

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 11 July 2002

The **SPEAKER (Hon. I.P. Lewis)** took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

GAMMON RANGES NATIONAL PARK

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I move:

That this house requests Her Excellency the Governor to make a proclamation under section 43(4) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 to vary the proclamation made on 15 April 1982 constituting the Gammon Ranges National Park to remove all rights of entry, prospecting, exploration or mining pursuant to a mining act (within the meaning of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972) in respect of the land constituting the national park.

The house is well aware of this issue, which is about the protection from mining of the Gammon Ranges National Park. As a previous minister, I have made a number of ministerial statements in relation to this issue. This motion is the tidy-up motion, which is a statutory obligation, to change the proclamation in relation to the national park so that mining does not exist in the future within the park.

I am really not going to hold up the house very long on this issue because I think the house has heard a number of very good contributions, including that of the Minister for Environment and Conservation the other day. This is a tidy-up motion in relation to the protection of the Gammon Ranges National Park. I think most members of the house are committed to protecting the Gammon Ranges National Park from mining, and this is simply the legal instrument that does that. I think there is enough on the record, both in my previous contributions and the Minister for Environment's contribution, to demonstrate that this motion has bipartisan support.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): This is a matter in which I have some particular interest, because this matter and the way it has been handled created the opportunity for one David Moore to stand against me at the last state election.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: That is unlawful, isn't it?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: If the Attorney-General wants to make a contribution in this matter, let him do so. But in relation to this, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The member for Stuart was prompt on his feet. The debate is about notice of motion No. 1. It is highly disorderly, as the member well knows, to respond to interjections.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance. I am sure you have a particular interest in this matter because of the way it has been handled. The house is entitled to know a little of the history of this matter. The proposition that we are debating today to prevent any further mining activities in the Gammon Ranges needs some explanation, and the history of it is important.

I understand that it is unlikely, or it was unlikely, that mining would be permitted in the Gammon Ranges. However, BHP held a lease which was legal and which it was entitled to transfer. There was a gentleman representing a company that wanted to purchase that lease. He actually took me—and I might say in a fairly unroadworthy vehicle—to look at this particular, considerable exercise. I explained to him in some detail that I believed he had a right to purchase the lease, but I thought it was highly unlikely that any

government or any minister would give him the opportunity to mine it. That was the situation. That is what took place: the minister of the day would not permit the lease to be transferred—a course of action with which I did not agree. I do not have a problem with this because I think it is clear that there is general public support for preventing mining in this rather pristine part of my electorate. There is no doubt that it contains large areas of material for which there may be some market in the future, but this particular exercise was going to be in competition with the material on Myrtle Springs Station and the SAMAG plant at Port Pirie.

Following that exercise, Mr David Moore, I understand, did a deal with Trades Hall to stand in the seat of Stuart. The whole exercise was to take votes off me and to ensure they ended up with the Labor Party. That was the sleazy exercise. That was the deal because the poor, simple fellow was misled. One would be kind if one described him as a scoundrel; one would be praising him. It was a move which was constructed and organised in secret. They did not tell the truth to the people. The poor fellow was conned and they had him running around the country. I would like to know who actually paid for all his signs. I would like to know who paid for all the advertising. At the end of the day, Don Farrell and his mates did their money twice because this motion before the house today resulted in this behind-the-scenes deal.

Mr SNELLING: I rise on a point of order, sir. I fail to see what relevance this has to the matter before the house.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The member for Stuart will come back to the substance of the motion.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The substance of the motion is that—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You are arguing with the Speaker; that's what it is. There is a statewide conspiracy against you!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Don Farrell's little boy at the back is doing his bidding. This motion ensures that no mining takes place in the Gammon Ranges National Park, which is in my electorate. It is well known to me. It is not very far from Arkaroola. But the full story ought to be told in relation to this matter and the intrigue and the little deals done behind the scenes by the Labor Party. I thought this was a government that believed in open, honest government. What do we have here? It is a clear example of people who are prepared to go to any end to achieve their objective.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: On one hand, they were telling the conservationists, 'We will stop mining.' On the other hand, they were encouraging this character, misleading him and letting him think they would give him a lease after the election. I think it is time the truth about this matter is clearly brought to the fore. Who did fund Mr Moore? Who encouraged Mr Moore to believe that this proposition we are debating today would not come forward?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I rise on a point of order, sir.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Here we go: we must be getting pretty close to the truth.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I rise on a point of order. The member for Stuart appears to have totally ignored your previous ruling. This is no more relevant to the substance of the matter than his previous diatribe.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The member for Stuart should come back to the motion, and may I remind

him that there is an identical motion on the *Notice Paper* from the minister.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Quite, Mr Speaker, and I look forward to participating in that debate too.

The SPEAKER: I wonder.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I look forward to participating in that debate because it will give me 20 minutes tonight instead of 10, and I have a lot more to say. Mr Speaker, as you well know, this particular motion is going to prevent any further leases being issued in the Gammon Ranges, and I understand you are one of the very few people who is familiar with this particular area, having been to the site. The point I want to make today is that we have this motion before us, and we have another one on the *Notice Paper* by the minister, but, at the same time as the now minister and government were telling the conservationists what they were going to do, they were encouraging Mr Moore, on the other hand, to get himself involved, with a view to improving the chances of the Labor Party in the election. That is what my complaint is about today.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It is all right for the government ministers—probably the Attorney-General was right in it. He was in all sorts of other skulduggery which we will come to on another occasion.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Not against you, Gunny. We had someone else in mind.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney-General will not engage in bear baiting.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Thank you, Mr Speaker, because this particular matter needs proper consideration. It needs further debate so that the public of South Australia can be properly informed about all relevant facts in relation to debating this motion and, in particular, the activities of one David Moore, why he stood for parliament, who funded him and who paid for the ads, because, unfortunately, Mr Moore, when he had had a few sherbets had a pretty loose tongue. So I look forward to furthering this debate.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I rise to support this motion and I commend the member for Davenport in his previous role as minister for the environment. I think he showed great courage and commitment in pursuing this issue some time ago, and I think he deserves full credit for that. The Gammon Ranges is a beautiful area of South Australia and any proposal to mine would damage that park. I have heard suggestions that they only want to remove a hill or two: that is just absurd, particularly in the vicinity of Weetootla Gorge, which is a magnificent part of that park. It would not only cause harm to the yellow-footed rock wallaby but endanger some of our rare native fish which inhabit that area. So, I fully support this motion. I think it should be dealt with expeditiously to clarify the situation so that people do not waste their time or money seeking to mine that park when the overwhelming majority of South Australians are strongly against that. It would be environmental vandalism, and I am pleased this motion is before the house. I notice that the government also has a motion, but I think in fairness the member for Davenport has pursued this for some time and he deserves the credit and I will be supporting it.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I will not speak for very long because I have spoken to the same motion—or a similar motion—a couple of days ago. It is an important motion that we want to get

through this house as speedily as possible. I am a bit disappointed that it was not passed two days ago when I first moved it, but I accept that the member for Davenport wants to have his moment of glory and I am happy to give it to him. I am inclined to try to defer it, to get the member for Stuart to cross the floor and vote with the government on a deferral motion, and I would be interested to see how many other members would come with him, if I chose to do that. As tempting as it is, the overwhelming principle should be to get this important matter through so that we can provide protection to this important part of our state. I was pleased to visit the Gammon Ranges last weekend, albeit briefly, as part of my visit to the Outback, and it certainly is a stunning part of a state and I, too, as I said the other day, commend the member for Davenport for taking on some of the interests in the Liberal party and other parts of the community over this issue.

I think it is difficult for a liberal minister to decide to stop mining in any park. This park has particular values that have already been mentioned to the house, so I will not mention them again. I commend this motion to the house. It is the same as the government's motion. We have largely bipartisan agreement about this, with at least one notable exception, and it will be interesting to see how he and his other colleagues vote. I commend the motion to the house.

Motion carried.

The SPEAKER: Lest the house have any doubt about the way in which the debate proceeded, in particular, the second speaker on the proposition, the member for Stuart, I trust that I can tell the house in order that it is not under any misapprehension that Mr Moore, a candidate in that election, was not financed by me, notwithstanding the fact that he was part of the Coalition of Independents, which is a registered political party separate and different from most others in that all members of it are Independent. I do not share the house's view of the matter.

FLINDERS CHASE NATIONAL PARK

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):

That this house requests Her Excellency the Governor to make a proclamation under section 43(4) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 to vary the proclamation made under Part 3 of that Act on 14 August 1997 so as to remove the ability to acquire or exercise pursuant to that proclamation pipeline rights under the Petroleum Act 1940 (or its successor) over the portion of the Flinders Chase National Park described as section 53, Hundred of Borda, County of Carnarvon.

This motion is not dissimilar to that which the house just passed in relation to the Gammons, but this motion is in relation to the Flinders Chase National Park on the western end of Kangaroo Island. In going through a process of review of some of the national parks prior to the election it became apparent that, in relation to the Flinders Chase National Park, an old petroleum pipeline right was gazetted to run through the park. The history of this is that there were potential petroleum deposits off the western end of Kangaroo Island, and a potential pipeline access route was effectively proclaimed or gazetted to run through the Flinders Chase National Park. In reviewing some of the national parks in response to the Gammon Ranges issue we asked what other parks suffer the same fate as the Gammons, and it became apparent that the Flinders Chase National Park had this petroleum pipeline access route through it.

We took advice from the Department of Environment and Heritage and the Department of Mines and Energy, and their advice was that they supported the abolition of this pipeline access through the Flinders Chase National Park. This motion seeks to change the proclamation or construction of the park to disallow that pipeline access. That will mean that Flinders Chase National Park will essentially be mining and pipeline free, as we have just moved for the Gammons. This is again a simple motion in effect; it is a tidy-up motion that brings better protection to one of our national parks, the Flinders Chase National Park on Kangaroo Island.

The government will no doubt be opening the \$8 million visitor facility in Flinders Chase National Park in the next few months. This facility was built by the former Liberal government and is basically completed and waiting for the minister to get the opening date in his diary so it can be opened. The Liberal Party is very proud of the construction of that \$8 million facility on Kangaroo Island; it is the largest single capital works project that National Parks has ever undertaken, and it happens to be in the Flinders Chase National Park, which is one of the tourism icons.

This motion simply prevents the acquisition of pipeline rights through the Flinders Chase National Park. When the house supports it—and I hope it does—that will mean that, like the Gammons and Belair National Park, the Flinders Chase National Park will have the highest level of protection afforded to it, as it rightly should, given its status in the national parks within South Australia. I understand that we will not be putting this to a vote today, but I will be seeking the house's support in relation to this motion.

Mr SNELLING secured the adjournment of the debate.

FIREFIIGHTERS

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I move:

That this house congratulates the South Australian Country Fire Service volunteers, the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service officers and support staff on their magnificent effort in assisting the New South Wales community during the recent devastating bushfires.

I also pay tribute to the partners, families and friends of those people who gave of their time so freely to go to New South Wales. As we all know, it was in the middle of the Christmas holiday period, and a lot of regular family holiday celebrations and functions were put on hold while our firefighters went to New South Wales. Those people were also left behind with the angst and worry about the safety of their loved ones.

On 5 January, I was at Sydney airport waiting to fly back to the safety of South Australia after experiencing a 48-hour period in my life that I do not think I will ever forget. Whilst sitting at the airport I was reading the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and I thought that one quote in particular summed up what I had experienced and what residents were experiencing, and it reflected very much the bond that had developed amongst our magnificent volunteers. Tony Stephens wrote:

The comrades in arms include ageing men with rivers of sweat running down deep lines of faces, young men with earrings, young women with ponytails. Worldly possessions could be bought and sold, but people were priceless.

The people of New South Wales were experiencing unprecedented devastation and, in the face of this devastation, as has so often been the case in our history, we saw courage, determination and real commitment to one another.

Some 121 officers and support staff from the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service went to New South Wales along with, on my count, 749 volunteer firefighters. Who could forget the vision on the television news of the convoy of firefighting appliances that set off for New South Wales? These people went to New South Wales to help out in any capacity they were needed, and I know from my personal experience that their efforts were deeply appreciated. These people, along with firefighters from New South Wales and other states around Australia, were prepared to put their lives on the line. They were there to protect people they had never met, and probably would never meet again.

As I said, that did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. I spent a great deal of time with a family in the Blue Mountains who lived on the border of the national park, and during the 48 hours I was there they were under constant threat. I came a lot closer to the fire than I had anticipated or planned. Within an hour of my arrival, the fire came so close that, while I was having a telephone conversation with the Premier, he could hear the roaring as he spoke to me. My knowledge of standing orders prevents me from quoting exactly what the Premier said to me at that time but he did, however, think that I should remove myself from the immediate threat very quickly. I pointed out to the Premier that I had nowhere to go. These people faced devastation on a minute by minute basis over a long period of time.

We are not just talking about the 48 hours that I was there, but over a number of weeks. They were so appreciative of the fire crews working in the area around their homes that they not only did the normal things of providing refreshments and looking after them, but they also took the time to learn the name of each and every firefighter as they came on duty. I thought this showed great respect, and I know that the firefighters appreciated it.

A total of 15 000 firefighters fought 100 blazes over 300 000 hectares from Kurrabung in the Blue Mountains to Sussex Inlet on the South Coast. Many homes as well as many loved possessions were lost. But, to the great credit of our professional and volunteer firefighters, not one life was lost. We all know what a bushfire looks like; we see them on the news all the time. But nothing prepares you for the actual experience of this threat first hand and, like so many things, you simply do not know how you would react until it happens to you.

I saw the bravery of so many wonderful volunteers and professional firefighters. Those from South Australia were working in terrain like nothing we have in this state. Not only did they face the dangers of the fire, but it was extremely dangerous and unfamiliar terrain. Volunteers from my local CFS brigades were there—from Salisbury and Tea Tree Gully. They were at Woodford, where I was, and at the location of some of the worst fires. We had brigade members from Crystal Brook to Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, Kimba, Port Pirie and Virginia—brigade members from every corner of our state. I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it a list of names of all those MFS and CFS officers who went to New South Wales during that state's time of need.

The SPEAKER: Regrettably, standing orders do not allow members to incorporate lists of names. Under standing orders, they must be statistical tables. That is a matter for the house to decide through the Standing Orders Committee. In the meantime, I cannot allow the table to be incorporated.

Ms RANKINE: Thank you, sir. I deeply regret that it cannot be included. Maybe that is something that we need to look at.

The SPEAKER: It is probably regrettable.

Ms RANKINE: Thank you, sir. As the clerk told me, there is a lot of unnecessary information in *Hansard*, and this would probably be a greater inclusion than some of the contributions that we hear in this house.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms RANKINE: Yes, there are about 800 names. These people did our state proud. Fires are a natural phenomenon. We need to be prepared for them and we need to be able to deal with them. The vast majority of the fires that occurred in New South Wales were the result of lightning strikes. However, too many were deliberately lit. Living in such a naturally fire-prone nation makes it all the more frustrating when people deliberately light fires. Residents and firefighters alike were confused and angry about the arson attacks, and there was much speculation as to why someone would commit such a despicable act, particularly when they had already seen the consequences.

There is much we can do to prevent both causes of fire. We need, as I have said, to be prepared for those naturally occurring fires. We need to be conscious of fire, for example, in own town planning, an area which has been generally overlooked and neglected. We should also be much more conscious of fire protection in our house construction.

I have run a number of fire safety days in my electorate with the help of the CFS. Having lived in the Mid North for many years, and with vivid memories of Ash Wednesday, I am only too aware of the fire dangers in our outer metropolitan and foothill areas. If we experienced a fire similar to those they had in Sydney, the Golden Grove development would be gone. There are many simple measures people in fire risk areas can take to help protect their homes. When we expect volunteer and professional firefighters to put their lives on the line, I do not think it is too much to ask that we also take some responsibility in protecting and preparing our homes.

It would appear that this was one of the great lessons learned in New South Wales. One of the reasons they believe no lives were lost was because enormous efforts had gone into preparing people for a fire event. Something like 140 community fire safety units had been established across New South Wales. For example, the units were made up of residents in a particular street who were sponsored and trained by the New South Wales equivalent to our MFS. These people were able to provide defensive fire protection before the fire units arrived. They were invaluable at a time when resources were stretched to the limit and, in many instances, they made the difference between saving or losing homes. These people had invaluable local knowledge and were a calming influence for residents who were confident in their ability to provide sensible advice about what they should be doing. These community safety units were credited with saving millions of dollars and many lives.

There are also other causes of fire such as arsonists. We clearly need to punish those people who are prepared to put other people's lives at risk. But the best thing is actually the prevention, of having people in that state of mind who are prepared to do those sorts of things. I am not talking about pampering these people, but identifying relevant factors, stepping in before lives are actually put at risk. Louise Newman, who is Chairwoman of the Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, said that many of the people

who commit these arson attacks tend not to have much sense of belonging to a community, that we need to identify high risk young people and address the reasons for their antisocial behaviour. We have a very strong responsibility, and I have spoken about this on many occasions, for including our young people and making them feel a part of our community, otherwise we do suffer consequences like this.

In February, I was delighted when the Premier of New South Wales took the time out of a very hectic and busy schedule to visit the Salisbury CFS. He would have liked to have visited more but just simply did not have the time available. He said, however, that he could not come to South Australia without making an effort to pay tribute to our volunteers. During his visit he presented me with a letter, and I think it is appropriate to read a section of it to the house and, most importantly, to put this on record. In his letter he thanked me for taking the time to visit New South Wales but, more importantly, he went on to say:

You witnessed first-hand the outstanding work done by members of the South Australian CFS. Standing shoulder to shoulder with firefighters from all over Australia and from across the Tasman, they heroically defended lives and properties. Not one life was lost, a magnificent achievement.

It was not only a display of sheer courage and professionalism. It was a display of interstate and trans-Tasman cooperation that transcended our traditional rivalries.

I look forward to meeting some of the South Australian CFS members to thank them and their colleagues for a great performance.

There are many lessons to learn from these fires, and I'm sure the NSW authorities will share any new insights with their South Australian peers. But the biggest lesson is this: you were there for us; we will be there for you.

I think that says an enormous amount about the contribution of our firefighters, and I think it truly reflects the deep appreciation of New South Wales residents who described our firefighters so aptly as 'angels with dirty faces'. These people did our state proud and I extend to them my personal appreciation, the appreciation of this house and my deep congratulations.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I am very pleased to support this motion, and I also want to formally congratulate all the people who went to the bushfires in New South Wales. At that stage, of course, just for the record, we were still in government. I was still the minister for emergency services, and I would have to say an extremely proud minister in my portfolios because of the great work that all these people did as well as, of course, the police and the other agencies; but, in particular, the way these people went about supporting New South Wales. In fact, there were more people volunteering from the South Australian Country Fire Service, and also from the Metropolitan Fire Service, than were able to go, and one of the things that I did often hear when I was talking to them at that time was, 'We would like to go as well. We would like to be able to offer our services.' But, of course, we have to remember not only those great firefighters who went to New South Wales from both agencies but also those who stayed at home and looked after us.

We need to remember that at the time of the New South Wales fires we had the highest fuel loads in South Australia in recent history. There was every potential for South Australia itself to be in a situation where we had bushfires, or wildfires as they are called today, very similar to those of New South Wales. So, I want to put on the public record my appreciation of the Country Fire Service volunteers, the paid staff and the Metropolitan Fire Service staff who stayed home

to protect and look after South Australians. They were equally as important as those who went over to fight the fires.

It was a team effort, and that is what the emergency services are all about in South Australia. When I was talking to the senior staff—John Gray, the Acting Chief Fire Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Service, Vince Monterola, the Chief Executive Officer of the Country Fire Service, and Ewan Ferguson, the Chief Fire Officer of the Country Fire Service in South Australia—I was impressed by the fact that they were working on this virtually nearly 20 hours a day, making sure everyone was looked after properly, and keeping me informed, as minister, and ensuring that our team got there safely and arrived home safely. I want to acknowledge those people, too, and the way they worked together as a team.

Both agencies did South Australia proud and made me feel proud. In fact, when we welcomed them home, planeload by planeload, and presented them with their caps, members of both the Country Fire Service and the Metropolitan Fire Service said to me, 'We didn't realise how close we are together,' and they wanted to grow that opportunity of good working relationships. I hope and trust that that will augur well for continued good working relationships between both the CFS and the MFS in the future.

I recall that hundreds of firefighters went over on 3 January, and members should remember that this was just after Christmas. I want to thank and put on the record, too, my appreciation to the families and the children who missed their mums and dads over that Christmas period, because that is normally when you are together as a family and, in this case, even on New Year's Eve these people were unable to celebrate together. So, I also thank the families. We should never forget the families behind the firefighters, who were obviously quite concerned for their safety, as, of course, you would be.

It is also important to highlight the message that I was receiving of how well trained and how well equipped our Country Fire Service and Metropolitan Fire Service were for the challenge. In fact—and you can ask anybody in any of the other fire services—we were ahead of the pack in respect of equipment, training and personal equipment. That was as a direct result of not only having these volunteers and paid staff so committed and so professional for so long but also, I might add, because when we were in government—even though we had negative messages from Labor back then when it was in opposition—the emergency services levy augured well for them having that equipment.

It is interesting today to see that, now Labor is in office, it is no longer critical of the levy or the fund. It is very interesting that it is no longer critical of it and it supports it, and yet before the election it was going to run around with badges all over my electorate: 'Robert Brokenshire, the emergency services tax man.' I was very much looking forward to that, because I had another tag to put on the top of that. But, we will talk about that another day, because there will be many days when we can talk about these things.

I want to come back and focus on the people of whom we are so proud—the volunteers and paid staff who went to New South Wales. I also want to say that I appreciate the good working relationship government to government, forgetting the colour of the government, when we have a potential national disaster on our hands or, indeed, a major state disaster. I thank the New South Wales government and particularly its fire services for the way that they worked cooperatively with not only South Australian government services but, indeed, all the other states that were involved in

supporting them. As the honourable member who moved this motion said, the Premier of New South Wales was very proud of the efforts of the South Australian firefighters. Indeed, one day we may have to call on New South Wales firefighters to come to South Australia.

We must remember a couple of things from this event. There must be a positive legacy out of any tragedy, that is, we must be ready, prepared and educated in relation to fire risk right across Australia. No longer can we have a situation where national parks, in my opinion, cannot conduct cold burns to protect the hinterland around those parks. One can see what happened in New South Wales because houses had been allowed to be built, effectively, in the bush.

We must be vigilant about that in South Australia. I see the minister in the chamber now and I hope that he will continue to support the education programs that were so valuable. For a small amount of money in real terms, we paid people and volunteers working with communities throughout the Adelaide Hills to ensure that people were prepared properly: whether to go or to stay when there is a fire; how to clear debris and so on around the place; and how to have adequate water systems, etc. They are the sorts of things that protect lives, communities and property. I think it is fair to say that New South Wales acknowledged that that was not the case, necessarily, in that state, and it has learned from that.

It was also interesting to see Elvis—the big helicopter that came over from America—do all that water bombing. Whilst the South Australian firefighters who went to New South Wales were impressed with Elvis, they still believe that, by and large, for cost effectiveness and efficiency the water bombing structure in place in South Australia is the most suitable for this state because it gives absolute flexibility. Of course, the cost of Elvis is prohibitive for any state, and I would never ask the minister in this government to fund something like Elvis because it would be over the top. But if the Prime Minister, when he finishes his evaluation, wants to buy a couple (and he indicated that he might if the worth was there), that is, one for the eastern states and one for Western Australia, clearly, that would be an advantage for our state. However, the cost is prohibitive and I think that South Australia is doing pretty well with its current structure.

As I said earlier, I was with the then premier, Rob Kerin, on numerous occasions—in fact, I think I was present when every plane load of volunteers arrived home. We should also say that everyone who went to help was a volunteer—whether they were from the MFS or the CFS, they were all volunteers who went to help, and that needs to be put on the public record.

It was a huge privilege to see those volunteers come home after representing South Australia and knowing that they had done such a good job. I talked to the families of the firefighters before they left (because I was also there when they left) and, again, I say thanks very much for their support. I was impressed—even with my own brigade from Mount Compass (I greeted those volunteers when they came home also)—by the fact that these people were very humble about the fact that they had done the job. They did not consider themselves to be heroes. They did not want the media to hype things up.

They felt that was part of their job. We had a chance to congratulate them as part of the Australia Day parade and I think that was fantastic. It was a great way for the South Australian community to say thank you, and I acknowledge all those South Australians who attended that parade through King William Street to Victoria Square and who showed

magnificent support, gratitude and thanks to our firefighters who went to New South Wales. I certainly commend and support this motion.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Government Enterprises): I want to speak only briefly to this motion because it is not a matter that I think would cause any division in this house. I acknowledge the truly magnificent effort of South Australian volunteers—whether they were from the Country Fire Service, the Metropolitan Fire Service or anywhere else—in fighting the very bad New South Wales bushfires. The willingness of those people to risk their lives and give their time is an example of what is finest in the Australian character and I have no doubt that, should we ever suffer the same misfortune, God forbid, we will see fellow Australians from New South Wales here in the same numbers offering the same sort of assistance. I was a little disappointed by the previous minister's using a resolution to thank those people who offered their time to pat himself on the back for his government's contributions in equipping the fire service. There is a time and a place for that and this is not the time or the place. I will not do any more politics on it than that, but it was very disappointing.

We can take some lessons from the New South Wales experience—a couple of them in particular. I am advised that the fuel loads in some of the fire areas were absolutely extraordinary—something our fire services have never seen and something that proves the point I made here. Despite some criticism in the community, including criticism from the member for Stuart on a number of occasions, that, regardless of the political sensitivity, we need to continue to conduct appropriate, scientific and well planned burn-offs in national parks, if we do not do so, we simply court the sort of disasters we saw in New South Wales, and I alert the house to the fact that we will have very high fuel loads this season if nothing is done in that regard. Fortunately, it has been a very long time since we had a major bushfire in South Australia, but we must be alert to the possibility of that occurring again.

The other lesson we must take from it is that, while our firefighters and volunteers did a superb job in New South Wales, there was a question of our equipment sometimes matching the equipment available there, in particular hose fittings to trucks, which is something we need to address in terms of developing over time national standards for this sort of equipment so that when we get the service of other Australians we do it in the best way possible. I have no more to say on the matter, except to express my sincere gratitude and the gratitude of this government for the efforts of the volunteers.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): I, too, wish to speak very briefly in support of this motion. Members would be aware that the seat of Heysen is in the Adelaide Hills and, as such, every summer is under a vast threat of bushfire. We have suffered two Ash Wednesdays and I have lived through them in the Adelaide Hills. Our brave firefighters need every bit of help and encouragement and deserve our praise and thanks for the efforts they put in constantly. But, to do so over the Christmas-New Year period and to travel to Sydney and its surrounds to help people they do not know and communities they are not living in, is an extraordinary feat and deserves our congratulations.

On a personal note, not only have I lived in the Adelaide Hills for the past 25 years, and therefore through the two Ash Wednesday bushfire events, but also I grew up on the

outskirts of Sydney in an area under threat in these bushfires. My sister was looking at evacuating her home three times during that period. I had a lot of family and friends in the area. From speaking to them since the events of January, I know that they are eternally grateful for the assistance offered by South Australia and I do not think it could be put by more eloquently than the letter from the Premier of New South Wales, read out by the member for Wright, that just as we were there for them they will be there for us. There is nothing surer in this life than that we will be under the threat of dramatic bushfires again at some time in future and it is comforting to know that we have been good friends to them and they will be good friends to us. I support the motion and thank the member for moving it.

Mr CAICA (Colton): I am pleased to rise in support of this motion. I will not take up too much time of the house, because everything has been said. I have a background in firefighting as I spent some time in the Metropolitan Fire Service. Indeed, one of the first jobs that I went to was the 1983 bushfires here in the Adelaide Hills when I worked in the area covered by the member for Heysen at Yarrabene Road. So I know first-hand some of the dangers associated with being involved with wildfires. I congratulate the CFS volunteers and the MFS volunteers who attended Sydney and, indeed, were deployed in the most dangerous areas, that is, the outer greater Sydney area and the Blue Mountains. Many points have been made about the lessons that we can learn but, whilst not wanting to rain on the parade because not only is their bravery magnificent but also their willingness to help their brother and sister firefighters in a time of need is absolutely outstanding, we should learn from the experiences on those occasions when such devastating bushfires occur.

The point in relation to some of the difficulties associated with compatibility of equipment was touched on briefly by the minister. It is a shame in this day and age that we have fire services operating throughout Australia that have different equipment and that there can be little compatibility between couplings, hose fittings, types of trucks or, indeed, the way in which water is drawn out of the plugs—which, I guess in basic terms, are the holes in the road for water to be drawn out of. To this end in a previous life when I was a firefighter and the secretary of the national firefighters union, we talked about this on numerous occasions to ensure that the proper authorities had the impetus to start investigating ways in which these things could be addressed. To that end, we entered into dialogue with the Australasian Fire Authorities Council and each of our branches entered into dialogue with the respective fire services throughout Australia to look at ways in which these matters could be addressed. In fact, if we go one step further, it seems odd that in this nation we do not have standard fire trucks and standard fire equipment for all aspects of firefighting which would ensure compatibility when the time arises that other services are needed to assist the home services in combating whatever disaster they might have at any point in time, and that will continue to occur.

The other thing that I think we could improve upon is the mechanism by which the flag goes up, that is, how the various fire services are activated to be in a place where they are needed in a very short period. Again, I have grappled with that for some time and I think that the federal government, through the input of the various state governments and the emergency services ministers, has to look at a way whereby a standard command and control situation and specialist crews can be equipped and trained to be deployed at any time

in Australia—and, indeed, in our outer regions, whether that be in Asia and the Pacific—to assist in a time of need. It can be easily done, provided there is the will. So, I am encouraged by the words of our minister with respect to the lessons that can be learnt and the way in which we can improve emergency services deployment in this country.

One of the things that I learnt about being a firefighter is the way in which members of the crews work as teams. That applies not just to the firefighting services but also to ambulance services, the Country Fire Services and the SES in various states. It is all based on team work, that is, you are all a link in the chain and if one link goes the whole process is threatened. So, I am very pleased that the CFS and the MFS can work collectively in the way that they do. There have been situations in the past when people have tried to promote the fact that perhaps a wedge exists. It is safe to say that there have been differences of opinion over many years between perhaps the CFS and the MFS administration, but at the coal face, where it really counts, where firefighters are working together, the bond and the mutual respect for each other has been particularly outstanding.

I reinforce the point made earlier about those who stayed home, because it does not matter whether it is a situation in New South Wales, in Queensland, in Tasmania or, indeed, what we witnessed in New York recently: firefighters and emergency services workers feel for their brother and sister emergency services workers and want to be there to help. Again, I reinforce the point that I made earlier about the way in which we should be working towards improving deployment and the equipment that these people use so that when they go to a site they can be more effective than might otherwise be the case. As I said, I do not want to take up too much extra time.

I reinforce the points made earlier by all the speakers. As South Australians, we should be proud of the efforts put in by our volunteer firefighters, both CFS and MFS, during the devastating bushfires around Christmas last year. I congratulate them for their efforts; and I congratulate the efforts of all firefighters and people throughout Australia involved in that exercise because they came from Western Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, New Zealand and throughout Australia.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I support the motion moved by the member for Wright. In the course of her address, the honourable member indicated that simple measures need to be taken to ensure that we do not have a similar occurrence in this state—a course of action with which I totally concur. I have an interest in this matter and the valuable work our volunteers did in New South Wales. I know the member of parliament who represents the Blue Mountains. Last week, I received a copy of the report of the parliamentary select committee which inquired into those bushfires. It is interesting to note that in that fire 754 000 hectares of bushland were burnt; 109 residences and premises were destroyed; 7 000 head of livestock were killed; and hundreds of kilometres of rural fencing was destroyed. Fortunately, no lives were lost.

Some interesting recommendations came out of that select committee. One recommendation was that they should not use plastic fittings on fire trucks, which is a simple conclusion. Surely, it is not necessary to have a parliamentary committee to find out that. Two things, in particular, interest me. The select committee's report talks about the building code, and people building houses in fire-prone areas and not taking any effective fire prevention measures. I think the time

has long past when we allow people to act so irresponsibly and then to expect volunteers to protect their property on days similar to Ash Wednesday. I think that time has long since past and that we should take firm action to give them guidance, otherwise the work will have to be carried out at their expense.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I agree with you, totally. The second matter relates to the construction and maintenance of fire trails. The committee paid some attention to that. If we expect volunteers to fight fires, they must have the ability to safely access these areas, not only to get in but also to get out. The only way to do that is to have adequate firebreaks and fire tracks established in all large areas of native vegetation. From time to time this parliament has distinguished itself by passing foolish laws and coming up with unworkable solutions. When we passed a law to say that you cannot construct a firebreak of more than five metres along boundary fences we endangered the lives of our volunteers. It is a stupid law which should be changed quickly, otherwise we will have a repeat of the situation where the tankers burnt. The quicker this parliament addresses it, the better. Private property owners and managers of government land should be able to construct boundary fences up to 15 metres and up to 10 metres internally, otherwise it is only a matter of time before there will be a tragedy.

Every time I drive home, I drive past a monument that recognises the last time a huge area of native vegetation close to where I live was burnt and a person lost his life. It will happen again. Country Fire Service volunteers and Metropolitan Fire Service firefighters are doing great work. The volunteers freely give of their time. We have re-equipped them and made great improvements, but we have other agencies trying to stop people from reducing fuel loads by burning off—and that is absolutely essential. The minister is right. He will have my full support because he will be acting in the public interest, and the irrational elements who say that they do not want it to be carried out should be ignored.

We have to allow people to take appropriate measures to protect their property and the public by having adequate, effective firebreaks. We have to educate the community and strengthen the law because the sad thing about the New South Wales' experience is that most of those fires were lit by people carrying out criminal—

Ms Rankine: Most of them were lightning strikes.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, some were, but then there were other people who lit them. That is unforgivable, because there you have people risking their lives, and we all saw it on our own television sets.

I recommend to the member and others that they read the joint select committee report from the New South Wales parliament. It is over 120 pages but it is worthwhile reading because it is the latest assessment on what is taking place. Our volunteers should be congratulated and I commend the member for bringing the motion to the house because I think it is small thanks for the effort that they have made, and the effort they continue to make, protecting the people of South Australia.

However, we also need to take those other steps which I have been discussing over the last few minutes. There are lots of things that I may not have much knowledge about, but I am one of the few people in this chamber who has been involved on a regular basis in burning off as part of a farming operation. I am one of the few people left in this chamber who has actually been involved in lighting large fires and

native vegetation. I have been involved in legally lighting thousands of acres, and I have done it without endangering people, and you can if you know what you are doing.

Let me say this on burning off operations: as you would know, Mr Speaker, one of the problems which the Country Fire Service and National Parks officers faced when their fire got away concerned firebreaks. There are two things about burning off: the first thing is that you have to have adequate firebreaks. The second thing is that you have to know how to light against the wind and, once you start, you have to hold your nerve and get the whole circumference on fire. If you do not, you are subject to wind change. So, you must get the whole thing on fire very quickly, and it is a matter of holding your nerve.

If you only get half on fire, and the wind changes, you could have a huge front going onto your break. If you do not have adequate firebreaks, people cannot get equipment and vehicles in without getting punctures. That is where stone-rollers can play such an important role in bushfire control. That is why these foolish people in sections of the bureaucracy, the environment department, with their nonsense, need to be shut up, because this state is going to face huge public liability problems in the future if we do not allow people to adequately protect their properties.

I believe that this motion is the right time to say that the insurance industry will be looking very carefully at silly laws that governments and parliaments have passed that stop people from protecting the public by having adequate firebreaks. I support the motion and commend it to the house.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I congratulate the member for Wright on bringing this matter to the house and thank her for speaking so eloquently on the matter. I feel there is nothing left to add, really, other than my disappointment that she was not able to include in the *Hansard* record the names of those people who were prepared to give up their celebratory times with their families and go off and support fellow Australians.

The SPEAKER: The member understands that it is our standing orders, not the chair.

Ms THOMPSON: I certainly recognise, sir, that if you had any discretion at all you would have allowed this to happen, and that it is because of our standing orders, and we do not always anticipate the problems that they might cause. However, I would like to take the opportunity of recording the names of the people in my electorate who were able to support our community by attending the fire and who do so on a local basis all the time. I think it was the member for Mawson who mentioned that those who are left behind also serve our community very well. As somebody who lives in an area protected by the CFS, I also have a particular interest in ensuring that they are able to do their job well, and I thank each and every one of them for the work they do every day of every week of every year.

Just to return to the point of relating the people who went to the bushfire in Sydney from our local CFS, there was Brian Holocek, Gary Cooper, Ian Taverner, Jenny Pilkington, Kevin Churchward, Matthew Bonser, Maxwell Atkinson, Michael Flynn, Nigel Grove, Rohan Roynance, Russell Bloomer, Simon Walkley, Steven Forbes and Todd Harris. I know several of those people personally and am aware of the way they contribute not only to the CFS but also to many aspects of our community life. I think that illustrates the community mindset of so many of those who don the CFS and SES yellows and a number of other uniforms, and how

they contribute in many different ways to our community. It is tremendous that the member for Wright has been given special responsibility by the Premier to ensure that their work is recognised and to ensure that they are able to do it with support, care, proper training and instruction no matter where they are. The CFS issue illustrates the need for training support and equipment for our volunteers, but many others who also serve our community also need that support. I do not want to extend the debate further; I simply want to thank and commend those members of the CFS who are so community minded and dedicated to assisting all, whether in peril or just in need.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I rise to support this motion and congratulate CFS and MFS volunteers—because they were volunteers at the time they went over to Sydney—on the magnificent job they did. As the member for Colton said, though, their attitude is professional and, once on the fire front—at the coal face—these firefighters do a magnificent job. To leave your family and go off to face very dangerous, potentially life threatening situations is something that not everybody can do. It is testament to the courage of the individuals and also a credit to the people organising the training of MFS and CFS personnel that these people feel capable of going off to a strange location to undertake tasks which are life threatening. I was in Sydney on other business over the time of the last fires and I saw first hand from the air the extent of the fires over there. Having had experience in the Country Fire Service as captain of the Happy Valley brigade, I know that when looking at a scene like that you just wonder where you will start.

Given that volunteers put their lives at risk, I am more than happy to support this motion. I urge all members to read the congratulations and thanks in letters to the Editor of the *CFS Volunteer* magazine at some stage. It is absolutely wonderful to be appreciated when you put your life on the line, as did these volunteers, but they do not do it for that. They do it for the personal satisfaction of helping out the community, and this is where volunteers, no matter what organisation they come from, are so vital.

We have 431 CFS brigades in South Australia, and the members of those brigades are dedicated. There was a total of 17 026 volunteers at last count. We hear about the damage that is done by fires, but we do not hear about what is saved by the volunteers. At last count, \$72 725 950 had been saved by the prompt action of the CFS volunteers. Let us not forget the MFS and the total property and lives saved by all our firefighters; we cannot thank them enough for their efforts. Coming back to the South Australian fire situation, I concur in the comments made by the members for Stuart and Elder. There is a need to revisit our attitude to burning off, reducing hazards and reducing fuel loads in the Adelaide Hills. As members of the Happy Valley CFS, we would go into the back areas of Coromandel Valley and down very narrow driveways, and we would see homes that were covered to the eaves with thick undergrowth and trees where you could not turn a fire truck around. As part of our bushfire prevention planning we made the decision that we would not put the lives of our firefighters in danger by going into those places.

It is absolutely necessary that bushfire prevention include not only educating the public but also hazard reduction. Hazard reduction will also provide CFS volunteers with experience in controlling fires in a managed situation. The ability to skilfully go in and back-burn a fire is one of the best ways of controlling large, out of control wildfires.

The skill and dedication of the fires on the ground in Sydney was only matched, in my eyes, by the aerial firefighting. I saw the helicopter dumping loads of water on fires between Sydney and the Pittwater. The skill and bravery of those pilots also should be acknowledged. We also should note the skill of the pilots who fly the air tractors in South Australia, which dump retardant and foam onto fires. I am aware that C130 Hercules were used in the recent fires in the USA—and I also note that the Governor of one of the states (I think Arizona) said that hazard reduction is something that we should be looking at very seriously to prevent wildfire outbreaks. The C130 Hercules that were dumping large loads (I think up to 8 000 litres at a time) of fire retardant foam onto fires is not unique to the Americans. I believe that the RAAF sent crews to Canada a number of years ago to train in aerial firefighting, and I believe that in Victoria there are modules that can be fitted inside these Hercules at a moment's notice to assist in firefighting. To my knowledge, these modules have never been used, and it would be interesting to find out whether they are still in a useable condition and perhaps could be used to help reduce the extensive cost of aerial firefighting. I reiterate my congratulations to all the CFS and MFS volunteers on the magnificent job they do at all times, but particularly for the job that they did during the Sydney bushfires.

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I rise to support this motion and to congratulate the member for Wright on moving it. I believe that over 800 volunteers went to New South Wales, eight of whom came from the Highbury service and 10, I understand, from Tea Tree Gully. I have family in New South Wales and, during that terrible time, I spoke to them regularly on the telephone. Thankfully, most of them were not in the path of the bushfires, but the fires were coming quite close to the little town where my uncle lives. While they were very concerned, of course, I was also very concerned as were, no doubt, other families here in South Australia that have family living in New South Wales.

Bushfires are a terrifying thing to experience and, thankfully, while I have not been in the thick of one, I have been very close, and I certainly never wish to have that experience again. Many of us knew that the member for Wright was in New South Wales—

Ms Rankine: And under threat.

Mrs GERAGHTY:—and under threat, and she received a number of phone calls from us, because we were most concerned about her wellbeing. Last Sunday, along with the member for Wright and the member for Florey, I attended a breakfast for our CFS and SES volunteers in recognition of their great efforts. These people perform a very valuable service without financial reward—a service which we cannot do without and one on which we rely greatly. This motion is a small way of saying 'Thank you' to all those volunteers who went to New South Wales and, as has been mentioned earlier in the debate, to those volunteers who stayed here to make sure that the people of South Australia were protected. I congratulate all the volunteers who went to New South Wales. I am sure that there were very scary moments for them, but they performed a very valuable service and they have done South Australia very proud. Congratulations to them.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I support the motion. I was born and raised in the Adelaide Hills and have lived there all my life apart for an eight-year stint when I worked

in some other country regions. As you know, sir, we come from the same district in the Hills—a very good part of South Australia. I actually witnessed first hand the devastating effect that the Ash Wednesday fire had in the Hills in 1983. It burnt out our family property—sheds, fences, stock, machinery, the whole lot. We were actually lucky because our family home was not burnt, unlike many other people in the Hills whose homes were razed. Even more tragically, a number of lives were lost on that day.

That fire certainly opened my eyes to the devastating effect that a wildfire can have. Before that day, I was under a total misapprehension. I thought that when a fire would start it would burn out a few acres—50 acres, or so—and the CFS would come along and put it out. You actually had to live through that day in 1983 to see that it was almost like hell on earth.

I fully support the member for Stuart's comments as well as those of the minister about the need to reduce fuel loads in parks. The conservationists do not really like it, but I am an advocate of cold burns, because it is the only way to reduce fuel loads. I continue to live in the Adelaide Hills, as I have said. When I married, my wife and I built our home only about 500 metres from my old family home, which is less than two kilometres from the Anstey Hill Conservation Park. Unfortunately, every summer individuals in our community, for whatever reason, find pleasure in lighting fires in that park. It is always a fairly worrying time on particularly hot days, when there is a north-westerly wind blowing, and a fire starts on Anstey Hill, because it comes straight up over the top of Range Road South and heads in the direction of our property and that of our neighbours and the district in general.

The CFS volunteers do an absolutely tremendous job. Their volunteer work not only affects themselves but also their families. They are prepared to come out any time day or night. We had an instance a year or two ago when a stolen car was obviously dumped at the end of our driveway; it was vandalised and set on fire. We knew that it was on fire only because we could hear a car horn blowing. We looked out the bedroom window and saw a vehicle on fire that had been pushed down over the bank and onto our boundary fence. We rang the CFS and they came along and put it out, and this was at 11 p.m. We also rang the police. Ours was only one of hundreds of call-outs the CFS has during the year.

I congratulate and pay tribute to the CFS not only in my own home district, because I know that volunteers from the Paracombe CFS and Hermitage CFS went to New South Wales, but also CFS volunteers from other brigades in my electorate. The member for West Torrens, representing the minister, and I had pleasure in attending the opening of the Gumeracha CFS Group Control Centre a couple of weeks ago. When that centre was opened, reference was certainly made to volunteers from the district who went to New South Wales to fight those fires.

In closing, I would like to congratulate and pay tribute to all the CFS and MFS people who went to New South Wales. I commend the member for Wright for bringing this matter to the house and, as I said, I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Motion carried.

The SPEAKER: Can I say, again by way of explanation of what I do, that in such instances, when I state my views on a matter, I do so as an ordinary member, not as Speaker. I will not engage in debate nor adversely reflect on the vote of

the house when doing so. I support the proposition, and I believe my constituents are entitled to know how I would have spoken and voted, and thereby judge me as their representative accordingly. I am not a political wimp.

On the substantive matter, I support it. Without reflecting on the adequacy or otherwise of other members' contributions I simply make the point that yet another thing that could be done to assist the efficiency and security of operations within our volunteer organisations in general, and the CFS in particular, is to ensure that those who choose to volunteer are not only given the opportunity to undertake training but are also assessed to determine whether they can fit into the team in one or other of the many roles that are available to them, so that we do not get square pegs in round holes which might otherwise compromise the safety and security of the other volunteers with whom they work. I thank the house for its patience in allowing me to make that contribution.

ANANGU PITJANTJATJARA COUNCIL

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): I move:

That the government shows support for the leadership and elected traditional owners and managers of the AP lands, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Council, by a public announcement in this house.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak to this motion and to put on the public record matters of some significance relating to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Council, the Pitjantjatjara Council Incorporated and the AP lands generally, as the pre and post election period did not enable me the opportunity of setting the public record straight.

Firstly, it is important to understand the entities that relate to the circumstances I intend to detail. The AP Council is a body corporate, independent of the state. AP has the power to enter into agreements with the Pit Council, and others, without the consent or assistance of the state. I reiterate that for absolute clarification and to provide an understanding of the relationship between the state and the ownership and management of the AP lands.

AP Council is not a state instrumentality and its decisions cannot be controlled by the state. It is the controlling body on the lands under law. The Pit Council is an incorporated body which, under contract and agreement with the AP Council, provides legal and anthropological services to the AP Council. In simple terms, members of the AP Council are the duly elected traditional owners and managers who purchase services from Pit Council Incorporated. It is important to understand the relationship between these two entities and the hierarchical role for which one has responsibility as opposed to the other which is employed to provide a service.

In speaking to this matter briefly in the Supply Bill debate, I indicated that the issue of conflict was not necessarily complex. It is about the very basic human follies. It is about greed, power, manipulation, harassment, standover tactics, deceit and alleged fraud. It is about non-indigenous people manipulating indigenous people—and I do not say any of that lightly.

An insidious campaign of allegations ranging from alleged inappropriate action of officers of DOSSA, the offering of bribes, state government intervention, withholding of funds, the state government attempting to overturn the land rights and ownership of the lands and the government appointing a person to manage the lands (in the person of Chris Marshall). The Department of State Aboriginal Affairs, its Chief Executive Officer, Mr David Rathman, ATSIC Commissioner, Mr Brian Butler, Mr Chris Marshall and

myself as the then minister for aboriginal affairs became the focus of this defamatory campaign, which started in about April 2001 and continued up to the eve of the state election in 2002. Why was this action taken, action of extreme malicious intent based on lies that had the potential to destroy the governance of the rightful governing body, the AP Council, and cause chaos among the traditional owners on the lands?

As far back as 1996, a process to review the administration of the lands was begun which developed into discussions about an administrator in 1999. In March of that year, ATSIC representatives, including the elected members of ATSIC and the state representatives of ATSIC, met with the AP's Executive on the Pitjantjatjara lands with the purpose of discussing the administration of the lands. In June 1999, the AP Executive passed a resolution to appoint an administrator. After lengthy negotiations, an administrator was finally selected and endorsed by the AP Executive in February 2001 and was due to commence in July 2001. However, on 6 June, the Chairman of AP phoned me to advise the outcome of a meeting held that evening on the lands. The meeting had rejected the resolution to appoint an administrator.

So, what happened between February and June? In February, support for an administrator had been accepted by AP Council and, at the June meeting, it was rejected. In retrospect, we knew the reasons for the change of mind by AP. On 11 July, Mr Mark Ascione, the principal legal adviser of the Pit Council, informed an officer of DOSSA that the Pit Council intends to 'run amok' within the community on the funding issue. The campaign to run amok started well before that statement on 11 July.

The reviews undertaken some time ago questioned the process of accountability in the expenditure of funds provided by federal and state governments. ATSIC, a major provider of funds into the lands for land rights administration, was becoming increasingly concerned about accountability and sought to have funds directed to DOSSA for distribution to AP. The funds provided are substantial: ATSIC funds total \$758 108, and the state contribution is \$245 000. So, we are talking about over \$1 million.

A funding arrangement was agreed by the three parties—AP, ATSIC and DOSSA. An MOU would be entered into between ATSIC and DOSSA to account for moneys received from ATSIC in 2001-02. This was concluded in full consultation with AP, and any future funding arrangement between AP and the Pit Council Inc. would have to include a service agreement with reporting and accountability requirements. This was the proposal that was the funding issue that Mark Ascione would run amok with in the communities of AP.

Members may appreciate that the funding issue, however, was not that ATSIC requested that DOSSA hold the AP funds for appropriate and legal distribution but that the question of accountability would finally be put to rest through a formalised service agreement with reporting and accountability requirements, which, of course, Mark Ascione and Gary Lewis did not want and were fighting desperately to avoid.

This arrangement would not suit those who may have benefited by a continual money stream without proper accountability practices in place, or those who could predict that the money stream was about to disappear. The principal legal adviser, Mr Mark Ascione, contracted through Pit Council Inc., was quick to pick up the fact that certain circumstances about to be put in place by the AP Council in conjunction with ATSIC had potential to affect the manner in which funds were allocated to the Pit Council in the future.

Gary Lewis, the Aboriginal chairman of the Pit Council, appeared to become a willing partner with Mark Ascione. Their campaign of deceit was initiated by greed and was meant to lead to a plan that would seek to take over control of the AP Council with a view to controlling the funds received by AP from both state and federal governments.

Let me go back to the period between February and June 2001, when Mark Ascione and his cohorts understood that accountability for funding was about to become reality, with their campaign of misinformation; defamatory statements; threats; calls for resignations made by Mark Ascione-signed letters, or Mark Ascione letters signed by Gary Lewis, Chairman of Pit Council; Mark Ascione media releases, signed by elders of the AP Council without their knowing of the content of releases; petitions presented to the Governor; and full-page sized petitions printed in the *Advertiser* signed by one of the most senior members of the AP Executive but without that senior's agreement or knowledge. When Owen Burton, Chairman of AP, rang me on 6 June last year to advise me that AP had changed its mind and would not be appointing an administrator, I had no idea of the circumstances under which that phone call had been made until I received a letter from Owen on 14 June. That letter states:

Dear Dorothy,

We wish to apologise for the recent public attacks on the state government and David Rathman. You will note that the majority of these attacks originated from the Pitjantjatjara Council Chairman and principal lawyer. The letters and press releases we have seen were not authorised by the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Executive Director, Executive Officer and myself. Regarding the press release sent out on 7 June and my phone call to you in relation to the administrator you should be aware of the following information. . . I consider the resolution to be wrong as it was made on the advice of the principal legal adviser who did not have the full information nor did he try to find out further details. So I consider the Executive was poorly advised and made the resolution under pressure from the legal adviser.

The press release sent out that day was written by the legal adviser and distributed without checking the facts. The telephone call to you was made in the presence of the legal adviser. The Director of Anangu Pitjantjatjara and myself signed the press release under pressure from the legal adviser so for our part we wish to stop that press release and I felt I was under pressure from the legal adviser to make that call to you. We wish to proceed with the appointment of the administrator on the understanding that the reference group the administrator reports to will be two representatives from ATSIC, two from DOSSA, four from Anangu Pitjantjatjara consisting of the Chairman, Director, one executive member and the Executive Officer.

Mr Burton concludes the letter as follows:

The resolution will need to be cancelled properly by the Executive at its next meeting. The Director and I hope that you will accept our apology.

The telephone call to me was made in the presence of the legal adviser. Two AP Council executive members, to whom English is a second language, signed the press release under pressure from the legal adviser. Owen Burton at all times was under pressure from the legal adviser to make that call to me. I do not have the time in this debate to express my abject loathing of people who use such despicable standover tactics of exploitation. I need to get the rest on record. ATSIC was not left out in the vitriolic attacks by correspondence and media releases, although both Ascione and Lewis were somewhat more circumspect with ATSIC being the major funder. On 8 June, following another vitriolic attack in the media, ATSIC responded to AP, and part of the comment in that letter states:

Firstly, I must advise Anangu Pitjantjatjara that ATSIC—

and this is a quote from the letter signed off by ATSIC—

is extremely concerned about the recent public attacks that have been made by members of Anangu Pitjantjatjara on the South Australian state government, Department of State Aboriginal Affairs (DOSSA) and against Mr Rathman in particular. ATSIC believes that your claims suggesting the state is attempting to diminish the power of the land rights legislation, Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Pitjantjatjara Council are completely unsubstantiated.

On 27 July a letter was printed in the *Financial Review* signed by Kawacki Thompson and countersigned by Gary Lewis. On 28 July letters appeared in the *Advertiser* signed by Kawacki Thompson and another on 30 July countersigned by Gary Lewis, all repeating their well-designed untruths. In December Mark Ascione called for Chris Marshall's resignation. On 13 December the AP Council authorised Chris Marshall to obtain whatever legal advice may be required to protect his and the interests of AP. On 26 January there was another media release, this time by AP under Owen Burton's signature countering a media release put out by the Pitjantjatjara Council on 25 January. In part, the release refuted Lewis's claims as follows:

Chris Marshall is not employed by Dorothy Kotz, her office, the government or the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs (DOSSA). He has been appointed by the Executive Board of AP and continues to have the support of AP. No funding has been stopped by the state government.

The *Advertiser* prints Lewis's claims on 28 January and ignores the AP release refuting the claims. David Rathman writes a letter to the *Advertiser* refuting the claims and it does not get printed. The first full page printed open letter petition appears in the *Advertiser* on 28 January signed by Kawacki Thompson and others. Mr Thompson is the senior executive elder on the council. The same day AP issued a press release stating that Anangu Pitjantjatjara Director, Kawacki Thompson, did not sign an open letter petition to Rob Kerin. The press release states:

The letter is said to have been signed by persons, including Mr Thompson. The statement is false and misleading. Mr Thompson has not signed such a letter and does not support its demands or the petition.

This was ignored by the *Advertiser*. However, the arch villains in this story need to have their despicable actions put on the public record. Mr Thompson was admitted to hospital in Alice Springs when all of this was going on and, on Sunday the 27th, he was visited by representatives of Pitjantjatjara Council. This was against Mr Thompson's expressed instructions that he did not want any visitors. Mr Thompson was put under unreasonable and inappropriate pressure to agree to sign or endorse the open letter that was yet to be printed in the *Advertiser*.

On that day Gary Lewis was accompanied on the visit by Mark Ascione and Gertrude Stotz. Ms Stotz is the anthropologist adviser employed by Pit council. After a private meeting between Mr Lewis and Mr Thompson, both Mr Ascione and Ms Stotz spoke to Mr Thompson and placed quite inappropriate pressure on him to sign or endorse the letter, notwithstanding that he had already indicated that he did not wish to do so. The distress caused to Mr Thompson by the visit was such that on the evening of Sunday 27 January, from his hospital bed, he contacted Mr Marshall by telephone and complained to Mr Marshall about the visit by Mr Lewis, Mr Ascione and Ms Stotz. Mr Thompson advised Mr Marshall that he was concerned that renewed attempts to pressure him to sign or endorse the open letter would be made on a follow up visit by the same persons the next day.

These matters are now in the hands of AP lawyers, and the *Advertiser* did reprint the full page open letter on Friday 8 February, the eve of the state election. Mr Mark Ascione has been banned from the lands. I do not think Gary Lewis has been seen since, but one of the positives if anything that came out of this whole debacle, which is partially still ongoing, was the fact that the Chairman of the AP Council, Mr Owen Burton, has courageously faced what has been an horrific challenge not only to his position but also to the whole of the affairs that reflect on the AP lands. This has strengthened his leadership abilities and he now has the undoubted support of the majority of the 3 000 community members on the lands.

This is an horrific tale that needs to be told and needs to be concluded. It needs this government to take action against those who have perpetrated these acts of stand-over tactics, bullying and exploitation, of using their education, their articulation of the English language when English is their first language and the people they are dealing with have English as a second language. To put pieces of paper in front of people, as their legal representatives, and have them sign something they understandingly and knowingly misrepresent is the most horrific case of exploitation I have seen. I want it put to rest and I will not stop until I see Mark Ascione disbarred from the legal profession.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am surprised that someone from the government benches did not want to participate in this debate.

Mr Meier: They will, but not necessarily today.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is excellent and I look forward to it. Many members are familiar with what the honourable member has rightly drawn to the attention of this house. The people in question conducted a campaign over the past few months to ensure that their protected positions were maintained at the expense of the democratically elected leaders of the AP lands. I have visited the AP lands probably more than any other person in this chamber, and I was there last week and spoke to those people, whom I have known for many years, and I have to say that I am appalled that we appear to have made no progress in ensuring that their standard of living, their opportunities to benefit from that large attractive part of South Australia which this parliament assigned to them many years ago, their ability to ensure that the young people have a future and can have opportunities to participate in mainstream Australia are being denied them. One of saddest things anyone can see is 12 and 14 year old youths walking around with jam tins full of petrol held to their nose or under their jumpers—and nothing is being done about it.

Ms Rankine: What did you do over the past eight years?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Apportion blame to whomever you like, I don't mind a bit. What I can say to you is that we need to take some positive and productive steps to fix the problem. I think it ought to be mandatory for every member of this house to go there and have a look—not with great fanfare; go unannounced.

Ms Bedford: You have to be asked.

An honourable member: You don't have to; you're an MP.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: You don't have to. You don't have to have a permit—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No, you don't. Go unannounced, and, at the end of the day you will be welcomed by the Aboriginal community. Some of the ones who may give you

the cold shoulder—I will not say all of them—have done very well out of the system. One of the senior people whom my colleague (who was with me at the Alice Springs show) and I spoke to and whom I have known ever since I have been involved in those lands—I will not mention his name—said, 'They've put us back; they want to put us back to the 1940s.' That was said by a person who has been involved in the administration. That is the level of frustration which they now feel in relation to what is happening.

When you have an area of land which could sustain very profitable productive cattle enterprises, tremendous tourist opportunities and other opportunities for those communities, and when millions of dollars of taxpayers money have been invested yet the standard of living of those people is deteriorating, there is something wrong. I would suggest to the minister at the table that, instead of going to Darwin, it would be better if he was dropped off at Alice Springs and he took a trip through the AP lands.

Ms Rankine: It would've been good if your minister went up there once in a while as well.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member seems to be very touchy and jumpy about this particular subject, I don't know why. She seems to have a problem, but why? What took place in relation to the legal representatives trying to control, manipulate and dominate the AP executive is a public scandal. People who were trying to take the right steps on behalf of their community were being frustrated, manipulated and exploited with huge quantities of taxpayers' money being diverted to Alice Springs to line the pockets of lawyers.

Mr McEwen: That's what the present minister is doing, isn't he?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Yes, and heaven help us. Many of those Aboriginal people wrote to the Premier and told him that there was great annoyance in relation to how this matter had been handled. At the end of the day, I hope all members want to see those people enjoy the benefits of their land and have it put to productive use so that their young people have a future. I repeat: if people go to those lands and sit idly by and see the youth of this state walking around sniffing jam tins full of petrol, then we have all failed and, if we do not do something constructive about it and if we try to hide it and make out that it is not happening, then we are all culpable.

We have to try to stop this nonsense of stopping people going there and exposing what is happening. I say to you, Mr Speaker, that, if the majority of South Australian citizens were to observe what my colleagues and I saw last week, they would be horrified and they would demand immediate action.

Ms Breuer: You had eight years to do it and you did nothing.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: All you have done is side with the lawyers and the anthropologists who have ripped off the system—they are your mates. Your minister has sided with the anthropologists and done nothing.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The honourable member has her blood pressure up. You stick to taking refugees down to Whyalla: that's your popular policy. Obviously, the honourable member does not want the problem solved.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Why are you getting so agitated? All I am doing is stating a fact. Assisting my colleagues to view some of the lands, to inform them of what is taking place in a significant area of South Australia, is in the public interest—and I make no apology for it. And let me tell you,

we are going back again at a time convenient to us. We are going back again because I would think that I know personally more of those leaders than probably anyone else here. I have only one concern: they are not our natural constituency. I have a concern to see these people being able to improve their standard of living, to do what they want to do, not to be the victims of outside people who are lining their pockets.

Ms Rankine: How many years have you been in this house?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Longer than you'll ever be here.

Ms Rankine: You talk a lot and do nothing.

Mr Brindal: That's offensive.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It is offensive, and it's not true.

The SPEAKER: Order! I overheard the interjection from the member for Wright. That is unparliamentary, so I ask the member to withdraw.

Ms RANKINE: I take your advice and withdraw.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me say in conclusion that I think it important that we continue to have a constructive, informed and considered approach to this matter and that we all put our best endeavours into fixing the problem. I suggest to all members that this parliament take positive steps to ensure that everyone goes there and observes the current situation. You do not need to go there with great fanfare, but go there and just have a look. Quietly drive through and talk to the people. And all I say is that I believe that, if the majority of South Australians went there, they would share the same views that I hold.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

CAMPBELL, Mr A.W.

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I move:

That this house notes with great sadness the passing of Australia's last Anzac, Mr Alec Campbell, and in doing so honours him and those Australian men and women who sacrificed their youth to protect the freedom for future generations of Australians and for their enduring legacy of decency, determination, honour and courage.

All Australians were very sad to hear of the passing of Alec William Campbell, our last Anzac, in May this year. Mr Campbell became very well known to all of us over the past few years as the numbers of these heroic veterans dwindled. In moving this motion, I want to honour not only Mr Campbell but all those Australian men and women who were prepared to sacrifice their youth and lay down their lives for our freedom. Our young Australian men and women have participated in two world wars, the Korean war and the Vietnam war. In times of greatest hardship, their courage and commitment to our nation, its citizens and, most of all, one another has always come to the fore.

Why was Alec Campbell so special? Well, he did not actually think he was. All our Anzacs, however, were special. I believe that it was on the beaches of Gallipoli where the Australian character was formed. Last year, I was chatting with a visitor from America about Anzac Day. He was here around that time, and was quite curious about why we would celebrate what he saw as a monumental defeat. In America, they only celebrate their victories, and we know that they do that with great gusto. I explained to him that Anzac Day was not a celebration of a defeat but of courage, determination and steadfast commitment, that we as Australians have for one another, and that those young people on the beaches of Gallipoli had to one another. They were very young men, babies really, so far from home. In desperate circumstances

they dug in and held fast. They truly were courageous and are deserving of their great place in our nation's history.

Alec Campbell lied about his age in order to join up. He was 16 years of age when he landed in Turkey in October 1915. One can only speculate about how he got away with this scam. We have all seen his photo, looking splendid in his uniform and appearing to be about 14, not 18 as required. He was only five feet five inches tall and did not even need to shave. Mr Campbell was wounded when a nearby comrade was shot. The wounded soldier's rifle pierced Mr Campbell's eye. His task on the beaches of Gallipoli was that of a water carrier, an indication that someone had some idea of his age. He did not have a rifle in his hand, but he was there battling the freezing cold, sleeping in holes in the ground, battling lice and flies, and his last days at Gallipoli were spent in a medical tent. It is not an overstatement to describe Gallipoli as a bloodbath, where 8 700 young Australians lost their lives.

Alec Campbell was a complex and interesting character. On reading some biographical information of him, I think it is not unfair to describe him as a bit of a larrikin at times and he got himself into quite a bit of strife when he was away. One incident is recalled when he scarpered out of the hospital in Egypt, and he was found some time later a little bit under the weather. So he was a bit of a boy. He had a love of life, a great sense of adventure, and he was obviously a healthy little fellow when he was signed up. In some of the information I was given, there was mention on his documentation of his medical state, and I thought it was quite amusing. It said:

He does not present any of the following conditions [which included] impaired constitution; defective intelligence; defects of vision, voice or hearing; haemorrhoids; varicose veins beyond a limited extent; traces of corporal punishment or marked—

and I sought the Speaker's advice some weeks ago on the pronunciation of this word—

varicocele with unusually pendant testicles.

Anyway, he was quite healthy, although he was discharged medically unfit. He was decorated with the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. During his life he was involved in some very interesting and diverse activities, which illustrate the diversity of his character, as I have mentioned. When he returned to Australia he worked as a carpenter, a research officer and a jackaroo, and he studied in South Australia and New South Wales before settling in Tasmania. He was President of the Launceston Trades Hall, so he was obviously a strong unionist and an advocate of workers' rights. He was the father of nine children, and he had 33 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. He was also a very avid yachtsman—he sailed in six Sydney to Hobart races—and he did an economics degree later in life. So, obviously, there was a great deal to this man and he lived a very interesting and long life.

His last known comments about war suggest that he thought it was futile. This is a message so often delivered by those who have returned from war, a message that we must heed. We must honour their courage and commitment and do all in our power to ensure that young lives are never again wasted in such a way.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I commend the member for Wright for introducing this motion, and I express my strong support for it. I would like to make a few brief comments. It is always important to acknowledge the sacrifice of those who gave their lives as well as those who

were injured whilst serving this nation. It is sobering to think that those who were killed in the various wars number approximately 100 000. Obviously those who were injured would number even more. It is a sad reflection on our nation that we do not teach enough about our history, because in my view if you do not know your history you do not have much of a future. We do not want to glorify war—because war itself is evil—but the actions of individuals can be of the highest order, and to sacrifice your life for others is the most noble act. So, I express my recognition for the service of people such as Mr Alec Campbell and all the other men and women who have made a sacrifice for this nation in the defence of freedom.

I would like to extend the concept further and acknowledge that, within our community, whilst in many of our towns and even in the urban area we have memorials which acknowledge the sacrifice of those who served in World War I—and that is appropriate—unfortunately we have not done the same in relation to those who gave their lives in World War II or subsequent to that. I know that we have the major memorial on North Terrace, but this issue came to my attention as a result of contact from some of my uncles who wanted to give recognition to an uncle of mine who was killed on his birthday in November 1942 whilst serving in New Guinea. He was a member of the 2nd 27th battalion and his name was Harold Robert Wescombe. My uncles, who are now obviously quite elderly, feel that it would be appropriate for not only Harold but others who were killed during World War II to be acknowledged in the area in which they enlisted. My uncle was from the Coromandel Valley area. He played sport, was married to a local and grew up in Belair, but he had close links to Coromandel Valley.

I have taken up this matter with the RSL, and I have made the local member, the member for Davenport, aware of this issue—and I believe he is supportive as well—to see whether we can get recognition not just for my uncle but for the others who gave their lives in World War II. The World War I memorial in Coromandel Valley has been brilliantly restored with the support of the City of Onkaparinga and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Likewise, in my own electorate, the war memorial on Chandlers Hill Road at Happy Valley—where some of the original members of the Light Horse Brigade gathered—has also been brilliantly restored. That is to the credit not only of the City of Onkaparinga and the Department of Veterans' Affairs but also of Mr Dud Nicolle, who is passionate, like I am, about recognising the sacrifice of those who gave their lives or who were injured fighting for this country.

I would imagine that, if other members of parliament look in their local area, they will find that there is little local recognition of those who gave their lives in World War II or subsequent to that. I urge them to consider pursuing this matter so that we can give due recognition in the local area in which they enlisted for the sacrifice that they made. As the member for Reynell would be aware, a project is under way to create an eternal flame of remembrance in the Morphett Vale area and, once again, that has strong support from the City of Onkaparinga, particularly from Councillor Darryl Parslow. I commend that project and urge people to be supportive of it.

It is encouraging that more and more young people are now attending the dawn services. However, it is still not enough. The percentage who pay due recognition on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day is only a fraction of the population, many of whom regard Anzac Day as just another

holiday. That is unfortunate and sad, because too many Australians take for granted their freedom and live in some sort of false world where they have little appreciation of the sacrifices that have been made by others. They also take for granted the institutions we enjoy, including this very institution of parliament.

I commend this motion, and I will support it. I acknowledge the sacrifice of Mr Alec Campbell and the thousands of others who gave their lives and who were injured. I urge those who are responsible for our curriculum in schools to ensure that our young people are more fully versed in the history of this nation and in the sacrifice that has been made so that people can then appreciate and treasure the freedom we have that has been made possible by the sacrifice of not only people like Alec Campbell but the other 100 000 plus who gave their lives for this nation.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I rise to support the motion and to commend the comments of my honourable friends who have spoken before me. It was, indeed, an amazing generation. Alec Campbell, the last of the World War I Gallipoli veterans, provides an example to all Australians of our amazing ancestry and the amazing origins of this nation. Lying in France, my great uncle, Theodore Wright, a Lewis gunner in the 48th battalion, joins the relatives of many other members of this house, I am sure, in further symbolising that great sacrifice. It was, indeed, a very amazing generation—a generation with what some would describe as quite different values to ours, a generation born of a different time, born of a far less technologically sophisticated age, in a country that had only just achieved its federation and its nationhood. The feats achieved in Gallipoli and World War I astound, even today.

To think that not only so many thousands of young Australians could be landing on Turkish shores so far from their homeland, doing what no doubt the Turks perceived as invading their homeland as part of a massive allied force, could only confound some of the young Australians of today. What on earth were our people doing over there all those years ago? Then later, on the Western Front, Australians held 20 per cent of the line—20 per cent of that front was held by young men from a country with a population of less than 7 million, so many thousands of miles away. To think that we could contribute so massively to the First World War effort is mind-boggling.

We should further recognise that it was an Australian general, General Monash, who was the most successful commander on the Western Front and that it was Australians who realised that the war of attrition pioneered by General Haig and other British and French generals could not go on. It was John Monash's ingenuity as an engineer, his detailed technical planning of operations, the thorough rehearsal of those plans and then the precise implementation of them that resulted in the fabulous success of the Battle of Hamel and other battles that ultimately broke the Hindenburg line, performed as they were by brave young Australians who realised that if there was a more savvy way to approach a battle, if there was an indirect route that could be taken, if there were deception or creative tactics that could be engaged other than throwing the chests of men against machine guns, then it should be pursued. It was that ingenuity, improvisation and creativity that showed that the Australians and, indeed, the Anzacs, were a force to be reckoned with by the Germans during that bloody conflict.

In fact, General Monash pioneered the tactics of blitzkrieg that had hitherto not been recognised by western generals, who preferred massive wave assaults. It was Monash who first used armour, air, artillery and infantry working in concert to smash through German lines. Indeed, it was an Australian, General Monash, who first commanded American troops in that bloody conflict and led them into battle with remarkable success. It is interesting when one looks today at our engagement in Afghanistan to note that we work today as part of a US-led coalition still fighting for the freedom of a nation.

The Battle of The Nek in Gallipoli probably typifies better than any other example the nature of these young Australians. To think that the first wave could go over the top in an area no bigger than a tennis court and be mown down within 5 metres to 10 metres of the trenches, that a second wave would follow orders and drive home that assault with the same result and that the third wave, knowing that they were certainly going to their deaths to a man, could simply shake hands, exchange pleasantries, farewell their mates and throw themselves over the top to their instant deaths before the attack was called off exemplifies a level of bravery, a level of love of country and a level of commitment to one's mates that sets an example for all who have followed.

After the war that Alec Campbell and his mates fought, the suffering went on. This was a time when the understanding of the science of psychology, when the understanding of things such as post traumatic stress, when the understanding of the sorts of latent effects of going through trench warfare and the depravities of that conflict, were not well understood. So many of these men came home on the understanding that they should tough it out; that to talk about their experiences and to offload those experiences emotionally and verbally to others was some sign of weakness or something that did not fit within the culture of the 1st AIF.

What these men must have gone through in the years that followed the war, and what their families must have endured as they dealt with their own demons, is something which has not been well written about and which has not been well understood. As someone who served 23 years as a member of our defence force, and a senior officer in it, I can only look back in total admiration at the calibre of these young people and recognise their accomplishment on behalf of not only the parliament but also those who currently serve in the ADF.

Gallipoli really meant far more than a military conflict. Gallipoli was actually a military catastrophe, but it symbolised the birth of a great nation. A lot of mistakes were made at Gallipoli; a lot of things occurred that were not written about—perhaps we would not want to write about; it was not all guts and glory by any measure. It was quite a sad and sorry affair, but it did demonstrate to the world that a generation of fabulous Australians had arrived to be recognised and to take their place in the world of nations. Unlike many nations, we did not have to fight a bloody civil war or revolution to gain our freedom, as did the Americans and French, and so many countries. We did not have to fight a bloody civil war, as did the Americans to keep their Constitution and freedom alive. We gained our freedom and our nationhood without paying a price in blood. That price was paid at Gallipoli and during World War I. I think that is why it holds such a special place for so many Australians. In many ways, it was the birth of our nation.

Today, as our young Australian Anzacs serve in Timor, Afghanistan and other peace-keeping destinations around the world, we have a current example that the quality of those

young people remains vibrant and alive today as it was in the day of Alec Campbell. As Santana said—and this quote hangs above the gates at Dachau, Germany: 'He who forgets history is condemned to repeat it.' Alec Campbell reminds us that we should be proud and that we should remember.

Time expired.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I thank the member for Wright for enabling the house to discuss an important issue in our community. The death of Alec Campbell was a death not just of one person but of an era. It makes us think about the sacrifices of not only those who died and who were injured but also their families. I think of the distance that was put between people who returned and their families. The member for Waite has referred to the culture of the day which required those people to come back with tales of horror from all the conflicts in which our people participated and not to be able to share them with their community. I recently was very distressed to see that the children of Vietnam veterans have a higher rate of suicide than do other members of our community. That is a present day illustration of the impact that the Anzac and other conflicts had on the families, as well as the people, when they returned from the war. There is no doubt that our soldiers have undertaken acts of great courage and have created the model for the sort of mateship that we aspire to as a community.

For me two significant events stand out: one is the Anzacs and the other is the experience of prisoners of war in Changi. The example that those people set for us in how we should care for each other in all circumstances should always be remembered. The passing of Alec Campbell, and the way that we have been able to mark the passing of a number of the veterans of the Anzac conflict, has enabled us as a community to think about how we should be reacting to that legacy; what lessons we should be sharing with our young people; and what we should be doing, even now, to try to bridge that gap that was established as people who had experienced horrors came back and did not talk about them, often distancing themselves from their families and communities.

It is not too late to bridge the gap. As I was preparing for this year's Anzac Day ceremonies I was listening to a discussion of the Youth Vigil that was occurring at the War Memorial on North Terrace at the time. I thought, 'Well, why can't we do that down south?' So, the next morning at the Anzac Day ceremony I discussed with a number of leading members of our community the proposition that we should mount a youth vigil at the Soldiers War Memorial in Flaxmill Gardens at Morphett Vale.

I was very pleased to hear the amazing response from people and to see the desire to assist with this. Before the morning tea was over I had somebody volunteering to coordinate this event—that was Brian Holecek, who is also involved in the Morphett Vale CFS that we mentioned earlier—and there was informal support from the RSL for this to continue. I had an informal indication from members of the City of Onkaparinga council that they recognised that their support would be required to enable this venture to proceed and, in subsequent discussions, I heard that they indeed know that their support will be required and that they have made budgetary provision to enable this to happen.

We decided that a day near the end of August was a suitable time to really begin planning so that next year we can have a youth vigil at Morphett Vale, representing the youth of the south. I thank particularly Mr Frank Owen, the

President of the Morphett Vale and district RSL sub-branch, who organised a resolution from the sub-branch indicating its full support for the venture and offering its facilities for whatever meetings might be required.

I am sure that I will have more to report to the house on this exciting venture as time goes by but, at the moment, I note that there are different ways that we can acknowledge the service of those who have gone before. I consider it really important that we find ways of linking the youth of today with those extraordinarily young men, supported by a number of young women, who went off to defend our country. When I look at some of the youth in the high schools today and know that they are older than so many of those people who went off to war it just shows the huge gap in experience. It is up to us who are somewhere in the middle to try to do what we can to assist the youth of today to appreciate that legacy, and, sometimes, to assist some of our veterans to appreciate the challenges of the youth of today.

While I was growing up I thought that Anzac Day was about old men but, as I have become older, I have realised that Anzac Day is actually about very young people, and it is an opportunity for us to try to bring our community together, honour what is good and great in our community and seek ways to assist the younger generation to live up to those ideals.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I too wish to commend the member for Wright for putting this motion. Like the members before me, I support this motion strongly, because it is worth supporting the recognition of the passing of Alec Campbell, the last living link to the Anzacs and Gallipoli—a significant time in Australia's history. Alec Campbell was a living example of what it meant to be at Gallipoli. As the member said, 8 700 young Australians lost their lives to shape our identity. As members have previously said, I believe that the First World War and Gallipoli were really the signpost in shaping Australia's identity. I do not believe that it was on 26 January 1788 nor 1 January 1901, when we celebrated Federation, important though those events were, but without those events we would not have proceeded and Gallipoli would not have had the impact that it did. If we look at 1915 we see that commitment to the ideal of what it means to be an Australian and to defend what is ours. The Anzacs embrace all that, and Alec Campbell played a pivotal role in that with the other Australians who gave up their lives in that event.

I speak as someone who was not born in Australia and who was like many others in the 1960s and 1970s, a time when we did not pay as much attention or respect to the Anzac tradition as we do now. I am really pleased to see that that has changed and that people recognise the importance of that part of our history. Like the member for Fisher, I agree that we should teach more about Australia's history. We should teach more about the important events that have shaped our identity. Fortunately, in 1915 my grandfather was on the same side. In 1939 to 1945 my father was on the opposite side, but I am sure that, regardless of what side they were on, men and women thought they were fighting for the same human ideals. That showed very clearly that those who sacrificed their lives for their countries did so for freedom. War itself is a horrible thing, but what comes out of war really shapes human values. Regardless of the political reasons why people find themselves in those conflicts, it is the response that matters—how they react to those conflicts and what comes out of that.

I am really touched by the Turkish community being such an important part of the Anzac Day celebration. As I said, I was not born here, but I feel so much a part of it to see the Anzac parades. I saw the important part they have played whilst I was teaching Australian studies and the reaction of the students to the importance of that part of our history as a nation. I too take part in many of the Anzac Day celebrations and those of the RSL clubs in my area. Alec Campbell epitomises the important development of that identity. Australia will not be the same, because we will not have that physical link. But surely it has cemented our identity, and we will be able to look back at the last Gallipoli veteran and know that he is really a hero of all Australians because he fought—and, as have others, paid the price—for what Australia is today.

Motion carried.

OPUS THEATRE COMPANY

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I move:

That this house congratulates all those involved in the successful launch of the OPUS Theatre Company based at the reinvigorated Noarlunga College Theatre.

There are really two parts to this motion. One is celebrating the fact that we still have a college theatre at Noarlunga, and the other is that the presence of the theatre has been able to spawn new initiatives in arts in the south, the OPUS Theatre Company being one of them.

The Noarlunga College Theatre was opened in 1985 as part of the TAFE development at Colonnades Centre (Noarlunga Centre, as it is more properly known) as an initiative to build together the council, the shopping centre, the health centre, the hospital and TAFE, and for TAFE to include a community theatre so that the residents of the rapidly expanding southern suburbs would have a place in their community where they could participate in the arts. It was a very important statement of those involved in community development in the 1980s—and it was, of course, a Labor government that recognised the importance of providing the physical infrastructure to enable communities to grow.

The Noarlunga College Theatre opened in 1985 and is a modern, fully equipped proscenium arch theatre which seats 492 people. The auditorium is raked, with seating arranged in continental style continuous rows. The sight lines and acoustics are excellent. The 29 line counterweight system, ample stage size and excellent scenery dock to stage access and communication system make the theatre a preferred venue by both community and commercial hirers. Also included in the venue are six well appointed dressing rooms, a practice or rehearsal room, a green room and a large workshop. The foyer area contains a base office, a manager's office, a refreshment bar and, interestingly, a 12 metre square sprung dance floor, and ample gallery space for exhibitions. The foyer has its own lighting rig and sound system and can be used for concerts or theatrical performances, with seating up to 100. The theatre complex also houses a lecture theatre—or theatrette—with seating for 127. It is fully equipped for concerts, plays, seminars and meetings.

The theatre complex was designed to function as a fully equipped theatre and as a training theatre for theatrical skills. It had been used extensively by Noarlunga TAFE but, unfortunately, in 1995 the college lost the theatre and it was leased to Adelaide Commercial Theatres for five years. Very unfortunately, during this time, the theatre was mainly closed—and you, sir, would have walked past it many times,

as have I, and seen it darkened. I think our attendance there for citizenship ceremonies would have been among the few times it got to breathe during that time. The theatre deteriorated considerably during this period of non-use.

Debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

APPROPRIATION BILL

The Governor's Deputy, by message, recommended to the house the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the bill.

NATURAL GAS PRICING

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Government Enterprises): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement. Leave granted.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The Gas Act 1997 provides that the Pricing Regulator may from time to time fix a maximum price, or a range of maximum prices, for the sale of gas to prescribed customers. In its recent submission for increases in retail gas tariffs, Origin Energy sought an increase of 10.6 per cent. Origin Energy claimed that such an increase was justifiable on the basis that their net margins were less than break-even. They also claimed that this had resulted from delays in previous tariff decisions and that previous tariff decisions provided for less than full cost recovery. These factors had compounded over a number of previous years and, in particular, in the immediately previous, that is, pre-election, tariff setting, the former minister allowed only an artificially depressed outcome. We can only wonder why.

While recognising that Origin Energy's claims are of some merit and that a costs plus margin approach is the most appropriate method for setting a regulated tariff, as the Pricing Regulator I have nevertheless rejected their claim for such a large increase. I have not allowed the retailer—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Well, unfortunately, I do think you cut them a bit thin last year, mate. I do not know why.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Very fair. I have not allowed the retailer to recover any losses of the past and I have required the retailer to achieve a 10 per cent efficiency in operating expenses. I have approved an increase of 6 per cent to the maximum prices that may be charged for the supply of natural gas in South Australia. This increase will allow Origin Energy to achieve a profit margin within the benchmark identified by the Office of the Regulator General for energy retailing, albeit at the lower end, and with the requirement for Origin to achieve the above-mentioned deficiencies. The increase will take effect from today and represents an increase of less than 50¢ per week for the average residential customer.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I want to be able to hear the Minister for Health give notice, even if the member for Bright and the Minister for Government Enterprises do not. I am sure that other members will be equally interested.

PRINCESS HIGHWAY

In reply to **Mr WILLIAMS** (5 June).

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Construction of the new overtaking lanes on the Princes Highway between Meningie and Kingston consists of two lanes, one in each direction, located south of Meningie, adjacent to the Coorong National Park.

The Aboriginal Heritage and Environmental Surveys have been completed and detailed design work will commence shortly.

SOUTHERN EXPRESSWAY

In reply to **Mr BROKENSHIRE** (28 May).

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I have been advised by Transport SA, that the travel benefits of an increase in speed limit of 10 km/h on the 21 kilometres of the Southern Expressway is approximately one minute.

In addition, Transport SA has advised that, as Stage 2 of the Southern Expressway has only been open since September 2001, it needs further time to gather and review crash data and examine how motorists are dealing with the traffic management arrangements on Stage 2. For example, there is only one emergency stopping lane on Stage 2 (compared to one each side on Stage 1) and slower motorists in the left lane may need to cross the conventionally faster right lane to utilise this facility. In addition, there have been some local concerns regarding high vehicle exit speeds on the Beach and Sherriffs road access ramps. How motorists deal with these arrangements will become evident over time, and Transport SA will review the speed limit after Stage Two has been opened for a significant period.

In view of the above, the existing 100 km/h speed limit is considered to be the most appropriate at this time.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HAPPY VALLEY RESERVOIR REHABILITATION PROJECT

Mr CAICA (Colton): I bring up the 178th report of the committee on the Happy Valley reservoir rehabilitation project.

Report received and ordered to be published.

QUESTION TIME

EDUCATION FUNDING

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education explain to the house why, after pledging that there would be no cuts to education, the government has cut funding to several essential English language courses for non-English speakers? These programs provide essential English language courses for South Australia's multicultural communities. They have been very successfully run by community centres with the support of government funding through the Adult Community Education Grants program. Camden Park Community Centre, for example, has run a highly successful literacy program for some 15 years. Unfortunately, in a letter dated 28 June, funding for this program was abruptly cut and the program is now in jeopardy.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the minister, can I point out to the member for Newland that the explanation is in no small measure couched in pejorative terms, which are not, in standing orders, an orderly part of an explanation. Notwithstanding that, I will allow the explanation to stand. Has the honourable member completed her explanation?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I am advised that community language programs at the Goodwood Community Centre, the Fullarton Community Centre and the Burnside Community Centre, and similar programs at Greenwith, Surrey Downs and Sunnybrook, Wynn Vale have also been cut. I have been

informed that 23 other adult education programs have also had funding cut.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I have some difficulty in answering this question because, as you pointed out, Mr Speaker, the question was couched in a pejorative and abusive manner, which puts me very much in the position of answering the question, 'Have you stopped beating your wife?' First, I reject the question, reject the tone of the question and the implications, because it reflects on the budget and, when the honourable member listens to the details of the budget, she will understand the nature of my reply. However, I will say that this touches on a matter that was in the purview of the member for Unley when he was the minister.

Members will realise that the ACE budget, the Adult and Community Education funding scheme, helps those who are most at risk, who dropped out of school often without formal training, and encourages them to regain skills, regain literacy and regain numeracy. The programs are funded in a very effective manner through community groups. Two years ago the previous minister commissioned a study to look into the effectiveness of the present scheme and review the distribution of funds and the achievement of goals in this sector.

In the course of this review it was noted that very many numbers of small funding donations were given to many groups. There was discussion about the adequacy of the selection process and about the effectiveness of some of the programs that were given grant moneys. The previous minister therefore approved a new scheme, after much consultation, which was highly effective in attracting more applicants.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley will come to order.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, there are assertions being made on my actions as minister and I should have a right of reply.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member knows that, and I warn the member. I won't tolerate that quite childish inanity. The member knows full well what the standing orders say about such matters.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In fact I should commend the former minister (the member for Unley) because his publicity and consultation on the then program resulted in an increase in applications from 154 (amounting to \$1.58 million) in the last year to this year having 177 applicants (amounting in total to \$3.466 million). It seems inevitable that the number of people and groups disappointed in the new funding scheme would rise from this change in the number of applicants. Indeed, this year it became apparent that there would be disappointment amongst those who had traditionally been funded for many years. As a result of the new selection process put in by the member for Unley, 27 previously funded organisations have missed out in this round.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bright and the member for Mawson.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The number of people who missed out on this funding round have nothing to do with the level of funding that is put in this budget: it is all to do with the change in criteria and selection processes put in by the previous minister for education.

LIQUOR PRICES

Mr SNELLING (Playford): Will the Minister for Consumer Affairs inform the house whether he is familiar with the practice of a bar located on Pirie Street offering drinkers an unlimited number of 50¢ beers for certain periods? Does the minister consider this to be a desirable practice and does he intend to do anything to address the situation?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): The member for Playford's service in the cause of temperance is renowned, and I will not be mentioning the name of the licensed premises in order to prevent the house from emptying before the budget is handed down.

The Hon. Dean Brown: Would you acknowledge that the Attorney-General's office is in Pirie Street?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Indeed, it is! I know the location but I am not sharing it with you. I was not aware of the practice, and I certainly do not believe that it is acceptable, encouraging as it does binge drinking and the consumption of alcohol to excess. I have referred the complaint to the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner, who has investigated the promotion. The commissioner believes that the promotion offends against the code of practice under section 42 of the Liquor Licensing Act 1997 which provides:

It is a condition of every licence that the licensee must comply with codes of practice prescribed or approved under the regulations to minimise the harmful and hazardous use of liquor and to promote responsible attitudes in relation to the promotion, sale, supply and consumption of liquor.

The commissioner has discussed this with the director of the licensed business who advised that the promotion will be discontinued immediately.

COORDINATING ITALIAN COMMITTEE

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Will the minister advise the house why adult community education funding for the Coordinating Italian Committee has been cut? Both the adult learning programs conducted by the Coordinating Italian Committee have been successfully running for over 10 years. These programs provide essential English language skills for mature age Italian migrants and equally as importantly provide an avenue for these people to become involved in other community programs and activities. They build social networks and develop a sense of belonging.

Australians from an Italian background are the largest and also the fastest ageing group of Australians from a multicultural background, particularly in South Australia. It is ironic that, at a time when demand for this highly successful program is on the increase, the government would choose to cut essential funding. It is disgraceful that notification of this funding—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley heard me, during the explanation given by the member for Newland (which I suspect has been prepared by third parties), point out that pejorative language in explanations which engenders antagonism and is already embarking on debate is disorderly. The use of such terminology then in an explanation will not be tolerated. Accordingly, I call the minister.

Mr SCALZI: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley has not engaged in an explanation but rather a debate. Leave for that

kind of remark is simply not available to him. I have called the minister.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): Again it puts me in the position of not knowing whether I should reject the question, because it does not appear any different from the previous question. If I could point out to the member for Hartley, as I understand it, that a minister's budget does not include all the recipients of grant applications but a sum of money that will be distributed to a budget line. My understanding is that the budget line is committed but not the recipients of all the money at this stage. So, for him to extrapolate that one grant applicant has been unsuccessful, and to call that a cut in the budget, would be quite inaccurate.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Will the minister give an assurance that an adequate level of funding will be provided to satisfactorily maintain the vocational education and training programs that are currently being run throughout regional South Australia? A vocational education training program—Schools and Industry Links—Adelaide Hills (SAILAH)—has been running for three years in the Adelaide Hills region with great success. Without adequate funding this program will fail to deliver successful outcomes for schools, the community and businesses in our region.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I remind the member for Kavel that he has a mere 48 minutes to wait for the budget to be handed down.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Schubert can entertain himself in other ways, I am sure, and maybe in other places if he persists with that sort of behaviour.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Rather than run through a discussion of the 27 unsuccessful grant applicants, it would be more reasonable for members opposite to understand that I have stated that there are 27 failed grant applicants in this round but that there are 62 organisations which have received funding.

DENTAL SERVICE

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): Will the Minister for Health say how many people are waiting for dental treatment and what will be the impact of the additional funding totalling \$8 million over four years announced by the Premier last week?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I thank the honourable member for that question because I know that he has had an ongoing interest in this area for many years.

The Hon. S.W. Key interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Since the tooth fairy, yes, and possibly still. The waiting time for dental treatment is a legacy of the previous government's failure to act after the federal Liberal government scrapped the commonwealth dental scheme in 1996. Even though the former minister claimed on 30 May last year that the number on the waiting list was falling, it actually increased from 81 000 last May to peak at 94 000 in February 2002—94 000! The average

waiting time is now four years. The Premier has announced an extra \$8 million to be allocated in the budget for dental treatment over the next four years. This will allow an additional 35 000 concession card holders on waiting lists to be offered prevention focused dental care.

I must say that I was absolutely amazed that on 4 July 2002 I received an email from the electorate office of the former minister for human services which states:

Ms X of Victor Harbor lodged a formal complaint 'about the lack of adequate funding for dental treatment for those who are financially disadvantaged and have to rely on the public system.'

This email from the former minister, who was in charge of all of this for four years, states that Ms X has been on the waiting list for 2½ years. The email concludes—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: You are unbelievable. The email concludes—and the gall of this bit:

Could you have my constituent's complaint and problem investigated as a matter of urgency so that she is able to receive . . . treatment as soon as possible.

One has to admire the gall of the member for Finnis. Even without an investigation, I can advise Ms X that her regrettable situation is the work of her own local member.

SOUTH-EAST WATER ALLOCATION

Mr McEWEN (Mount Gambier): Will the Minister for Environment and Conservation provide the house with an update on the South-East water allocation issue, in particular as it relates to forest authorisations? Most South-East media outlets have run over recent days a number of stories where the Member for MacKillop has reported that the minister has had to apologise over his handling of forest authorisations and the handling of the matter by his department. I feel it is important that the facts are on the record.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I have been anticipating a similar question from the member for MacKillop for a while, so it is good to finally get it on the record. To address the comment and the explanation first, the Member for MacKillop confuses politeness with an apology. I had a member of my staff contact him; I certainly did not apologise to the member for MacKillop. I should say at the outset—and this is a claim that has been made by the Member for MacKillop—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL:—on repeated occasions, including when the member for Unley was the Minister for Water Resources—that the government (either this government or the former government) somehow intended to impose a 'rainfall tax' on forestry in the South-East. I declare again in this place, as I have in every other place I have had the opportunity, this is not the case. It never was the case; it never will be the case. As the member asked, let me put the facts on the table. As the minister responsible for the Water Resources Act, it is my main duty to make sure that we have water resource sustainability. Therefore, I have commenced working with the forestry industry and other stakeholders in the South-East to develop amendments to the Water Resources Act to implement a 26-point plan, developed by the former minister—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: You probably could have—and supported by the Select Committee on Water Allocation in the South-East, which operated in the former parliament.

These proposals—and I repeat—did not include and never have included a rainfall tax, and I am sure the member for Unley would vouch for that. However, they do provide a legal mechanism to ensure accountability for the impact of plantation forestry upon ground water recharge. The interim report of the select committee recommended:

an accountability system for recharge impacts of forestry be implemented, taking into consideration the previously unaccounted for recharge under forest plantations, as an interim measure for a period of five years.

That five year measure is an important point to emphasise. This is an interim measure to try to allow the situation to be sorted out for the longer term and allow forestry to pursue its goals in the South-East. The current lack of accountability of forest impacts could pose a threat to water resource sustainability in the South-East. The system proposed provides for accountability, transparency and certainty for all stakeholders during this five-year interim period while further scientific investigation is undertaken. I have proposed a five-year sunset clause to be applied to this proposal in order that both the scientific and management issues can be re-examined at that time.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have supported it, and I also propose it. I acknowledge the work of the former minister, who went dramatically grey dealing with this issue in his term, and I know he would acknowledge that.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Early days! I'm already grey. During this period it is important that there is a greater level of certainty for all water users, including the forestry industry which, like other industries, has a range of variable external market factors which it must consider in its investment planning. This proposal provides a greater level of certainty. The proposed forest authorisation will recognise the distinction between water licences which are for extracting water from the ground water system and any impact of forestry on reducing recharge. Rather than imposing a 'rainfall tax' or stifling the growth of the forestry industry, these proposals provide clear benefits to forestry, and these benefits include:

- Allowance for considerable expansion of both blue gum and pine plantations. I am advised that, in aggregate, the proposal allows for expansion in excess of 50 per cent of today's estate, or given the industry's own predictions, nearly 20 years industry growth.
- Ability to transfer forest authorisations to assist the 'matching' of land and water availability.
- Forestry authorisations will not attract a water-based catchment levy.
- Access to some water in the strategic reserve.

An officer of the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation met yesterday with the Green Triangle Regional Plantation Committee, which has subsequently issued a statement on the outcome of that meeting. I know the member for Unley will be interested in what the committee had to say, and I quote:

The Regional Plantation Committee supports the recommendations of the parliamentary select committee on ground water in the South-East and is willing to work with the minister and his department to implement its recommendations.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: It includes the blue gums, hallelujah! However, there is a rider which states:

However, we do not support the 26 points as a total package and seek to put forward some modifications.

I am advised that the committee will write to me in the near future regarding the 26 points, and I look forward to receiving their views and working through their concerns. I am optimistic of a favourable outcome.

MEMBER FOR HAMMOND

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Will the Premier confirm that prior to 22 May none of his advisers or representatives, including Mr Randall Ashbourne, had any discussions with the member for Hammond or any of his representatives regarding the reimbursement of legal expenses? In response to my question yesterday, as to whether the Premier or any of his advisers or representatives had had discussions with the member for Hammond or any of his representatives concerning the reimbursement of his legal costs prior to the resolution of the Public Works Committee on 22 May, the Premier indicated that he could 'not recall anyone raising the issue' with him. He did not address the issue of whether the matter was raised with any of his advisers or representatives. Will he now do so?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I can honestly say that no-one has raised this with me. Perhaps we could survey everyone; we could carry out a survey in the street on this matter. How ludicrous is that question! Seriously, why do you not get on board and do something for your electorate, just for once?

OUTBACK BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Ms BREUER (Giles): Can the Minister for Consumer Affairs give the house some detail about the recent introduction of the Outback birth certificates by the Births, Deaths and Marriages Unit of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Consumer Affairs): I am pleased to tell the house that commemorative birth certificates were first introduced in other states as a new product that encouraged parents to register their babies and obtain a birth certificate at the same time. Revenue raised assisted in funding major projects of computerisation, either by data entry or digital imaging, so that searches became faster and more accurate. I was very pleased officially to launch the Outback commemorative birth certificates at the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs last week in the wedding room. It is a compliment both to the artist responsible for the designs, Peter Coad, and to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Unit that the Outback designs have also been adopted for use in New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory.

In the five years since commemorative birth certificates were introduced in South Australia, 57 000 have been sold, and I acknowledge the role played by the former Minister for Business and Consumer Affairs (the Hon. Trevor Griffin) in their introduction. These sales have generated sufficient revenue to provide for the full cost recovery for the development and production costs of the certificates and about \$800 000 has been dedicated to the computerisation of older birth records. There has been a back-capture of birth records onto computer going back to 1942.

MEMBER FOR HAMMOND

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises and Leader of the

House regarding his consideration of the matter of reimbursing the legal costs of the former presiding member of the Public Works Committee: when did you first receive the details of the expenses incurred and who, if anyone, did you have check those account details?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Government Enterprises): I have never received the account details because I have never paid it. I hope the member understands that. I will go through this again for him. What occurred is this—just to save him asking another one of his tedious questions in a moment. To the best of my memory, this is the process. Without any other discussion with anyone, I received a communication in writing from the presiding officer of the Public Works Committee, advising me that the committee, without opposition, and including the vote of a former Liberal minister of the Crown, had suggested that the former presiding officer of the Public Works Committee should be indemnified for his costs. I think the advice was that the committee believed that, as the former presiding officer was acting to defend the laws of the state and was acting properly, he should be indemnified. I made no judgment on the merits. What I know is this: the committee did that without opposition, and a former Liberal minister of the Crown voted for it. It did seem to me, therefore—

The Hon. L. Stevens: He seconded the motion.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: He seconded the motion, apparently, I am told. It did seem to me—

Mr Brindal: Well, you can have the same interjection you got the other day.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: And you'll get the same answer, so I'd be careful.

Mr Brindal: Try it. One-four; try it.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Let's call it a nil-all draw there, shall we?

Mr Brindal: No, we won't.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: No? This was brought to me. As I understand it (and I have sat on committees before), the presiding officers of committees have in the past also asked parliament to cover unusual expenses, including travel that is not covered in a budget; those sorts of things. It was delivered to me but, as leader of government business in the house, I do not have a budget to cover things like that. I sought advice from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and my advice was that, in ordinary circumstances, something like this should go to the Speaker of the house for approval. That would not be appropriate in these circumstances. In such circumstances, therefore, it should go to the Clerk—or the Acting Clerk, as I think the person is. So, I sent a letter to the Acting Clerk (this is to the best of my knowledge of the whole event) setting out the resolution of the committee and asking him how it could be dealt with.

I also assured him that, if it was decided to reimburse it and it did not create too much strain on the budget, we could fix it up. At that time, to the best of my knowledge, I heard anecdotally we were talking about something in the range of \$20 000 to \$30 000. I do not even know who told me that. When you are trying to fix up the electricity problems this mob left you, when you are trying to fix up the gas problems, when you are trying to fix up the absolutely stuffed up emergency services budget they leave you, this sort of matter does not rate up there with the big issues for the state.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: No, it doesn't; I'm sorry. It does for the opposition, because they have an obsession with this. Maybe they should start taking their federal leader's

advice. Maybe they should start behaving like a grown up opposition and forget about the Speaker for a while. Maybe they should concentrate on us. But I will set that aside. I sent it to the Acting Clerk. As I understand it, the Acting Clerk sent an advice to the Deputy Speaker asking him if he would approve it and giving him advice on what grounds he might do it. I understand the advice was that it was a proper thing to do. That is what occurred. To this date, I do not know what exactly was paid. But that is what occurred.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: You just pay the money and don't find out why?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Let me tell you, that is the process we used—completely open and completely proper. But let me compare that to the process used when they threw good taxpayers' money after bad with their miscreants repeatedly defaming people. We saw Rob Lucas go out and defame the Hon. Nick Xenophon, pay the full damages, then go out and do it again. What a complete disregard for taxpayers' money. Then the member for Bright defamed one of our members persistently (according to a judgment of the court), sought indemnity, and the cabinet was told by Crown Law that it would not be proper. So, they sent it back and said, 'Please can you have another look', and Crown Law said, 'No, it wouldn't be proper.' So, what did they do? They indemnified him.

I compare the process that I have used to deal with this matter with the process this shoddy mob used in throwing around taxpayers' money. I will answer this question as often as the opposition likes, because I have nothing to hide. We only found out about the Crown Law advice on the indemnity for the member for Bright after the election, but I can say this: we have nothing to hide. Members opposite can keep on asking and wasting questions, and I will keep on answering them.

HERITAGE POLICY

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Can the minister advise the house of any new government initiatives to address the management of heritage issues in South Australia?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I acknowledge the member's great interest in environment and heritage issues. The Labor Party, prior to forming government, announced a broad platform of measures in relation to heritage policy, including a Heritage Advisory Committee, which I have established. That committee was established from 1 July this year and I have given that committee a deliberately broad brief. In particular, I have asked it to look at three things. First, I have asked it to advise me on strategies to coordinate and improve built heritage programs within South Australia. I think at the moment most members would acknowledge that there are great problems at local government and state government level in dealing with heritage issues, both with particular buildings and with streetscape.

The second thing I have asked the committee to do is advise me on strategies to develop a whole of government approach to South Australia's non-indigenous heritage. Currently, heritage matters are dealt with by, I think, three or maybe four government departments as well as local and federal governments. Thirdly, I have asked the committee to undertake any other tasks that I request it to examine from time to time.

I particularly asked the committee to advise me on strategies to protect our heritage and to implement the government's other heritage policies, including the annual celebration of our heritage awards, and the heritage cemeteries fund. The committee includes representatives, I am pleased to say, from the State Heritage Authority, Heritage SA, the DAIS Heritage Unit, the History Trust of South Australia, the Local Government Association, the National Trust of South Australia, Planning SA, the Property Council of Australia and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

I have appointed the Hon. Rod Matheson, AO QC, as Chair of the committee, and I have also appointed him as the presiding officer of the State Heritage Authority. Joining him on the authority board is the National Trust Director, Rainer Jozeps, who is a deputy member. Other members include heritage planner, Iris Iwanicki as a full member, and architect Elizabeth Vines as a deputy member. Community input is a vital part of dealing with heritage issues and I am confident that we have the framework in place to ensure that stakeholders across government and the community work together to preserve this state's heritage.

PENALTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is directed to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General give an assurance that all people who are convicted in South Australian courts for poaching abalone are appropriately punished? I understand that the new penalty management system is allowing offenders to write off significant amounts of fines. I am advised of a case on the West Coast where a convicted abalone poacher had \$36 000 of fines converted to community service under the penalty management system. He apparently then obtained a sickness certificate for a bad back, the case went back to court, and the community service was written off.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): If the member for Flinders will give me the details of the case, I will be happy to make inquiries and get a report for her and for the house.

PORT ELLIOT HOUSING PROJECT

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): My question is directed to the Minister for Housing. Will the minister inform the house about the purpose of the building project at Port Elliot which was officially opened on 5 July 2002, and which is supported by the South Australian Community Housing Authority?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Housing): Last week, I had the pleasure of opening an exciting new and innovative project in the community housing area at Port Elliot. It is also interesting to note that this project is on Ramindjerri lands, which is part of the Ngarrindjeri people. The development, supported by the South Australian Community Housing Authority, provides 10 new homes for aged, disabled and low-income families on the Fleurieu Peninsula. It also incorporates the original Port Elliot stationmaster's home. This historic building, which was built early last century, will be used as carers' respite accommodation and a specially adapted low-allergy home. The units have been built on the site of the old Country Fire Service at Young Street, Port Elliot. There are seven two-bedroom units and three three-bedroom units.

I would like to congratulate the three organisations that worked in partnership on the development: the South

Australian Community Housing Authority, which provided the funds for the design and construction; the Alexandrina Council, which facilitated the land/road development works and the additional costs required to enable a low-allergy home to be built; and the Whalers Housing Cooperative which arranged for blinds and air conditioners to be fitted to the units and which canvassed local businesses to donate furniture, garden materials and kitchen appliances. The Whalers Housing Cooperative Incorporated supports homeless, low income, disabled, youth and aged people who require low-income housing and tenant assistance.

This cooperative manages or holds title to 70 homes in Port Elliot, Goolwa, Victor Harbor, Langhorne Creek, Strathalbyn and Encounter Bay. SACHA facilitates housing for a diverse range of low income and special needs groups across the state and, through its housing cooperative, currently manages more than 3 800 properties. Many communities across South Australia are greatly strengthened by the presence of community-based housing management. There is community housing in rural areas ranging from Coober Pedy to Port Lincoln, Kangaroo Island across to Lameroo and down through the Riverland to Mount Gambier.

This country housing represents 12 per cent of all community housing and is enabling the ageing, and the disabled members of the community in particular, to live within their own communities and families. I am sure that the people of Port Elliot will greatly benefit from this housing development for a very long time. I would also like to place on record that the member for Finniss has been very involved in this project, as have a number of the local traders. It was quite important to have support not only for this development at Port Elliot but also for donations of furniture. We see a fabulous cooperative model at Port Elliot and I hope that will continue throughout the state.

ELECTRICITY, SUPPLY

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Has the Minister for Energy undertaken to support approaches by the LGA to tender jointly for the supply of electricity with the state government? Full retail contestability for the supply of electricity will commence on 1 January 2003. A recently completed survey by some 57 local government councils shows that these councils collectively spend in excess of \$20.5 million directly in public lighting and in excess of some \$600 000 indirectly. The Department for Administrative and Information Services tenders electricity agreements for large government enterprises. The LGA has advised that a joint approach could provide optimal value to both spheres of government.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Energy): I can see some merit, I must say, in the honourable member's question. To date, I have not been approached, to the best of my knowledge, by the LGA, unless there is a file on its way to me. It may well be that the approach would appropriately go to the Minister for Administrative Services if it is a tender for electricity because the previous tenders have been handled out of the Department of Administrative Services and we have advised on a policy basis on that. However, I will say this: we are prepared to look at and judge on its merits anything which is innovative and which helps us address the problems we face with full retail contestability. I had a meeting with the member for Chaffey about a proposal in her electorate to group together people to see whether they could not get a better deal for retailers in her area, that is, irrigators

and local government. So, we are doing what we can with our officers to give some support to developing those proposals. I assure the house that anything we can do to assist ourselves and consumers facing full retail contestability on 1 January we will do, because we have inherited a very difficult situation and simply do not like the price shocks that people are getting. A lot of things are not within our control any more, of course, and not simply the privatised assets, but it does make it difficult.

The regulation of the wholesale price is a very difficult issue and very difficult for a small state to control or even to change. I am going to the national electricity ministers' meeting on Friday with proposals for better policy direction in the NEM and for proposals on, for example, rebidding. I was very disappointed with the ACCC decision the other day. So, we are prepared to look at anything that might assist. I do not know the detail. I will find out whether my office has received something, but it may well have been addressed to the Minister for Administrative Services.

LABOUR MARKET FIGURES

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education inform the house of the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics labour market figures that were released today?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Napier who, I know, shows a keen interest in employment issues in his electorate. The latest labour force figures released today by the ABS show a mixed picture for the state labour market in June. The underlying trend figures showed further improvement, whilst the more volatile seasonally adjusted figures deteriorated slightly. South Australia's seasonally adjusted or headline unemployment rate rose by 0.3 of a percentage point to 6.9 per cent, much in line with the national trend, which also rose, with the national rate now 6.5 per cent seasonally adjusted.

The state labour force participation rate rose marginally to 61.1 per cent in both seasonally adjusted and trend terms. This is its highest level for two years and indicates continued confidence in the state labour market by job seekers. In trend terms, which more accurately reflect the underlying labour market conditions, total employment in South Australia continued to rise in June to a new recent high of 695 800 people. The most positive aspect of the latest figures is a fall in South Australia's youth unemployment rate from 32.2 per cent to 28.3 per cent.

Whilst this drop in the youth unemployment figure is encouraging, it is still too high, which is why we have included a number of measures in today's state budget to provide for young people and to provide them with an opportunity to develop the skills they need to get a job.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley needs to remember that a personal explanation later on the day is something currently on the agenda. I only hope he is here to give it. The member for Kavel.

HOSPITALS, MOUNT BARKER

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): Will the Minister for Health give her assurance that adequate infrastructure and facilities will be in place to cater for the increase in demand that will be placed on the Mount Barker hospital's maternity

ward? I wrote to the minister on 25 March—some 3½ months ago—highlighting this issue. To date I have yet to receive a response. Stirling hospital's maternity ward has closed, which will increase demand for those services at the Mount Barker hospital.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Government Enterprises, I am sure, will be interested to discover what the budget contains for his portfolio, and the member for Newland will also be interested in what the budget contains, if she is still here. The member for Kavel has the call.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Coupled with that impact and the growing residential development in Mount Barker and surrounding districts, the current obstetrics facilities at the Mount Barker hospital will not cope with this increased demand.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I thank the honourable member for this very important question. The issue of the delivery of obstetric services across the metropolitan area is particularly the subject of the generational review, as is the delivery of all services across Adelaide's metropolitan area.

I agree that the issues in relation to Mount Barker and the population increase in Mount Barker have particular significance, but I want to assure him that, as part of the government's plan to rebuild South Australia's health services, the generational review is looking in detail at the metropolitan hospitals and how they develop all health services to South Australians. That particular issue of obstetrics will be part of their discussions and deliberations and will form part of the report they will provide to me for future planning.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CANDIDATES

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): Can the Minister for Local Government advise the house on the number of younger people standing for election to local councils, and will the minister indicate his position on this matter?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Local Government): I thank the honourable member for her question and I value her advice, being a former officer and mayor of Norwood. She has been of enormous assistance to me in my portfolio. This was an issue originally put on the agenda, at least in a public sense, recently by the Local Government Association. I must acknowledge the important role that they have played in raising this issue. I, and of course our government, wholeheartedly support the idea that councils should as far as possible reflect the communities they represent.

In particular, having regard to the current composition of council-elected members, it is important that we encourage more young people, women, indigenous people and people from different cultural backgrounds. It is important that we do have diversity, because diversity in representation also means diversity in ideas. That must mean stronger governance. However, to achieve greater diversity in representation, I believe that we must also look at participation in the whole process of local government decision making and participation in voting in local government elections.

Whilst some important initiatives were taken by the previous government—and I acknowledge the work of the previous government in that regard—further measures can be taken to improve the turnout and also the participation in local government affairs. I have asked my officers to work closely with the Local Government Association to see

whether they can develop further measures that will include encouraging people who perhaps do not see local government as relevant to their affairs or do not find any attractiveness of the—

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —present local government system. That will involve re-examining the Local Government Act to see if there are any impediments to the way in which people participate. It may also involve education and promotion of the importance of local government to the lives of ordinary South Australians.

I would also like to invite all members of this house, including those opposite, to take steps, even within their own electorate, to encourage young people they know in their local communities to get involved in the local government elections coming up next year, so that we can improve this question of diversity of representation.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The honourable member opposite can perhaps put his mouth where his actions are and assist me in this exercise. I think this is an exercise where there should be some bipartisan effort. It is something we should be able to agree upon. We are simply building on the agenda of the previous government. I would ask for cooperation in measures that I hope to bring to this house which will further these objectives.

CANNABIS

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the concerns raised about cannabis use during the summit and the Premier's recent announcement that he intends to be tough on illicit drug manufacturers and distributors, will he now agree to support and fast track the passage of my bill for zero tolerance of hydroponic cannabis, which is currently being debated in this house, through both houses of parliament? Last year, this bill was passed through the House of Assembly but it was adjourned in the legislative Council. Given the recent levels of cannabis use and trafficking and the opposition's support for this government's 'tough on drugs' stance, this bill should be debated with priority.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am delighted to receive the assurance from the Liberal opposition that they support and acknowledge our tough stance on law and order and drugs. I am aware of the member's bill, which is before the house. We intend to roll that up into one package and punch it through so that we can have something done in a comprehensive way. Essentially, we are talking about a range of matters. Let us remember that on the statute books, as I understand it, there is a \$5 000 fine for those who manufactured commercial quantities of precursor drugs or the ingredients that go into amphetamines. We are saying that that penalty should now be 25 years imprisonment. We are also looking at other maximum sentences. I will talk about hydroponics in a moment, but for those who are trying to involve children in selling amphetamines either in schools or elsewhere—we have all heard the stories—the penalty will be life imprisonment. So, if kids in schools in South Australia sell amphetamines because they have been entrapped by adults, those adults will face life imprisonment.

In terms of hydroponics, we are simply saying that the expiation scheme should not apply to hydroponics. We believe that those involved in selling large commercial quantities of cannabis should basically face life imprison-

ment. These are very tough measures. Apparently, I have already been criticised by the Democrats, and I have been whacked by the Law Society, civil libertarians and academics, but I know, we know and now it appears that members opposite know that we are doing the right thing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLY

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Government Enterprises advise the house whether the master plan for water on Eyre Peninsula will be tabled for public comment prior to its finalisation? Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the water supply on Eyre Peninsula is in a critical state. The Eyre Peninsula water supply master plan is currently being developed and is due to be released in August. However, constituents are concerned that there be an opportunity for community comment before the plan is finalised and it becomes the plan for future water supplies on Eyre Peninsula.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Government Enterprises): I understand that the question is: will the plan be available for public comment before it is finalised? I will take that question back to SA Water. I do know that there has been a degree of consultation with the water catchment authority. Frankly, I will have to find out what stage that is at, but I would like to take this opportunity to talk about water, particularly on the Eyre Peninsula. At the invitation of the honourable member, I travelled to the Eyre Peninsula and met with the water catchment authority. I must say that I was disappointed with the comments made to the media by one of the representatives of the water catchment authority following the meeting as, in my view, they were entirely consistent with the tenor of the debate that we had and the willingness on my part to look for solutions to the problems that exist on Eyre Peninsula.

Let us be plain: I said there and I say here that water on Eyre Peninsula unlocks wealth, and it always has. Secondly, from the time that Matthew Flinders turned up there have been problems with water on the Eyre Peninsula. If they were easy to fix, someone would have fixed them by now. I have a great regard for my own abilities, but I am sure that if these problems were easy to fix someone would have done it before now. Taking all that into account, we are genuinely addressing what we can do there.

The master plan is a first step. I recognise the program of the former minister and the former government, and point out that work on the pipeline to Streaky Bay is continuing, which will give the people concerned security regarding their water supply in the future. We must recognise that in the world we have inherited it is a much smaller government than before, with a capital program that is capable of doing only so much at once. I advise the member for Flinders that one of the difficulties is, of course, simply the replacement value of water infrastructure on Eyre Peninsula. Off the top of my head, I think it will involve about \$550 million. So the issues are not easy to address.

One of the things I encourage the opposition to do—and we have said that we want to do this—is to make better use of public/private partnerships in the productive infrastructure. So far, the opposition has chosen only to make a political issue out of that. I urge the honourable member's colleagues to take a more balanced approach, because infrastructure is the key to addressing those water problems. It is expensive

infrastructure. If we can innovatively involve the private sector in assisting us to provide infrastructure, we will do that, and it will be easier if it is not made a political football by the honourable member's colleagues. I am a great fan of the Eyre Peninsula, as the member for Flinders well knows. I have visited it on many occasions. I think it is one of the most beautiful places—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I've done a little fishing. I've done a lot more work than I've done fishing, I can tell you. However, it is one of the most beautiful places on earth. There is a lot of wealth to be unlocked there, if we could provide the infrastructure to supply water. However, none of it is easy. What we need and what we tried to foster over there—and what was so disappointing about the comments I read in the paper—is a bipartisan approach that supports what we tried to do so that, to the extent possible, we can bring ahead the infrastructure we need. I genuinely want to do it. There are limitations in our state budget, so I ask for your support in the approach that we take with public/private partnerships.

RECREATIONAL BOATING

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is directed to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. How is this government demonstrating its commitment towards recreational boating in South Australia?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I note the member for Unley's welcoming comments as I get to my feet. I thank the member for Colton for his question. I know that he is a boat owner and a very passionate fishing person. There are approximately 47 000 registered recreational boats in South Australia, and more than 120 000 people have boat licences. Marine related activities are a key focus in the lives of South Australians, whether for commercial or recreational purposes. The state government's recreational boating facilities levy fund and special project funding is used to support new and upgraded boat launch facilities in South Australia. The recreational boating facilities levy fund is financed by a \$25 per year levy on all registered recreational vessels supplemented by an annual state government allocation of approximately \$250 000.

The funding is based on recommendations from the South Australian Boating Facilities Advisory Committee. I am pleased to inform the house—and some members might like to listen to this—that the committee's recommendations, which I have had signed off on, are as follows: once again, the big winner is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, because \$367 000 is going to the Goolwa wharf. That is an extension to the existing wharf which will provide for the construction of a low level landing facility to provide 21 short-term boating berths. That is \$367 000 going into the electorate of Finnis. Another big winner is the member for Goyder, the opposition whip, because the upgrade of the Point Turton boat ramp to the tune of \$250 000 will provide for an all weather, all tidal launching facility sited adjacent to the Point Turton jetty. Also in his electorate—another one is coming—\$25 000 additional funding has been set aside for hot mix paving of the car and trailer park, and lighting of the area at the Port Vincent boat ramp. I know he is on the phone to the *Country Times* with that information. Another winner is the electorate of Flinders. The Arno Bay area will get \$8 000 which involves changes to the existing pontoon

system to allow for vessel movements to and from the ramp at all tide heights.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Not in the budget. I would like to thank the member for Flinders for taking me on a couple of visits when I was at Port Lincoln. One of the trips the honourable member did not attend was when I went to look at the tuna farms. We stopped on the way back from the tuna farms and put in some fishing lines, and I let members know that I caught four salmon. I do not know who got the biggest shock—me or the fish.

Just to show that all the money does not go to Liberal electorates, there is one more. I note for the Treasurer, in wishing him luck—I am sure members on both sides of the house wish him luck as he is about to get on his feet to deliver the budget—not that he wishes for any luck—that \$205 000 has been allocated to North Haven for a floating service pontoon and waste oil station; that is just to try to balance the books. Most of it, of course, went into Liberal electorates, but some went into the Treasurer's electorate at North Haven.

DENTAL SERVICE

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: During question time the Minister for Health read part of a memo from my office to her office. The most important paragraph was missing, and I would like to read that into *Hansard*, as follows:

On Friday [7 June], Dr Mark Penrose tried to organise for my constituent to be admitted to the South Coast District Hospital for the tooth to be extracted. Since that time [Ms X] has been informed that there is a problem with funding between the South Australian Dental Service and the hospital. Now [Ms X] is unable to receive the appropriate treatment and is most upset. Could you please have my constituent's complaint and problem—

on 7 June this patient was referred to the hospital—

investigated as a matter of urgency so that she is able to receive the necessary treatment as soon as possible.

The Hon. L. Stevens interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health will come to order.

SOUTH-EAST WATER ALLOCATION

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr WILLIAMS: Earlier in question time today, in answer to a question from the member for Mount Gambier, the Minister for Environment and Conservation sought to suggest that he did not offer an apology to me for earlier public statements made by him about me, especially those made in a ministerial press release in the last week of June. On Friday 28 June, I received a message on my mobile phone from Kym Winter-Dewhirst, Chief of Staff for the minister, who also left a message at my electorate office seeking me to return his call. Later in the evening of that day I returned that call to the minister's Chief of Staff, and Mr Winter-Dewhirst offered me a most humble apology on behalf of the

minister. He went on to explain that that apology was made because of the minister's discovery that my earlier claims were, indeed, based on fact and he also told me that the minister had stated to him—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister will come to order!

Mr WILLIAMS: —that the minister would have taken the same action as I did if our roles had been reversed. At the time, I certainly appreciated Mr Winter-Dewhurst's remarks—

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Sir, I rise on a point of order. The appreciation that the member had for the comments, whether they existed or not, is absolutely not relevant to a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: Yes, the use of the word 'appreciated' indicated to me that he had lost the plot. That cannot be part of a personal explanation. Your feelings, whomever it is, whichever honourable member may be addressing the chamber, are irrelevant. It is simply a matter of stating the circumstances in which the member claims to have been misrepresented and putting the record straight, without entering into any debate or offering any opinion. Does the member for MacKillop have anything further to add?

Mr WILLIAMS: I merely wish to add that I accepted that apology in good faith.

EDUCATION FUNDING

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley.

Mr BRINDAL: I—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: I seek leave to make a personal explanation, sir.

Leave granted.

Mr BRINDAL: In answer to a question today regarding cutting funding to a variety of English and basic literacy programs, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education asserted that the cuts were the result of actions taken by me. I claim to be misrepresented and, therefore, make the following explanation.

During my time as Minister for Employment and Training, I was always impressed with the work of the adult community education sector. As the minister intimated, it is a key plank not only of employment but also of any government that believes in equity and social justice. Because of this, I ensured that the budget for the sector was considerably increased last year. In addition, I believe that I did commission a review, and I accept—although I cannot recall—that I may well have endorsed its findings.

I note that the minister does acknowledge that this resulted in more applications and, therefore, more spirited competition than had normally been the case. I believe, however, that normally (or at least in my office when I was minister) the results of a funding round and its consequences were generally drawn to the attention of the minister personally or to the minister's senior staff before any final decisions were made. As I was not the minister to whose attention the consequences of this round of funding were drawn—

An honourable member: You got your hands in the ruck did you?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: —I made no such decision. I had supplied the additional resources because—and I quote the

minister:

It helps those who are most at risk and who dropped out of school, often without formal training, and encourages them to regain skills, regain literacy and regain numeracy.

I can absolutely assure this house that, had I been alerted to the consequences of my actions regarding this round of funding I would have taken every proper action that I could to see that not one literacy or numeracy program was cut. If I had made a mistake, I would have acknowledged it and corrected it.

BUDGET PAPERS

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I lay on the table the following budget papers: Budget Paper No. 1, Budget at a Glance 2002-03; Budget Paper No. 2, Budget Speech 2002-03; Budget Paper No. 3, Budget Statement 2002-03; Budget Paper No. 4, Portfolio Statements 2002-03, Volumes 1 and 2; Budget Paper No. 5, Capital Investment Statement 2002-03; and I move:

That budget papers Nos 3, 4 and 5 be published.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act for the appropriation of money from the Consolidated Account for the financial year ending on 30 June 2003, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr Speaker, as a result of the February election, the Labor Party was entrusted with the responsibility of running the state and managing its finances. This is a responsibility that we take very seriously. Labor has learned from the past. We promised to deliver balanced budgets, and this we will do. But this budget does more than that—it delivers significant cash surpluses across the forward estimates.

In coming to office the government undertook to make savings by cutting the extravagant spending and waste of the Liberals. This budget takes the first, measured steps towards that end and presents a plan to deliver further efficiencies. Together they represent the government's commitment to sound financial management.

This budget is focused on delivering tangible benefits to the community now. It accepts that only hard work and tough decisions will make South Australia a leader.

This is a budget that delivers for the people of South Australia. The budget delivers what we understand the community expects from government: it delivers schools not soccer stadiums, roads not rose gardens, productive infrastructure not white elephants. Soccer stadiums and rose gardens are expensive monuments to the extravagant, poorly focused spending of the past. This budget is tough but fair. It's a start on delivering the right priorities for all South Australians. The initiatives presented in this budget have been carefully targeted.

Mr Speaker, this budget will be in surplus. The surplus in cash terms will be \$92 million. This is not a one-off surplus. It is not a phoney \$2 million surplus that we've seen in the past. It is backed up by surpluses totalling \$321 million over the forward estimates period. In every one of the next four years we have locked in a tight fiscal position, that is

surpluses of \$92 million, \$98 million, \$48 million and \$83 million.

However, commitment to achieving a cash surplus is not sufficient. We are also committed to working towards a balance on net lending, the more rigorous accrual target adopted in a number of other states. We discovered bad news behind the veil of financial secrecy worn by the Liberals. We were not prepared for the picture of financial mismanagement that has since unfolded on almost a daily basis. Unavoidable cost pressures limiting the delivery of essential public health and education services had been hidden behind this expensive veil, with urgently required funds redirected to a range of questionable initiatives.

The Department of Treasury and Finance advised the new government on the 12 March of a number of unavoidable cost pressures that were not reflected in the Liberal government's Mid-Year Budget Review released during the February state election campaign. The advice from the Department of Treasury and Finance was (and I quote):

Treasury and Finance believes these cost pressures represent a substantial threat to the Budget.

and:

In our view, the structural position of the South Australian Budget is unacceptable and an issue that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

As a financially responsible government, we have acted on this advice.

Addressing the structural weakness of the budget is a priority of the government and must be if we are to deliver the services that South Australians expect, deserve and demand. This government came to power with a range of targeted election spending promises. These promises were all to be funded through a cautious and disciplined savings approach. Despite the budget deficits we have found, our modest promises remain funded. They will be delivered.

The reckless spending of the past is over. Cabinet has acted to reverse a number of decisions made by the previous government in its final months. For example, the Riverbank upgrade project has been reviewed and funds have been redirected to provide much needed health services.

Mr Speaker, the commitment to efficient and well-targeted government does not end there. The government has formed the Expenditure Review and Budget Cabinet Committee to oversee the budget process and a wholesale review of departmental operations. The committee is charged with the responsibility of preparing the budget based on clear and consistent priorities.

The review of agency expenditure will focus the government on results. More than ever government must take responsibility for what it delivers. We will continue the process of redirecting resources away from areas of waste and extravagance towards areas of public priority.

We have to assure South Australians that not only has everything possible been done to ensure prudent fiscal management, everything possible has also been done to ensure value for money. We have to win back the confidence of the public in government. We will do this with actions, not hollow words.

The choice is clear—government must move from the short-term focus of the past, to a process that ensures that the billions we spend provide the best services for the public. The deficits left by the previous government are substantial. The problem cannot be solved with expenditure cuts alone. We

have no choice but to pursue carefully considered and targeted revenue measures.

Mr Speaker, these measures are necessary to pay for the extravagance of the past. Our tax measures of \$208 million contribute to funding the former government's budget deficits. And they have been targeted at those who can afford to pay and protect those who cannot. No Treasurer enjoys having to announce increased revenue measures. But my choice is simple—do I condemn the ongoing delivery of essential services to cut backs or do I introduce selective revenue increases? Again the choice is clear. We do not back away from our commitment to provide quality health and education services to the people of South Australia.

The \$561 million worth of deficits (over four years) is being funded by direct action, tough decisions—fiscal discipline.

REVENUE

Mr Speaker, the shocking budget position we have inherited warrants urgent action. The time in which expenditure reductions alone can solve the structural problems of the budget has passed. We cannot shirk our responsibility to redress the budget imbalance. We have had to make some very tough decisions.

Financial pressures and the government's budget strategy have required the inclusion of a number of tax measures in this budget. The measures have been carefully targeted to protect those who can least afford to pay. The main changes relate to gaming machine tax, stamp duty on conveyances and stamp duty on commercial equipment hire purchase. In a full year these revenue measures are expected to add \$55.5 million to the budget bottom line.

This money is essential to begin to pay for the Liberals' budget deficits: to fix the problems that those opposite failed to address and simply wished would disappear, the financial problems that wouldn't go away.

Mr Speaker, the gaming machine industry in South Australia is dominated by a relatively small number of venues, which consistently earn profits far in excess of the rest of the industry. Nearly half of the net gaming revenue in South Australia passes through gaming machines at just 13 per cent of venues.

Evidence on venue costs suggests that venues with net gaming revenues in excess of \$1.5 million per year are earning super profits estimated at around \$90 million per year. Treasury advice to the government has been independently verified and supported. In contrast, 15 per cent of venues earn less than \$75 000 per annum in net gaming revenue.

Apart from adjustments to allow for the impact of the GST, tax rates for gaming machines in hotels and clubs have remained unchanged since July 1998. It is on this basis that this budget introduces a new tax structure for gaming revenue targeted at the super profits of the most successful gaming venues, while giving tax relief to venues with low net gaming revenue.

The government had two choices, Mr Speaker: do we penalise those who can least afford it, or do we increase the tax on those earning super profits from pokies? Frankly, the decision was easy.

The new tax structure introduces additional tax thresholds and rates above \$945 000. These increases return an amount of around \$39 million: a portion of the super profits earned by the state's richest venues. As an example—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members of the opposition know that it is not only disorderly to interject during speeches being made by another member, but particularly in the budget speech. There is no precedent whatever any time since I have been a member of this place for the number of interjections, that have been occurring during the course of the Treasurer's delivery of the budget speech, and I will tolerate not one more. The Treasurer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you Mr Speaker. As an example, hotels earning in excess of \$2.5 million will now pay a marginal tax rate of 65 per cent on net gaming revenue. Clubs and not for profit entities earning the same levels will pay 55 per cent.

The new tax structure also provides tax relief totalling around \$5 million to small clubs and hotels allowing them to earn \$75 000 net gaming revenue per annum before paying tax. As a result of the new tax structure:

- all venues earning up to \$945 000 net gaming revenue will receive at least some tax relief
- venues earning between \$945 000 and \$1.5 million will pay virtually the same amount as at present
- venues receiving more than \$1.5 million will pay higher amounts of tax.

In other words, 76 community and sporting clubs are winners. This government has listened to the concerns of community clubs and acted. 292 small hotels, struggling to compete against the richest venues, will also benefit.

Mr Speaker, this budget introduces selective increases to the stamp duty payable on conveyances. These increases have also been carefully targeted. Increases will apply to the duty payable on conveyances valued in excess of \$200 000. The median house value in South Australia is \$168 000. The duty payable on the conveyance of these properties will remain unchanged.

As a guide, the stamp duty payable on a \$250 000 property will increase by \$125 and the duty payable on a \$1 million property will increase by \$7500. Additional revenue from stamp duty on conveyances is expected to total \$14 million in a full year.

Mr Speaker, South Australia is one of only two jurisdictions that does not apply duties to the hire of goods under commercial hire purchase arrangements. Currently, contracts for retail goods hire and commercial equipment hire are subject to rental duty, but commercial hire purchase arrangements are not. This restructure of arrangements will result in an additional \$7.5 million in a full year.

The last budget announced a number of changes to payroll tax arrangements in 2001-02. The changes were spread over two years with a reduction in the payroll tax rate taking effect from 1 July 2002 and an offsetting broadening of the payroll tax base. These changes were supported by Labor in opposition and will be delivered by us in government.

EXPENDITURE

As I have said, this is a budget with the right priorities. This budget targets government spending to areas where it can deliver the greatest return in delivery of services and sustainable economic development. This government shares the values and priorities of the community. Quite simply, every South Australian needs to feel valued and safe. Those who need an education must be given places to learn, the sick must be treated and the threatened protected. This is our challenge. Meeting this challenge requires tough but fair redirection of funds from the waste of the past to community priorities—to Labor priorities.

A number of saving initiatives have been adopted to create the budget capacity necessary to fund the improvements in health, education and other essential services promised at election time and delivered in this budget. These strategies include:

- savings on expenditure targeted at areas of waste and low priority
- a significant reduction in spending on consultancies by government departments compared to last year
- up to 600 voluntary redundancies of public servants.

Targeted savings measures deliver \$196 million to the budget bottom line in 2002-03. By reducing consultancy expenditure, we take an important step in placing confidence in the expertise within government. Important decisions on future service delivery and infrastructure investment will be made within government. Savings on consultancies by government departments are expected to total \$10.6 million in 2002-03. The government's commercial businesses have also been advised that the government expects them to rein in their spending on consultants and deliver on a similar saving.

This budget includes funding of around \$42 million for up to 600 voluntary separation packages. This has required a tough decision and a leaner public service. Mr Speaker, it is important to note that these strategies pay for our election promises. No revenue increases have been necessary to support our election spending initiatives. That is what we promised. That is what we've delivered. I turn now to specific expenditure initiatives contained in this budget.

The government places importance on the delivery of an efficient health care system with quality patient care as its priority and strong public hospitals at its core. This budget reflects that importance. It is the government's goal to rebuild acute health care services and, at the same time, move the health system towards primary health care, prevention, health promotion, and safety and quality in health care.

Mr Speaker, our long suffering public hospitals will benefit from new initiatives totalling nearly \$108 million over four years. In particular, this budget funds a staged increase in public hospital capacity totalling 100 extra beds by 1 January 2005 at a cost of \$52 million. Waiting times for elective surgery will also be targeted with hospitals receiving \$9.5 million over four years. More generally the health system will benefit from additional funding support of \$36 million over four years.

In the area of mental health this budget provides \$9 million over four years for programs to address the problems faced by the Aboriginal community, children and youth, as well as adult mental health services and regional inpatient services. Health care in regional areas will be supported by an extra \$6.6 million over four years to fund the availability of medical officers in country hospitals.

Community based support for the aged and disabled will be assured through an increase of nearly \$52 million over four years in state funding for disability services and for services provided under the Home and Community Care program. Pensioners and disadvantaged groups will benefit from an \$8 million increase over four years in funding for community dental services.

Mr Speaker, the capital investment program for Human Services will total \$261.7 million in 2002-03.

Our commitment to the rebuilding of our public health system is reinforced by the announcement of a program of significant redevelopment for four of our major metropolitan public hospitals. These projects were promised by the former government but never fully funded.

New stages in the redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Health Service, Royal Adelaide Hospital and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital will proceed. These are in addition to the redevelopments currently in progress at each of these hospitals. The Women's and Children's Hospital will benefit from works to improve the environment and safety within the Boylan Ward at a total cost of \$4.5 million. Mr Speaker, in addition to funding for these metropolitan hospitals, \$3.5 million has been allocated to ensure that stage 2 of the Murray Bridge Hospital redevelopment can proceed.

Significant items of high cost medical equipment are funded in this budget. At the Royal Adelaide Hospital, over two years at a cost of \$9 million, existing linear accelerators used in treating a range of chronic disease will be replaced. The diagnostic capacities of both the Lyell McEwin Health Service and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital will be significantly enhanced by new MRI capacity at both hospitals at a total cost of \$1.5 million.

In addition to these increases in health expenditure, the ongoing availability of vital blood supplies will be protected as a result of additional funding to the Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service totalling \$15 million over four years. Mr Speaker, like health, education is one of the highest priorities for this government. We believe that the future economic and social development of our state depends on having an educated and skilled population. A total of \$220 million has been allocated over four years to improve our public education system.

School retention rates have dropped significantly in recent times. This government believes that the longer students stay in school the greater their success in the work force and in life. Raising the school leaving age to 16 years is a major step in improving retention rates. \$28.4 million over four years is provided to fund the cost of this initiative. \$31.8 million over four years has been allocated to reduce class sizes for students in the first three years of primary school. This allows for up to 160 additional teachers. High quality teachers are integral to the success of the public education system. From this budget year an additional \$10 million over four years will be spent on professional development, country teacher scholarships and IT education for teachers.

Our future economic success requires that we equip our children to face the challenges of the information age. An extra \$8 million over four years is being provided to schools in need of improved information technology equipment through the Computers in Education program. A total of \$138 million will be spent on education facilities and associated equipment in 2002-03. New works will commence at 13 schools and the Torrens Valley Institute in the coming year at a cost of \$10.8 million.

Mr Speaker, this government places great importance on employment, education, science and small business. In recognition of this importance and the complexities of managing such a broad group of functions, the government has created the new Department of Employment, Further Education, Science and Small Business. These functions will be removed from the Department of Education, Training and Employment, which has been renamed the Department of Education and Children's Services.

Appropriation for 2002-03 has been allocated on the basis of the combined department. On completion of administrative arrangements for this restructure, individual appropriations for each function will be determined and at that time will be disclosed to the Parliament. Our spending priorities are not confined to education and health.

This government believes that no form of crime and no level of crime is acceptable. When we were looking for savings, we refused to consider cutting police numbers. The number of police officers on the street protecting our community has been quarantined in this budget. The budget also includes additional funding of \$3.2 million over four years for DNA testing, analysis and data management. This increasingly important technology will be available to assist our police in the detection and ultimate prosecution of criminals.

In the Justice Portfolio, additional urgently needed medium-security prison capacity will be built costing \$6.6 million. The emergency services will benefit from a new integrated computer aided dispatch system. This system costing \$15.9 million over four years will replace obsolete and disparate equipment within the police, fire and ambulance services. \$10.5 million has been allocated to replace the existing police facility at Mount Barker.

The livestock industry contributes nearly \$1.2 billion to the South Australian economy annually. It is essential that steps are taken to protect this industry from the threats that we have seen decimate the livestock industry in Britain in recent years. \$7 million will be provided over four years to fund strategies enabling early detection and a rapid and effective response capability to foot and mouth, and to mad cow disease.

Research and development is the key to the future of our agriculture industries. South Australia is investing \$12 million over the next five years in the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics, to be based at Adelaide University's Waite campus. The total cost of this project is \$40 million.

The importance of the aquaculture and mineral industries is being recognised in this budget with funding for the regulation and management of the aquaculture industry of \$2.8 million over four years, and major funding for targeted mineral exploration totalling \$5.7 million over four years.

Under the Commonwealth's Natural Heritage Trust arrangements an additional \$12 million over four years is being provided to reverse the decline of the state's precious natural resources. Crown land reforms, increases in support for the Environment Protection Authority and River Murray initiatives will be funded at a total cost of \$7.3 million over four years.

This government has created a separate and independent Environment Protection Authority. Its appropriation has been included in the appropriation given to the Department for Environment and Heritage. Once administrative arrangements for the new entity have been finalised the appropriation assigned to the new EPA will be disclosed in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Adelaide holds a proud place in the Australian cultural community. This position will be enhanced by the introduction of the Adelaide International Film Festival, and by making Womadelaide an annual event. Both festivals are funded in this budget. In addition, eminent world class leaders will be encouraged to live and teach in South Australia as part of the Thinkers in Residence program.

New capital investment projects announced in this budget total \$395.1 million. Road transport initiatives in the budget include:

- \$13.4 million in 2002-03 to enable construction to start on the new six kilometre, four-lane expressway link between Eastern Parade and South Road as part of the Port River Expressway
- Stage 1 of the Port River Expressway, estimated to cost \$58 million including state government funding of

\$31.4 million and Commonwealth funding of \$26.7 million; the expressway route will provide a seamless link between the state's export enterprises and industrial areas with transport and distribution facilities at the Port of Adelaide

- \$5 million on reconstruction of Torrens Road: Park Terrace to Churchill Road
- South Australia's own 'Black Spot' road funding program spearheading the government's new \$20 million 'Safer Roads' investment program.

Mr Speaker, in the future, road safety programs and policing will be explicitly recognised and supported by diverting anti-speeding device revenue from Consolidated Account to a new road and community safety fund. Revenue generated from this source is expected to total \$39.4 million in 2002-03.

Upon coming to government we committed to a number of initiatives as part of the Compact for Good government. These initiatives have been funded in this budget. They are funded from reallocation and savings—as are all of our promises in this budget.

COMMONWEALTH-STATE RELATIONS

The Intergovernmental Agreement on Commonwealth-state Financial Relations, signed by the former state government and the Commonwealth, committed the Commonwealth to maintaining the level of special purpose payments to the states following the introduction of the GST.

Maintenance of this agreement is critical to South Australia's ability to continue to provide the quality and level of community services and infrastructure that South Australians deserve. Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, the Commonwealth has already broken the agreement.

In March of this year, the Commonwealth announced—without consultation—that funding levels to the states would be reduced because of the Federal government's decision to discontinue indexation of the petroleum products excise. This change in funding to pay for their opportunistic pre-election spending spree was a breach of the agreement. The cost of this deception to South Australia is more than \$70 million over four years.

Mr Speaker, we are told that from 2006-07, Commonwealth funding to South Australia under the arrangements for collecting and distributing the GST will pass the break-even point. We along with all states will be maintaining the pressure on the Commonwealth government to keep to their promises and deliver on the agreement.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Mr Speaker, the projections contained in the budget are based on a number of key economic parameters. I wish to make two points about the economic environment in which this budget, and the policies of the Labor government, are framed.

The first point is that in recent times this state has underperformed compared to the rest of the nation, and relative to its potential. Economic growth in South Australia has lagged behind that of the nation as a whole. One of this government's major tasks is to create an environment for sustainable economic growth. This is vital to ensure our children are able to find worthwhile and secure jobs and to stop the loss of the state's best and brightest to the eastern states.

The second point I want to make about economic conditions in South Australia is that this government has undertaken the first important steps to helping this state reach its full potential. By rebuilding the state's finances, this government is laying the foundation for future growth. The estab-

lishment of the Economic Development Board is another bold initiative taken by the government. The board, chaired by Robert Champion de Crespigny—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Finnis.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:—has a membership comprising community and business leaders from around Australia. It has been asked to provide the government with an assessment of economic conditions in the state and to develop a five-year strategic development plan for the state.

This new structure is already delivering results. Through the efforts of Mr de Crespigny and others, the government was able to ensure the survival of Mitsubishi Motors, not only protecting 10 000 jobs in the automotive industry but also laying a platform for further investment in manufacturing and research by Mitsubishi.

Mr Speaker, I would like to place on the record my gratitude to the Under Treasurer and his staff for their efforts in helping to prepare this budget. My thanks also go to my ministerial colleagues, their Chief Executives and their staff, and to my personal staff for their contribution to the budget process.

SUMMARY

This budget delivers on Labor's election promises. It has the right priorities for South Australia:

- more beds for our hospitals
- more teachers for our schools
- cutting the waste
- fixing the mess
- balancing the books.

It's tough but fair, caring but responsible, and gets the priorities right. I commend the Budget to the house.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

This clause provides for the Bill to operate retrospectively to 1 July 2002. Until the Bill is passed, expenditure is financed from appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act*.

Clause 3: Interpretation

This clause provides relevant definitions.

Clause 4: Issue and application of money

This clause provides for the issue and application of the sums shown in the schedule to the Bill. Subsection (2) makes it clear that the appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act* is superseded by this Bill.

Clause 5: Application of money if functions etc., of an agency are transferred

This clause is designed to ensure that where Parliament has appropriated funds to an agency to enable it to carry out particular functions or duties and those functions or duties become the responsibility of another agency, the funds may be used by the responsible agency in accordance with Parliament's original intentions without further appropriation.

Clause 6: Expenditure from Hospitals Fund

This clause provides authority for the Treasurer to issue and apply money from the Hospitals Fund for the provision of facilities in public hospitals.

Clause 7: Appropriation, etc., in addition to other appropriations, etc.

This clause makes it clear that appropriation authority provided by this Bill is additional to authority provided in other Acts of Parliament, except, of course, in the *Supply Act*.

Clause 8: Overdraft limit

This sets a limit of \$50 million on the amount which the government may borrow by way of overdraft.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

GAMING MACHINES (GAMING TAX) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Gaming Machines Act 1992. Read a first time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: 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.

Apart from a reduction in gaming machine tax rates to make room for the GST and the cessation in March 2002 of a temporary tax surcharge of 0.5 per cent of net gambling revenue (NGR), which had been introduced in 1997 to recover a shortfall in tax revenue against an industry guaranteed level, tax rates on gaming machines in hotels and clubs have remained unchanged since 1 July 1998.

About 75 per cent of NGR earned by the industry comes from just 28 per cent of venues. A review of the profitability of the gaming industry shows that very large profits are available to the largest venues in the State. Evidence on venue costs suggests that above average, or 'super profits', are being earned by high NGR venues in the State.

In this context, the Government has decided to increase the tax payable by venues on that part of annual NGR in excess of \$1.5 million. The increased tax on high NGR venues is estimated to raise \$39 million in a full year but would continue to leave the larger part of above average profits in the hands of venue operators. Based on 2001-02 activity levels, adjusted to 2002-03 estimated NGR levels, it is estimated that a total of 176 venues out of 593 will be affected by the increase in tax, including 161 hotels and 15 not-for-profit venues.

Simultaneously, estimated tax relief of \$5 million per annum will be provided to small gaming venues, many of which are struggling financially. Clubs SA has, for some years, been lobbying for a tax free threshold to assist small venues.

Clubs and hotels generating annual NGR of less than \$75 000 will no longer be required to pay any gaming machine tax. The benefit of the tax-free threshold of \$75 000 will be reduced for larger venues by increasing marginal tax rates between \$75 000 and \$945 000 of NGR.

The net result is that a diminishing amount of tax relief will be provided to venues with annual NGR up to \$945 000 while venues with annual NGR between \$945 000 and \$1.5 million will pay virtually the same amount of tax as at present. Venues with annual NGR in excess of \$1.5 million will pay more tax as a result of the "super tax" rates.

The new tax structure will take effect from 1 January 2003 and is estimated to raise an additional \$14.1 million in 2002-03 and \$34 million in a full year.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Substitution of s. 72

Current section 72 is to be repealed as it is of historic interest only. New section 72 contains definitions for the purposes of Part 8 (GAMING TAX) (comprising sections 72 to 73C) of the principal Act.

72. Interpretation

The definitions of net gambling revenue (or NGR) and non-profit business have been moved from their current position (*subsection (6) of section 72A*) so that their defined meaning will be for the purposes of the whole of Part 8 and not just for section 72A. The actual definitions, however, remain unchanged.

The new definition inserted is that of prescribed gaming tax. The prescribed gaming tax is set at different levels for non-profit businesses and for all other businesses. Aside from that, the method for calculating the gaming tax for any business is similar.

A new rate of gaming tax is to come into operation from 1 January 2003. This means that different tax rates will apply for the first half and second half of the 2002-03 financial year. Gaming tax, however, must be determined on the basis of the net gambling revenue derived in respect of licensed premises for the whole of the relevant financial year (*see section 72A(3a)*). Therefore, in order to determine the prescribed gaming tax for the whole of the 2002-03 financial year, the gaming tax must be calculated (for either a non-profit business or for any other business, as the case may be) in accordance with Part 1 of the table set out in paragraph (a)(i) or (ii) (as the case requires) of the definition of prescribed gaming tax as adjusted by Part 2 of the table set out in paragraph (a)(i) or (ii) (as the case requires) of the definition.

From the commencement of the 2003-04 financial year and for each successive financial year, the prescribed gaming tax is to be calculated in accordance with the tables set out in paragraph (b) of the definition of prescribed gaming tax.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 72A—Gaming tax

New subsection (1) provides that the holder of a gaming machine licence must pay to the Treasurer, for each financial year, the prescribed gaming tax on the net gambling revenue derived in respect of the licensed premises in the financial year. (The current subsection is substantially the same but also contains obsolete information.)

Subsection (3) provides that the gaming tax is to be paid in monthly instalments to be calculated and paid in the manner specified by the Minister by notice in the *Gazette*. A new subsection (3aa) is to be inserted allowing for the Minister, by further notice in the *Gazette*, to vary or revoke such a notice.

Subsections (6) to (10) of section 72A are to be repealed. The repeal of subsection (6) is consequential on the amendment provided for in clause 2 while subsections (7) to (10) contain only obsolete information.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

STAMP DUTIES (RENTAL BUSINESS AND CONVEYANCE RATES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Stamp Duties Act 1923. Read a first time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: 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.

South Australia is one of only two jurisdictions not to tax commercial equipment hire using hire purchase arrangements; only the hire of goods through lease finance is currently subject to tax. All other States and Territories applying rental duty apart from Western Australia have broadened their rental duty base to include the hire of goods under commercial hire purchase arrangements. The Western Australian Review of State Business Taxes (released in June 2002) includes a recommendation that the rental duty base in that State also be broadened to include hire purchase arrangements.

The Australian Finance Conference and the Australian Equipment Lessors Association have lobbied for many years for the rental duty base to be broadened to remove stamp duty incentives favouring commercial hire purchase funding arrangements for equipment hire in preference to lease finance arrangements.

The industry has also lobbied for a rate reduction in conjunction with base broadening. The State's finances do not permit a rate reduction but the Government will provide more limited tax relief by moving to a GST exclusive tax base for rental duty and increasing the monthly rental threshold above which stamp duty applies from \$2 000 to \$6 000.

With the introduction of the GST, all States and Territories made the decision to apply stamp duty to GST inclusive values. In the case of insurance and rental duty, there was an issue of cascading tax because GST was applied to stamp duty inclusive values while stamp duty was to be applied to GST inclusive values. In the case of insurance, GST law was amended to exclude stamp duty from the

GST base. This was not done for rental duty. Most States and Territories, except South Australia and Western Australia, adopted a GST exclusive rental duty base.

In the interests of uniformity with other States and Territories and for administrative simplicity, the Government has decided to amend the rental duty base to exclude GST.

Rental firms that do not engage in equipment hire using commercial hire purchase will be better off under the new rental duty arrangements. This includes rental firms engaged solely in retail goods hire such as household appliances and equipment, non-fleet car rentals and houseboat hire.

The proposed changes to rental duty arrangements will take effect from 1 January 2003. The delayed introduction will give the industry sufficient lead time to adjust administrative systems to accommodate the new arrangements.

The rental duty amendments are estimated to raise additional revenue of \$7.5 million in a full year.

Stamp duty rates applied to property conveyances were last increased in 1999-2000. To assist in meeting the Government's fiscal targets, marginal rates of duty applying to conveyance value in excess of \$200 000 will be increased as follows:

- dutiable value between \$200 000 and \$250 000 will be taxed at a rate of 4.25 per cent instead of 4.0 per cent;
- dutiable value between \$250 000 and \$300 000 will be taxed at a rate of 4.75 per cent instead of 4.0 per cent;
- dutiable value between \$300 000 and \$500 000 will be taxed at a rate of 5.0 per cent instead of 4.0 per cent;
- dutiable value between \$500 000 and \$1 million will be taxed at a rate of 5.5 per cent instead of 4.5 per cent;
- dutiable value in excess of \$1 million will be taxed at a rate of 5.5 per cent instead of 5.0 per cent.

The new rates will apply to documents lodged for stamping on or after the date of assent of legislative amendments to the *Stamp Duties Act, 1923*. Documents lodged on or after this date that relate to contracts entered into on or before Budget day will, however, be assessed using existing duty rates rather than the new rates.

The revised tax structure is estimated to raise an additional \$14.0 million in a full year.

The increased rates will apply to both residential and non-residential property transfers that are valued in excess of \$200 000. The additional tax only applies to properties where ownership is being transferred.

For properties of the same value, the level of conveyance duty payable in South Australia will continue to be below that payable in Victoria, except for properties valued below \$158 500.

The cost of property is generally higher in the eastern States compared to South Australia. A more accurate measure of relative tax severity is the level of tax payable on properties of similar size, age, location and general amenity.

The level of stamp duty payable on the conveyance of a median priced house in South Australia will not be affected by the proposed tax changes. South Australians pay the third lowest level of stamp duty on median priced house sales. In Melbourne, the median price of house sales in the first three months of 2002 was \$316 500 and attracted conveyance duty of \$14 650. Adelaide's median price for house sales, in contrast, was \$168 500 and would attract conveyance duty of \$5 570 at the proposed rates to apply in 2002-03.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

This clause provides that sections 5 and 6 of this measure will come into operation on 1 January 2003 with the remaining provisions to come into operation on the day on which the Act is assented to by the Governor.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 31B—Interpretation

This clause amends section 31B, which provides definitions of terms used in the portion of the Act falling under the heading "*Rental Business*".

The existing definition of "contractual bailment" is struck out and a new definition substituted. The new definition differs from the existing definition in that it specifies that a "contractual bailment" includes a hire-purchase agreement. This definition also differs in specifying that a contract or agreement providing for the sale of goods incidentally to a lease of, or licence to occupy, or the sale of, land is not included.

This clause also inserts a definition of "hire-purchase agreement". A "hire-purchase agreement" is a contract or agreement for the

letting of goods with an option to purchase the goods, or a contract or agreement for the sale of goods by instalments. Excluded from this definition is a contract or agreement under which property in the goods passes on or before delivery of the goods.

Clause 4: Insertion of s. 31C

This clause inserts a new section.

31C. Exemption of hire-purchase agreements

The effect of this proposed section is to exempt hire-purchase agreements made from 1 January 1984 from duty chargeable under the Act in respect of rental business. This exemption reflects the practice that has applied since the abolition of instalment-purchase duty by the *Stamp Duties Amendment Act (No. 2) 1983*. However, this exemption will not apply to hire-purchase agreements made on or after 1 January 2003.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 31F—Statement to be lodged by person registered or required to be registered

The amendments proposed to this section relate to the amount of duty payable by a person carrying on a rental business, that is, a person registered under section 31E. A registered person is required under section 31F to lodge with the Commissioner a monthly statement detailing the total amount received during the previous month in respect of the person's rental business.

Under the existing provision, the amount of duty payable by the person every month is equal to 1.8 per centum of the amount by which the total amount received, as set out in the statement, exceeds \$2 000. The proposed amendment increases this monthly threshold to \$6 000.

Currently, under subsection (1a), the amount received by a registered person is taken to include amounts received to reimburse, offset or defray his or her liability to GST on the services provided in and incidental to his or her rental business. The proposed amendment reverses the current position by replacing the existing subsection (1a) with a new subsection that has the effect of excluding such amounts from the amount taken to have been received by a registered person in respect of a rental business.

Under subsection (2), a registered person who has been carrying on a rental business that has received a total amount of less than \$24 000 in a period of one year can elect to lodge a single annual statement instead of a monthly statement as required under subsection (1). A person who makes an election is currently required to pay duty of an amount equal to 1.8 per centum of the amount by which the total amount received in the relevant year exceeds \$24 000. The proposed amendment increases the amount, in relation to both the condition that must be satisfied before a person is entitled to make an election and the duty payable after an election has been made, to \$72 000.

Under subsection (4), a registered person or the Commissioner can cancel an election if the Commissioner is satisfied that the total amount received by the registered person in a 12 month period exceeds \$40 000. The proposed amendment increases this figure to \$120 000.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 31I—Matter not to be included in statement

Section 31I specifies certain amounts that a registered person is not required to include in a statement under section 31F. A person is not required to include an amount in respect of the sale of goods unless the sale relates to an agreement, arrangement or understanding that the buyer may, at a later time, sell the goods back to the seller, or, now, as a result of this proposed amendment, a hire-purchase agreement.

Subsection (1c) provides that a person who receives in excess of \$2 000 per month for or in relation to the use of goods under a lease, bailment, licence or other agreement that provides for the person to be responsible for the servicing of the goods may deduct a certain amount from the excess. Consistent with the amendment to section 31F, the proposed amendment to subsection (1c) increases the threshold from \$2 000 per month to \$6 000 per month.

Clause 7: Amendment of Sched. 2

This clause amends Schedule 2 of the Act by striking out certain passages relating to the rate of duty payable on conveyances and substituting words that have the effect of increasing the amount of duty payable in respect of a conveyance or transfer on sale of property, or a conveyance operating as a voluntary disposition *inter vivos* of property, where the amount by reference to which duty is assessed exceeds \$200 000.

Clause 8: Application of amendments

This clause provides that the amendments made by section 7 apply to instruments lodged with the Commissioner for State Taxation on or after the day on which section 7 comes into operation. However,

the amendments made by section 7 will not apply to an instrument lodged for stamping after that day if the Commissioner is satisfied that the instrument gives effect to a written agreement entered into on or before 11 July 2002.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION (PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Constitution Act 1934 and make related amendments to the Oaths Act 1934 and the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990. Read a first time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This bill proposes an amendment to section 67A of the *Constitution Act 1934* to permit the appointment of a maximum of two members of Parliament as Parliamentary Secretaries. The bill also proposes consequential amendments to the Schedule to the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990*, and to the *Oaths Act 1935*.

The Crown Solicitor has advised that the *Constitution Act 1934* currently only allows for the appointment of one Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. The government believes that there would be benefits in allowing for the appointment of one additional Parliamentary Secretary.

In connection with this initiative, the proposed amendments will authorise payment of an additional annual salary to the maximum of two members of Parliament appointed as Parliamentary Secretaries, at a rate of 20 per cent of the basic salary of a member of Parliament, without infringing section 45 of the *Constitution Act 1934*.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

(Absence of a commencement clause signifies that this bill will come into operation on that date on which it is assented to by the Governor.)

Clause 2: Amendment of s. 45—Disqualification of members holding offices of profit

This clause broadens the category of exceptions to the prohibition on members of Parliament holding offices of profit from the Crown (prohibited by s. 45(1)) on account of the fact that it will now be possible to have a member of Parliament accepting office as Parliamentary Secretary to a Minister.

Clause 3: Substitution of s. 67A

This clause sets out the Governor's power to appoint a member of Parliament as Parliamentary Secretary to a Minister.

Clause 4: Amendment of Oaths Act 1936

Clause 4 makes consequential amendments to the Oaths Act 1936.

Clause 5: Amendment of Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990

Clause 5 makes consequential amendments to the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.5 p.m. the house adjourned until Monday 15 July at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Monday, 8 July 2002****QUESTION ON NOTICE****FIRE PROTECTION**

1. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Does the Government support private landholders taking adequate fire protection measures when their land adjoins a National or Conservation Park?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Yes, providing the fire protection measures are done within the legislative parameters of the *Country Fires Act 1989* and the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.