrelink payments, living from hand to mouth the whole time, worrying how they are going to pay their increased bills, with the 10 per cent GST, with the emergency services levy, and seeing that any prosperity that comes to this state is passing them by.

I know from the same source, which was Professor Richard Blandy at an address he gave to the Southern Success Business Enterprise Centre recently, that people in this state who are employed are probably doing about the same as people in other parts of Australia who are employed, and that is good news. We know they could do better because we do not think that Howard has done a very good job of looking after working people and ordinary Australians but at least South Australians in that situation are not missing out. However, those who have been forced, effectively, to choose to drop out of the work force are really missing out and every piece of good news has to be tempered with the fact that so many of our fellow residents in this state are forced to live in the poverty experienced by people who can no longer participate in the work force.

During the estimates process, quite a bit of which I attended, I was really floored by the lack of accountability and disclosure in the current budget papers. I know I was shocked last year by how little information it was possible to get out of the budget papers compared, say, to 10 years ago, and this year it was even more difficult. This government is characterised by lack of accountability and disclosure, and it is so difficult for anyone to get information about anything. We have read in the press about issues to do with freedom of information but that is only one part of it. We find that questions remain on the *Notice Paper* for months and commitments given in the House to provide information are not followed up. We know that in past years it has taken months to get answers to questions asked during the estimates committee proceedings—and many of those questions were simply not answered.

Only today we had an example when the member for Hanson asked a question of the Deputy Premier about the very topical issue of a committee, study, or consultancy that was supposed to be undertaken to investigate better ways of dealing with the important issue of fruit fly eradication. I have spent quite a few years in the Public Service preparing briefing papers. In the past, I know that the minister would have been provided with a briefing paper so that he was ready to answer a question about such a topical issue. So, what is happening with this government? Do they not have briefing papers any more, are they unable to find them, or is it just part of this pattern of failure to disclose lack of accountability and that they just do not want to say?

One issue raised during the estimates committees was the first home owner grant. It was revealed by the shadow treasurer (the member for Hart) that, in fact, the recipients of the \$14 000 first home owner grant do not have to spend it on the home. It can be spent on anything that is legal. This scheme is once again an example of how this government and its colleagues in Canberra—the Howard government—do not think things through properly. There are many young and older people who have found the first home owner scheme—whether it be the \$7 000 or the \$14 000—a real boon to their prospects of owning a home in the near future. It has enabled them to stop paying rent and fulfilling the Australian dream of owning their own home. I have been really happy to witness papers for some of the people who have come into my electorate office celebrating the fact that they will now be able to buy their own home.

When the payment under the scheme was increased from \$7 000 to \$14 000, the publicity that went with it said that it was to promote and help the housing industry during a downturn period with the GST peaks and troughs. Probably some people would argue that some peaks and troughs have been experienced because of the Olympic construction program.

So, what was the real objective of the scheme? If it was to promote the housing industry and the important jobs that exist in that industry, why was the payment not tied directly to home construction or home purchase, particularly in relation to the \$14 000 payment because that relates to the construction and not the purchase of a home? We hear all the time in this place, and certainly in electorate offices such as mine, about the lack of public housing available. We hear about people who will never be able to afford to buy a home, whether they get \$7 000 or \$14 000 support—or probably \$50 000 support. They are the people about whom we heard earlier that the late George Whitten talked about—those poor people who will never be able to save the deposit for a home. There are something like 10 000 of them on the Housing Trust waiting lists. There are people who have been on the waiting list for 10 years and who you and I, sir, know will never get a home from the Housing Trust under the current policies—but still they are hopeful.

These people also want the security of a home they can call their own. They know that in the private rental market they are subject to eviction on all sorts of occasions for all sorts of reasons not to do with their own behaviour. The property owner has family who want the home or they want to make a different investment decision for their retirement or whatever, and so there they are—homeless. People want the security of a Housing Trust home when they feel that they cannot afford a home. Then there are the people who are homeless and desperate for immediate housing.

So, what do this government and the mob in Canberra do? Instead of looking at the biggest problems that we need to address as a community—and one of those problems has to be homelessness—and instead of advancing the housing industry and addressing the problem of homelessness and housing for low income earners, they implement a scheme that does not have proper accountability measures and no guarantee of achieving the objectives it sets out to gain. It will be helpful to many people but for others it is simply a reward for building a house.

Some people do not need to be rewarded. I could not see anything in the guidelines that would prevent Jamie Packer from getting a first home owner grant if he so wished and he had not bought a house before March 2001. Any government that sets up a scheme that makes it possible for people such as Jamie Packer to get a first home owner grant needs to look at itself very hard and think about whom it is trying to serve and what it is trying to do.

Another issue that came to my attention recently where Liberal governments at state and federal level do not interact to consider the impact of their decisions on the community is in the area of TAFE studies, and the women's education program in particular. I recently received a deputation of students from the women's education program from the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE. These students are extremely distressed by what is happening to women's education. They see that there is a cut in the vicinity of 20 per cent for the forthcoming year, having experienced a cut of about 10 per cent last year. They are also seeing a very welcome increase in the number of students seeking to undertake the women's education program. For many years now women's education—or women's studies—has been an important way of allowing women, particularly those who have been out of the work force for some time, to upgrade their skills and start looking at either jobs or further education.

I think we would all recognise in this place that people who have been out of the work force for some time to undertake the important job of caring for children and others have lost many of their workplace skills. They need a program that enables them to develop their confidence and self-esteem as well as to update their skills to make them relevant to today's work force. The women's education program at the Noarlunga TAFE has found that many women seeking to study there have had very little experience at all in the work force. Often, they were fairly young mums—and are still fairly young, seeking to study and find a way into the work force, particularly as a result of mutual obligation commitments.

The restriction on the enrolment and funding for the women's education program in TAFE is such that people are not able to study their chosen subjects. The course administrators have taken the position that it is better to offer intending students one subject just to get them involved in study and start the rewarding path to a different life. However, the consequence of their being able to do only one subject instead of the three that would be a normal part-time load is that many of them are unable to qualify for the pensioner education supplement. Indeed, at the moment about a quarter of students cannot study enough subjects to qualify for the pensioner education supplement that is supposed to be there to help them make this transition.

About 50 per cent of the students are not able to study all the subjects they want to study because of lack of funding. This has an incredible consequence for peoples' lives. Many of those women wanting to study women's education are

escaping domestic violence and have faced very difficult lives. They are looking to get on with their lives but they have very tight budgets.

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

Ms THOMPSON: Before the dinner break I was talking about the extremely tight budgets that so many women who are seeking to study under the women's education program have to live by. It is a real stress for them when they have even minor expenses in terms of course fees, photocopying notes, resources, and sometimes train fares for trips to visit various institutions for them to find out more about the society in which they live. The restrictions on enrolments in the women's education program mean that they cannot enrol in enough subjects to qualify for extra payments from Centrelink, which is a real problem for these women. I have to say that I admire each and every one of them who is so determined to develop a better life for themselves and their families that they incur this expenditure, when the real situation is for us to get our act together. The Howard and the Olsen governments need to see what is happening as a result of the legislation they introduced and to allow people to undertake mutual obligation training commitments properly and not in a way that they are penalised financially by doing so.

The policy at the moment that the women's education program is adopting of allowing all students at least to study one subject is putting a strain on all students, in that we now have classes in women's education approaching 30. This is an area where a nurturing environment and close attention to encourage people who have often little formal education is really important. The more experienced students often act as mentors and tutors for the newer students, but classes of this size are unacceptable in such an important program. I was told by the student delegation who visited me to talk about this program that it was suggested to some of the contract lecturers, who are the main backbone of this program, that perhaps they could work for 30 hours but only be paid for 25 hours. Already there is so much of a volunteer contribution to this program, from both more experienced students and staff, that it just about needs the volunteer of the year award, and the suggestion that lecturers should volunteer extra services is just ridiculous.

The amount of money needed to enable the approximately 85 students who want to study more in women's education is so minuscule in terms of the budget this government has just brought down that it is really a travesty that this money cannot be found. I want to close by using the words of some of the students in the program. They say:

The need for this program is growing in leaps and bounds in this era of 'mutual obligation' for this target group who have minimal education levels, employment skills and finances. They do however have motivation, dedication and the will to achieve and become productive members of society in abundance.

It is very disappointing to me that this government has not been able to meet these women's aspirations and help them and their families get on with a new life.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I will make some brief comments in relation to the estimates committee process in looking at the budget. The first is a general observation. I have argued for a long time that the whole process of estimates committees needs to be reviewed, and I believe that it is time for upper house members to be allowed to sit in on

those committees. I hope that, in the near future, that matter can be addressed because I see no justification to exclude upper house members from participating, given that the Treasurer is a member of the upper house anyhow. I do not see that it does anything to undermine the processes of parliament, but rather would provide an opportunity for all members of parliament (from whichever house) to contribute to this process.

I was pleased during estimates to receive a positive reaction from the Minister for Education and Children's Services in relation to the possible review of school hours. The minister highlighted the situation at Enfield High School, which, basically for senior students anyway, operates on a four day week. As the minister pointed out during estimates, the current timetable for schools, the starting times, basically have not altered over 100 years. I think it is appropriate that that matter be visited and considered, and I was pleased that the minister gave a positive response rather than rejecting the suggestion out of hand. Not only is it simply the starting and finishing times but also, importantly, it is what happens in between the start and the finish of the school day. I look forward to seeing some positives come out of that review process and I welcome the constructive response of the minister.

The issue of youth at risk has been a passion of mine for a long time; that is, young people who have left school early, or, in some cases, been asked to leave early. I do not believe that we as a community can sit back and allow them to hang around shopping centres and elsewhere and hope that something will happen. We know from statistics that half of them will remain as long-term unemployed. Their chance of being employed is much less than those who have completed year 12. I continue to urge the government to pursue this matter and to put resources into bringing these young people who are at risk—that is, young people who have dropped out or who have been kicked out of school—back into a training environment where their self-esteem can be raised, basic skills imparted and their employability increased. Once again, I have been encouraged by the positive response from the minister and the CEO of the Department of Education in relation to that matter.

One area that requires considerable attention is what I call children with marginal learning disabilities; that is, children who are not classified as warranting attendance, say, at a special school where they have severe intellectual retardation or some similar disability, but who may have a learning disability characterised, for example, in the form of dyslexia and other marginal learning disabilities that, nevertheless, have a significant impact on a child whilst at school. I believe that is one area that needs greater resourcing, greater attention and greater commitment. I know some schools are putting more effort into it. The example of Woodcroft Primary School was mentioned, which, at the start of the day, has 100 minutes of uninterrupted literacy programs for all children, and that seems to be paying off.

There are many students—and all members would be aware of cases brought to them or about which they know personally—who have a disadvantage or a disability, say, in relation to literacy and numeracy, or it might even be a mild behavioural problem needing attention, but who do not qualify under the more severe categorisation as being disabled or having a serious disability. I plead with the government to put more resources into that area so that these young people can learn throughout their whole schooling

experience and, in particular, can take full advantage of secondary schooling.

In conclusion, I refer to an issue about which I feel very strongly—and this is not to take anything away from the assistance in the budget to self-funded retirees or pensioners. I realise that the main thrust for the type of assistance to which I am referring must come from the federal government but, nevertheless, the state government has a role regarding the situation of what I call the working poor: families who are, say, on an income of \$30 000 per annum gross, often where there is one parent working, maybe one working full time and the other part time, and they have young children. These people pay tax but they do not get any concessions. They are actually struggling and often trying to pay off a mortgage, put their children through school, and clothe and feed them. Ironically, they are often worse off than people on welfare—and I am not trying to take anything away from people on welfare or from pensioners, because they are certainly not in the category of being wealthy or living an extravagant lifestyle. But I believe that the working poor, those on a low gross income with children are really doing it tough and, sadly, they have been overlooked in this budget by the state government and also by the federal government.

I have recently written to both the Premier and the Prime Minister asking them to conduct a review of the working poor and examine their situation. I think that they, like the rest of us, will be amazed at how difficult it is for these people to survive as a family in the current economic situation. That is really the plea that I make, because I see the situation of these people frequently. They do not ask for much; they do not get much; they pay tax but, ironically, after they pay their tax and without the concessions, they are often in a far worse situation than the people on welfare who, heaven knows, themselves are not well off.

So, that is the plea that I make very strongly to the Premier—and I have also done the same at the federal level—that we cannot allow families to be in that situation and it should be a priority for future budgets to address this issue involving a significant percentage of the population who, in my view, have been seriously overlooked in terms of adequate assistance and even family friendly policies, whether in the way of family concessions to attend functions or to travel on public transport. All those issues need to be looked at so that young families on a low income are not put at risk or disadvantaged and so that these young people, particularly the children in such families, do not miss out on opportunities that otherwise the state and country could afford them.

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I will be addressing one particular issue that I raised during the estimates committee but, before I get onto that, I want to talk about an allocation that has been made under the recreation and sport budget and one that the government may, in fact, in the not too distant future be expected to make. During the estimates committee for the Minister for Human Services the minister detailed some initiatives in relation to urban regeneration that were taking place. He made reference to some youth initiatives that were happening down in Yankalilla where the local council had developed a skate park. I made some comment at the time that the Tea Tree Gully council was meeting that particular night to consider whether it would go ahead with the Golden Grove district sports field. This is the third time that this community's expectations and hopes have been lifted. This

is the third time it has lived in great hope that it would finally see this facility come to fruition.

The lack of sporting facilities is reaching crisis point in the Golden Grove area. This project was earmarked for commencement back in 1990-91. Indeed, the first community development plan that was developed in 1987 and signed off by the Tea Tree Gully council established these time lines and identified this as a very important project. Interestingly, this particular community development plan included photographs of the then mayor, and the current chief executive officer of the Tea Tree Gully council was one of the nominees of the Tea Tree Gully council on that planning committee.

On that Tuesday night that our estimates committee was sitting, Tea Tree Gully council deferred its decision until the Thursday evening. I was able to go to this meeting and was absolutely stunned at two decisions that the council made. First, they decided to go in camera and discuss this vital issue in secret. I make this point because the council has been critical of the government in relation to the Golden Grove development and a number of times has asked for open and accountable government in relation to the impact of the Golden Grove development on the City of Tea Tree Gully: but, when it comes to decisions of the council, it seems that it is okay for them to be made in secret. So, as the only person sitting in the council chamber at that time, I was surprised when I was asked to leave. I was then further stunned that the council decided not to proceed.

I consider that this is a major breach of faith with my community. This facility is 10 years overdue. Between 35 per cent and 40 per cent of the population is under 19 years of age, yet this council continues to ignore and disregard their needs. Older people in our area have no access to sporting facilities: they must travel out of the area in which they live to access any form of sport and recreation. My community has again been hung out to dry by the Tea Tree Gully council. This council has shown, once again, that it has no vision and it has no understanding of the needs of this community.

I was also amazed and stunned at the excuses that were proffered for this decision. First, it is a sloping site. That is quite amazing. I would like to know where there is a flat site in Golden Grove. They said that the site has unsuitable landfill which will cost \$1 million to remove, yet when I asked council officers they told me that no engineering reports were presented to council and there are no detailed costings. So, where has this information come from? I am told that the figures are indicative. This is one of the favourite words of the Tea Tree Gully council. They often cite the 1990 community development plan as being indicative. They do not need to honour it because they did not sign off on it. They did sign off on the 1987 development plan, but they failed to tell the community about that. Has all this enlightenment taken 10 years? To add insult to injury, three of the councillors were not even present, and two are from the Golden Grove area.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: I thought that the Tea Tree Gully mayor is currently a Labor candidate.

Ms RANKINE: No, you are wrong. That is a Golden Grove councillor. One of the councillors who did not turn up is a Liberal candidate.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: A Liberal candidate?

Ms RANKINE: A Liberal candidate.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal: What about the Labor candidate?

Ms RANKINE: No, you are wrong—

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are totally out of order, and I ask the member to return to her speech.

Ms RANKINE: The Minister for Water Resources is again wrong, and I am happy to inform him who is on the council once I finish my speech, but there is not a Labor candidate on the council.

As I said, to add insult to injury, three of the councillors did not turn up and two of them are from the Golden Grove area. I understand that one of them is on leave and has been overseas, so I guess that is understandable. But this is currently the biggest issue in my community, and these councillors were not even there—they did not front. Certainly, residents could be forgiven for being a bit cynical about why they did not turn up. This decision should not have been made without a full contingent of councillors present. They had the opportunity to let us know where they stand, and they did not do it.

I refer to the decision that the council made. Item one is the one that lands the telling blow: this is what kills it off. The motion that was passed says that in view of the risks and costs of developing the Golden Grove district sports field for grassed playing fields council will not proceed with the proposal before it. What will interest the government is that the second part of this motion says that 'in light of the above, the council authorises the chief executive officer to raise the concerns with the appropriate state minister to obtain support to render the site suitable for its intended use'. They want the government to pay because they say it is too costly. Is that not interesting?

I will refer to the costs of Golden Grove in a moment, but they want the government to pick that up. They try to reduce the flak with a range of fuzzy intentions listed in this motion and, true to form, as I said, they are looking to the state government to fund it. Once again, they want to pass the buck.

The only clear commitment in the motion is to allow the Golden Grove Dodgers Baseball Club to stay where it is currently, that is, at Illyarie Reserve in Surrey Downs. There has been a lot of community disquiet about that, and I look forward to seeing the community delight that the baseball club will not only remain where it is but will also expand its facilities. Other than that, the council is prepared to negotiate, to explore and to do some planning but, again, all of this is, to use their language, indicative. Nothing is concrete. This decision was an absolute disgrace.

I was negligent in that I omitted to mention one of the interesting parts of the decision where they voted down our district sports field. On at least one occasion, I have raised the issue of a grant that was authorised by the Minister for Recreation and Sport for this regional sporting facility. The council was very slow to access these funds and start work—in fact, it was two years overdue when the minister said, 'Enough is enough.' It wants to use the recreation and sport grant now 'to purchase mulch and tree and shrub seeds to revegetate the site, and that these be grown on during the time that plans for the development are being finalised, and the purchase of park furniture'. So, the council wants to spend on seeds \$75 000 of taxpayer funds that was supposed to be for the development of this sporting facility.

The only thing that this council can deliver is constant disappointment. It lacks vision, it lacks commitment and it lacks credibility. We know that the situation is serious when local councillors do not even have the gumption to turn up. I have written to the council three times in recent weeks about the importance of this project. I pointed out that this is a

unique opportunity at a community level to develop a facility that caters directly for its community and, unlike the vast majority of sport and social facilities, provide some direct support for women's sport as well as for male sporting activities. About 2 500 netballers play every week at the South Australian district netball courts. The Tango Netball Club has 300 players yet, if you look around for social facilities for women who play sport, you find that there is none, and it seems that there will remain none.

Members of a range of sporting associations with which I met were supportive of the establishment of a sports and social club. They recognise the need to engage our young people and to provide some positive role models for them, to expose them to a range of opportunities—whether it be sporting, administrative or support roles in which they can actively participate—and to develop their self-esteem. The council is going to explore that but, if they were serious, they would have built clubrooms on site as an indication to the community that that is where they are heading. But, they are not doing that. Instead of making the most of this opportunity, the council has once more let down the community. And, make no mistake, it will be looking for scapegoats. It will be looking for this government to foot the bill: it will come bleating to the government, looking for it to pay—remember, the council cannot afford it.

Under the community development plan, the council also had an obligation to develop the Greenwith community oval, and it did not do that. It allowed the two schools to pay for that. The council was supposed to develop the Wynn Vale community oval: it has sold land to pay for that, and works that I was promised would commence in April I do not believe have even started yet. It also had some land undedicated at the district sports field site, which it had ready to sell for over \$1 million. So, it was going to flog that off as well for this obligation.

Back in 1989, Touche Ross undertook a financial study of the impact of Golden Grove on the Tea Tree Gully council. In the conclusion, Touche Ross said that the development over time had a very positive impact upon the Tea Tree Gully council's budget. It did some modelling, and we hear from it all the time that it cannot afford Golden Grove; it is costing it too much. In 1989 dollars, by the year 2001 it was estimated that the Tea Tree Gully council should have made a profit in excess of \$10 million after paying for all its commitments, taking into account everything—garbage collection, library services, road maintenance, park maintenance and capital works projects, including things such as the ovals I have just mentioned. By the year 2004 (in 1989 dollars), it was estimated at \$19.5 million. However, in future dollars, Touche Ross estimated that, by the year 2001, Tea Tree Gully council would have made a profit of \$25.5 million; and, by 2004, over \$60 million. Tell me that the council cannot afford it: let it go out and tell my community that it cannot afford it. We will not swallow that line any more.

These people have a commitment: they will be asked to honour it. Each and every one of those people on council who did not support this proposal going ahead will be held accountable, and so they should be. This time, they will not be able to hide. Local government wants to be taken seriously, and there are some wonderful examples of innovative, progressive local councils—and the other council in my area, the Salisbury council, is a prime example of that. Tea Tree Gully council has a responsibility, it has obligations, and it needs to know that we expect it to honour them.

The other issue that I want to talk about briefly tonight relates to the Public Trustee and the charges that it levies against people for whom it administers financial affairs. In particular, I am referring to the Public Trustee tax fee, and a specific case that was brought to my attention, that of Mr Billy Passmore, a 76 year old cerebral palsy victim who has never been to school, who has never worked and who has lived for 40 years in the Hampstead Centre—that is where he went when his parents died. His plight was brought to my attention by his guardian, Mrs Iris Copeland.

Mrs Copeland undertook guardianship of Billy Passmore three years ago, after she stopped working at Hampstead. He had no family to care for him. He had always been a part of her family; he went to her home for weekends, and so on, and her children literally grew up with him. The Copelands did not want the financial responsibility of managing Mr Passmore's affairs, so they sought the assistance of the Public Trustee. However, Mrs Copeland's concerns have been aroused, and not without justification. Her concerns relate to the irregularity of the statements that are provided and about the ambiguity and lack of information on those statements—and, certainly, that has been reflected in many other cases that have since been brought to my attention.

My concern is that Mr Passmore—and, it seems, many like him—has very minimal transactions undertaken by the Public Trustee on a fortnightly basis. Mr Passmore is solely reliant on an age pension. From his pension of \$482 a fortnight, \$399.70 is transferred to the Hampstead Centre. He receives a personal allowance of \$31.20 a fortnight, and the Public Trustee takes a commission on his pension of \$26.56; \$25.52 goes in the bank. During the space of a year, the commission on his pension amounts to \$690. In addition, he is charged an administration and audit fee of \$100. So, he pays nearly \$800 a year to have a couple of transactions carried out which, if I had them done through my credit union account, would cost me nothing.

The Copelands accepted this, but what they did not accept was an additional \$30 fee levied by the Public Trustee to assess whether or not Mr Passmore needed to pay tax. It is quite outrageous. Mrs Copeland contacted the Public Trustee's office and got nowhere. She was told that it was for the preparation of a tax return and that a management decision had been made to change this so that it was universal for all clients, whether or not returns were lodged. So, irrespective of whether a person has ever paid tax before in their life (and Mr Passmore never had), there was a blanket charge of \$30. He was also being charged \$54 a year for ambulance fees. He was living in a government funded health facility; he did not need an ambulance subscription. I have heard of other instances where people have paid private medical insurance and did not need ambulance fees either but, again, this was a blanket charge.

When we wrote to the Attorney and detailed our concerns, he wrote back and said that the ambulance fees are raised as a matter of course; that the income commission (that is, the \$26.55) is waived for some people who have less than \$2 000 in the bank (which is a great concession), but all estates are charged the tax fee. He claimed that it was necessary to make an assessment. I would like to know where and why. Certainly, the Public Trustee has an obligation to maintain proper accounts, but it has absolutely no obligation, as far as I can see, to prepare taxation returns. When we contacted the tax office, it confirmed that Mr Passmore had no tax file number, that his income was below the tax threshold (and that has recently increased to \$20 000), that there was no need to

lodge a return and no need to advise of not lodging a return. We went back to the Attorney and asked how many people this might relate to. Of 1 520 people reliant on a pension for their sole source of income, none would need to lodge a tax return and all, according to the previous advice of the Attorney, would be charged for the assessment and preparation of a tax return not required by anyone. This surely has to be considered an unconscionable act. In relation to the ambulance fee, there are somewhere between probably 360, according to the Attorney's advice, and 200 people who are being charged for ambulance subscriptions. It is an absolute disgrace.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Now is an opportune time to reaffirm the benefits of a free enterprise, free market system. Virtually all Australians realise that economic growth is the foundation on which each of us builds the future, and we want more of it. Our attitudes are formed not by what we already have but by what we still want. The only system of government that has been proved capable of delivering perpetually according to the rising expectations for all people, including the disadvantaged, is a free enterprise economy. In such a system, the production, distribution, pricing and consumption of goods and services are primarily determined by the choices of individuals, whether acting alone or as corporate entities. Entrepreneurship, innovation and consumer choice ensure that scarce resources are continually employed in a manner which most effectively matches the changing needs of society. Governments in richer societies such as ours ensure that a minimum standard of living is available for all their citizens, however contentious the determination of that minimum standard might be. In fact, the provision of public goods and a safety net for those who need it requires that governments have the resources that only a prosperous, market orientated economy can deliver.

One of the most interesting pieces of literature that has come across my desk is a book in support of free enterprise published by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Western Australia. It identified three fundamental prerequisites of a free enterprise economy which form the essential civil institutions needed to make an economy work. They are, first, freedom of contract so that individuals and businesses are unconstrained in their choices of where, when and whether to buy and sell goods and services, including labour, and in the prices at which they do so. The second is security of property rights, so that individuals are free to buy, sell and use their property as they choose. Security means that they cannot be arbitrarily deprived of their property and rights in it and that they must receive appropriate compensation if lawfully deprived (in part or in whole) of these rights. Here, property is taken in a wide sense to include not only physical property but also human property and intellectual property. I have, however, some reservations about the definition of property rights in relation to products from the sea and water and mineral resources. The third prerequisite is a legal framework which, in addition to the usual protection from fraud, threat and violence, can be trusted to defend freedom of contract and property rights impartially.

All economies which share the desirable characteristics of high living standards, relative absence of poverty and individual freedom are, to a greater or lesser extent, free enterprise economies dependent on these essential civil institutions. Conversely, all those economies characterised by relative or absolute economic difficulty—the countries of the former USSR are characteristic—lack some or all of the

framework, often despite generous endowments of natural resources and human capital. Government provides the framework in which the fundamentals of a free enterprise economy are guaranteed. Government must also ensure that it maintains appropriate broad economic settings, particularly in fiscal and monetary policy, which do not stifle enterprise, investment and growth.

While some advocates of the free enterprise economy believe the state which governs least is the state which governs best, somewhere along the line compromise will be necessary. Democracies work through persuasion, and an essential problem is in persuading voters to accept a painful process described by one professional as 'creative destruction' which lies at the heart of free enterprise. Businesses rise and fall as they adapt or fail to adapt to changing circumstances. Consider how numerous farriers were at one time and how scarce they are today. A more recent example of failure to adapt would be the HIH collapse.

The most visible effect of the process of adapting is the loss of jobs. This is often a statistical illusion. The media reports the loss of hundreds of jobs, but the absorption of those workers in hundreds of other enterprises goes unreported. Farriers may be as scarce as hens' teeth today, but mechanics abound in thousands, and many HIH employees will be absorbed by businesses similar to HIH, taking over the work made available by the collapse. Nevertheless, the notion that change inevitably involves loss of employment and loss of security is a deep-seated one. The perception would appear to differ markedly from reality.

The Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training has attributed job insecurity to workplace change resulting from labour market deregulation, outsourcing and downsizing and the growing trend to part-time temporary and contract employment. Australian labour market economist Mark Wooden found that the chance of losing a job and the average duration of employment are no different now from what they were 20 years ago. Wooden concluded that, despite widespread claims to the contrary, employment today is just as secure and stable as it was 20 years ago. His conclusion is supported by evidence from Roy Morgan Research which shows that over the past 25 years the great majority of people consistently expect unemployment to rise. That is the perception; reality proves the perception is false.

The measures of wellbeing still most commonly associated with standard of living and quality of life are real wages of employees, consumption and the disposable incomes of individuals and households. 'Real' here means figures that have been adjusted for inflation over the relative time period. Over the past 25 years real average full-time income earnings have risen by 21 per cent, real per capita household consumption by 61 per cent and growth in real per capita disposable income by 41 per cent. Growth in the volume of per capita consumption has outstripped growth in disposable income mainly because of a steady decline in household savings from 18 per cent in 1975 to 4 per cent in the year 2000. If it were true that rich countries such as Australia could secure ever-improving living standards only at the cost of poor countries, then our material progress would be neither sustainable nor defensible. If this were true then poorer countries would be getting poorer and their standard of living would be decreasing. I believe this is not so.

On average, the global trend is improving. The explosion of the world's population over the past 150 years is itself I believe an effect of improving living conditions. The gap

between the advanced and developing worlds is not widening. Developing economies on average are growing more quickly than advanced economies—5 per cent per year over the past 30 years as against 3 per cent per year for developed countries. In a free market economy it is possible for all countries to enjoy economic growth. This means that eliminating global poverty is achievable and that the best means of achieving it is to encourage economic growth. In fact, evidence suggests that growth in poor and rich countries is mutually reinforcing, not mutually inconsistent.

There is a sense of dissatisfaction, anxiety and alienation in part of the community which is inconsistent with this generally favourable national and international picture. One source of concern arises among those who acknowledge that the gains in material living standards are real but who argue that they were unsustainable. Against this pessimism many economists argue that we can in fact continue to raise living standards in both rich and poor countries without hitting insurmountable constraints from either lack of resources or an overburdened environment. The argument from history is simple: pessimistic predictions of collapse of resources have not eventuated. This is brought out sharply by the famously fallacious Club of Rome predictions of 1972. These predicted that world reserves of copper, gold, lead, mercury, natural gas, petroleum and silver would be exhausted by 1993.

The clarity of the pricing mechanism in a freely functioning economy means that if resources do become scarce then their price will rise, and both producers and consumers will have increasing incentives to find new alternatives. Innovators will have increasing incentives to devise those alternatives. Even the current power prices have an up side, with increasing interest and expenditure in alternative, cleaner and now more viable sources of power from wind, sun, hot rocks and waves.

The Australian reality gap is made worse by the fact that people tend to measure their own success compared with their contemporaries rather than with their own history. In western societies such as Australia this pessimism is evidenced in the large number of people who assume that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer, even when this is not in fact the case. However, expectations are ever increasing, as are the services provided by governments to meet them. A series of articles in the *Australian* in June 2000 highlighted this gap between the perceptions and reality. Professor Ann Harding, Director of the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, found among other things that from 1982 to 1996-97 those on the lowest incomes have enjoyed the fastest growth in real living standards and that nationally there was no increase in inequality.

Governments may choose to opt for isolation rather than free trade. A comparison of North and South Korea amply demonstrates the disadvantages of a closed economy and the advantages to residents of a free economy. India tried to grow industry behind high tariff walls, building industries on import substitution rather than focusing on building exports and competing with imports. They found among other things that economic development was left to the mercy of shifting political and bureaucratic influence, and that industries created were out of date and inefficient compared with leading edge industries elsewhere. This is changing in part with the advent of satellite technology and the IT industry, with India now being called the back office of the world.

Research by the World Bank shows that economic growth is necessary for a country to escape from poverty. We can look at the past few years here in our own state. As illustrated

by yesterday's export data, the Liberal government has made concerted and successful efforts to expand the economic base and lift the income of the state. This provides a sustainable and increasing income for the government to retire public sector debt, pay its bills and lift the quality of life of the residents of this state.

The World Bank also said that the evidence is that private property rights, stability and openness create a good environment for poor households to increase their production and income. Much of the push for freer trade is now coming from the world's poorest nations because it is increasingly clear that this, combined with secure property rights and a good legal framework, is their best chance to escape poverty. There is a perception amongst some people that the way to make the poor rich is to make the rich poor. The French Revolution destroyed the rich and made them poor but it did not make the poor rich.

Economic freedom is inextricably linked to political freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Free trade benefits the community at large at the cost of formally protected interests, which is why governments characterised by patronage and cronyism tend to be protectionist and interventionist. In Australia, as in most developed and many developing economies, tighter environmental standards are proceeding hand in hand with openness to foreign trade. A free market economy underpinned by law and respect for property rights provides the environment most conducive to a high and rising quality of life in all senses of the term. Innovation and cooperation will continue to deliver improvements in living standards without unsustainable pressure on scarce resources and the environment.

It is my belief that only Liberal governments, both state and federal, can ensure that we can continue to deliver these improving living standards to the people of our state that have previously been threatened by the huge debt levels left by recent Labor governments.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I want to spend a few minutes tonight talking about some of the issues that arose out of the estimates committee in which I was involved last Tuesday with the Minister for Human Services and the Minister for Disability Services and Minister for the Ageing. Before getting down to details (and perhaps because it is very fresh in my mind), I must say that I found the estimates' process this year to be the most frustrating, boring and virtually useless process in which I have been involved for a long time. We had avoidance of the question, we had confusing statements, and we had long rambling answers which got off the point and which I suspect were deliberately misleading. It was obfuscation as I have never heard it before and, as a result of that day, I really have to ask whether this whole process, which we go into every year, is worth continuing, because I do not think we gain much at all.

It was quite clear to me that both ministers seemed to have little knowledge of the budget themselves, even though occasionally they wanted to hide us, members of the opposition, for not being able to understand the papers. In one instance when I received a telephone call during questioning, the Minister for Human Services asked me whether I was receiving advice or instructions. I felt, 'What a statement! How rich is this!' He was sitting there with about 25 advisers and we had none; yet he had the nerve to make that sort of remark.

I reckon about 25 advisers were present in the chamber last Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Of those 25 advisers,

I suppose perhaps five would have had something to say. The rest of them just sat there, and I have to ask whether they would be better employed back at the Department of Human Services getting on with the job rather than sitting here. They must have been bored witless by the proceedings, sitting there all day doing nothing.

The process needs a good look and we have to be honest about it. If we want proper scrutiny of the budget, step 1, let us have some budget papers that people can make sense of, and, step 2, let us put a fair effort into answering the questions; otherwise, we should just be honest about the fact that the whole thing is a charade and do away with it.

I raise the issue of spending on information technology in Human Services because I noted that in question time today the minister virtually re-ran his answers to the questions that I put to him last week during estimates about the government's expenditure on information technology in the Department of Human Services. To refresh everyone's memory, I point out that the government is looking at an expenditure of \$90 million for computerised patient information systems across the department over the next five or so years.

Mr Hamilton-Smith: Hear, hear!

Ms STEVENS: The member for Waite says 'Hear hear!' Let us hope so, because I do not know that there are any guarantees that the honourable member will get what he thinks he is going to get. The OACIS program will cost \$64 million all up over five years. That is a lot of money when one considers that \$89 million is the cost of the entire upgrade of the Lyell McEwin Health Service. The government is spending more than \$39 million on these systems just this year, and that is more than stage 1 of the upgrade of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

In the press last week the minister called me a troglodyte, and he repeated it today in the House. He wanted to say that I was living in prehistoric times, that I had no idea how important it is to have these systems and what a great idea this whole thing is. I have no problem at all with the concept. Obviously if hospitals, GPs, private hospitals and all parts of the health sector can communicate information, can quickly communicate patient records, patient information and test results, that would be a great boon. I have no problem with that. The problem is that I do not think there is any guarantee that that is what we will get as a result of our expenditure of \$64 million.

I want to talk about the area where this is most obvious. What we get for our \$64 million over five years is the eight metropolitan public hospitals linked together and systems to enable patient information transfer, but it involves only the eight metropolitan public hospitals. I asked the minister a question about someone who has private health insurance and who attended the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, or any one of the public hospitals, as a private patient, and then on another occasion went to Ashford Hospital. The fact is that, in order to get a system working effectively, all the players need to be linked. The OACIS system will not necessarily link in the private hospitals—it will do so only if they agree—and it will not necessarily link in any of the GPs.

One of the major issues, as well as transfer of information in terms of hospitals, is the linkage of information between outside specialists and outside GPs. It is about linking those very critical players into the loop. There is no guarantee at all that that will be covered with our \$64 million. The minister was equally unclear, and maybe that is just his style, so I challenge anyone to read Minister Brown's answers and tell

me whether they have a clear idea of what he was talking about because I would be very surprised if they have. We are also not clear on how or whether the system can be integrated with the national computerised patient system, how or whether it meets privacy standards and, most importantly, the ongoing costs of maintaining and upgrading the system.

I will now return to the minister calling me a troglodyte. If being a troglodyte means being sure of getting what you are actually paying for and not going headlong into a system—and members should remember that the person who first signed us up for this was the former Minister for Health, the member for Adelaide, which seems to me to be giving it the kiss of death in terms of his other forays into new ideas and new deals—without questioning the amount of money spent and the result that you get for that money, and you hold that expenditure up against other priorities, I am happy to be a troglodyte because I believe I am being responsible. Clearly, that is not what the minister wanted to hear. However, we will see.

I think everyone in this House would know that computing systems—information technology—are notoriously linked with black holes for expenditure of money. We have a whole lot of people who are not familiar with this new paradigm. Masses of consultants and so-called experts are running around using the new language with the latest toys and there is a massive potential for people to be taken in and charged big dollars. I hope this is not the case. We have raised the concerns and we will wait to see how things turn out. I must say that I am certainly not confident that the questions have been answered and the aims of that system—which are laudable—will, in fact, be a reality as a result of the expenditure of \$64 million. When you see the state of our current system, and when you know—as we all do—the stresses and strains that are currently happening, you have to ask if this expenditure is wise. We will see as the future unwinds.

Another issue I want to highlight concerns the Minister for Disability Services and Minister for the Ageing, the Hon. Robert Lawson. I have to say that some of the answers that he gave were the most unbelievable answers you could expect from a minister. I draw members' attention to *Hansard* of 26 June during the last session and ask them to have a little read of my questions and his answers in relation to disability services and the government's forward planning to deal with the issue of unmet need. I put what I thought was a pretty straightforward question to the minister when I asked him whether he could clarify the level of unmet need as at 1 July 2001. As a bit of background, that question is not something that he would not have heard of because a few years ago there was a national agreement on the level of unmet need in disability services across Australia and he took part in agreeing on the national and state figures, so he knew what moneys he had put in. My question was simply, 'What would be the level of unmet need as of 1 July 2001?' I told him that we had done some work and thinking about it and had come up with the figure of \$18 million. I asked the minister to confirm or otherwise. He told me that I was wrong but that he did not have a figure at all. He went on to say—

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Ms STEVENS: It gets worse. He went on to say that not only did he not have a figure but also that his department does not regularly compile data of this nature. Further, he went on to say that his department identifies needs on a case by case basis. That is the Minister for Disability Services answering a question about his department's forward planning to address the level of unmet need in disability services in South

Australia—and it is in *Hansard*. It was the most preposterous response. I do not know how any minister worth their salt could say such a thing and think that they could actually hold their head up afterwards.

Everyone in this nation knows that the level of unmet need in disability services is the major issue confronting governments. Yet, in South Australia, the minister does not know what it is because he does not compile data on a population or demographic basis; he works it out on a case by case basis. Does this mean that when he heads off to COAG meetings he has to ring and ask, ‘How many phone calls did we get today?’ or ‘How many letters did we get today?’ What a load of rubbish! I felt sorry for his cringing public servants when he made such a fool of himself. Of course, the sad thing is that he is actually the minister.

Mr Lewis: For how long?

Ms STEVENS: Let us hope that it is not for too long. I want to make a few comments about human tissue, which the Minister for Health focused on as his major issue during the estimates committees. As members would know, last week during the estimates committees, the minister revealed part one of the saga that we now know has many other parts to it. He revealed a lot of disturbing information that affected many people in the community. At that particular time, we had no reason at all to doubt anything that the minister said. In fact, events that had occurred in New South Wales were revealed earlier this year and an investigation was conducted in South Australia in relation to the retention and use of body parts and we had no reason to doubt that there had been an investigation here and that there had been certain practices that were of concern.

The minister then provided a hotline number, and he said that people who required counselling could call that hotline number and get that counselling—which was good. That was on Tuesday; it was fine and we thought that was the end of it. On Wednesday morning, my office and other Labor offices—and I would be surprised if some Liberal members did not as well—had people ringing to say that when they rang the hotline number they got an answering machine. My office then decided to refer all queries to the minister’s office. The fact is that the minister knew what he was doing on Tuesday and he knew what he was announcing. He knew that this would disturb a lot of people; he even said in his statement that he understood that this could affect people but that it was important that the truth be heard.

That is fine, but when you do that you have to take care of the consequences, and it is quite clear that little or no thought had gone into dealing with the situation. A person who rang my office spent 1½ hours trying to get through, and when they finally got through, they got the answering machine. I know that hundreds of people were in that situation. Belatedly, in the afternoon, they rustled up eight, nine, or however many counsellors from across the health system and set them up on these telephone lines. If you were going to do this, you would think that this would have been set up—that those counsellors would have been given some training to ensure that people were ready for the sorts of things with which they might be confronted. It was quite clear that none of this was done, and I think that was highly irresponsible.

Anyhow, what happened last Tuesday now seems to have been superseded by other events. It seems that we are now looking at a much more serious situation, and we will have to wait to see what finally comes out of the inquiry which the minister has established. The question is: how is it that the

minister’s investigation was so far short of the mark? How is it that these very concerning allegations, allegations that are so serious that they could result in a royal commission, were made through a radio station? What does that say about that initial investigation?

Mrs Geraghty: Not much.

Ms STEVENS: The member for Torrens says, ‘Not much,’ and I agree.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): May I take up the remark that was made by the member for Elizabeth at the closing stages of her contribution and point out that I think the literal interpretation of the legislation under which we have been operating since the early 1990s in relation to human tissue did not—and no-one took the trouble to get it across to the medical profession—sink in. The medical profession did not understand it and, in consequence, they continued with practices that were no different from the practices which had evolved as part of the professional work they had been doing for goodness knows how long. It had become clear from research being done around the world that it was possible to use tissues from one live, warm human being for other live, warm human beings and that, in any case, such tissue at the point at which a person is pronounced dead is still suitable for research and by using it you are not causing agony or any truncation of the life of that person; it has already gone.

Frankly, it is not all black and white and, notwithstanding the shock there may be for those left living who are members of the family, the loved ones of those who have died, I am compelled to consider always what is implied in that slogan which, without being very theologically accurate, says: ‘Don’t take your organs to heaven; heaven knows we need them here.’ We are very foolish indeed if we make it impossible for medical science to use tissues and organs from us when we have immediately departed this life. Our bodies are useless to our spirit thereafter; it is our spirit that is left. If we deny the medical profession access to them under pain of great penalty, then we will do ourselves a disservice and we will all suffer accordingly, and anyone who is advocating the kinds of additional strictures which need to be put in place (as they see it) needs to think carefully about the implications and how they would feel if it was their life that was going to be forfeited if it could not be saved by chance of the still useful living organs of a person who was clinically dead, if these organs were to be made available to them.

I cannot for the life of me see that it is all evil. I understand the emotions, but policy made on the basis of emotions which is at odds with good science is policy which will fail to serve the best interests of society and the increasing degree to which we can civilise it. There ought not to be untrammelled access without the ethical aspects being addressed, but some of the stuff that I have read in recent times and/or heard on the electronic media, whilst understandable, is not acceptable as a basis upon which to make policy change from this point forward. I have seen it from both sides—and I will not go into that; I just will not go there tonight because, for me, that is an emotional discussion, not one which, all the same, is without rational regard for reality.

I want to mention another topic which I addressed during the course of the estimates committees; that is, the expenditure on the legislature. It only got a few seconds. I missed the opportunity to question the Premier about the way in which funds are spent in the parliament and believe that it is simply not appropriate, as I have said before, for a minister of the Crown to have control of the purse strings of parliament, yet

that is what we imply when we put the line for which the appropriation is made for parliament under the portfolio line of expenditure for a minister of the Crown. The solution to this is very simple. We should set an example for the rest of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association parliaments, the Westminster group, by appropriating for the parliament separately and independently from government as a separate bill which must pass the House before the government's budget is brought in. Appropriations for parliament ought to be laid on the table of the House by the Speaker detailing what is needed to run the institution of parliament, and allow members to debate it openly.

We all say at some point or other—whether or not we all mean it I sometimes wonder (and I know the party organisations do not)—that we openly, publicly and willingly espouse the virtues of transparency and accountability. There is no reason why we cannot have an open and frank debate about the taxpayers' money spent in this institution, pointing out how little, as a proportion of the total amount, the parliament costs the society it serves to ensure that the other services the public expect government will provide are, in fact, provided. It is not at all expensive. As you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker, if we did away with the parliament in this state and allowed the bureaucrats as professional public servants to make all the decisions, we would be living in hell in no time at all, because they would ensure that the rules and regulations they introduced suited their administration: the approach which their department, their staff and the organisation which grew up inside that structure wanted for its—

The Hon. G.M. Gunn interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: Yes, the member for Stuart has it right, and I know he understands these points. They would become more powerful and that would be worse than a dictatorship of one, because I can tell you that you know whom to shoot when you have a dictatorship of one, but you would not know whom to shoot in the Public Service if they were all powerful. I say to those people who are arguing for the abolition of the states and the introduction of expanded local government: that is tosh and piffle.

It is not done anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere and it will be far less satisfactory for us as citizens. We could set the example then—let me come back to the main point—for all the other parliaments and constitutions by simply saying that we will amend the state's constitution such that the appropriations needed to run the parliament are made and passed before the government can introduce its budget bill. And they should properly come to the parliament as a recommendation from the Joint Parliamentary Service Committee as the body delegated by this and the other place to look at the minutiae and approve the proposed budget before it is debated. I am sure we would get a lot more sense into the public interest here than we have otherwise been able to do.

I illustrate that by referring to the idiocy of the present arrangement for media monitoring. You have the Leader of the Opposition upstairs trying to do the best he can—and it is better than was possible for the Minister for Human Services and member for Finnis when he was opposition leader, and that was better than what Dale Baker was able to do in monitoring the media. The equipment and staff that they have available is grossly inadequate given the responsibility they have as Her Majesty's loyal opposition, whoever that is from time to time. Yet on the other side of it, we have the profligacy of 19 journalists and—I do not know because the Premier has never revealed it—over \$1 million worth of

electronic surveillance equipment checking everything that is said every minute of the day on all radio and television stations, as well as the reading of every newspaper, newsletter and journal that is ever published in this state or saying anything about the government. And then they churn out the kind of propaganda that they believe is necessary to prop up their frail ministers as the front runners of the government to retain office in the state.

That is profligacy gone mad because, if the product were made available to all members, the same amount of information could still be provided to the Premier and the government from the library. If the Premier desires to have a whole bivouac of spin doctors 24 hours a day on duty in his office that is up to him to take it out of his own budget. But it ought not to be a matter for parliament to starve every other member and yet be forced to keep the government in office by not changing the appropriations that are made to the Premier's office as it now stands for media monitoring purposes.

This was the year, if there was ever a year at any time in the last 50 years, in which it should have been transferred from the Premier's office into the parliament itself, into the library. It should have been expanded to provide that service in the library without expanding the cost to the public purse, because the same amount of information would then have been available from the service in the library to the spin doctors in the Premier's office and every other minister's office as they get now, but the dog in the manger attitude which every government has taken in the nearly 22 years I have been here is such that, 'No, you must not give it to any other member, even the backbench, for fear that they might disturb your ascendancy within your party's role as its leader or spokesman on the matter—and more particularly, for fear that they might disturb your comfort as Premier of the government and/or ministers in the government. If they get the same amount of valid information about who is saying what and why, the other members of parliament might look better compared to you.' Now that is stupid; that is not in the public interest. It may be in the interest, and indeed it obviously is, of the ministers and the Premier to do it that way. But it is not in the public interest. Yet it is the public money, it is their interests and it is their state. The people are sovereign, and the parliament has the responsibility of making government accountable. Without access to that information it cannot do so.

This is an opportunity missed, and the Premier stands condemned for his dog-in-the-manger attitude, his meanness and his miserable nature. The government would have been no worse off: everybody could have had access to the information from the parliamentary library on the internet, wherever they were—in a ministerial office across town, in an electorate office across the state, in Ceduna or anywhere else, or in their homes. We would all have been better informed and the standard of debate would have risen accordingly, because the information would have been collected and objectively assessed by people who are professional in their work and not beholden to any political party or government for their position. And I guess, also, it would have been obtained at much less expense for each person because you could hire such people and give them security of employment in the parliamentary library for less than you would otherwise hire the same skills if the security of tenure depended on their employers re-election to office. So, the contracts that suck the money out of the taxpayers' purse are in excess of what is really necessary to provide that information to just one section of the parliament against the public interest.

I turn next to the question, if there is one—and I hope there is not: I am not wishing to contradict myself—of the Governor. I congratulate both the Premier and, more particularly—she said call me Marj—the Governor-elect, Marjorie Jackson Nelson. I think I have said that the right way round: I apologise if I have not. Some journalists write it as Marjorie Nelson Jackson whereas others write it as Marjorie Jackson Nelson. I do not know who is right and who is wrong. I say to her: congratulations. I hope that the rigours of office can be embraced by her as they were so ably embraced by people who were her predecessors—people such as Sir Mark Oliphant and the like—in recent times where no explicit focus was put on an understanding of the legal pleasantries of the constitution and the role of the head of state. That role is not simply ceremonial but it is, indeed, to ensure that we behave in parliament and, more particularly, that governments behave in compliance with the Constitution. That is the real check, balance and reason for having a head of state separate from the head of government—to ensure that, should a government attempt to do what leaders in some other countries have done and are presently trying to do, then it is prevented. Nothing illegal is tolerated. We do not want to become China, Indonesia, Iran or Iraq.

The Hon. G.M. Gunn: Zimbabwe.

Mr LEWIS: Zimbabwe, yes. There is a string of countries where that sort of thing arises. In the process of evolution and understanding of the societies involved, degrees of development are occurring to get to the point that we are at. Whilst we are not perfect, I am quite sure, from my experience of what I have seen elsewhere over my lifetime, that this is as good as it gets anywhere in the world today as far as having a system of government in which everybody is in some measure accountable. I can go out of here tonight and I know I will not be set upon by henchmen from the Premier's office, but I know that if I were to make these remarks about President Wahid in the Indonesian parliament I would fear for my life. I would not make such remarks unless I was absolutely certain that I could out-gun anybody who was gunning for me the moment I went outside. You would be a fool otherwise: you would not be alive for long.

During the estimates committees I suggested to the Premier a method by which we might improve the process of the appointment of our governors, but he dismissed it as being radical.

The Hon. G.M. Gunn: What was the suggestion?

Mr LEWIS: The suggestion was, quite simply, that all members of both houses of parliament should meet with the mayors and chairs of the district councils around South Australia in one convocation and elect a recommended nominee. It would be a bold Premier who would go against the wishes of such a broadly based group of people who had thought carefully about who ought to be in the position of head of state. I think that would be a preferable system because it would be free of the risk of the accusation that the appointment to the position was made on a partisan basis. I really fear that is what might happen in the near future, and I believe it has happened in some measure in Victoria and in New South Wales. The office has lost its role and relevance as the watchdog to ensure that the rules are obeyed.

I move on and make a plea about another matter to which I drew attention during the estimates committees, and that is that the communities in the Mallee are blessed with underground water but they are cursed with the tyranny of distance and the cost of supplying other things in reliable manner, including electricity which is delivered down wire. But, one

of their natural advantages is that they have shallow, abundant fresh water available, yet they pay the same amount as people living in more remote communities where it costs a hell of a lot more than around \$1 a kilolitre to deliver water. I think that is wrong, because it denies them the chance to develop their communities using the natural advantages at their disposal. They are literally subsidising the consumption of water not just in Adelaide but, more particularly, in some areas of South Australia such as Yorke Peninsula which is remote from its source of water and which relies on the Stockport pipeline from Swan Reach pumping station, and other communities which rely on the Morgan to Whyalla pipeline, and all the way to Woomera: it costs a lot more than \$1 a kilolitre to get it there, and it is crook that the government cannot address that in all fairness. The government says that everything else has to be on the basis of cost recovery and competition. That is simply crook and it flies in the face of what the government otherwise says it is doing. It discriminates against the interests of those communities and I will forever carp about that until it is fixed, in the same way that Max Brown used to carp about having filtered water for Whyalla.

Time expired.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I was very interested that the government announced in the budget that it was going to give a grant to the public to encourage the installation of solar hot water systems. I noted during estimates that the Minister for Minerals and Energy spoke about this issue. In his media release, he said that between \$500 and \$700 per system will be paid directly to consumers and that the government is doing this to reduce greenhouse emissions through sustainable energy use. It is not often that this state government has committed itself to policies that deserve some praise but, in this case, I commend the minister for implementing this grant because we have a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gases in Australia. We have, unfortunately, experienced international criticism because Australia has been seen to be dragging its feet in reducing greenhouse gases. This was evidenced at a recent international convention where Australia was criticised for its weakened position on the Kyoto protocol.

Recently, one of my constituents, Doris, who is an Aboriginal housing tenant, discovered that her solar hot water service had broken down. When she inquired of the Aboriginal housing unit about getting it either repaired or replaced, she was told that the department would replace the solar hot water service with a gas or electric hot water unit, depending on which service was connected to her home. I find that rather extraordinary, and so does Doris. She simply cannot understand why her solar hot water service cannot be repaired or replaced. Obviously, it is cheaper for her to run, but the use of a solar hot water service is being encouraged and people are being given a financial incentive by the government to install them.

It seems to me that, where we already have a solar hot water service installed on a South Australian Housing Trust property, it would be in keeping with the government's recently announced policy on sustainable energy use to replace the solar service with another solar service. My constituent now has had to live without hot water for over a week and, of course, we would all accept that that is a totally intolerable situation. I am not holding the officers of the Aboriginal Housing Unit responsible for this because, as it has said, government policy does not recognise solar

appliances for repair or replacement so, basically, its hands are tied.

I have written to the Minister for Human Services, because this matter falls under his portfolio. But I thought it was worth raising in the House to highlight what can, I guess, only be called hypocrisy when it comes to the government's putting its commitments into practice. I think this is a great opportunity that has gone begging. We could have had the government setting a great example to the community by saying, 'We are following up on our own policy.' I do not know whether it is a lack of communication between one government department and another, but it does seem incredibly hypocritical.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am very pleased to speak in this debate. I was just discussing this matter with the honourable member who had made a number of comments in relation to how the parliament should be funded and the necessary course of action which may take place in the future. I have found the debates we have had over the previous couple of weeks in the budget estimates quite interesting.

Mrs Geraghty: You hurried us along.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I thought that was one of my better acts, because I did not think that—

Ms Key interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I was my usual amenable and cooperative self.

Mr Hamilton-Smith: He's been very good today. Even in the party room he was very nice today.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: My usual amenable self.

Mr Hamilton-Smith: He was a gentleman.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I always am when I have been successful, and when I am getting my own way. It was interesting listening to the alternative points of view that were being put forward, and the various options of members as to how the money should be allocated and how we should divide the turkey up. This afternoon, we heard a long dissertation from the shadow treasurer, the member for Hart. I was listening with bated breath, because I thought now—

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, I was. I had the speaker on and I thought, 'Now we'll be told, chapter and verse, what this alternative budget is.' We have listened, we have been through the process. We had the member for Hart issuing forth; he had his dark suit on and he did his buttons up, but the television cameras had gone, and he looked a bit deflated about that. However, we heard nothing. We did not hear whether he would increase expenditure in one area; whether he would increase the 31 per cent that we spent on health to 38 per cent—because the member for Elizabeth is always seeking more money. Then we have the member for Taylor, who wants to increase the 28 per cent on education. If we do that, we will have to do one of two things: reduce expenditure elsewhere or raise more revenue. It is quite simple.

Mrs Geraghty: There's nothing left to sell, is there? You sold it all.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: You spent it; we had to pay for it. You spent it, you blew the overdraft. You increased the overdraft to a point where the bank manager called in the loan. And, of course, the member for Torrens, in a nice way, had to have a bit of a shot, but she was not correct. Surely she also recognises that the methods of raising revenue for state governments have been greatly restricted in recent times.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No. Surely the member understands. Some of the areas from the past, such as franchise taxes, are no longer available to state governments. There is a very limited revenue area if governments are foolish enough to go unwisely down the track of wanting to drastically increase expenditure, which will have a very dampening effect upon the economy of South Australia.

The member for Hart did not in any way indicate to this House what the Labor Party's spending program is. What I would like to know from the member for Hart is: will he increase government expenditure? If we were ever unfortunate enough to have the member and his colleagues in government, what would be their spending program? We are entitled to know. The public of South Australia is entitled to know. The opposition has adopted the attitude of being critical, of going around and saying how bad things are and accepting no responsibility for their previous actions, but they have not told us where they will spend the money or how they will get it—whether they will change the priorities, whether they will change the operations of government enterprises. We are entitled to know.

One of the things that the member for Hart did do during the estimates committees is get a headline—and he is always keen to have a headline. I picked up the *Advertiser* of Friday 22 June and saw an article headed 'The pokies claim an MP can't prove'. I thought that this was interesting, because we have listened at great length—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am pleased that the honourable member is now in the chamber. Perhaps he will have a second opportunity to tell us what his alternative budget is, because I am interested. I was particularly interested, because I like to read the paper about 6 o'clock in the morning—

Mr Foley: What paper was it?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The *Advertiser*—that well informed Murdoch journal. I have to say that I am not one of its fans. I do not mind if they print it, but—

Ms Key: I thought that you were a *Times* fan.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, I am a fan of the *London Times*, and I read it on one of those electronic devices that I do not find easy to manage. However, I picked up this article. Since Senator Buckland has been appointed, having followed a former member of this House who is well known to me, it is the first time I have seen him in print. The article states:

A claim raised in state parliament that a first home buyer wasted his \$14 000 federal government grant on poker machines was unsubstantiated, a Labor Senator admitted yesterday. SA Senator Geoff Buckland described the allegation aired by opposition treasury spokesman Kevin Foley in parliament yesterday as 'anecdotal evidence'. But outside parliament Mr Foley said that whether the paper story was true or false becomes irrelevant once it became clear it was possible.

It may be possible, but we have yet to have any evidence. Mr Foley said:

He (Senator Buckland) did some checking and was astonished, as I am, that the events as described can occur.

Had they occurred, what steps does the honourable member recommend—except to gain this headline? I was quite interested to hear the shadow treasurer, someone who aspires to high office and who would be entrusted with the finances of this state, talk about the day when he will have rigorous controls, and will make sure that all ministers meet their deadlines. It will be the first Labor government in the history of Australia, or anywhere else in the world, that has done

that, if that takes place; they do not have a good record in this area. The article continues:

It appears that there are no requirements as to how the money issued under the scheme is to be used—provided, of course, that the recipient is eligible to receive it.

Goodness me, that is enlightening. So, the honourable member achieved his headline. Then, of course, I turned over a few pages, only to see that he got a second mention in the paper—and I thought that this was even better. The article reads:

Yesterday, Opposition Treasury spokesman Kevin Foley claimed a man who had qualified for a \$14 000 Federal Government first-home-buyers grant had blown the money on poker machines. Mr Foley admitted hearing the story from an ALP senator who later agreed he had not raised it in the Federal Parliament because it was merely anecdotal. Mr Foley knew the story had not been authenticated yet raised it as if it was a fact. It is disgraceful and unacceptable for our political leaders to make claims of this type without checking the facts.

That is correct. While we are talking about it, we want some facts, because we have had this extensive examination of the budget. We have had members trotting out all sorts of requests and making comments to ministers at length, but we have not had put to us any alternative programs, suggestions or data that would clearly indicate to us what an alternative government budget would be.

The Minister for Human Services raised in the House the difficulties that have arisen in relation to the taking of human tissue and all the related matters. I want to raise an issue in relation to that matter. I received a telephone call from a constituent of mine today who was most concerned that this matter had gone on and on in the media and that an attempt was being made to continue to highlight in great detail some of the actions that have been taken. That was causing a great deal of personal distress and concern to people who had had loved ones and little children die and who may have had extensive autopsies carried out on them. It was bringing all that pain and grief back to them.

I think there comes a stage where the media must be cautious that in informing the public they are also aware of the effects that running some of these quite detailed and distressing stories will have on those people who have been affected or the organs or tissue of members of whose family may have been used for some of these procedures. The media have a responsibility not only to report but also to be aware of the hurt and suffering that can take place. This constituent of mine was most concerned that this process had gone on for a considerable number of days, and that the media seemed to have worked themselves into a considerable frenzy over the issue, but they had failed to appreciate that there was another side of the story and that another group of people would suffer considerably in relation to this matter.

I want to comment briefly on a second matter. The member for Hammond gave a lengthy address in relation to the parliament's having its own appropriation. That course of action has been suggested on a number of occasions. I do not disagree with the principle. I well recall attending a presiding officers conference in the 1980s when I was Deputy Speaker in this place, and the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Rt Hon. Billy Snedden, gave that conference a half hour dissertation on what a great and wonderful suggestion this would be and why it should take place in parliaments of Australia and elsewhere. After he had finished his half hour address questions were invited. I got up and asked him whether when he was the Treasurer of the commonwealth of Australia he held those views. He did not

look pleased with me at all, and he said no. I asked to him, 'Well, what have we been talking about for the past half an hour?' I was told afterwards that that was not an appropriate question to ask. I thought it was very appropriate.

Notwithstanding those comments, I think there is some merit for this suggestion. I am of the view that this parliament does not have sufficient resources to allow members to carry out their responsibilities, particularly some of the committee work. If one compares the appropriations that they have in New South Wales and elsewhere—I think probably they have gone a bit too far the other way—one sees that it is not possible for some of the committees to do some of the work that they want to do. I do not think anyone could accuse this parliament of having an excess amount of funding. We are aware of how difficult it is for members to carry out certain of their functions. The select committee which is looking at the processes of this parliament ought to examine that matter because I think it has a great deal of merit.

There is another matter which has a great deal of merit and which this select committee ought to look at it in some detail to come to a bipartisan agreement. This will not happen unless both sides of politics accept that the parliament should have as much independence as possible. The parliament does not belong to the government, the Liberal Party or the Labor Party. It really is the voice of the people of South Australia. It is there so that people can raise issues without fear or favour and have them debated. It is an instrument whereby people can feel that their points of view will be put clearly and precisely, and that there will not be undue restriction on them. There is a tendency in democracies for governments of all persuasions to look inward. They do not like being questioned—and I suppose that is natural. However, I think there is great merit in that.

There is another matter which greatly concerns me. I am one of those people who believe that parliaments across Australia should consist of people from a broad spectrum. Young people should not be deterred from coming into the parliamentary process. I am quite disturbed that it appears that the federal parliament has bowed to some quite hysterical media pressure—and it is a dangerous thing when parliaments continue to react to pressure from the media—to change the federal superannuation rules. What it will do is prevent certain young people from offering themselves for parliamentary service. They may wish to do so for only a limited period of their life. Some people say that after serving only a couple of terms they should not be entitled to superannuation, that they should not be allowed to get on the gravy train.

What has to be clearly understood is that, if we want to attract young people into the parliament, it means that often they have to leave secure employment and secure superannuation benefits in the future. Their families will resist quite strongly. If they go into the parliament in a marginal or semi-marginal seat, there is a fair chance they will not serve in the parliament for any length of time. If people look at it sensibly before they put their name forward, many of them will come to the conclusion that they do not want to offer themselves. I think that would be a great pity.

If we are not careful with this process, we will restrict the groups of people who will be able to offer themselves for parliament. Unless someone has a guarantee from their existing employer that they can go back to their particular industry, or they are self-employed, or they have a profession in which they can continue, it will create the situation where members of parliament will feel that, if they come from a profession—a doctor, lawyer, dentist, and so on—they must

continue to have involvement in that profession so that they will not disadvantage themselves and will not lose track of what is going on, so they can readily go back to that profession if they are unsuccessful at the next election.

When people think about these issues, I do not think that is what they really want. Members of parliament should be focused and giving their attention to it. I have some concerns about the process, and I sincerely hope that all these issues are given careful consideration because it would be a great pity if people in this country are denied the opportunity to enter the various state parliaments at a young age because of fear of not being able to have gainful employment after serving a couple of terms of parliament.

Earlier today I raised the issue of the AWU elections, and I will refer to that during the next couple of weeks because I think it is most interesting that the honourable member for Spence got himself involved in that matter. Another point of interest to me is that, when I raised certain aspects of this matter on a previous occasion, nothing appeared in the local paper, the *Advertiser*, but it did appear in the *Australian*. It was rather interesting that that was the case and I was somewhat surprised because, when members get themselves involved in these sorts of controversies, usually the media in this state shows some interest, particularly when the comments that I made were supported by statutory declarations. However, that is probably a matter for another occasion.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to make these comments because the budget process is the most important debate that we have in this parliament. It is very important that we give careful scrutiny to the in excess of \$7 000 million that we are going to approve and spend on behalf of the taxpayers of South Australia. I am sure that taxpayers expect us to question the government in detail and I am sure that we are going to get the best possible return on that money, and my electorate has received a considerable amount of assistance from this budget.

Time expired.

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I concur very strongly with what my colleague the member for Elizabeth, the shadow minister for health, said about the usefulness of estimates committees this year. Indeed, they were quite useless in terms of getting information from ministers about the budget papers and the items contained in the budget. As the years go by, we find that less and less information is given in the budget papers and this year the information was particularly scanty. It was very much an attempt by the government to hide the detail of the budget but, when we got to the estimates committees, disappointingly we found ministers ducking and weaving, speaking gobbledegook and saying anything in response to questions just so long as they did not address the issues and so they could not be held accountable. Ministers can get away with that currently in this parliament but the big question is whether the voters of South Australia will allow them to get away with what they are hiding within these budget papers.

I refer particularly to the education estimates process, which, as I say, was a most unsatisfactory one. The minister was very smug in his avoidance of answering my questions. It is very difficult for opposition members to get very much information from a minister under the current situation because we get very few questions and very few follow-ups and there are long dorothea dixers from the other side. The result is very few answers to our own questions. At one point it took me nine questions to get half of one answer to a very simple question.

The education estimates process did not start out too well this year. It commenced with a very snarly, arrogant letter from the minister to me regarding the estimates timetable. I received a very condescending letter from Minister Buckby and I guess it was an indication of the contempt with which he was to pursue the estimates process. That condescension included the claim that somehow it was my failing that he would have so many staffers present in estimates.

As the member for Elizabeth reported in terms of the health estimates, there was a cast of thousands at the education estimates. I politely wrote back to the minister saying that my questions would be simple, that he should have no problem with answering them, and that, apart from the chief executive, he would need no other staff present. However, as is his right, he chose to have a cast of thousands. He then implied that somehow I was responsible for the cost of their being there.

I thought that was rather cute coming from a minister who, I am told—as he has done in previous years—has had his senior staff tied up for months preparing for the estimates. What a waste of resources. On top of that, it was particularly hypocritical of the minister to raise this as an issue given that he has been tying up the resources of senior executives and senior departmental staff for a long time in monitoring the activities of the DETE select committee. The minister's own staffers, the chief executive and senior staff members have been represented at every single meeting of the DETE select committee, scribbling notes and making sure that anyone giving evidence could see that there was a departmental presence. So, it was very hypocritical of the minister to talk about the use of departmental resources when he flagrantly has used the time of senior executives for those purposes.

There are very few lines in the education budget. In fact, the statement of financial performance contains six items: employee entitlements (which take up roughly 70 per cent of the budget); supplies and services (18 per cent); depreciation; interest; grants and subsidies (roughly 8 per cent); and other expenses. Those are the lines in the budget. There are five output classes: the education and training output class accounts for \$1.7 billion of the \$1.8 billion budget; then there are child care; employment services; coordination and advice; and youth services. My colleague Stephanie Key (the shadow minister for training and youth) had responsibility for the latter three output classes, and I concentrated on the education and training and child care lines.

Throughout the day, I asked the minister a few very simple questions. In all, I asked him, substantially, seven questions, and I might say that he answered none of them. The scant details that he provided were evasive. He did not directly answer my questions. With all his staff present, he was unable to give basic budgetary information on matters such as the TAFE budget for the last financial year. I asked the minister how much the government spent on TAFE in South Australia. He said that that was too complicated a question. He said, 'Give me another one.' His reply was: 'Too complicated; can't answer; I'll have to get back to you.' This was a pretty basic question. When I asked him what were the budgets for the TAFE institutes, he said that my question was too detailed and that he could not answer—'I'll have to get back to you.' These were very simple questions.

The budget for vocational education and training last year was \$320 million; this year it is only \$291.4 million. I asked the minister what happened to that \$28 million. That became a very interesting question indeed. The minister did not provide a satisfactory answer. In fact, at one stage he was

trying to say that the budget papers were wrong. Which budget papers: this year's, last year's, or perhaps the year before? He was shifty and evasive—too tricky. That is what the people of South Australia will see from this government. In the last financial year, the government spent on education \$1 803 million; this year it is budgeting to spend \$1 803 million—no increase. Yet, that budget has to absorb an increase of \$27.6 million in wages and salary, based on the number of teachers in the system (which is a decrease this financial year). So, the government has to absorb that amount, plus all the inflationary costs that must be absorbed as well. A pretty basic question to ask is, 'What gives, minister?' The minister says, 'Nothing'; there is no increase in funding and no accounting for inflation or increased wages costs, and the minister uses a whole lot of gobbledegook to get around the question.

My very first question to the minister was, 'Why is it that expenditure on education next financial year will be less than a quarter of the budgetary cake from the state government?' The minister's response was, 'That is too simplistic an attitude. It is not the amount of money that counts.' After arguing with my figures (I had quoted from previous years that showed a decline in expenditure on education) and saying that I was selectively quoting, he came up with exactly the same figures that showed there was indeed a decline in expenditure. To the questions seeking to ascertain the benefit from the sale of ETSA, the promised increase in education expenditure, and a bigger share of the cake for education, the minister had no answers.

I next asked the minister to go through each of the budgetary outputs for education and training and the child-care area and explain the differences between what was spent against what was budgeted. However, it was far too difficult. We started down that path; they looked at child-care, pre-school and got stuck on vocational education and training. Why? Because there is a difference of \$28 million between last year's and this year's budgets. How did the minister explain that difference? First, after much argy-bargy and probably half a dozen questions, the answer came back, 'There were inaccuracies in the output cost calculations in the 2000-01 budget papers.' He was basically saying that last year's budget papers were wrong. He said, 'There was an error made in assigning costs between pre-school education, reception to year 12 education and training and vocational education and training.'

I continued to question the minister and test the information that he gave as he went round and round in circles. One would have to ask the question: if mistakes were made in this or last year's budget papers or the budget papers for the year before that—and we are talking about \$28 million and not a trifling amount—why did not the Treasurer or the minister come back into parliament—as they are required to do—and explain that difference? No, it was of trifling insignificance and, according to the minister, he would have to take it all on notice.

I also asked the minister to explain a \$30 million decrease in budgeted expenditure in the line, 'Other supplies and services'. Supplies and services are for schools, pre-schools, TAFEs and basically translates into services to students and education communities. The budgetary explanation states:

The decrease in other supplies and services relates mainly to improved asset management practices to reduce utility and other overhead costs.

I asked the minister to break down that \$30.7 million and he came up with some figures but nothing in there that even

remotely looked like utility cost savings. So I asked the minister about this. The response that came back was:

... there are savings but not of a significant nature.

This is the item that the explanation to the budget papers claims is the significant source of this variation. It continues:

In the P21 scenario, if savings are made those savings are retained by the sites. That is quite clear. So, outside the P21 situation we are looking at other savings that may be in non-P21 situations.

That was the response I got. Further, when I continued to question the minister about this \$30 million decrease in proposed expenditure and the claim that these savings were somehow going to come from utility costs, I asked him about electricity costs to schools. We went around in circles, with many questions trying to get to the bottom of this, until finally the minister had to admit:

No, we are not talking about a decrease in electricity costs.

Electricity costs amongst the department comes to a figure of \$11.7 million—quite a substantial utilities cost. But the minister at one stage admitted that there would be increased electricity costs having to be absorbed above any supplementation that Treasury would provide to the education department. He could not say how much but promised to provide that. It is almost two weeks since that estimates committee and I am yet to get any clarification on that matter from the minister.

Obviously there are quite serious discrepancies in the budget papers, yet not any satisfactory explanation as to how multi-million dollar figures have been manipulated in the papers. There was an underspend in the capital works budget of \$15 million. There was an overspend from the commonwealth contribution to capital works of roughly \$1 million, so we had a \$16 million shortfall from the state government. When I questioned about that, a figure of \$12 million for minor works came up in response. Where is that accounted for, minister? You underspent the capital works budget. How could you have transferred \$12 million in there for next year's budget? The statement for minor works does not add up to \$12 million. 'Oh well,' comes the answer, 'it is not that minor works on that page, it is something else.' 'Where is it accounted for, minister?' I asked. We go around and around in circles: gobbledegook, non-answers, evasion and again hiding what is going on in this budget.

It was a totally unsatisfactory process in the estimates committee. Clearly multi-million dollars are being pushed around from this bucket to that and the minister refuses to clearly state where money has gone, where it has been spent, and his arrogant attitude is: what are you worried about? I am worried about the fact that the South Australian public were promised an increase in education spending. That impacts on our schools, TAFE colleges, pre-schools and child care services. For the minister to come out and say that these multi-million dollar figures are insignificant, that they do not matter, that the fact that we have seen a cut in real terms to the expenditure proposed from next year over what was spent last year, is of significance to the South Australian public, particularly in light of the fact that they were promised a bonanza in education spending after the sale of ETSA.

The minister can duck and weave, but he is the one who has to explain to the public of South Australia why, after all the pain that we have had with this Liberal government and after all the promises of a better deal for education, this government came up with less than 24 per cent of the pie for education and a cut in real terms.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I rise to contribute to this debate on the appropriations and the budget on behalf of the people of Waite in order to support it, to congratulate the government on the services that it is delivering to the people in my constituency and to comment on the pitfalls and shortcomings foreshadowed in the opposition's approach to the appropriations in the budget, in particular, its lack of vision for the future of the state.

What the budget has done is set down a course to follow through which South Australia might rebuild its economy and its economic development, and indeed it is already doing that. We have had news this week of outstanding economic performance for the state. We have Access Economics and other commentators describing the state as the untold success story. We have figures and statistics showing that our exports and our economic growth are outperforming every other state in Australia. So, it is already happening. This budget is adding extra momentum to that economic growth.

The opposition seems to fail to understand, and it has shown that it clearly does not understand through the estimates process that, if you do not have economic development, you cannot have education, health and welfare programs. If you do not have the money coming in, you cannot have the money going out. It is like breathing in and breathing out. You set up the economy in such a way that your revenues are coming in so that you can then deliver to people better social services, better education and better welfare. That is how it works in government, but all we hear from the opposition is calls for more spending.

Unless you have an economy that is thriving; unless you have economic development in the state; unless you have a population that is growing and businesses that are thriving and able to do good business interstate and overseas; unless you have small business in a position to hire extra people; and unless you have better and more competitive costs for business—for example, reducing their WorkCover costs, their payroll tax and the cost of doing business, as this budget has done—people will not be employed and therefore they will not earn a wage, and they will be unable to support themselves. By doing all these things, you have fewer people on the dole, in need of welfare or assistance. This is the point that the opposition does not seem to grasp—it is like breathing in and breathing out.

Yet in their critique of this budget all we have heard from opposition members is talk about inputs: we need to spend more money on education; we need to spend more money on health; we need to spend more money on this; and we need to spend more money on that. What our government is focused on is outputs. What our government is focused on and what this budget and these appropriations are based on is trying to get results for people. If we can find a way to deliver twice the bang for the same buck, we will. If we can find more efficient ways to deliver services, we will. If it involves outsourcing, if it involves privatisation or if it involves finding ways to make government enterprises more efficient and more competitive, then we will follow that course, because, at the end of the day, it will deliver a better output and a better dividend for the people of South Australia. I believe it is doing that in my constituency of Waite, and there are plenty of examples of that.

Because we have paid off \$6 billion of the \$9 billion worth of debt that we inherited from Labor through its economic mismanagement, the state's books are in a better and more balanced position. More recurrent revenue is available to deliver on programs. Because we have run a

surplus budget, instead of the \$300 million per annum deficit that we inherited from Labor through its incompetent economic management, we have more money that we are able to spend on the programs that matter to people. In my electorate of Waite, which includes most of Mitcham and a part of Unley, we have delivered fantastic dividends in the environment.

I might just mention a few and I will begin with the outstanding initiative of Minister Evans called Yarrebillla, the Greater Mount Lofty Park, a program which has been talked about by political parties and by various non-public bodies, other individuals and leading members of the community for decades and which this government has been able to fund and deliver for people. After years of waffle from the Labor Party and the Democrats, in particular the latter, a Liberal government has delivered the Greater Mount Lofty Park—a common management plan and concept for the coordinated management and upgrading of all the parks throughout the Adelaide Hills.

In Waite, our Brownhill Creek Recreation Park and the Belair National Park will be our contribution to that greater vision. Not only that, Minister Laidlaw has delivered better planning regulations in regard to the removal of trees from the suburban areas, and the people in my constituency particularly welcome that. We now have measures in place to preserve the flora and fauna in our suburbs in a way that no previous government was able to do. We also have seen the introduction of planning measures designed to preserve the architectural heritage that resides within our suburbs through initiatives from our government, in particular, the approval of new PARs in Mitcham (for Mitcham Village) and Colonel Light Gardens, which have enabled new planning regimes to be introduced and which will see those areas preserved and the character and liveliness of those suburbs retained in perpetuity.

All of that has been achieved because Minister Laidlaw listened to people and has taken action in response to their concerns to deliver a better quality of life for them. The community, through organisations such as the Friends of Brownhill Creek (and with the cooperation of ministers Laidlaw and Evans), has taken action to do something about Brownhill Creek. Even the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services has been involved in providing detainees, or prisoners, to participate in certain work programs throughout the creek. Minister Evans has provided funding for a management plan for the Brownhill Creek Recreation Park to be developed.

I am in negotiations with Minister Brindal about extra funding to the Patawalonga Catchment Board to enable the removal of woody weeds and non-natives from the creek to be enhanced and improved, building on earlier trials that have been conducted along those lines. I particularly commend Marcus Beresford and David Wagner of the groups that are vitally interested in preserving Brownhill Creek for the work that they have undertaken to promote the interests of Brownhill Creek Reserve and the creek itself.

Our government has listened to them and we are taking action to help uplift and upgrade the creek after years of neglect under previous Labor governments. Of course, I have mentioned the outstanding job done by Mitcham council in regard to preparing the Colonel Light Gardens and Mitcham PARs which the minister was pleased to approve in the past two years and which demonstrate how this government is listening to people and how it is delivering for them a better quality of life—all enabled and funded by this budget and by

its predecessors. The culture and quality of life in Mitcham has been uplifted and continues to be so by this budget.

I am blessed with some fantastic community inputs here. For example, Mitcham Arts and Crafts is an absolutely outstanding example of a group of people totally dedicated to uplifting the enjoyment of community life in the Mitcham district through the maintenance of the Mitcham Arts and Crafts rooms at the Mitcham Institute. Those rooms are open to the public, and the group conducts classes and a series of educational experiences and opportunities for people within the community.

All of that is being assisted by grants through various government departments; all again funded in this budget and in its predecessors in ways that result in tangible benefits for people. Now if you need to look for an example, you need to look no further than the active club grants provided by the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Iain Evans. A number of clubs in my constituency have received a benefit from this and they have certainly put that money to good use. Of course, the sorts of clubs that benefit range from the bowling club and the cricket club on the one hand to tennis clubs and even groups like Probus—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Lee will take his seat and stop interjecting.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The member for Lee seems to have a particular interest in my electorate. If he would like to come out and visit, I would be more than happy to explain to him how things are in my electorate. I could take him to the Colonel Light Gardens Probus Club and I could show him the sound system that they purchased; I could take him to the Westbourne Park senior citizens club where he could look at the bowling mat that they purchased with their active club grant. In fact, I could take him anywhere. If he is having trouble visiting those sorts of clubs in his own electorate for one reason or another, I am more than happy to show him how to do it so that he can perhaps improve his local member skills. I am more than happy to do that. All those funding initiatives are contained in this budget and its predecessors and, as I said, are delivering tangible benefits to people.

Now, we have heard a lot from the opposition about education. I am always amused when I hear the opposition get up and scream for more money to be spent on education. They have not quite got any idea on how it should be spent, but let me just explain to you that \$20 million has been spent at Urrbrae High School on a major rebuilding program; that close to \$2 million has been spent at Mitcham Girls High School on its new art centre and on a range of other initiatives; Unley High School has had a major rebuild during the term of this government; Westbourne Park Primary School has received a major upgrade of its facilities. We are working at the moment towards getting funding for Colonel Light Gardens Primary School. A number of other schools have received benefits and, in fact, this budget provided over \$1 million for Pasadena High School's new basketball stadium.

So, to simply stand there and say that we are not spending enough on education, let me tell you that schools in my district languished under Labor governments and under our government many of them have received extensive capital works. Our student to teacher ratios are amongst the best in the country. There is always room for improvement and I certainly share some of the concerns expressed during this debate about the need to further upgrade our primary schools. I think our primary schools do have needs that have now been

seen to warrant much closer attention. What I find as a local member is that a minister, not only in education but in environment, in health and in planning, is ready to listen to you, ready to listen to your local community and ready to go away and, through their budget, try to come up with solutions for people. That is what I see and that is what we have not heard from members opposite.

The provision of services for the aged in my area is something that is particularly important to me and we will share in some of the initiatives that have come out of human services and health in this budget—the 200 extra nurses, the mental health strategy, the additional winter beds and the emergency department workloads (I think it was \$15 million provided) and better private dental arrangements—extra money there. It seems to have been missed by members opposite that this budget has delivered in this appropriation some tangible benefits to the aged, to children and to the community in electorates all around the state. I am just giving you an explanation of how it has impacted in my electorate. Let there be no mistake, during Labor governments the so-called leafy suburbs—that is how they like to describe us—of Mitcham certainly were neglected. We know what you think: you think that everybody who lives in Mitcham and Unley is wealthy and, therefore, you do not need to spend any money on education, health or aged care in our areas because, apparently, we are all wealthy. Well, let me tell you that if you are a pensioner or if you are a disabled person or if you are a person in need, it does not matter where you live: you are a person in need. This is the point that the Labor Party seems not to understand. This budget and this appropriation has certainly delivered some results in that regard.

I get back to the point at which I entered this debate: you cannot deliver services to people unless you have economic development and economic prosperity. I said that it was like breathing in and breathing out: you cannot have one without the other. I ask ALP members to tell us how they are going to create the economic prosperity and the revenue that goes with it so that we will be able to afford to provide the services that they keep barking for. When they can answer that question, the people of South Australia may be prepared to listen to them. They need to create more jobs and they need to create more commerce, and there have certainly been a lot of jobs and a lot of commerce created in my constituency in the last seven years compared to the devastation that we inherited from Labor.

We have recently heard the Labor Party's fabulous Knowledge Nation announcement, and the pontification reported so thoroughly in today's media regarding this new initiative warrants close scrutiny. I welcome this attempt at a vision by the Labor Party. No doubt, there will be some sub-iteration of this policy coming out of the state Labor Party over the next few months. I look forward to it. I look forward to any little bit of vision or policy from members opposite. Let me say that before you go away and think up your sub-iteration of Knowledge Nation, you should remind yourselves that education is not an end in itself: it is a step towards a greater goal. It is a step towards a job or it is a step towards some greater achievement. I hope that we are not going to go back to the 1970s when the Labor Party, state and federal, delivered endless education—'Off you go: we will give you free university education. You can study for 10 degrees and it does not matter if you end up with a PhD in ancient Greek—that is all right. The taxpayers will fund it. You can stay at university until you are 45 years of age, and we will pay for the lot.' I hope that, whatever your reiteration

of this Knowledge Nation policy is, it is relevant to the economy and relevant to people.

I agree that innovation and learning are vitally important to our future. The reality is, however, that we in the Liberal Party, through this budget and through our vision, will deliver a more relevant innovation and knowledge policy than what I have seen so far coming from the Labor Party. This was described by Matt Price in today's *Australian* (3 July, at page 6) in these terms:

If this is Australia's road map, fasten your seatbelts because we are in for a wild journey. Apparently, the Knowledge Nation street directory will be known as a cadastre, a French, Italian or Greek term for a land register.

He continues:

The Jones report is a tough read—a mixture of the obvious and the obscure. At times it seems the Knowledge Nation committee plonked Sergeant Pepper on the stereo, sat around in a circle, held hands and dropped LSD.

The media and some commentators have described it as meatball and spaghetti, but I take a different view. I give the Labor Party a tick for its Knowledge Nation policy, and I would say that it is a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, it is so obscure and so vague that I am sure it will deliver nothing.

A person in my electorate who lives in Colonel Light Gardens designs tail-lights for Mercedes Benz and is doing business with Germany over the internet. It is the way we are going. We have a vision for the future, and this budget is helping us to deliver it. The ALP is just critiquing what we are doing and providing nothing else. Most importantly, I want to point out to the electorate and the people of Waite the complete failure of the Democrats in respect of this budget. There has been nothing from them. They will probably do what they did last time in Waite—do a deal with Labor so that Labor will run low and try to get a Democrat elected. However, a Democrat in Waite will simply help deliver a Labor government and will ensure that the people of Waite are treated with disregard by both major parties. In terms of this budget, the Democrats go around promising everybody everything, knowing they will never need to pay for it and being unable to contribute effectively.

Time expired.

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.

LAW REFORM (CONTRIBUTORY NEGLIGENCE AND APPORTIONMENT OF LIABILITY) BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

GRAFFITI CONTROL BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate resumed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Ross Smith.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): You say it with such enthusiasm, Mr Deputy Speaker. Why should I not rise to my feet when I am greeted with such warm words from you? I want to make a couple of comments with respect to the bill, and I will try not to take up too much time of the House.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: No, I will try not to take up the full 20 minutes unless I am encouraged to do so. Unfortunately, it effectively comes down to this: we go through this exercise every year—and it does not matter which party happens to be in power: the government says how wonderful the budget is and the opposition says how bad it is. In the meantime, we have an estimates committee process that all members of the House will privately acknowledge to one another does not work. Whilst there are always desires on the part of opposition parties to improve the process, when they become government that interest soon subsides. The ones who suffer as a result are really members of the South Australian public. The government would have us believe that this budget has produced a small surplus, but it is nonetheless a surplus.

Those figures put forward by the government cannot be sustained, and we are running a considerable recurrent deficit which will reveal itself after the next election when the election of a Labor government is almost inevitable. Those figures will come out, and they will show quite clearly that we are in deficit and that we are back on that treadmill again.

Of course, what we have witnessed in the parliamentary debates on the budget is that, whilst there has been some close questioning of some ministers and some information has been gleaned (which I believe confirms the fact that we are running at a deficit), the difficulty that the public has in discerning the truth is that the government has the control of the information levers through the Treasury. The opposition can hazard a reasonably educated guess, given the information that it can glean from those budget papers and from the questioning of ministers. However, both sides, in the run-up to the next election, will take as gospel the accuracy of these budget figures for the promotion of their policies and platforms that they will take to the people in a four week election campaign, and hope to convince the people that one side or the other should be endorsed as the government. What both sides know is that these figures are crook, that they do not really stand up to scrutiny, and that many of the promises and pledges that will be made by both sides will have to be modified after the election, simply because the figures upon which their promises will be made are based on a budget which is based on a false premise—that there is a slight surplus—when, in fact, I believe, as do a number of other commentators, that there is a significant and an increasing deficit.

What does this do as far as the public of South Australia is concerned? I suggest that it only reinforces their alienation from the processes of parliamentary democracy. Each side will sling arrows at one another and then, after the election, the awful truth will come out about the true budgetary position, and positions will have to be rethought with respect to promises made, whichever side happens to win. The public already knows that. The public already knows and half expects—more than half expects—that, after the election, whoever wins, a cry will go up, 'God, if only we had known this beforehand. We have discovered a black hole,' just like Mr Howard found straight after the 1996 federal election with respect to the so-called Beazley black hole. Members of the public expect it, they do not like it, and it just further alienates them from the political process.

Mr Lewis: From the parliament, too.

Mr CLARKE: And, as the member for Hammond points out, it also alienates them from the parliament. We know, as legislators, as people who deal with our constituents on a daily basis, that there are certain vital areas of our infrastructure that need modernisation. We need improvements in our health and hospitals, in our schooling, and so on, and that requires funding. But no-one wants to tackle the issue of where we get that funding from, because that dreaded word 'tax' might come up, and we are all afraid that we will not be able to explain to the average punter in the street that some things have to be paid for, and they will be paid for in one of two ways: either a reduction in services, health care and education outcomes for our children, or we will all have to put our shoulder to the wheel and pay extra, ranging from each according to their own means to those in greatest need.

In terms of the estimates process, fortunately, I only had to endure one of the processes this year, because we have gone through the same pantomime regularly every year since I have been in parliament; that is, we have ministers pretending to answer questions from the opposition side, and we have dorothy dix questions put by the government side to waste time, so that little real information gets out.

Questions are directed to ministers rather than to civil servants. If they are asked questions civil servants tend to tell the truth whereas, whilst I will not say they lie, ministers will tend to be far more devious and quick footed and will try to dodge answering those questions. I do not blame just this government; it is something that is endemic whichever government is in power.

I contrast the type of estimates set-up that we have here in South Australia with that of the Senate in the federal parliament of Australia. I do not understand exactly how those senate estimates committees work, but they seem to meet on a regular basis and seem to have sufficient time, particularly for the opposition of the day to get right into detail with respect to the departmental budget figures, particularly getting answers from civil servants. Ministers intervene only where it becomes a party political matter or a policy issue for which the government of the day is directly accountable. Otherwise, it is mainly public servants giving answers in a straightforward manner and at times embarrassing to the government—and good on them. They give honest answers to straight questions that are put to them, and the public are the better for it, because they are better able to appraise the processes and accountability of the government of the day.

But we do not have that in this system. I know from talking to other backbenchers that there is an alienation for backbenchers in this system on both sides. It would be even worse for government backbenchers, who are told to behave like idiots and trained poodles and ask questions that have already been typed out for them and given in advance for ministers to read out ad nauseam to waste time. It wastes a lot of public servants' time in compiling these sorts of answers to dorothy dixers to which the members of the government already know the answers. It is an insult to the intelligence of those backbenchers that they are required to go through that trained poodle exercise. No doubt when the Labor Party was in government something similar happened as well.

The frustration on the opposition side is that, because of the more limited time span that oppositions have, obviously the shadow ministers take all the questions, particularly in an election year, to try to glean as much information as they can

for policy areas. It is utterly redundant and a waste of time for backbenchers on the government and opposition sides to be present. They are there to make up the numbers and rarely get an opportunity to ask a question. In particular, there is insufficient time for members of parliament to ask ministers about issues in their own electorate, because they must be subordinate to the overall tactics decided on by the opposition party of the day or by the government.

There is always insufficient time for members of parliament who are not on the committee to be able to ask questions of the minister for education about issues affecting their schools. They will not make the headlines in the next day's press, because they are local issues, but they are important not only to the member but also to the constituents whom the member represents, and a bit of good might come out of it. Unfortunately, there is insufficient time.

It seems to me that our estimates committees need to be designed more like those of the Senate. I am not saying that we should use the Legislative Councillors to do that, because I am afraid they might have some difficulties going beyond 6 o'clock in the afternoon to be able to complete their task. I do not want to put a strain on their heart by having them exercise some grey matter. If I am correct in my assumptions about the workings of the Senate estimates committees, it could be a very useful exercise if the estimates committees were conducted on a rolling basis during the year, where there is more time to examine ministers and where not just ministers but public servants answer the questions, as in the Senate, without the unnecessary delaying tactics used by ministers.

For example, in the Aboriginal affairs portfolio at a state level I understand that only 30 minutes was allocated, of which the minister spent the first 12 minutes reciting her opening address to the committee, and then the government members had three questions. Then the opposition tried somehow to compact, in the last five or 10 minutes of that 30 minute time slot, its three questions. It is an insult. While it is a small portfolio or a small ministry, nonetheless it is an important ministry and important to the Aboriginal people of South Australia. In effect, we allocate less than 20 minutes—18 minutes—in which to examine that particular portfolio and the work that is being carried out. That further denigrates the parliament in the eyes of the public.

While we all are so keen on the efficiencies of parliament, and so on, we have to remember that parliament is not established to be the most super efficient boardroom of a company. We are not a private company: we are an elected parliament representing the interests of 1.5 million citizens. We have a budget of \$6 billion—which seems small in comparison with some of the commonwealth government departments. But, nonetheless, we are not based on autocratic principles.

We are here to represent the interests of our constituents and to freely ask ministers, more particularly the public servants who run the departments, how programs are going and to get straightforward, honest answers so that the executive arm of government is kept under check. Some ministers will say that that is an inefficient waste of their time. I am afraid parliamentary democracy, compared with a dictatorship, is technically more inefficient. I do not think any of us would want to live in a totalitarian regime, so our parliaments should be designed along the lines of ensuring that the interests of the people are protected whomsoever is in government.

The truth of the matter is that limited, if any, reform will take place because it never suits the government of the day to have that type of set-up. Sooner or later, I would hope there would be sufficient public outrage to cause a rethink of that position because that will be in the interests of us all; that it is used as a very important vehicle to get the information to elected representatives and to get it out into the wider community as part of the overall scrutiny of executive government. We do not sit very often in this place—certainly over the past couple of years. I think this year it is only 42 days. I have almost forgotten how to come to this place because we sit so rarely. During the times we do sit, we ought to use it properly in terms of scrutinising the actions of government.

I will conclude my remarks. I realise I have another five minutes, but I said I will keep my speech as short as I can. As I said at the very beginning of my speech, the total wisdom and the total sum knowledge, as far as the people of South Australia are concerned, about this budget and what we have learned from the estimates committees is zilch. The government maintains a slight surplus: we maintain a heavy recurrent budget deficit. We will each go into the next election on a false premise, making promises which both sides know are based on figures which are false and which will be revised after the election, whomsoever wins. There will be further alienation of the general public from the parliamentary democratic process. We all know that to be true.

At times we ought to shock ourselves and the public of South Australia by actually being honest with them. And do you know: I do not think they would recoil with horror. They might appreciate honesty and straightforward talk, because I have certainly heard a lot of bull over the past few weeks and during the past few years with respect to not only the economic circumstances of this state but also its long-term future. The public are not idiots—and we should not treat them like idiots. We should tell them the truth and treat them like adults—and they might respond to the clarion call to try to rescue this state from some of the morass in some key areas. You can con some of the people some of the time but you cannot con all the people all the time—and I am afraid that is a maxim to which we do not pay enough regard.

Mr WRIGHT (Lee): It is disappointing that the member for Ross Smith did not give full value for money by going his full 20 minutes, but he gave it his best shot. Unlike the member for Waite who spoke for 20 minutes basically about nothing, the member for Ross Smith put a few things on the agenda. In fact, I had no intention of speaking until the member for Waite made his contribution and demanded that I make a contribution during this important debate.

Before I go into a few of the matters with respect to the areas for which I have shadow portfolio responsibilities, let me say that we are always reminded of the terminal nature of this government when the member for Waite gets to his feet because the member for Waite gives the full demonstration that the government's time is up, that this is a tired government, that this is a worn-out government, that this is a washed-up government just waiting for the electorate to put it out of its misery. Why the member for Waite has to do that when there are so many other old stagers who could do it for him is a sorry reflection upon the government. Nonetheless, the member for Waite carries the bag for them as he did again tonight.

Similar to the comments expressed by the member for Ross Smith, I point out that we all know that the estimates process is far from ideal and requires genuine reform. We should have a bipartisan approach to bring about a better, stronger, fairer system. I agree with the member for Ross Smith that we need to find a better system in a whole range of areas but particularly we need to find a system that gives some genuine encouragement to our valuable backbenchers to have a greater opportunity to participate in the process.

By and large a number of the ministers whom I had the opportunity to question during the estimates allowed opposition members to ask their questions unfettered, and I think that is a step in the right direction. It is just a waste of time when government backbenchers, whether it be us or members of the present government, utilise the valuable, limited time of the parliament during estimates to ask obvious, inane, dorothy dix questions. More than anything else, it probably shows a lack of confidence and a lack of ability in the minister who is being questioned. However, as I said, most of the ministers whom I questioned took the opposite position and allowed us to ask our questions uninterrupted. They are the better for it and they have shown that they have got some confidence in their portfolio and that they were prepared to have the time allocated in that way.

I will highlight a few issues from my portfolio areas that stand out in my mind. I will not deliberately take the time of the House, given the hour, but I was disappointed in a couple of things that occurred. For example, I was most disappointed that we still do not have a guarantee from the government, from none other than the Premier and then the Deputy Premier on the following day, that the Auditor-General's report into the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium would be put before the taxpayers of South Australia before an election. Let us not worry about any games that people can play with respect to whether the Speaker has the ability to put this forward after the parliament rises and let us not have any games about the election being in March so we do not have to worry about that.

Let us just have the Premier of the day, the highest officer in the parliamentary system in South Australia, come forward and make an unequivocal statement that, whether or not parliament is sitting, as soon as the report is made available to the Speaker, irrespective of the technicalities, that report will be put before the public of South Australia. Let us put an end to this once and for all. The Premier can come into this House tomorrow or he can do it outside of this House and stand before the people of South Australia and make such a statement once and for all, categorically, irrespective of the date of the election, because we know that he is playing games with the timing of the election. He has the ability to do so.

The public will not appreciate that. The Premier will pay the penalty for the games he is playing. Despite those games regarding the timing of the election, the Auditor-General has said that he will report to the next session of parliament. If the report has not been handed to the Speaker before the election is held, it cannot be made public—but it can under any other circumstance, whether the parliament is sitting or not sitting.

I want the Premier to come in here tomorrow and show some real leadership to the parliament and the taxpayers of South Australia. He could even move a motion to that effect to overcome any motion that might already exist, so that, irrespective of whether the parliament is sitting or not sitting, if the report of the Auditor-General on the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium is made available to the government or the Speak-

er—I think that is where it must go—he can ensure that it will be made available to the taxpayers of South Australia within 24 hours. That is what the Premier should do; and that is what he must do.

If Dean Brown were the Premier, he would do nothing less. He would show some guts and leadership on this issue. He would come into this House and say to the parliament that, irrespective of whether a motion is already on the books and in case we have a situation where this particular report goes to the Speaker and we are out of session and the parliament has been prorogued, ‘I will find a way; I will move a motion; I will give a guarantee to the parliament that, if the report of the Auditor-General on the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium is made available before the election’—before the very Saturday when the people decimate this government—‘I will make it available to the taxpayers of South Australia.’

If John Olsen was any sort of a leader or Premier, he would stop playing games and forget about the shenanigans: he would stand up here like a man, like a Premier, look us in the eye and say to the parliament, ‘I give you a commitment if the Auditor-General makes this report available to the Speaker, whether the parliament is sitting or not sitting, and whether we are in an election campaign.’ There is a real possibility, despite what John Olsen says about a March election, that that could occur. Let us see some leadership from the Premier of this state. Let us see him come clean and give a commitment and a guarantee to the parliament to move another motion if need be.

We will support it and the Independents will support it. We will give unanimous support for a commitment by the government that, if the Auditor-General makes his report available to the Speaker, if parliament has been prorogued but the election has not been held, the Premier of the day or the Speaker will make the report available to the taxpayers of South Australia. We do not want any more games. We do not want the Premier hiding behind parliamentary procedure. We do not want to hear more guarantees about a March election, because frankly we do not believe him. The Premier does not stack up, he never has and he never will. The Premier can clean this up once and for all, straightaway, first thing tomorrow.

The other thing that I would like to draw to the attention of the House is that the Minister for Government Enterprises made a further revelation about the TAB sale. It was hard to believe before last week that the situation could have got any worse, but it got worse last week because, during the estimates, the minister made a further revelation that the cost for consultants has now reached \$6 million plus—and the meter is still running.

Of course, on top of that we have to pay a 1.2 per cent success fee on the sale. Rounding that out, we are looking at about \$7 million. He also revealed that, for a range of reasons, the government is down to one bidder. I will not go back and revisit that debate except to say that the government is in this mess because it botched the TAB sale from day one. This has been a sale in the making that has been going on for four years. We now know that the cash register is still ringing and we are up to \$7 million. We also know that only one bidder is left; there were initially 11, but the others have gone running because of the ridiculous demands that the government has put on the sale. I predict that the government is fast back-tracking with a number of conditions that it put in place with regard to the sale. I believe that we are now looking at a scenario that may well include a downward revision of money that was promised to the racing industry. We may also

be looking at sweeteners being offered to the successful bidder, which further complicates and highlights the scenario that we have. This is a mess with nowhere to go.

Mr Acting Speaker, as a former shadow minister for racing, I despair with you the process that we have gone through because this is an unrecoverable mess which is getting worse by the day. I suspect that we are very close to an announcement but the government does not have the courage to make it while parliament is sitting. So, I presume that the first available opportunity may well be late Thursday afternoon after question time or perhaps it is more likely to be Friday. We are looking at the greatest mess that could ever be imagined. As with the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, this is a sorry saga and another blight on the government. It has nowhere to hide on this issue. All will be exposed and, needless to say, we expect full disclosure on the announcement of the sale so that it can be examined with a fine toothcomb.

There are a couple of other areas I would like to briefly highlight. I imagine that members of all parties would take very seriously the issue of occupational health, safety and welfare; it is obviously an area that is critical to workplace safety. I was surprised to learn that, despite the fact that the minister highlighted this in his speech before questions started about how vigilant the government has been in this area and how enforcement was a vital part of how the government had gone about its business in the area of occupational health and safety, there has been only one prosecution in the past 12 months for transgressions of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act. I would be delighted if someone could prove to me that that was a reflection upon business.

I believe that the body of business out there is good, but we know, and have known, not only during this period of government but for a long time that, if this act is to work not only for the benefit of workers but for employers, enforcement must be an important component of the legislation. I wonder how seriously the government is taking this particular area. Of course, when I asked about prosecutions for underpayment of wages the answer was none. So, in the vital area of occupational health and safety, there has been one prosecution in 12 months and none whatsoever for underpayment of wages.

It is strikingly obvious that those sorts of numbers do not give any confidence about the government’s priorities in that area. There is still no information as to what will happen if and when there is a prosecution in relation to amusement rides. It may well be that we have another Royal Show before we even know what will take place as a result of that very sad accident that took place at last year’s Royal Show.

I will finish where the member for Waite stumbled, that is, in the area of recreation and sport. He highlighted a number of areas with regard to the active club program. Before and also during the estimates I acknowledged and congratulated sincerely the Minister for Recreation and Sport for doubling the money that goes to the active club program. That was done some time ago. We in recent times had, as a result of the budget, an announcement of an increase of, I think, \$7 million for funding in that budget for areas that have been described as regional infrastructure. I asked a range of questions of the minister in regard to that. Like all people in the sporting and recreation industry, I am delighted about the additional money but I hope it will be used in the right areas for the right purposes.

At this stage we do not have any detail about the guidelines or about how and where that money will be spent, so we await that sort of detail. I hope that that money will not be used as a pork-barrelling exercise and that on the eve of a state election we have not had some money that has been made available to the critically important area of sport and recreation so that money can be handed out in key areas where the government so chooses to spend money on infrastructure projects to try to increase its opportunity of being elected.

If this money is to be available for recreation and sport it is important that it be used in the right areas, important that we see the government's guidelines and that we know exactly what program is involved. Is the minister talking about a new program or an extension of existing programs that are in operation? These are the details that I hope he is able to quickly clear up and bring to the attention of this House so that we can have confidence as we move forward and get closer to an election that there will be strict guidelines, that the Office of Recreation and Sport will very clinically assess applications for any grant money in recreation and sport on its merits and that the money goes into those areas where it is most needed. With that in mind—and the minister may be able to give us a clearer picture—it is important that we have a very solid picture of what infrastructure currently exists in those areas of recreation and sport both in the metropolitan and regional areas, because it is only once we have that picture that assessments can be made that can ensure that the money goes into the correct and best areas and in the genuine interest of recreation and sport.

It is very important, now that we have this additional money (which I acknowledge the minister has been able to deliver), that it is not used as a pork-barrelling exercise but used in the best interests of communities both in the metropolitan and regional areas so that we get total value for recreation and sport throughout South Australia and we get some really good infrastructure projects that will leave their mark and have their effect for years to come. That is what is important with this money and I look forward to the minister coming back to us with more detail, with guidelines and specifics so we can address and assess that sort of information and be confident that the money will go into the right areas at the right time and be prioritised so the money gets best value for sport and recreation. Only then can we be confident that this money will be put to full use.

Motion carried.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): There were some matters which, as the bill came out of committee and goes now to its third reading, were canvassed in the course of the committee but which I did not have time to address and which I would now like to put on the record. These issues are simple and short.

The variation and the position of the government before last Christmas 2000 and the present position on the Hindmarsh stadium in its negotiations with local government—

that is, the City of Charles Sturt—and the sort of invective and ultimatums that were delivered in the press as well as by correspondence to the council as a threat to that council by the Deputy Premier on behalf of the government (which has now been withdrawn), and the local government body, though reluctant to talk about it, under the terms of the deal that is going down, is accepting from the government some compensation which it was not going to get under the proposition that was put to it just prior to Christmas by the Deputy Premier, who stepped in to sort out the mess that had been created by the member for Coles, the member for Bragg and the other people who were involved in the sleazy deal they did with each other and the Premier.

The next matter to which I wish to draw attention is the question of control or eradication as alternative policies on broomrape. Strategic control did not work because the area under the infestation grew in a decade from a few square metres—

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I object to being named as being part of a 'sleazy deal' by the member for Hammond, and I ask him to withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The chair suggests that the term 'sleazy deal' is not parliamentary, and I ask the member for Hammond to withdraw 'sleazy deal'.

Mr LEWIS: Yes, I will withdraw and simply call it 'a crooked, rotten and corrupt deal', because it was used for other purposes than the interests of the public.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I ask that the member withdraw the comment about its being a 'corrupt deal'.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Hammond to withdraw the second statement that he has made.

Mr LEWIS: No, they are the facts. Mr Deputy Speaker, can I ask you what—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Hammond take his seat, please.

Mr LEWIS: What is the precedent?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the member for Hammond take his seat, please. The member for Hammond has used the word 'corrupt', and the chair would suggest very strongly that that is inappropriate and asks the member for Hammond to withdraw.

Mr LEWIS: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The chair directs the member for Hammond to withdraw the word 'corrupt'.

Mr LEWIS: No, not at all, never, not in relation to Hindmarsh. This man and that woman knew what they did in the deal with the Premier, and that is sick.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Once again, I ask the member for Hammond to withdraw the word 'corrupt', or I will be forced to name the member for Hammond.

Mr LEWIS: Any offence that you may take, sir, I apologise for, but I will not withdraw.

HAMMOND, MEMBER FOR, NAMING

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I name the member for Hammond. Does the honourable member wish to be heard in explanation?

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): Yes, I am happy to be heard. I make the point that I have not used any word which in any precedent situation has been considered unparliamentary. For

it to be now found (even though publicly it is known to be a fact) to be unparliamentary, just to please the feelings of the member for Bragg—who was involved in the arrangement—is something I am not prepared to do because they are the facts. My purpose in being here is not well served if I am unable to say things as I see them. I have not known of the word ‘sleazy’ being unparliamentary, and I have never heard any member of parliament anywhere being named for using that word.

Indeed, a former Prime Minister used words far more, if you like, corrosive than that—more explicit—to describe certain actions, and I refer to none other than Paul Keating. I do not want to be seen to be in the same boat as Paul Keating but, at the same time, I believe that I ought to be treated at least in the same manner as other members of parliament, this parliament included. Stronger language than that has been used to describe the actions of other members of this parliament where those actions are demonstrably inappropriate and demonstrably dishonourable, and it is for those reasons that I refuse to withdraw.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): I move:

That the honourable member’s remarks be accepted by the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion that the honourable member’s comments be accepted seconded?

Mr Hanna: That his apology be accepted?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That his apology be accepted. *Members interjecting:*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has not apologised: it is an explanation.

Mr Hanna: Thank you, sir; I wanted to clarify that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded?

Mr HANNA: Yes, sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: For the question, say aye; against, no. I believe that the noes have it.

Mr LEWIS: Divide!

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (21)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Breuer, L. R.	Ciccarello, V.
Clarke, R. D.	Conlon, P. F.
De Laine, M. R.	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K.	Hanna, K.
Hill, J. D.	Hurley, A. K.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
Lewis, I. P. (teller)	Rankine, J. M.
Snelling, J. J.	Stevens, L.
Thompson, M. G.	White, P. L.
Wright, M. J.	

NOES (22)

Armitage, M. H.	Brindal, M. K.
Brokenshire, R. L.	Brown, D. C.
Buckby, M. R.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Gunn, G. M.
Hall, J. L.	Hamilton-Smith, M. L.
Ingerson, G. A.	Kerin, R. G.
Kotz, D. C.	Matthew, W. A. (teller)
Maywald, K. A.	McEwen, R. J.
Meier, E. J.	Penfold, E. M.
Scalzi, G.	Venning, I. H.
Williams, M. R.	Wotton, D. C.

PAIR(S)

Rann, M. D.	Olsen, J. W.
-------------	--------------

Majority of 1 for the Noes.

Motion thus carried.

The SPEAKER: Order! Would members resume their seats. I ask the member for Hammond to withdraw.

The honourable member for Hammond having withdrawn from the Chamber:

The SPEAKER: I call on the Deputy Premier.

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

That the member be suspended from the service of the House.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADELAIDE CEMETERIES AUTHORITY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 May. Page 1614.)

Ms KEY (Hanson): In looking at this bill, I am reminded that there have been a number of inquiries ranging from the Statutory Authorities Review Committee through to a steering committee and a select committee that reported earlier this year. The aim of all these committees, I believe, was to ensure that there was a clear statement, as addressed by the minister, of the role of the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority—to look at the full range of funeral and cemetery services to the community, with flexibility under the umbrella of an established authority, instead of its being restricted to administration and management of cemeteries. This bill seeks to achieve a single, up-to-date act in relation to Adelaide cemeteries, to establish an authority and to provide administration and maintenance for Cheltenham Cemetery, Enfield Memorial Park and West Terrace Cemetery.

A number of submissions have been made to Labor regarding this bill and I commend the Local Government Association and the Australian Conservation Foundation on their submissions to caucus on this very important issue. I note, in reading through the findings of the Statutory Authorities Review Committee, the steering committee and the select committee, that there has been considerable interest in the new structure which will be put forward and which, I think, is contained mainly in this bill.

One of the areas that I found particularly interesting when meeting with the Australian Conservation Centre is, surprisingly, the issue of native vegetation. I commend Sharon Mosler of the University of Adelaide who, knowing my interest in the area of native flora and fauna, provided me with a check list of the native plant species that can be found—at the moment, at least—at the West Terrace Cemetery. Assuming that this bill is successful, I urge the new board to look at this with some seriousness. There are some questions that I want to ask the minister in committee with regard to that issue.

I note from the information supplied to me that, just in the West Terrace Cemetery—and I know that this issue can be taken up in some of the country cemeteries in South Australia and, indeed, throughout Australia—there are at least three trees that are known to be native to the plains. They are found in the West Terrace Cemetery, in the parklands and in the Mile End area, part of which is in the electorate of Hanson, which I represent.

There are at least six different types of tall to medium shrub plants from that area; 12 ground layer shrubs which are considered to be important as part of our background with

regard to native flora; and 27 herbaceous and annual species that have also been identified and can be found (some of them quite rare plants) in the West Terrace Cemetery, west parklands and Mile End.

One other point I would like to make about this bill is that not only have a number of individuals made submissions to the various committees that have been set up but also the Adelaide City Council has been involved and, in particular, the previous Lord Mayor, Jane Lomax-Smith. As the House would be aware, she is now a candidate for the seat of Adelaide. I am sure that, when elected, she will be a good representative for the people who live in the seat of Adelaide. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the minister, who has done an excellent job in representing most of the views of the different reports and recommendations that have been brought before her. I also mention here the Hon. Carmel Zollo, the Hon. Terry Roberts and more recently the Hon. Robert Sneath, members in another place, for their work and diligence in following up on this issue and making sure that the parliamentary Labor caucus was aware of all the varying interests and concerns that have been raised by the public with regard to the Cheltenham Cemetery, Enfield Memorial Park and West Terrace Cemetery.

With regard to heritage and historical issues, a number of the submissions I have received on this bill have emphasised the fact that in this case it is important to look at the white heritage of South Australia, particularly through the Adelaide cemeteries, and at some of the historical contribution and issues that can be found just by analysing some of the monuments, gardens and places within those three areas. I am pleased to see in the bill some reference to a heritage and monument committee which is proposed to be a subcommittee of the authority. As I said, this bill has obviously been the product of a lot of work on both Labor and Liberal sides of the House, and I am pleased to say that in this instance Labor supports the bill.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Minister for Human Services): I appreciate the concise, valuable and positive contribution by the honourable member. This bill has gone before a select committee, so I do not believe that there is any point in debating the issues at length. The matter has been dealt with by that select committee, and I now urge the House to support the bill.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4.

Ms KEY: In other negotiations that have taken place, as I understand it—and, in fact, in an amendment that was in the minister's name, I think last year—there was a proposal that there be an application of the Public Corporations Act 1993 and that the authority is a statutory corporation to which the provisions of the Public Corporations Act apply. I note that that has been deleted in this version of the bill. Presumably, the explanation is that the authority is a body corporate, as referred to in clause 4(2)(a). Will the minister explain what the identity of the new proposed authority will be?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Firstly, this is a money bill, and that is why this has to be done. The authority is the same body corporate as the Enfield General Cemetery Trust.

Clause passed.

New clause 5.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I move:

Page 4, after line 10—Insert:

Application of Public Corporations Act 1993

5. The authority is a statutory corporation to which the provisions of the Public Corporations Act 1993 apply.

This is necessary because it is a money bill.

Ms KEY: I am not sure whether the document that I have is, in fact, the correct amendment. Has an amendment been distributed? I do not think any of us has received it.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment has been on file for some time.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The amendment was filed on 28 May.

New clause inserted.

Clause 6.

Ms KEY: Clause 6(a) relates to the administration and maintenance of certain public cemeteries. The Local Government Association has sought clarification about the method of gaining approvals for conservation work deemed to be development that directly affects the cemetery. So, presumably there would need to be some clarification about maintenance with regard to the public cemeteries that are listed. Can the minister give any clarification with regard to gaining approvals for conservation work?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: In preparing for the administration and maintenance of the cemetery, I refer the member for Hanson to clause 20, relating to the plans of management for authority cemeteries. They must prepare plans of management for each authority cemetery and, in doing that, they must consult with the local government body as referred to in subclause (4), so there is consultation with the council on that. I might add that that includes some of the conservation issues that the honourable member is talking about.

Clause passed.

Clause 7 passed.

Clause 8.

Mr De LAINE: Clause 8(1) provides that the authority may not acquire a cemetery or a part of a cemetery or establish a cemetery without the written approval of the minister. Will you explain to me what process needs to be followed for a new cemetery to be established? Is it done purely by the authority, and would it be funded by the government, or would it be a shared responsibility of the government and local government?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Under clause 8(1), a public corporation would have to apply to the minister in writing. As for the funding, I think I am right in saying that the government does not fund cemeteries as a general rule—I think West Terrace is an exception to that—so they would need to be able to provide their own funding. I could ask the minister to clarify that in writing if my answer is wrong.

Mr De LAINE: In the event of an additional cemetery needing to be established, who would make the application and what would be the process of getting that in train?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I refer the member to clause 6(1), which provides that the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority has the power to administer and maintain any other cemetery established or required by the authority. In fact, the authority itself could establish a new cemetery and then seek approval from the minister as part of that. As I said, it requires prior approval. The authority may not acquire a cemetery or part of a cemetery or establish a cemetery without the written approval of the minister. So, the proper corporation (the Adelaide Cemetery Authority) has the power to establish it, but it needs the minister's approval.

Mr De LAINE: Subclause (3) provides as follows:

The authority must not disturb or interfere with a grave within the area delineated and marked *Jewish Granted MEM*.

Why has this exemption, if you like, been granted to the Jewish part of the cemetery? What is the reason for that?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: It is a straight take from the existing act. That is in policy now, and because the West Terrace Cemetery is part of the new authority then this is a direct take, as you would expect. A previous undertaking has been given.

Clause passed.

Clause 9 passed.

Clause 10.

Ms KEY: I am a member of the select committee which is considering a reference into the parklands, so I am well aware of what that committee will be looking at. Some questions have been raised about the linkages between the City of Adelaide parklands bill and a bill that may appear following the select committee deliberations and recommendations, and the disposal of all or part of the cemetery under the cemeteries bill. In relation to the West Terrace Cemetery, what are the requirements and procedures under the cemeteries bill for the authority to acquire more land from the surrounding parklands? There is some provision in this bill, but I am wondering whether there is any added information. I am also reminded that the select committee on page 7 of its report raised this as an issue. So I am concerned about the relationship between the West Terrace Cemetery, in particular, and the parklands.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I think it is very clear from the legislation that it is not intended to take any more Adelaide parklands. Clause 10 deals with the fact that, if it disposes of any land, it needs to go back to the parklands. There is no provision that gives it any entitlement to take more parklands. I appreciate there is a select committee on the parklands, but I think it is a little premature for me to be commenting on what that might decide.

Clause passed.

Clause 11 passed.

Clause 12.

Ms KEY: I notice in the select committee recommendations on page 8 there are a number of comments in relation to the authority board. My question could be dealt with under either this clause or clause 16. Is the minister aware of the status of board members with regard to the sitting fees that they might attract? As the minister would know, there are a number of different boards and decision making bodies within the government sector that have different levels of status. For example, the Housing Trust board has a certain status as opposed to the WorkCover board which has another status and level within the public sector. As this will be a new authority, will the minister indicate what category it might attract. I will not hold the minister to this, but I would be interested to know what the status of this sort of authority and its members is seen to be by the government.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I cannot give the honourable member an answer. The normal procedure would be for the legislation to pass, for the authority to be established, and then for the matter to go before the Commissioner for Public Employment, who sets the relevant level. This is what happens in all other areas. Therefore, it would be a matter of whether it has changed from the present position. That would be the normal process. I doubt whether that has even been determined. It is not likely to be determined until the act is assented to.

Clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 17 passed.

Clause 18.

Ms KEY: In division 3 it is provided that 'the authority may employ such staff as it thinks necessary or desirable on terms and conditions determined by the authority.' Will the staff be covered by public service provisions, will the head of the authority be answerable to the Commissioner for Public Employment, and under what type of contract of employment will staff expect to be employed?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I cannot give an absolute assurance, but I think it is normal in a case such as this for them to be employed under the Public Sector Management Act. That is the normal practice, and I expect that it would apply in this case.

Clause passed.

Clause 19.

Ms KEY: During the select committee hearings, a number of suggestions were made with respect to the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority Heritage and Monument Committee, and a number of questions were raised with and submissions made to the various select committees, the steering committee and the Statutory Development Committee. Will the minister address the issue of what relationship this committee would have to the Development Act and PARs, and will it be necessary for this committee to receive development approval for any changes or the establishment or implementation of any headstones or memorials through this committee's work? This is similar to the question that I asked regarding maintenance and how that fits in with the Development Act. A number of questions have been asked about how this committee will fit in with the Development Act and the procedures under the Development Act.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: This committee would have no influence at all on the Development Act. If you look at clause 20, you will see that it is only an advisory committee. It has no functions or powers except to give advice. Clause 19(4) provides:

The committee has the following functions:

- (a) to advise the authority. . .
- (b) to advise the authority on activities. . .
- (c) to advise the authority on the establishment. . .
- (d) any other function . . . by the minister

It would not impact on the DAC at all.

Ms KEY: One of the reasons for that question is that one of the select committee recommendations is that the minister will establish a heritage and monument committee to assist in the preparation and implementation of policies relating to heritage and historical matters. My interpretation is that not only would there be advice but also it would be involved in the implementation. But the minister is saying—and it is quite clear in this clause—that we are talking about only advice. It seems this is an area where perhaps there is a difference in emphasis between the select committee's recommendation and the provision in the legislation. That is why I wanted to clarify the relationship with the Development Act, the PARs and the area of construction.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I think they can do the implementation under subclause (4)(d). I was making the point that they do not have any power in terms of development approvals but they can give advice on and carry out the preservation of monuments. This clause has been inserted as a result of the select committee's recommendation.

Mr HILL: I think it is admirable that this committee has been established because our cemeteries, particularly our

older cemeteries, obviously contain a lot of heritage material that should be protected and preserved. My concern is that the minister responsible for heritage in this state (currently the Minister for Environment and Heritage) is not involved and his officers and those expert in heritage matters are not included in the process. If you look at the qualifications, all that is required is that, in the minister's opinion, they have the ability and experience necessary to perform the duties. We are not even sure who the minister would be. I guess that is another part of the question: who would be the minister? It would not be the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Would it be the planning minister or the Minister for Government Enterprises in the current government? Why is there not a stronger role for the heritage minister or the heritage department in this authority?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: If the member for Kaurna looks at clause 20, he will see that it is required to prepare plans for management and to present those plans to a public meeting. Clause 20(4) provides:

In preparing a plan of management for a cemetery, the authority must consult with the relevant local government council, the administrative unit of the public service responsible for state heritage matters and other persons.

When preparing plans, the authority is required to consult with the Department of Environment and Heritage, as the appropriate part of the Public Service that deals with heritage matters. So, the Department of Environment and Heritage would have a strong input because it has to be involved and consulted when plans are developed.

Mr HILL: I guess that is some assurance that there is an involvement. Of course, the authority is required to have the management plans and consult with various departments, including Heritage. But the committee that is established underneath the authority is not necessarily required to include anyone with heritage knowledge or involved with heritage training. That committee can be delegated under the clause you mentioned before—clause 4(d)—and can be assigned duties to preserve and restore damaged heritage items. You may be giving a body with no heritage expertise those responsibilities. While the management plan may have had to be consulted, the day-to-day operation does not require ongoing heritage involvement.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I think it does under clause 19, because in selecting members for this committee they must be people who have the abilities and experience required for the effective performance of the committee. It is after all a heritage committee, so there would be a breach of clause 19(2)(b) unless people had experience and capability in heritage matters. The other issue is that under clause 20(6) there is a requirement also that they must be able to comply with heritage requirements under the Development Act. You can see not only that there are safeguards there, because they must comply and consult with the appropriate government department, but also that they must be ongoing people with an ability in this area. I can understand the member raising his concern in this matter, but this clause has been drafted to consider all the points he has raised.

Clause passed.

Clause 20.

Ms KEY: I notice in the select committee report that different consultation times are suggested with regard to draft plans of management. First, the select committee suggested that draft plans of management should be released for 12 rather than six weeks' consultation and—I could not find it in this clause—the committee considered that making the

consultation period the same as that for major development—an environment impact statement consultation period of six weeks—is appropriate but recommended that the bill should be amended to refer to 30 business days in order to clarify the situation. I am wondering whether the minister could comment on decisions eventually made to put provisions in this bill regarding consultation. I notice that clause 5 talks about 30 days before the date of a public meeting, but it seems that the consultation dates do not reflect the suggestions made by the select committee. There is probably good reason for that, but what is the rationale behind the consultation dates put in clause 20? Secondly, what would be the situation with regard to major developments and environment impact statements? They do not seem to be mentioned here at all.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Prior to the select committee the period under subclause (5) was six weeks, which was taken from the Enfield cemetery legislation. It was changed to 30 days because of the recommendation of the select committee. Therefore, it is now 30 days in line with the select committee's recommendation.

Mr De LAINE: I have been a long-time strong opponent of the reuse of burial sites in cemeteries. In recent years there has been large-scale reuse of burial sites in the Cheltenham Cemetery, in my electorate. Does this mean that when this bill comes into effect no more recycling can be done at the Cheltenham Cemetery, for instance, until such time as a public meeting is convened by the authority to reinstate that practice or to continue with the recycling of graves?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: As far as Cheltenham is concerned, under clause 20(3)(b), if they were going to reuse burial sites, they would have to develop a management plan to do that and that would have to be approved. However, regulations under the Local Government Act under cemeteries set down the conditions under which there can be recycling of any burial site. The conditions that apply are established under another act of parliament.

Ms KEY: With regard to clause 20(3)(d), 'planting and nurturing of vegetation in the cemetery', in my contribution earlier I raised the issue of native vegetation. I know, strictly speaking, we are talking about vegetation that has probably been put in place as part of the garden or as part of the memorial in the three areas that we are talking about. Will the minister take on notice the concern that has been raised by the opposition with regard to native vegetation and whether the minister could consider this in her deliberations and perhaps make a statement? As I said, not only has this issue been raised by the Conservation Council but also by a number of other people who have regard for native vegetation and some of the remnant native vegetation in not only the Adelaide cemeteries that will be covered by this bill but also in country cemeteries as well.

Trying to save some of our native flora has become quite an issue in this state. I do not expect the minister to answer me directly tonight, but I would appreciate it if he would be prepared to undertake to raise that with the minister and provide an answer on that issue.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I will certainly take up the matter with the minister. Can I say that I would support that very strongly indeed, firstly, because I personally very strongly support retention and even the development of native vegetation, where appropriate. I can recall another cemetery, the Victor Harbor cemetery, which has a superb native vegetation area and a very significant area which they are using now. They have developed walkways through the

native vegetation, and there are a lot of big gums. Small plaques have been placed where ashes have been laid along the paths through native bushland. It is different—and I have not seen it anywhere else—but it is quite popular. Being a person who supports that sort of thing very strongly indeed, the member can be assured that I would advocate to the minister that any native vegetation be retained, preserved and even enhanced.

Clause passed.

Clause 21 passed.

Clause 22.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I move:

Page 11, line 36—Leave out ‘or the Treasurer’.

Page 12—

Line 3—Leave out ‘or the Treasurer’.

Line 4—Leave out ‘or the Treasurer (as the case may be)’.

Ms KEY: Why? What is the explanation for deleting ‘or the Treasurer’ in these considerations when, at the commencement of our considerations, we had to consider the supply issue associated with the Public Corporations Act and reinserting clause 5? Perhaps the minister could explain why we are now deleting ‘or the Treasurer’. I have no problem with the concept, but I would like to know why.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The original clause 8 made reference to the Treasurer. The select committee recommended the removal of ‘or the Treasurer’ but that recommendation was missed in the drafting. These amendments are conse-

quential on the one that occurred in the removal of ‘or the Treasurer’ from clause 8, and that is why ‘or the Treasurer’ is now being removed.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 23 passed.

Schedule 1.

Ms KEY: As I said earlier, part of the proposed area to come under the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority Bill is in my electorate of Hanson. With all the pomp and ceremony that was attached to the renaming of Burbridge Road to Sir Donald Bradman Drive, would it be appropriate that schedule 1 is amended to reflect the new name? As I understand it, and I have certainly seen them in the electorate, signs have been displayed to that effect. Is it appropriate for the minister to amend that schedule?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The map that we have here was prepared by Planning SA, but I will suggest to the minister that she look at ensuring that that plan is up to date in all respects, including the naming of all streets shown on the plan.

Schedule 1 passed.

Schedule 2 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.45 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 4 July at 2 p.m.