

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 25 June 2003

The **SPEAKER (Hon. I.P. Lewis)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

### ASSENT TO BILLS

Her Excellency the Governor, by message, assented to the following bills:

Constitution (Gender Neutral Language) Amendment,  
Criminal Law Consolidation (Abolition of Time Limit for Prosecution of Certain Sexual Offences) Amendment,  
Gaming Machines (Roosters Club Incorporated Licence) Amendment,  
Legal Practitioners (Insurance) Amendment,  
Mining (Miscellaneous) Amendment,  
Prohibition of Human Cloning,  
Research Involving Human Embryo,  
Shop Trading Hours (Miscellaneous) Amendment 2003,  
Statutes Amendment (Equal Superannuation Entitlements for Same Sex Couples),  
Statutes Amendment (Gas and Electricity),  
Statutes Amendment (Road Safety Reforms),  
Statutes Amendment (Water Conservation Practices),  
Supply 2003,  
Training and Skills Development.

### ZERO WASTE SA BILL

Her Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of money as may be required for the purposes mentioned in the bill.

### ELECTRICITY, PRICING

A petition signed by 48 citizens of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to keep its promise to the people of South Australia to deliver cheaper electricity prices, was presented by the Hon. Dean Brown.  
Petition received.

### DOG CONTROL

A petition signed by 671 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to amend current legislation to allow dogs, under effective control, to sit with their owners in all outdoor dining areas, was presented by Dr McFetridge.  
Petition received.

### PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

Regulations under the following Act—  
Public Corporations—Industrial and Commercial Premises Corp

By the Attorney-General (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)—

Regulations—  
Statutes Law Revision Regulations—Acts (Various)—  
Clerical Amendments  
Rules of Court—  
Supreme Court—  
Criminal Rules—Questionnaire Deleted  
E-filing Pilot

By the Minister for Consumer Affairs (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)—

Regulations under the following Act—  
Co-operatives—Corporations Act Application

By the Minister for Health (Hon. L. Stevens)—

Response to recommendations made by the Social Development Committee in its Sixteenth Report entitled—Inquiry into Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Regulations under the following Acts—  
Dental Practice—Supervision Requirements  
Medical Practitioners—Practice Fee  
South Australian Health Commission—Medicare Patients Fees

By the Minister for Education and Children's Services (Hon. P.L. White)—

Regulations under the following Act—  
Senior Secondary School Assessment Board of South Australia—Curriculum Statements

By the Minister for Environment and Conservation (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

Proclamation—  
National Parks and Wildlife—Nene Valley Conservation Park

By the Minister for Transport (Hon. M.J. Wright)—

Declaration—  
Third Party Premiums Committee—Premiums 2003 and 2003

By the Minister for Tourism (Hon. J D Lomax-Smith)—

Regulations under the following Acts—  
Fisheries—  
Commercial Fees  
Crab Net  
Meat Hygiene—Fees  
Primary Industries Funding Schemes—McLaren Vale Grape and Wine Group

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith)—

Regulations under the following Act—  
Training and Skills Development—Recognition Services.

### ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The **SPEAKER**: I lay on the table the interim report of the committee, on the emergency services levy 2003-04, which has been received and published pursuant to section 17(7) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991.

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that the written answer to the following question on the *Notice Paper*, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: No. 154.

### AGED CARE

In reply to **Hon. DEAN BROWN** (13 May).

The **Hon. L. STEVENS**: South Australia did not miss out on an estimated \$8 million in the current financial year in aged care payments due to new arrangements for building aged care facilities. As indicated in my Press Release of 26 September 2002 the Government ceased the HomeStart scheme to avoid an increase in public debt. The Labor Government's capital loan process avoids this increase.

There were 12 locations that had expressed interest in HomeStart loan facilities at the time (May 2002) at which this avenue of finance was closed. Of the 12, only three had progressed to the point where an approval had been gained from HomeStart for the loan. These

were Gumeracha, Kangaroo Island and Naracoorte for loans totalling \$1.3 million and providing an additional 26 aged care places.

On the basis of the above dates it is possible that, as the approvals had already been gained, there may have been delays of up to five months in the building of these facilities. However, these loans were granted through the current scheme in October 2002. Since then the relevant organisations have not spent the allocated funds. Ceasing of the HomeStart process, as compared to the processes involved in building the facilities, has been immaterial in the availability of aged care beds in those locations.

The other locations, at the time the HomeStart process was ceased had expressed interest in the loans without the necessary documentation and approval being gained. According to Department of Human Service's records the Social Assessments required for these facilities were not completed until November 2002. It is reasonable on that basis to conclude that no delays were experienced by these facilities.

#### HOUSING TRUST

In reply to **Hon. M.R. BUCKBY** (15 May).

**The Hon. S.W. KEY:** The Housing Trust has no intention of withdrawing its services from Gawler. Rather, it is examining opportunities to co-locate its service with those delivered by Family and Youth Services (FAYS), generating a more efficient and effective service arrangement.

Over the past four years the viability of maintaining a Housing Trust office in Gawler has been under regular review. The long-term lease of the Gawler office is due to conclude in October 2003.

In 2000 the Housing Trust and Gawler FAYS co-located in the Housing Trust office in response to a critical staffing issue. FAYS have since opened its new office and during the planning phase allowed space for the possible accommodation of the Housing Trust staff.

There are cost savings to be gained by co-locating the Housing Trust service in Gawler with the existing FAYS service. The Housing Trust Board is expected to consider this issue at its June 2003 meeting.

#### JAM FACTORY

In reply to **Mrs HALL** (5 June).

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The Jam Factory is an incorporated association, with an independent Board responsible for the management of its operations. While the Jam Factory Board is appointed by the Minister for the Arts, the Jam Factory is not a government agency and is therefore not required to comply with Treasurer's Instruction 11.2.3 which requires payment of government accounts within 30 days.

As of 12 June 2003, the Jam Factory owed its artists a total of \$45,000 (not as stated over \$80,000) and has advised them that they will be paid within 90 days.

The Jam Factory generates approximately 74 per cent of its income through its own business activities including its retail outlets. The Jam Factory's cash flow has been impacted in 2002-03 by the marked decrease in overseas tourists and the unexpected collapse of its major glass-blowing furnace. In a spirit of open communication and transparency, the Chair of the Board and senior management met with artists (suppliers) to explain the situation in January 2003. Senior staff met with artists again in March 2003.

The Jam Factory has a policy of paying its artists before other suppliers. The Jam Factory expects to be back on track to restore 60 day terms from early July and to maintain or improve these terms from then on.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** I bring up the 189th report of the committee, on the Bookpurnong and Loxton salt interception schemes.

Report received and ordered to be published.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** I bring up the 190th report of the committee, on the Women's and Children's Hospital Emergency Department redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

#### POLICE, RADAR UNITS

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Acting Premier):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** During answers to estimates questions, two numbers were used regarding the proposed purchase of mobile radar units by South Australia Police: numbers were mentioned of 35 and 36. In order to remove confusion, the number of mobile radars that the police intend to purchase is 36. However, this number is still subject to final tender and price processes, which may vary the number to be purchased.

It should be noted that, when considering this answer, the matter of the purchase, mix and deployment of speed detection devices are an operational matter for the ultimate decision of the Police Commissioner. The commissioner has stated that it is envisaged that mobile radars will be deployed mainly in rural areas where they are most effective and where, tragically, a disproportionate number of our road deaths occur.

#### ROWAN v CORNWALL

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** On 18 June, in answer to a question from the member for Bragg about the Rowan versus Cornwall case, I said that the state had not yet paid out the judgment moneys to Ms Rowan because the state defendants are appealing the decision of Justice Debelle.

There is an appeal pending and listed for hearing, starting 4 August. However, I was incorrect when I stated that the moneys had not yet been paid. Judgment moneys must be paid to a plaintiff, unless the court grants a stay. The Crown Solicitor applied for a stay on behalf of the state defendants. All the other defendants also joined the application for a stay. The applications were heard by Justice Duggan on 2 August 2002, and his Honour refused them.

The plaintiff sought payment of the judgment monies from the state defendants, and the monies were paid to the plaintiff on 7 August 2002. Contribution proceedings were commenced by the state defendants against the other defendants. Those proceedings were heard by Justice Debelle on 29 October 2002. His Honour delivered judgment on 28 February 2003 apportioning liability. The state portion of the total judgment (including interest) is \$384 779.34. The total ABC liability (including interest) is \$87 278.42. The total Network Ten liability (including interest) is \$87 278.42. The total commonwealth liability (including interest) is \$28 730.67. Payment from the other defendants was recovered by the state on 24 March 2003.

#### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health):** I table a response to the recommendations of the committee in its 16th report, entitled 'Inquiry into attention deficit hyperactivity disorder'.

## HEALTH REVIEWS

**The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. L. STEVENS:** On 19 June 2003, as the Minister for Health, I released the final report of the Generational Health Review together with the government's initial response, *First Steps Forward*. I now table both documents. On coming to government in March last year, the government started on the job of rebuilding a better health system for all South Australians. Our first two budgets provided additional funds over the life of the government for services including: \$52 million to boost hospital bed capacity; \$34 million to progress mental health reforms; \$30 million for extra intensive care beds at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Lyell McEwin Health Service and the Flinders Medical Centre; \$26.8 million for additional nurses and the nursing recruitment and retention strategy; an additional \$16.3 million for replacement of biomedical equipment; \$9.5 million for 2 000 extra elective surgery procedures; an extra \$8 million to reduce dental waiting lists; and \$9.6 million extra to guarantee a safer supply of blood.

We have locked into our budgets an additional \$220 million to complete the rebuilding of the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwin Health Service. These financial commitments are down payments on doing things better. The job of rebuilding health services is complex and needs a plan. In May 2002 we commissioned the generational health review to develop a blueprint for reform over the next 20 years, and the process received an overwhelming response from the community. The government's initial response to the recommendations of the review—*First Steps Forward*—focuses on three main themes: building better governance; building better services; and, building better system. These financial commitments are down payments on doing things better. The job of rebuilding health services is complex and needs a plan. In May 2002 we commissioned the generational health review to develop a blueprint for reform over the next 20 years, and the process received an overwhelming response from the community. The government's initial response to the recommendations of the review—*First Steps Forward*—focuses on three main themes: building better governance; building better services; and, building better system support.

This actions two-thirds of John Menadue's recommendations, and the government will give further consideration to the remaining recommendations as it implements these changes for the better. The government has accepted recommendations to provide services closer to home, to strengthen primary health care services, to improve health services for the most vulnerable in our community, in particular, Aboriginal people, children and young people and people with a mental illness, to develop a health work force with the right skill balance, and to produce new governance structures and broaden the involvement of health practitioners and the community in health planning and policy decision making.

The government has pledged that no public hospital will close and no public hospital will be privatised. To deliver the best of care, our public hospitals need to be well linked to other services in the community, including general practitioners, domiciliary support services, home nursing and preventative services. For our health services to work as a system they must be managed and run as a system. New governance

arrangements will provide the basis for better integration of services and a comprehensive system of care. The government will also implement population based funding as a key to improved service integration, cooperation and access.

Copies of the generational health review report are being distributed to all honourable members and other interested parties. Copies are also available on the web site at [www.sahealthreform.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealthreform.sa.gov.au). Members may be interested to know that the web site for the review report has downloaded over 11 000 documents, including 5 700 copies of the full report and 4 300 copies of the summary. This indicates an extremely high level of interest in our health services, the review and the government's initial response.

I record my appreciation for the work of the review Chair, John Menadue, and his team. They did an excellent job in identifying the pressures the health system is under and pointing the way forward. We now have a comprehensive plan to improve and rebuild our health services, and the reform process has begun in earnest.

## QUESTION TIME

### DONATIONS, RAFFLES

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Acting Premier assure the house that all ministers and their staff have complied with South Australian lotteries rules and the donation rules of the Australian Electoral Commission?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** I will take that question on notice and get a considered response for the member. If he has any information he would like to present me with I am happy to have it, but I will ensure that that is the case.

### WATER REBATES

**Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood):** I direct my question to the Minister for Administrative Services. What are the details of the state government's water rebate scheme?

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Administrative Services):** I thank the honourable member for her question. Today I am pleased to announce the introduction by the state government of a rebate scheme for the use of water saving devices. South Australians who elect to purchase water saving devices such as tap timers, water efficient shower heads and flow restricters will be entitled to a standard rebate of \$10 per item up to a maximum of \$50 and \$20 per item to a maximum of \$100 for SA Water or Family and Youth Services concession card holders.

I acknowledge that this is a modest scheme introduced by the government which is aimed at kick starting community attitudes to water conservation. With water restrictions beginning on 1 July this year, we have put in place what we believe is a minimum legal level to ensure that we can meet the 20 per cent reduction that we need to achieve through SA Water, but there is a much broader issue about encouraging water conservation practices in the community. This scheme will assist people who are perhaps on the edge of making decisions about those sorts of water saving devices to go that next step and make those purchases. To qualify for the rebate, customers would need to provide proof of purchase of an approved water saving device or product; in the case of flow restricters, proof of installation by a plumber. The rebate will be credited—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** You can actually put your flow restricters in yourself if you happen to be a genius like the member for Davenport, who has plumbing skills.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The members for Unley, Davenport and Schubert will come to order.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** If you use a licensed plumber you will get the rebate on the SA Water account. The rebate scheme will be capped at \$1 million, an amount which will be reviewed in a year's time. Analysis by SA Water has shown that, if this scheme is fully subscribed, water savings are estimated at an amount of 500 megalitres. I commend the initiative to all members of the community and I hope members opposite will play a constructive role in the debate. The feedback we have had in response to the crisis in relation to the River Murray has been one of the community wanting to cooperate and go further than the minimum legal restrictions that are put in place. They want to find ways in which they can make their contribution in this crisis.

**The SPEAKER:** People should still wash.

#### DONATIONS, RAFFLES

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** I agree with your sentiment there, Mr Speaker. As the minister responsible for gambling and gaming in South Australia, will the Minister for Gambling assure the house that the ALP's major raffles are run in accordance with South Australian law and that he is not aware of any donations to the ALP which have been disguised as the sale of raffle tickets? In Senator Bolkus's press statement dated 23 June this year he says:

The Hindmarsh campaign conducted a number of major raffles in accordance with South Australian law.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling):** No information has been drawn to my attention that would require further investigation or that demonstrates any unlawful behaviour or any behaviour of any sort that warrants further action to be taken by me or my department.

#### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey):** Can the Minister for Social Justice say what is being done to improve the safety of staff in FAYS offices and units?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Social Justice):** This is a very important question, despite the laughter opposite. I am very pleased to advise that nearly all FAYS offices and the Crisis Response and Child Abuse Service will benefit from a major security upgrade. A sum of \$47 000 has been allocated for office modifications and the installation of security systems that will address the concerns raised by staff during the recent security audits. In general, the upgrades will involve the installation of new walls behind reception areas with electronic access control to staff safety zones. In many offices, locked doors will be replaced by electronic access control. Electronic alarm systems with strobe lighting and fixed and portable duress alarms will be installed and supplied as necessary. I am pleased to say that the work on upgrades will commence from next week, and it is expected that all security upgrades will be completed by October.

#### CORA BARCLAY CENTRE

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** My question is directed to the Acting Premier. Will the Rann government force all other non-government organisations assisting disabled people such as Minda Incorporated and the Crippled Children's Association to sell their assets, invest the funds and use the income from these investments to replace annual government grants as it has required of the Cora Barclay Centre? Both Minda Incorporated and the Crippled Children's Association have valuable assets and receive government funds. The state government is forcing the Cora Barclay Centre to sell its assets to generate cash to replace government grants.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Acting Premier):** I thank the deputy leader for this question because I have some interesting comments to make, and I noticed the shadow minister for transport cringing as the question was asked, and for good reason. The government has had positive discussions with the board and staff of the Cora Barclay Centre. We have made a comprehensive offer of assistance to that centre designed to help it continue to provide a service to children with hearing impairments. We are waiting for the board to respond to our latest offer.

I remind the house that the Cora Barclay Centre is a private charity that receives commonwealth, state and private funding. The state government is doing all it reasonably can to assist the Cora Barclay Centre. The centre does world-class work with children with a hearing impairment in catholic and independent schools. The state government has programs to help hearing impaired children in state schools. The state government's aim is to provide the best service we can afford for South Australian children with a hearing impairment. However, given the question from the deputy leader, let us compare that with the Liberal's track record on this issue.

The deputy leader of the Liberal Party has had a lot to say about the Cora Barclay Centre in the past few days and again in this question, and I will address it. On Monday, the deputy leader told SAFM listeners that 'the government needs to put more money in.' That is what we are offering. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a hypocrite. When the Liberals were in office—

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I rise on a point of order, sir. The Acting Premier is debating the question, which is against standing orders, and I ask you to rule accordingly.

**The SPEAKER:** It certainly seems that way to me now. The question was not about the Cora Barclay Centre so much as the other charitable corporations that own assets and what might happen to those assets, given what the Cora Barclay Centre is going through. I ask the Acting Premier to address that matter.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, sir, and I am happy to come back to some of the points—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order. Mr Speaker, I think you will find that Erskine May refers specifically to the word 'hypocrite' when used to describe another member as being unparliamentary, and therefore I believe the honourable member should withdraw the remark.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Mr Speaker, I am happy to withdraw the word 'hypocrite'. I will make further contributions to the house today on the actions of the deputy leader and the former government. It was the former Liberal government that required the Cora Barclay Centre to sell an asset to assist its funding. It was the former Liberal govern-

ment (of which the deputy leader was a minister) that required the Cora Barclay Centre to sell an asset, because—

*Mr Brokenshire interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mawson will come to order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** When the Liberals were in government they slashed funding to the Cora Barclay Centre. At the time, the former minister for education—

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Mr Speaker, you have already ruled that the Acting Premier is not answering the question. The question is about forcing them to sell assets, and I am asking specifically about the Crippled Children's Association and Minda Incorporated.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I understood that was what the question was about, and I trust that the Acting Premier will address that matter.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I will, sir, and I will come back to this. I can understand why the deputy leader took a point of order: because he is about to be embarrassed. Can I say this, Mr Speaker: I am not aware of any such actions, but, during debate in the house today, I look forward to contributing some interesting facts about which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this state will be embarrassed.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I have a supplementary question, again to the Acting Premier. Will the Acting Premier immediately make public the offer made to the Cora Barclay Centre so that its many parents and supporters can assess the true value of the government's proposal? The Cora Barclay Centre has indicated to me that it wants the government's offer made public. The future of education for deaf children in our state is a matter of concern to all members of parliament and every citizen.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I will come to that answer, but I believe that I do need to put a little history into this exercise. As I said, when the Liberal—

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My point of order is that I want a yes or no answer from the Acting Premier whether he will make it public. That is the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Mr Speaker, the government—  
*Mr Brokenshire interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Mawson might find himself taking an early minute.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The government's offer to the Cora Barclay Centre will be made public. I sent a detailed letter to the President of the association last night. At our meeting yesterday, the government, together with the executive of the Cora Barclay Centre and the Hon. Nick Xenophon, all agreed that, until we have tonight's meeting, that particular offer should be kept confidential to ensure careful consideration without public speculation.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** That was a decision of the last government. As I said, the former Liberal government slashed funding to the Cora Barclay Centre. Members should listen to this (and I can understand members opposite not wanting to), because it is an interesting additional piece of information for members opposite. As I said, it was the former Liberal government that slashed funding to the Cora Barclay Centre. At the time, the former minister for education (the member for Light) defended—

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Sir, I rise on a point of order. The Acting Premier continues to debate the answer to the

question, which I believe you have already ruled upon. Will you rule again, please—although it should not be necessary?

**The SPEAKER:** The Acting Premier will address the substance of the question and leave the debate to later this day.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, sir. I will certainly come back. But I know who had a secret confidentiality agreement to keep Cora Barclay quiet three years ago: it was you, and here it is.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Bright!

**Ms RANKINE (Wright):** My question is directed to the Acting Premier. What is the current status of negotiations between the government and the Cora Barclay Centre regarding future funding?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** We are addressing a situation with respect to the funding of the Cora Barclay Centre—funding that was slashed by the former government.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The Leader of the Opposition says 'rubbish'. It is true. When the Liberals were in government, they slashed funding to the Cora Barclay Centre. At the time, the former minister for education (the member for Light) defended his government's cuts in a prepared statement to the ABC's *7.30 Report* on 14 April 2000. He said:

... a new funding formula had created a more equitable system and the Cora Barclay Centre remained the most highly funded of the non-government organisations receiving disability funding in this state.

He added (this is the former government) that the centre had made no attempt to operate on a commercial basis. Interestingly, Mr Buckby refused to participate in an on camera interview for the program at the time. The former education minister further reinforced his views of the centre's funding levels in parliament on 24 May 2000 when, in answer to a question, he described the level of funding to the centre—

**Mr BRINDAL:** Sir, I rise on a point of order. In answering the question, the minister is required to address the substance of the question and not to debate the matter. You have so far ruled on this about three times for the Acting Premier. How far will the patience of this house be tried?

**The SPEAKER:** The Acting Premier is addressing the substance of the question. There is no point of order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Mr Buckby made further comments about his clearly strongly held views when he referred to the centre's funding as 'clearly inequitable'. That was the former government. One would not have thought that, listening to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in recent days. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (the member for Finnis) was on 5AA on Monday this week and was critical of the government for suggesting that Cora Barclay sell some of its property. Yet, as I said before, when the deputy leader and the Liberals were in government, they cut funding and forced the Cora Barclay Centre to sell its property. This is the doublespeak of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

But it gets worse. The deputy leader has demanded (this is a very important piece of information that I think the house must hear) that the government put annual grant funding into the Cora Barclay Centre. That is exactly what we are offering. But what do you think he did about annual grant funding to Cora Barclay when he was the minister for human services? By letter dated 14 July 2001, the former minister

for education (the member for Light—who is keeping very silent; his head is bowed) wrote to the deputy leader and appealed for him to contribute almost \$40 000 a year to the Cora Barclay Centre. Let me quote from the letter from the then minister for education to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The letter states:

I ask you to give serious consideration to this request to enable Cora Barclay to continue to provide these important and high quality health services.

Just to underline the urgency, there was even a handwritten note from the former minister for education. The bottom of the letter states:

Margaret, I did not get a chance to catch Dean last night.

The member for Light—and I give him regard and respect for this—obviously wanted to see the deputy leader that night before he put this important issue to him personally. It was a matter of great importance to the member for Light. The former minister for education waited two months for a response. This is from the deputy leader, who is telling me to make a decision. The former education minister waited two months for a response from his good friend and, when it came, it was somewhat disappointing, because the deputy leader, as the then health minister, refused. He simply said no. No funding from him for Cora Barclay!

In fact, he could not even be bothered to write the letter himself. He had his junior minister, the former minister for disability services (Hon. Robert Lawson MLC) who, I understand (I could be wrong), shared an office with him, deliver the bad news by letter dated 14 September 2001. This clearly showed how important Cora Barclay was to the then minister: he could not be bothered responding himself and, some two months later, got a junior minister in his office to respond. The letter from the Hon. Robert Lawson states:

Although the funding of the CBC is a sensitive issue, I do not believe that the DHS [that is the Department of Human Services] should provide funding for CBC because, as I am strongly advised by the department, it does not fall within the parameters of the Disability Services Office criteria.

So, when he was the minister he knocked back the very thing he is telling me to do, and we are doing it. The Liberal government's position changed less than two months later when, in October 2001, under increasing public pressure, it gave the Cora Barclay Centre \$600 000 in a secret deal. That is right, a secret deal. It was a secret deal and the letter contained a confidentiality clause, which I will quote. This is what the former minister, the former government, required of this centre. This is the pressure it put the good people at Cora Barclay under three years ago. This is what it did, and this is from an opposition which says that I should be public. The confidentiality clause states:

All terms and conditions surrounding this arrangement are kept confidential. The minister must approve the form or content of any proposed statement made by staff or council members to the media or the community.

That is a little different from what we are hearing from the member for Finniss now, isn't it! That is a little different from the standard he is applying to me. But it gets much, much worse. The deputy leader—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I do not know; can it be deliberately? I do not know. But he is still trying to misrepresent his government's secret deal to which I have just referred, because on radio yesterday he said:

Very importantly, Malcolm—

and I assume he refers to Malcolm Buckby, the then minister—

agreed that they needed further funding and it was his understanding at the time that there'd be ongoing funding of about \$150 000.

I wonder why the deputy leader would have said that when he knew it was not true. In the very document I refer to there is another clause which provides:

The centre acknowledges that no guarantee of funding for the purposes of conducting the purposes beyond the funds is given by the minister.

That is a clause in a confidentiality agreement, yet the member is on radio saying that they had given a commitment for further funding. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can say what he likes, when he likes, and misrepresent things when it suits him to advantage his political argument.

However, the deputy leader has been very anxious of late to spend time with people at the Cora Barclay Centre. It is a pity that he did not do so when he was in government and had the power. But let us look at how much care and concern the member for Finniss had for urgent meetings with Cora Barclay management. In a letter dated 25 January 2002, Dr Jill Duncan again wrote to minister Brown, the minister for human services, concerning the allocation of disability funding that he had rejected. By letter dated 6 February 2002 (two weeks later, or thereabouts), the former minister responded as follows:

I am sorry but, due to time constraints, I am unable to meet with you prior to the state election.

The member for Finniss had no care for Cora Barclay, and he rejected the funding option while in government. He was part of a government that signed a secret deal that put unfair burdens on this organisation. He has now done a complete backflip. The member for Finniss will say and do anything, but he has proved to be a member of parliament with double standards. The deputy leader has no credibility whatsoever on this matter.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley has point of order, and I want to be able to hear it.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Mr Speaker, with absolute respect to you, the Deputy Premier (acting as Premier) quoted extensively in his answer correspondence from the members for Finniss, Light, and from the Minister for Disability Services. He repeatedly referred to a 'docket', and your very first ruling was that if a minister quotes from a docket anyone in this house can demand that that docket be tabled in its entirety. I ask, sir, that you ensure that you take into your possession forthwith the entire document and that these current and contemporaneous matters are not removed from before it comes into your possession.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand the point that the member for Unley is making. It is so ordered.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Mr Speaker, I did not refer—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** No, I am happy to comply.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I will seek your ruling, Mr Speaker. I did not refer to a docket. I am happy to release correspondence, because I understand—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Hang on. Mr Speaker, can I get an answer?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Acting Premier.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I do not recall referring to a docket, but what I do recall is this—that I referred to correspondence. I am happy for that to be released, because I think that has already happened. I think it is being released to the media as we speak.

I have a document, a secrecy agreement between the Minister for Education and Children's Services and the Cora Barclay Centre. I am happy for that to be released—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** —but I don't think, Mr Speaker, I can because there is a confidentiality agreement.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Happy or unhappy, it is so ordered.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** But, Mr Speaker, I seek your advice—

**The SPEAKER:** I have just told you my advice: it is released.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** It has a confidentiality clause that the former government signed. I am happy for it to be released. I do not know, though, whether the agreement so allows it.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! For the last 20 minutes much of what might have been achieved in the last 20 months (if it is that long, and I am not sure that it is) has been lost, and it is because the house fails to understand that question time is not an urgency debate. Provisions of our standing orders enable us to ventilate such matters as have been addressed during question time but in abuse of the process of question time, to the detriment of our standing—all of us. Can I say, though, that in relation to the substantive matter raised by the member for Unley, to which the Acting Premier sought to make an explanation, those documents from which the Deputy Premier quoted during the course of his answer to the member for Wright will be tabled.

I trust that honourable members will give urgent consideration to the manner in which they wish to conduct business at the commencement of the day's proceedings through the mechanism of question time and the subsequent grievance debates, as well as understanding the purpose of standing orders where they allow for an urgency motion to ventilate such complex matters in a more even-handed manner which, at the same time, facilitates proper debate. I believe that is what the house desires, but it abuses its own collective conscience by ignoring what its standing orders say, and attempting to do it without going through the proper process.

### SCHOOLS, AMALGAMATION

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services confirm that she will not abolish any junior primary principal positions, and effectively amalgamate their schools, without consultation with the union pursuant to section 10 of the Certified Agreement, or without a review committee being established under section 14B of the Education Act?

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** The answer to that is simple, and that is that, in all matters that require negotiation with the union under the terms of the enterprise bargaining agreement, the department must consult with the union. As minister, I have given undertakings to the CPSU-PSA and the AEU, but my instruction to the chief executive is that the department comply with those requirements.

### SCHOOLS, DRUG STRATEGY

**Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens):** My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. How will the government work across three school sectors to develop local drug strategies and action plans?

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** Last year a drug summit was convened, as members know, to help guide the government's future drug strategies, and the Social Inclusion Board is overseeing the implementation of the summit's recommendations. One of those recommendations was to encourage the three school sectors—that is, the government school sector, Catholic education and the independent schools—to work together on local school drug strategies and action plans. Two new project officers, one from the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia and the other from Catholic education, have been employed and are working closely with my department's drug strategy team to work across sectors—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the member for Bright wishes to resolve some ambiguities of opinion between himself and the leader of the house, I invite the member for Bright to cross the floor, acknowledge the chair and sit down next to the minister and talk it through. The next occasion upon which either the member for Bright or the minister engages in conversation across the chamber that interrupts my hearing-impaired ability to hear the minister, they will both receive what they might otherwise not have expected. Minister.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE:** The two new project officers are already working closely with my department's drug strategy team to work across the sectors to develop and implement whole-school drug strategies and action plans. Those project officers from the three educational sectors have already met with several principals of cross-sector schools that are closely located on multischool campuses. For example, they have met with the principals of the four schools at the shared campus of Aberfoyle Park—that is, Spence Primary School, Heysen Primary School, Nativity School and Pilgrim School—to discuss the best way of working across that campus and the systems that exist on that campus.

Last week, on that particular case, the drug strategy staff worked with the staff from all four schools to familiarise them with the drug strategy and the materials (which have been produced to assist them with the implementation of all elements of it), the school environment policy, procedures, partnerships and curriculum. The staff from that multischool campus participated in activities that can be used with students, and explored some of the many support package materials designed to be used in each area of their school. Elsewhere, project officers have met with assistant principals from Golden Grove campus schools—Pedare Christian College, Gleeson College and Golden Grove High School—to deliver a principals' briefing and to explore the best way for the schools to work together to develop a whole of campus approach to the drug strategy.

Project officers from each of the three sectors are co-delivering training in each school in each of the sectors in order to get a better understanding of how each sector works, and to develop strategies to encourage and facilitate the cross-sector approaches in other areas. All schools that have been approached so far have been highly supportive of working across sectors to share knowledge, resources and community contacts. The department, with the other two sectors, is

currently exploring ways of working together to share information for schools which share a geographical location but which are not on the same campus. It is hoped that any model developed will be implemented right across the state.

#### ATTORNEY-GENERAL

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** Will the Acting Premier advise the house whether he asked the Premier or any of the Premier's staff to instigate an inquiry into the actions of the Attorney-General late last year?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Acting Premier):** I will take that question on notice. If the honourable member would like to provide me with information, I would be happy to receive it.

#### PARKLANDS

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens):** My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What has been done to improve the community's understanding of the natural environment of Adelaide's unique parklands?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation):** I am hopeful that the residents of the western suburbs, in future, will have greater access to the city parklands. I am pleased to inform the house that a landmark survey is under way to comprehensively catalogue the biodiversity of the Adelaide parklands. The survey is the combination of six months' work by the Adelaide City Council and the Department for Environment and Heritage to conduct a biodiversity survey of the parklands. This survey was originally proposed by the council—and I congratulate the council for this work. The survey builds on the scientific expertise of the department and extensive data collected over the years of the Adelaide City Council's management of the parklands. The survey reveals that of 514 flora species studied in the parklands, 309 (60 per cent) are introduced species. It also reveals that 77 plant families are represented in the parklands; of these 33 (42 per cent) are indigenous.

A mix of planted exotic and native Australian flora are present in the parklands. Many of the native Australian plants consist of Western Australian eucalypts. Other large exotic trees, such as peppercorn, aleppo pine and radiata pine are spread throughout the park. The European olive and the Moreton Bay fig are also quite prominent. Some parts of the south parklands and one site in the north parklands have areas of naturally regenerating locally indigenous species, including many native grass species and a number of herbaceous species such as vanilla-lily, bindweed, native sorrel and grey germander. Unfortunately, many fauna species have disappeared. The survey records that 33 mammal species have lived in the parklands. However, only 12 mammal species are present today, including brush-tailed and ring-tailed possums, water rats and many types of bats. Most of the small woodland birds have disappeared from the parklands including the yellow-rumped thornbill, superb fairy wren and red-capped robin.

The area is dominated by more aggressive birds that are able to utilise the abundant seed and nectar sources in this highly modified environment such as galahs, long-billed corellas, crested pigeons and, of course, the very colourful rainbow lorikeets. Amphibian species continue to live in the parklands, although there are fewer of them. Limited information is available for reptiles and invertebrates,

although we do know that the number of butterflies has reduced.

The survey has produced a series of digital maps of the Adelaide parkland area that will be used to better record current and future biological information. Other maps include a vegetation map that shows pre European settlement plant communities. These maps and data sets will be of great help and interest to the South Australian Museum, the Plant Biodiversity Centre, the Parklands Association, individual naturalists and community environment groups.

I commend the partnership between the Adelaide City Council and my department, which have shared resources and expertise. The survey was conducted without employing expensive consultants. It is to be released at the end of the month and the survey is a stark reminder that the ecosystems in the parklands are fragile. The findings of the survey will be used to help manage Adelaide's iconic park for years into the future.

#### ATTORNEY-GENERAL

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** My question is to the Attorney-General. Will he advise the house whether late last year he offered his resignation as Attorney-General in the presence of senior officers of the Premier's Office?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** No.

#### ATHLETES

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. What is the sports institute doing regarding the identification of potential elite athletes in South Australia?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** The South Australian Sports Institute has many programs that identify, develop and support athletes who have the potential to achieve outstanding success in their chosen sport. One of the initiatives of SASI is the Talent Search program, which scientifically identifies potential elite athletes and facilitates their development in a number of different sports. The program has a cooperative partnership with the Australian Institute of Sport. In the last two years alone, over 17 600 high school children have been profiled through a range of physical and physiological tests. This program has led many students to sports they may never have considered and has had outstanding success over the years. It has produced international-level athletes in cycling, rowing, canoeing, kyaking and volleyball. Other specific initiatives of Talent Search include: an over-18 years female talent identification program; a siblings of established elite athletes program; and a targeted approach on schools and areas surrounding the major sporting centre facilities of rowing and cycling. SASI also conducts an annual talent scholarship program which provides financial assistance to talented young athletes to provide them with enhanced opportunities and support to assist them progress to the senior elite level of their sport.

In addition to this, each of the 15 SASI sports plan programs is chartered with the responsibility of working with their state associations to establish sustainable talent identification and talent development programs and pathways. Most of these fit into a national pathway and are developed in partnership with the national sporting body and the state sporting association. All sports are well aware of the need to develop underpinning programs that will support their elite programs in the future. These talent identification programs



are also encouraging young people to try their sports, continue in them to the best level they can and perhaps go on to represent their country at an international level. SASI provides the coaching staff, management, resources, facilities, programs and the initiatives to provide every possible opportunity for the talented athlete in South Australia to achieve at the highest level possible.

### SCHOOLS, FUNDING

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland):** My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Will the minister advise the house what consultation and transitional allowances have been provided to accommodate the scrapping of the biannual delivery of government grants to non-government schools according to the calendar year in favour of a quarterly allocation according to the financial year, which threatens to severely increase costs to schools?

I have been contacted by parents of a non-government school which currently receives its government grant paid according to the calendar year in July and October each year. Like many small non-government schools, this school operates with an overdraft during various parts of the school year, with the peak occurring in the period just prior to the delivery of the grant. Less than one month before it is due for its major payment, the school has been told that biannual payments will now be replaced by a quarterly financial year payment system. Consequently, it is expecting to receive only half the funding due this calendar year with the rest allocated next year. There been no warning or transitional allowances put in place to allow for the adaptation to this new system, and the school will now face cash flow problems and huge increases in bank charges on its overdraft if this new system is arbitrarily introduced.

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** The member for Newland can go back to her school and assure it that the information she read out in parliament is not correct. I am yet to receive the recommendation from my ministerial advisory committee as to the allocation. However, my understanding at this point in time is that it is not going to be quarterly payments at all.

### CHAFFEY THEATRE

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** Will the Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts advise the house why he has refused to fund urgent safety repairs at the Chaffey Theatre in the Riverland for the 15 months he has been the responsible minister? The opposition has been advised that the minister was briefed in April 2002 of the need for him to urgently fund safety repairs in the Chaffey Theatre. In order to prevent loss of life or serious injury to the health of patrons and workers at the theatre, essential work included: provision of safety harnesses and lighting gantries, upgrading of electricity distribution boards, provision of emergency aisle lighting to the auditorium, raising the safety height of the balcony handrail, total and urgent removal of asbestos-based materials as urgently recommended by consultants, provision of a deluge fire sprinkler system to the stage area, and upgrading of fire extinguishers, fire reels and hydrants. Is the theatre safe, minister?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts):** The member for Waite has been beating up on this issue now for some time. I have addressed the issue on a number of occasions. In fact, in the most recent budget this

government allocated \$500 000 to deal with occupational health and safety issues in the four theatres. That is \$500 000 more than his government put in to address those issues when they had the opportunity to do it. They talk tough; but they did not apply funding to the problems. We have dealt with the problems. We have an allocation of \$500 000. I have answered this question in detail during estimates. I refer the member for Waite to that answer.

### LANDY, Mr M.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Minister for Health release medical specialist Mr Mark Landy from the confidentiality clause of the contract renegotiation now that he is moving interstate and will not be working at the Mount Gambier Hospital after 30 June? Mr Landy has written the following very brief letter to the minister:

I am one of the General Surgeons in Mount Gambier who, because of the continued turmoil in the local hospital and lack of direction of the administrative staff, decided to seek employment elsewhere.

Some months ago I did sign a confidentiality clause about the negotiations I had with Tom Neilson and Bob Gausson, a mediator from New South Wales. As I am leaving to work interstate I would ask of you that you release me from those confidentiality conditions as I wish to discuss what I was offered with my colleagues.

Yours sincerely,  
Mark Landy

**The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health):** I thank the honourable member for his question. This was not an agreement to which I was a party, and therefore it is something from which I cannot release Mr Landy.

### RAILWAYS, LEVEL CROSSINGS

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light):** Can the Minister for Transport advise what action has been taken to date by the State Level Crossings Safety Strategy Advisory Committee to upgrade those level crossings identified as dangerous? The State Level Crossings Safety Strategy Advisory Committee was implemented after the Salisbury rail crossing tragedy in October last year. I understand that to date more than 70 crossings have been identified as dangerous, yet there is no detail in this year's budget for any upgrades.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport):** The member is correct when he says that the work has been done. I will get the details asked for by the member. I am not sure whether the number mentioned by the member is correct (it may well be) but, beyond that, 10 level crossings (and I will have to check those figures) have been identified as having the highest priority, and I am happy to bring details of those recommendations back to the house. Certainly, some have been identified as having priority, and that work will be the first undertaken. Obviously, even within that group, some have been given higher priority, and four spring to mind as having been brought to my attention, and I will bring back the details for the member. I assure the member and the house that that committee has been progressing this matter, and it has been doing some good work in progressing it. Obviously, this is a high priority, and work will commence in the very near future.

### TEACHER NUMBERS

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services explain why 140 full-time equivalent

teachers had not been added to the work force summary at the time of publication of the budget on or before 29 May 2003? During the estimates committee hearings, in particular, on 19 June 2003, the minister advised the committee that there was an error in the work force summary information, and that an extra 180 full-time equivalent positions had been omitted. When questioned about this omission, the minister explained as follows:

This 180 staff relates to new initiatives of the government in the 2003-04 budget. We knew the dollar figures of those initiatives but the calculations of staff had not been done at the time that particular part of the budget papers was prepared.

The minister later explained that, on a breakdown of the extra staff, this included '140 full-time equivalent salaries for the additional leadership time in primary schools. . . that is, teaching salaries'. However, the Department of Education's annual report of 31 December 2002 confirms that this is not a new initiative of the government. It was well-known a year ago under the new enterprise bargaining agreement that there would be additional leadership time in primary schools and preschools to be affective from 2004.

**The SPEAKER:** Before calling the minister, I point out to honourable members that it is not appropriate to quote from debate before the house that is not concluded on any matter. The budget debate may conclude some time later this week, but we cannot anticipate that. However, I point out that that does not mean that the minister is not required to answer the question.

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** I will try to explain very simply for the member for Bragg, which is not to patronise her but to point out that we have been through this many times. This is quite a simple concept to understand. The 140 staff to whom the member refers equate to a funding allocation in the 2003-04 budget of roughly \$10 million (I think it is \$28.4 million over a couple of years or so many months). This amount was agreed to between the government and the CPSU, the PSA and the Australian Education Union in the enterprise bargaining agreement. What was agreed at that time was the dollar amount, not the number of salaries. The honourable member knows this, because in her question she referred to the annual report and stated that this is a facet of the enterprise bargain.

The honourable member asserts that the number of full-time staffing equivalents is in error, but that is not so. The calculation of how many staff the \$10 million equates to was not done because discussions were continuing with the unions. So, that figure was not added to the papers at that time. However, as I explained to the member during estimates (and previously), these leadership positions are extra teaching salaries for all schools. Just as the government put an extra 160 junior primary salaries into schools this year, from the start of 2004 the government will put approximately 140 extra staffing salaries into schools. These are not general teaching salaries (two amounts of \$10 million would equate to 160 teachers) but leadership salaries for principals, deputy principals and the like. So, this is leadership time.

This was expressed in the annual report as a dollar amount, but the levels and categories of staffing were not agreed to until after that portion of the budget had come into play. So, there is nothing sinister in this calculation. As I have already explained during estimates and previously in public, this is good news as it will provide extra teaching salaries for our schools. On top of the 160 junior primary salaries that we put into schools in 2003, next year we will have an extra

140 leadership time salaries. This is not the only additional extra staffing for schools next year. We will also have 29 extra primary school counsellors on top of the extra school counsellors who went into primary schools at the start of this school year. So, we have increased the number of schools with a primary school counsellor by over 100, bringing the total to about 244. In the 12 or 18 months in which Labor has been in power, this government has put a substantial number of new teacher salaries into our schools—and that is what matters to South Australians.

## REFUND RIGHTS

**Mr O'BRIEN (Napier):** Will the Minister for Consumer Affairs clamp down on retailers who are giving consumers misleading advice about their refund rights; and, if not, why not?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Consumer Affairs):** I was most concerned to learn that nearly 300 people complained to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs in the last financial year that they were given misleading advice about their right to a refund. Examples of the type of misleading advice about which consumers have been complaining include stores refusing to offer refunds altogether or putting up signs saying 'No refunds'; 'No refunds after seven days'; or 'We will exchange or repair or give credit notes, but we do not refund.' The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs has also had complaints about staff being instructed to tell customers, 'The manager needs to authorise refunds and he is not here right now.' This is an attempt to fob off customers.

South Australian law is clear about consumers rights to a refund and this conduct is a breach of the Fair Trading Act. Consumers are entitled to a refund if the goods they buy are defective or do not do what they were supposed to do. Consumers are also entitled to refunds if the goods were bought for a particular purpose and do not fulfil that purpose, do not match the description given by the trader or do not match a sample shown to the consumer by the trader. Consumers are not entitled to a refund if they change their minds about the product they bought, were advised that the product was faulty at the time of purchase or if they damage the product themselves. Consumers are also not entitled to a refund if they discover that they can get the product for a cheaper price at another store.

Just over two weeks ago I announced publicly that I wanted people to do in stores that offered dubious refund policies or practices. A number of people have already reported examples of illegal refund policies to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs. Most of the complaints the office has received so far have been about retailers failing to refund consumers for defective goods. I would like to encourage people to continue to report stores that are not doing the right thing to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs. Staff from the office will be visiting the retailers in question to discuss their legal obligations. In some cases it is possible that retailers may not be aware of their legal obligations. Those retailers who wilfully and persistently mislead the public about their refund rights can face stiff penalties under the Fair Trading Act.

## INDEPENDENT GAMBLING AUTHORITY

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** On Friday 20 June, during the consideration of estimates pertaining to my portfolio areas, I said the following, which requires correction. I indicated that the increase in the Independent Gambling Authority's budget from \$1.016 million to \$1.386 million was an increase of 19.3 per cent. I clarify that such an increase represents an increase over two years and that from 2001-02 to 2003-04 the increase is 36.4 per cent. The 19.3 per cent increase is the increase from 2002-03 to 2003-04. I also said that I am advised that as soon as concerns were raised about the inadequacy of the time line to respond, it was automatically extended and I believe it has been extended to 19 July this year. The correct date is 11 July this year. In reference to the Monarto Zoo, I said that I thought that the Department of Environment and Heritage had taken control of that asset. In fact, the asset was transferred to the Royal Zoological Society. I seek to correct the record in this way.

## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

### ARTS FUNDING

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** I rise on the issue of arts funding and to bring to the attention of the house the great concern within the arts community and on the part of the opposition about the dramatic drop in arts funding that has occurred in the two years since this Labor government has been in office. The Premier, as Arts Minister, has overseen the greatest collapse in arts funding in South Australia since the 1980s.

Arts funding is heading backwards at a rapid rate. In its first budget this government slashed arts funding by almost \$3.3 million in so-called efficiency gains. Now we find that this funding trend downwards is to be further exacerbated in a most dramatic way. In fact, another \$1.2 million is to vanish from funding in so-called efficiencies, but on top of that there are \$6.6 million in cuts over the next four years, and those cuts are far reaching. There is a reduction in grants and subsidies of \$3.8 million, and that will impact mainly on community and youth arts groups, which have perhaps enough funding to keep the door open but not enough funding to run new, creative productions; not enough funding to hire extra casuals, actors and supporting staff to put on productions; and not enough funding to continue to be creative and to thrive. Arts boards are to be cut by \$625 000.

How that is to be done remains a mystery; what impact that will have on arts boards remains vague. Not only that, but Arts SA will also have to struggle in the four years ahead with \$2.2 million in cuts to its corporate services and to administration, requiring downsizing of Arts SA, a reduction in the services it provides to the arts community, the removal of staff and other critical setbacks. As well, the government is refusing to provide the additional \$6.7 million required in outstanding funding to fix the four regional country theatres, as promised and funded by the former Liberal government within the budget of the former Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts. New ideas announced by the

Premier for film, the Art Gallery and the Adelaide Festival are about \$1.16 million less than the savage cuts he has inflicted. Most alarmingly, the Australian Dance Theatre faces closure as a consequence of the Premier's silly decision to slash its budget by 26 per cent or \$225 000 over the next two years. We may see the ADT collapse around the Premier's feet.

This situation must be reversed. Most cynically, arts funding to live music is of concern to the house. Last year this parliament directed the government to provide \$500 000 out of poker machine revenue when the parliament passed the gaming machine bill. On 28 August last year every government member—every single member of the Labor Party—opposed that proposition, but it passed, and the spirit of that act was that the government would provide \$500 000 of new money for live music. What has the government done? It has defied the spirit of that act and got the \$500 000 for live music by cutting grants and subsidies to other arts agencies. It is a cynical fiddle of the books. Instead of providing \$500 000 of new money from poker machine revenue, this government has simply slashed the rest of the arts community. It is a cynical accounting fiddle. The arts community is stepping backwards. Live music, major agencies and the smaller arts groups are all suffering under the weight of these savage cuts. The arts have taken a bigger step backwards in the past two years than they have in nearly 15 years. Not only that, but no capital spending ideas of consequence appear to be emerging from this government.

### BOWLING FOR COLUMBINE

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey):** Because many people have told me what a good movie *Bowling for Columbine* is, I went along to see it last weekend with my 23 year old son. I was looking forward to seeing it, because of Michael Moore's book *Stupid White Men*, which was published in 2001 and which I have but have not yet been able to read, because so many people keep borrowing it from me. Because of that I am not sure of the relationship between the book and the film, but I do know that Michael Moore made a controversial speech recently in accepting an award for the film at the Cannes Film Festival. *Bowling for Columbine* was the first documentary film accepted into that competition in 46 years. The Cannes jury unanimously awarded it the 55th Anniversary Prize.

From a look at the Columbine High School security camera tapes to the home of Oscar-winning National Rifle Association president Charlton Heston, from a young man who makes homemade napalm with the *Anarchist's Cookbook*, to the murder of a six-year old girl by another six-year old, *Bowling for Columbine* is a journey through America and its past, hoping to discover why the pursuit of happiness is so riddled with violence in that country.

The title is taken from the little-known fact that the two killers at Columbine High School, Dylan and Eric, were supposed to be in a bowling class that morning before the murders. At least five witnesses, including their teacher, told the police that they saw the boys that morning at the bowling alley for the first hour of their class. Some school and law enforcement officials later maintained that the two boys skipped the class that morning, yet no other witnesses have come forward to say that they saw the kids anywhere else.

One reason that the film is called *Bowling for Columbine* is that, after the massacre, all the pundits and experts started blaming all the usual suspects that are wheeled out for blame

whenever a school shooting occurs: evil rock music (in this case, that of Marilyn Manson); violent video games; and bad parenting. Michael Moore says that blaming those scapegoats makes about as much sense as blaming bowling. After all, Eric and Dylan were bowling. They took bowling classes at the school, so was bowling responsible for their evil deeds? Or, if they skipped their bowling class that morning, did that bring on the massacre? Had they bowled, that may have altered their mood and prevented them from picking up their guns. So, as can be seen, it is as impossible to say that as it is to blame Marilyn Manson and his music.

The movie is alternatively horrifying and humorous. It is a sobering documentary about the US and a commentary on guns and violence in that country, particularly the events surrounding the deaths at Columbine High School. The movie asks: why do 11 000 people die in the United States each year at the hand of gun violence, when in Canada, just across the bay from Ohio and Columbine, similar numbers of guns are in circulation and readily accessible, but hundreds fewer are victim to gun-related death? In Australia, the figure quoted was 65 deaths annually, similar to that in the UK. Still too high, we would say, but, remarkably, much lower than the United States when averaged out.

How have Americans become both masters and victims of such enormous amounts of violence? When we consider recent events in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the fact that inquiries are under way not only in the United States but also the United Kingdom and we hope here soon in Australia, it is an important question domestically and internationally. Mr Moore says on his web site that it is not a film about gun control and the millions of Americans who own them. He is right.

I left the cinema deeply concerned about many things, and there are two particular incidents in the movie that I would like to speak to members about. Some time after Columbine, a six-year old black American boy took a gun from his uncle's house to school and there shot a little white girl, also aged six. We are not told what the boy said when he was inevitably asked why he did this, but we were shown that his mother is involved in a type of work for the dole program and that she could not be with her children in the mornings because she is bussed 80 kilometres to work two jobs from which she is unable to earn enough to sustain herself and her two children. It told us that she had been evicted for non-payment of her rent and was staying with her brother because she had nowhere else to go.

The second event in the film examined the racial dilemma that the US faces, and it has a parallel in Australia, where black people are always shown as the perpetrators of crime, so much so that it hardly seems possible that a white person ever commits a crime. That analogy applies easily to Australia, where crime statistics show us that Aboriginal people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

In closing, I make mention of the story, also shown in the movie, about African bees. When a species of aggressive bees arrived in the US mainland, they were called African bees, even though they did not come from Africa. They were compared with the European bee, which is friendly and makes honey. A classic example of black versus white? Rather, it is an example of the subtlety of the nuances of the debate that we must have if we are all to live in peace in the world, both locally and globally.

## INTERNATIONAL HORSE TRIALS

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** I rise to talk about the wonderful decision of this government to fund the Adelaide International Horse Trials. It is good to see commonsense prevail. The horse industry in South Australia employs about 7 500 full-time equivalent employees. It is a very important industry to South Australia. It is far more than the gallops, harness racing and the pony clubs. Every weekend around South Australia, Horse SA tells me that about 50 000 people ride their horses, that is, 50 000 people enjoying their leisure pursuit. It is not just an elitist sport: kids from Elizabeth and Hackham also have horses. In my veterinarian practice, I used to spend a lot of time with the kids from Hackham whose parents were struggling to give them a horse, and they deserve every bit of support that the government can give this industry.

According to the RIRDC report, it is an \$8 billion industry across Australia. I am not sure what the proportion would be for South Australia, but I imagine that it would be fairly close to \$1 billion plus. The international horse trials held in Adelaide is only one of four four-star events held in the world. Adelaide is the only one in the southern hemisphere. The others are Badminton and Burghley in England and Kentucky in the United States. In the past, it has been called a three-day event because traditionally it was held over three days: a day of dressage, a day of cross-country and a day of showjumping. Under the new Olympic standards, the new four-star event will be a modified event. The road and tracks section and the steeple chase section will be taken out of the cross-country day, but it will still include the gruelling and spectacular cross-country course set for the horses. Having competed in these events, I know how testing it is on both horse and rider. The courage shown by both the horses and their riders is a spectacle to behold.

Up to 50 000 people attend the international horse trials in the Adelaide parklands. Its setting is unique around the world. Just as we had the fantastic Grand Prix right on our doorstep, we have the international horse trials as well. In the past, it has been held on the same day as the Christmas pageant, and many families who come to see the Christmas pageant stay on for the day and go to see the horse trials. It is a free event. It has been subsidised by this government, and I appreciate the money that has been put into this particular event. It is the type of event about which you cannot be a hard economic rationalist. You cannot bully people and say, 'This is not making money, so, sorry, you are out of here; your horses have got the chop.' This event could not have been relocated to Gawler. Even without the road and tracks and the steeple chase, you still need an extensive cross-country course. The land that was developed for the cross-country course in Gawler has been used for housing. That was a fantastic course. I have no idea where they could have put the event in Gawler, because, as the member for Light can testify, that area is absolutely booming.

Putting it at Oakbank was not going to be a goer. Anyone who knows the extent of the development of the jumps and the facilities required for cross-country and what a four-star event implies will tell you that, considering the wet weather at Oakbank, it would be very difficult to build the four-star course in time. The big problem we would have had, though, even if it was possible to build those courses, would be obtaining the accreditation from the FEI for a four-star event held any where other than in the parklands. That would have put the selection of both the Australian and New Zealand

Olympic teams in jeopardy. I am glad that this government has done a backflip. I am really pleased that the minister, despite the constraints put on her, I am sure, by the Premier and the Treasurer, is true to her word.

What she said to me in this place after last year's event was that funding was in place. I was shocked beyond comprehension when the announcement was made. A press release was made not within days or weeks but within hours of the government's making the decision. No-one knew what was going on. This is one of the best turnarounds that I have seen by the government for a long time. I just hope that we can see the same turnaround for the jazz festival at Glenelg—\$100 000 has been pulled by the state government. That is an absolute shame. The state of Louisiana in the United States supports the jazz festival. They put in money and send artists over, but not this state. It is a family event. The Feast Festival and the French Film Festival are not family events. Let us have some support for family events in South Australia.

### BRAEBURN RESERVE

**Ms RANKINE (Wright):** 'If you fence that pond why don't you fence the Torrens Lake, or Mawson Lake, or all of the creek lines in the city?' If the report in the *Leader Messenger* of 18 June is accurate (and I have no reason to believe that it is not), they are the quoted comments of the City Manager of the City of Tea Tree Gully in response to the extremely concerning hazard report prepared by the state government's Injury Surveillance Unit in relation to the stormwater holding facility on the corner of John Road and Golden Way at the Braeburn Reserve. This report warned of hazards which are assessed as high risk for children and which are likely to cause drowning and strangulation. Yet, this is the response we get from the City Manager. If nothing else, his response is inappropriate and clearly ill-informed. If I were a member of the council, I would be strongly querying advice such as this given by the city's chief officer.

Since raising this issue in parliament on 4 June, having waited patiently for eight months for the council to take some remedial action in relation to this facility, I received a letter from the Mayor outlining works that council proposed to carry out on this site. Amazingly, and quite coincidentally, it seems, from the Mayor's letter, the council had already commenced work just a couple of days before I contacted it (how is that for timing), and it seems that the rain prevented them from finishing their works. Nevertheless, the Mayor outlined her council's proposed works, and I forwarded this information to the Injury Surveillance Unit for comment.

Representatives of the unit suggested that two of the initiatives proposed by the council were, indeed, positive. However, they do not believe that the remedial work prepared for behind the grated outlet on the eastern side of the pond is adequate to address the safety hazard—that is, strangulation—and they describe it as being far from satisfactory. Indeed, they say that the 125 millimetre space between the bars of this grated outlet need to be reduced, because this poses an entrapment and strangulation hazard for young children. In addition, the existing post and chain style fencing needs to be replaced with the same style of fencing that appears on the decking of the lake. Council appears not to be prepared to address the other recommendations in this report, which include:

- perimeter fencing of Braeburn Reserve, which surrounds the pond, to reduce the drowning hazard;

- fencing as per the decking on the lake (the existing post and chain style fencing around the western culvert inlet needs to be replaced, because the existing fencing is inadequate as a barrier and will not prevent access to the fall and drowning hazard); and
- adding some loose gravel or small rocks to the bottom of the slimy embankments in order to provide a surface with more grip if a child needs to be retrieved from the water (the gravel would need to be used for the first two metres from the water's edge).

If I were a member of council, I would be urging that council consider its liability, having received this advice from experts within the government and consciously choosing not to take these actions.

Whilst the remarks from the Chief Executive are meant to be flippant and, no doubt, downgrade the seriousness of this issue by referring to fencing creek lines (we know that our environment is full of a lot of natural environmental hazards that we all have to come to terms with and learn to deal with), he mentions Mawson Lakes, for example—another man-made facility—and that is what I am talking about. I am concerned about what councils and developers have responsibility for. I am concerned, too, about those facilities that we are making and designing, whilst not taking into account the safety of our children and the public, which we put at risk.

We have a responsibility, when we are constructing these water facilities, to ensure that they are safe and that the risk to our children is a reasonable one—that it is not unreasonable and that we minimise it as much as we possibly can. I am not talking about fencing Cobbler Creek and those sorts of things—and I guess the test for that is for the council to consider whether it would be sued if someone fell from the bank of Cobbler Creek or Petworth Lakes. Would the council in surrounding Mawson Lakes be sued, or would the Tea Tree Gully council be sued in relation to Braeburn Reserve, which has clearly been identified as having a range of quite significant dangerous aspects to it? The council has been alerted to the problem, and I beseech it to take urgent action in relation to this matter.

### SCHOOLS, BOOLEROO CENTRE DISTRICT

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** Today I want to raise an issue in my electorate concerning the Booleroo Centre District School. One of the best schools in South Australia, it has an outstanding scholastic record and an outstanding record of its young people getting employment. In a letter to me dated 19 June the school indicated its very great concern that a grant of \$60 000 (which was approved in 2000) for a project to purchase a dam so that the school could water ovals etc., at the school at Booleroo Centre has not been forthcoming. The letter states:

The Booleroo Centre District School Governing Council would like to draw to your attention the lack of action from the government in finalising an ecologically sustainable development project, which had a grant of \$60 000 approved in 2000 for this project. The school is a focus for local communities and it is most important that ovals and grounds be maintained to an already high standard as they are used by many local communities throughout the whole year. The proposal is to acquire a large dam west of the school and surrounding land and set up a pumping facility at the dam to pump water from the dam to a header tank on the school property. From there the grounds can be watered using the existing infrastructure. It is expected that the capacity of the dam is such that all ground watering requirements can be met. Potentially, therefore, the school can save up to \$20 000 a year in watering costs.

The letter continues:

. . . The Mount Remarkable District Council is very supportive of the project and will undertake whatever work is required to maximise stormwater retention at the dam. The adjacent golf club is willing to provide support in setting up the facility and have a reciprocal arrangement with the school for access to some of the water. Details of the proposals are as follows:

- The dam and land be purchased for \$40 000. For this price the land will be cleared of all old machinery, rubble and plant.
- A windmill and electric pump be set up at the dam and pipes be laid at a cost of \$15 000 to the header tank at the school. The windmill will provide sufficient power under most circumstances to pump water to the tank and the electric pump can provide a backup as required.
- A safety fence be erected around the dam to keep out students and animals. The cost of the fence is expected to be \$5 000. The fence will be erected by the golf club.
- Channelling, dredging, land clearing and other work be done by the local council to ensure maximum run-off retention.
- School site stormwater run-off be maximised by site works being undertaken as part of the school amalgamation.

This is a unique opportunity for the school and its communities to work together to develop an ecologically sustainable project that provides an excellent context for environmental education and has the potential to save the school \$20 000 a year. . . At this time of water restrictions and mounting ecological problems with the Murray system, it defies logic that a way cannot be found for the school to access such an enormous and valuable water resource as the dam. It seems ludicrous that a commonsense, logical and straightforward project, already approved, with total community support and offers of help, can be jeopardised because the government will not sign off on the proposal.

This letter is signed by Robert Koch, President of the Booreroo Centre District School Council. It is a worthy project by an excellent school, which has very strong community support. I urge the Minister for Education to take immediate action to resolve and sign off on this issue so that this hard-working group of people can get on with their project.

I have already raised in this house on two or three occasions the stunts and the behaviour of the Labor Party at the last election. As a part of sort of schoolboy action, some 12 months after the election the Labor Party has left a sign of the ALP candidate on the stobie pole opposite my office—12 months! That was meant to be some sort of a smart trick. I have already indicated that the Labor Party started this scurrilous campaign and I intend to finish it. Let us make it very clear. We will target every activity of government, unless some undertakings are given. Plenty of activities can be chased up, if we want to. I do not want to do it, but I will.

Time expired.

## HEALTH REVIEWS

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** It is my pleasure to rise today to say how pleased I am that the Minister for Health has tabled the Generational Health Review and revealed the first steps for implementation. I have been excited by the discussion about the Generational Health Review ever since it commenced. Certainly, I noticed that, at the community meeting that was held in the south in November last year, people were really excited about the idea of changing our health system.

It seems strange that people might get excited about our health system. However, at that meeting were people who were working in our excellent community health service in the south (the Noarlunga Community Health Service) and in our hospital, in addition to people from disability support groups, parents, and ordinary community members. Much to my surprise, a couple of young people also attended. The last thing I expected was to see young people coming to a meeting and talking about a health service.

Given my recollection of the interest in the Generational Health Review shown at that meeting and the many ideas that were put forward, I thought that I would refer to the notes of that meeting and see how well the minister was delivering in terms of the first steps that have been taken in the Generational Health Review. So, I am doubly pleased to say that the announcements that have been made so far, whilst they are only the first steps and do not encompass all the issues raised at that meeting, are entirely consistent with what my community was looking for. So, in a way, I am not surprised to hear the minister talking today about the already huge number of hits and downloads for the report of the Generational Health Review.

One of the reasons that those who attended this meeting were so excited was that they really did welcome the idea of being involved in some of the major decisions about the spending of our health dollars. It is very interesting that, when we hear about various crises in the health system, it is always about some fancy piece of technology or some high-tech facility and how many we need. It almost seems as though there is a belief that it is not a real hospital unless it has an XYZ machine with six bells; four bells is not sufficient. For example, in the south, in relation to the neonatal intensive care unit at Flinders Medical Centre, when people were asked whether they thought that their local hospital should have the best and the latest technology, they said that, yes, it should. They want to have those life-saving services or pieces of equipment available to them. However, at that community meeting, when there was discussion about whether \$4 million should be spent on this type of equipment so that it was only 20 minutes away, given that that machine will cost \$500 000 a year to support, or whether people were prepared to travel an extra 10 or 20 minutes in order to use a machine slightly across town but, in return, they would have the types of service that are required on a long-term basis much closer to their community, an amazing sigh of relief went around the room when people thought that they might be able to be involved in making that sort of choice.

When those sorts of choices were presented to them as options, they wanted to be able to feel that they have access to the latest and the best in Adelaide (because my people do not think so much about the country) and are prepared to travel for the technology, provided that they receive the on-the-ground services. They want greater links with their GPs, and they want their GPs to be connected more to the hospital system. They want their GPs to be supported by the various other professionals in the health care team, because they recognise that, at the moment, GPs are under such a load that they do not always know this. Their big warning was 'be careful of the empire-builders and be careful of the drug companies.' I believe those were the two messages that that meeting wanted me to take back to the minister in terms of implementing a changed health system.

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## FOOD (DOGS IN OUTSIDE EATING AREAS) AMENDMENT BILL

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett)** obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Food Act 2001. Read a first time.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Food Act 2001 that was passed uses the Australian and New Zealand food standards, and this is where we have created an absolute monster in the way our society is being treated. For many years, all around the world, people have been able to take their dogs out for a walk, and if there were all fresco dining facilities available they were able to sit down outside and have a cup of coffee, a chat with their friends, and generally enjoy the lifestyle that South Australia is well known for—and one that Don Dunstan fought for, with his enthusiasm for the arts, and for restaurants and the culinary arts.

He would have appreciated the fact that South Australians were at liberty to go out and enjoy their lifestyle in a commonsense way. But, unfortunately, that has not happened. The situation we find ourselves in is that people now cannot take their dogs to outdoor eating areas, sit down, have a chat, have a cup of coffee or have any food served to them because the Food Act 2001, as I have said, uses the Australian and New Zealand Food Standards; in particular, the reference to standards 3.2.2 and 2.4.1, where the definitions of premises and food cause all the problems. I read from those standards:

food premises means any premise including land, vehicles, parts of structures, tents, stalls and other temporary structures, boats, pontoons and any other place declared by the relevant authority to be premises under the Food Act kept or used for the handling of food for sale, regardless of whether those premises are owned by the proprietor. . .

That means that the definition of premises is up to any local authority and up to the government to prescribe. The definition of the handling of food under the Australian New Zealand Food Code is:

handling of food includes the making, manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, storing, transporting, delivering, preparing, treating, preserving, packing, cooking, thawing, serving or displaying of food.

It does not talk about consuming food, but it certainly talks about serving food. This is where the whole problem is: the definition of food premises and the definition of the handling of food. Because of those two definitions and the way they can be interpreted, it leaves the owners of businesses open to litigation. If some overzealous bureaucrat, somebody who does not like dogs or has a beef against the owner of a particular business, wants to go out there and give them a hard time, they can do so. The penalties for being in breach of those food standards are found in section 21 of the Food Act, 'compliance with food standards code'. Section 21(1) provides:

A person must comply with any requirement imposed on the person by a provision of the Food Standards Code in relation to the conduct of a food business or to food intended for sale or food for sale.

The maximum penalty if the offender is a body corporate is \$250 000 for having a dog outside a restaurant and serving someone a cup of tea. The maximum penalty if the offender is a natural person is \$50 000. But it is \$250 000 for serving a cup of coffee to someone who has a dog. That is absolutely ridiculous. I know that was never the intent of this legislation. I cannot understand why the minister has not done what would have been so easy for her to do and what I have asked her to do on several occasions, that is, change the regulations so that this part of the act does not cause the repercussions that it is causing. In the *Advertiser* of Thursday 22 May, Samela Harris wrote:

Something very sad is happening to us. We are reverting to wowsersdom, becoming the over-regulated, scaredy-cat, mean-minded, judgmental place the arrogant east used to mock in the 50s. Gone is the image of the enlightened arts state. Somewhere along the line, petty bureaucrats with minds as broad as a frozen pea have taken control. . . But here in South Australia, we are trying to marginalise the dog and dog owner. We have restricted where dogs may go—and denied them the beach for most of the day.

Now emerges this surreptitiously passed 'health' regulation which decrees that dogs may not attend outdoor eateries. It's fine to be choked by toxic car fumes but the presence of a dog is unhealthy at street cafes.

That is what it comes down to. Is a well-behaved dog on a lead sitting down a health hazard? Various officers of the minister's department have said to radio interviewers and constituents of mine that they are not considered to be a significant health hazard. In fact, the minister herself has replied to constituents who have written to her asking her to change the regulations. A letter signed by Lea Stevens, Minister for Health, and dated June 2003 states:

The Department of Human Services has not viewed that as a change from the previous legislation and is not aware of any intent behind the national legislation to increase restrictions on dogs in outdoor dining areas.

The minister is clearly wrong. The intent in the food standards and also in the act says what it says. We cannot draw an arbitrary conclusion from that: 'I didn't really mean this, so you don't need to interpret it that way.' If someone wants to interpret it that way, they can do it. I guarantee that until it is changed someone will do it. The owners of businesses in Holdfast Bay and the electorate of Morphett—and I am sure in the electorates of the members for Colton and Norwood—are worried about being pinged for something which was not intended, and, certainly, I am sure, which this government would never have intended.

These owners are running scared and banning people from using the outdoor dining facilities if they have a dog. They are putting up signs. There was even a ridiculous suggestion of having a separate area where dogs could go—like the smoking and non-smoking areas. It is crazy. We do not need more bureaucracy and more legislation and governance. Where are we going? Let us get some commonsense back into this place. The minister's letter continues:

To the best of my knowledge only the City of Holdfast Bay has changed its policy on dogs at outdoor dining. . .

It is not the City of Holdfast Bay that has changed its policy. The City of Holdfast Bay is applying the policy that is put out in the food safety standards and the Food Act. The City of Holdfast Bay is doing what it is obliged to do. Unfortunately, as a result of their being a little too enthusiastic, but quite correct, the particular owners in Jetty Road, Brighton, and Jetty Road, Glenelg, are more than concerned about the implications and the potential penalties of the onerous sections in the Food Act. It would be so easy for the minister to change the regulations. I do not know why I have to use the valuable time of this house to introduce a private member's bill, which will sit on the table for many weeks (if we do not get it passed quickly) in order to do something which is commonsense and which is so easy to fix. The minister is wasting the time of her own departmental officers trying to defend something that does not need to be defended all the time. Just change it: it is as easy as that. The minister says it is important that councils have the power to ensure that dogs that are not well controlled do not affect diners and this is provided for by the legislation. Of course it is provided for by the legislation: it is in the dog and cat management

legislation, also. Ninety-nine per cent of owners having a cup of coffee in one of these alfresco areas are accompanied by dogs that are very well behaved.

Look overseas. In Europe, dogs are allowed into dining areas. My amendment provides that dogs not go into totally covered areas. I want this bill to make only a small change to the act. The minister could do it by regulation but, unfortunately, I have to do it by using up parliamentary counsel time, the time of this house and my own personal time (which I gladly give on behalf of the thousands of people who have signed the petitions that I have been collating—another one of which I will present tomorrow, signed by another almost 2 000 petitioners). All this amendment does is insert a new clause 112A, which provides:

Dogs in outside eating areas

112A.(1) A person who handles food in an outside area cannot be taken to be in breach of any provision of this Act, or of any requirement imposed by or under this Act, by virtue only of the fact that he or she is handling food while a dog is present in the outside area if the following conditions are satisfied:

- (a) the dog is under the control of a person who is present in the outside area;
  - (b) the dog is restrained by a lead that is not more than 2.5 metres in length;
  - (c) the person in control of the dog did not enter the outside area through a part of the premises that is not an outside area.
- (2) A person who is in control of a dog in the circumstances described in subsection (1) is exempt from the operation of item 9 in the table set out in section 43 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

This shows how ridiculous this situation is. This bill needs to change not only the Food Act but also the Dog and Cat Management Act. If the minister would just change the regulations it would be so easy, and I cannot understand why she does not do so.

In the grand scheme of things, this is probably quite a small matter but it is important to the lifestyle of the people of South Australia. This government represents itself as a Dunstonian government—and I do not mean a Flintstone-type government: I mean a Dunstan-type government. It supports the arts, the people and the lifestyle that we have, so all I ask of this place is to do this, and I ask the minister to change the regulations. I do not mind if the bill is withdrawn—just do the commonsense thing and do what I ask, what the people writing to you ask, what the thousands of people signing the petitions ask, and what the members for Colton and Norwood want you to do (but they are probably worried about stirring up trouble on that side). Do what is right for the people of South Australia. Do not just sit and pass it off to the Local Government Association. Have the courage to be open and honest. Stand up and do what is right. Change the regulations or we will have to change the act. The people want you to do it: you support the people and are here to represent the people. So, minister, do it.

**Mrs GERAGHTY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE: FISHERIES ACT

**Mr HANNA (Mitchell):** I move:

That the report of the Legislative Review Committee on regulations 259 and 273 of 2001 made under the Fisheries Act 1982 be noted.

The Legislative Review Committee first considered these regulations, which allocate the giant crab resource to fishers,

in May 2002. A number of fishers contacted the committee stating that the allocations were unsatisfactory. The committee invited the fishers and their representatives to appear before it. The committee also took evidence from the Director of Fisheries and a representative of the South Australian Research and Development Institute, which provides the government with specialist advice on fish stocks.

The committee conducted numerous hearings and provided stakeholders with adequate opportunity to make submissions and respond to evidence that had been provided. It heard from eight witnesses, which included scientific experts, legal representatives and full-time joint crab fishers, and recorded over 80 pages of *Hansard* evidence. It also received numerous detailed submissions from the parties. The fishers informed the committee in August 2002 that they might resolve their concerns with the regulations through a private arrangement. However, the parties ultimately failed to reach an agreement and consequently the committee continued with its review.

After taking evidence from the parties, the committee wrote to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries on 5 December 2002 and requested an immediate review of the regulations. The minister responded on 17 February 2003 and advised, inter alia, that it was not appropriate for him to overturn the decision of the Director of Fisheries. On 19 February 2003 the committee resolved to produce a report on the regulations. This report was tabled on 4 June 2003. The committee noted and considered each of the criticisms of the fishers in relation to the scheme of management for the giant crab resource. Consequently, it reported on the following:

- Whether the total allowable catch for the giant crab resource, which is announced at the beginning of each season, is too low.
- Whether the total allowable catch fails to ensure the optimum utilisation of the resource.
- Whether the distribution of the resource amongst fishers is inequitable.
- Whether the right to review an allocation under section 58 of the Fisheries Act 1982 has been taken away by the use of regulations.
- Whether the right of fishers to the resource is dependent on non-reviewable decisions resulting in a breach of natural justice.
- Whether the king crab allocation advisory panel (the panel) made decisions about equitable allocation when it did not have the information or expertise required for such a determination.
- Whether the panel made errors in its calculations.
- Whether the panel did not validate data used to calculate historical catches, which subsequently determined the distribution of the giant crab resource.
- Whether the Director of Fisheries has not obtained the best scientific advice in making decisions about the management of the resource.
- Whether the director unreasonably excluded pre 1997 catch histories of fishers on the basis that this information could not be validated.

The committee made six recommendations on the basis of its inquiries. In relation to recommendation 1, the committee recommended that, as part of the review of the Fisheries Act 1982 commissioned by the government in June 2002, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries should develop a policy for the implementation of regulations concerning schemes of management for fisheries. The committee noted



that a policy would inform fishers that appeal rights or rights to a fishery may be determined by regulations. The committee noted that some fishers believed that such rights could ultimately be decided by the courts.

As to recommendation 2, the committee recommended that the policy for the implementation of regulations should be publicly available and incorporate the following:

- Guidelines for when regulations are to be used as a fisheries management tool above other options such as licence conditions.
- Measures to ensure that sufficient information is collected to enable an effective determination on the 'equitable distribution' of the resource in accordance with section 20 of the Fisheries Act 1982.
- Measures to inform fishers that, given the fisheries industry is highly regulated to ensure the sustainability of available stocks, allocations may be determined by regulations and may not be challenged pursuant to section 58 of the Fisheries Act 1982.
- Guidelines on consultation that must be undertaken before regulations are introduced to ensure that:
  - Fishers are given adequate opportunity to make representations and submissions.
  - Where fishers submit a written query about the consultation process or matters arising therefrom, a written response is provided by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA.
  - The consultation process is transparent, and all submissions are available to the public upon request (where the submitter provides authority).

As to recommendation 3, the committee recommended that the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries should note the effects of implementing regulations that extinguish appeal rights that were previously available to fishers. These include:

- A possible breach of the committee's principles of scrutiny that require it to consider whether regulations 'unduly trespass on rights established by law or are inconsistent with the principles of natural justice, or make rights, liberties or obligations dependent on non-reviewable decisions'. The committee construes the term 'rights' widely so that it includes appeal rights or a person's right to access or exploit a resource notwithstanding that no proprietary right has been conferred.
- If appeal rights in relation to determinations about the allocation of the giant crab resource are extinguished, the District Court is obviously unable to intervene and correct any errors.

As to recommendation 4, the committee recommended that the Director of Fisheries should formalise and improve measures for the collection of scientific information in relation to the giant crab fishery. The measures should include:

- Formal (written) requests for information from fisheries scientists who have collected relevant data.
- Consideration of the purchase of data or other scientific information if it is cost effective to do so and is beneficial to the management of the fishery.

In relation to recommendation 5, the majority (the Hon. John Gazzola MLC, Mrs Robyn Geraghty MP, the Hon. Ian Gilfillan MLC and Mr Kris Hanna MP) of the committee recommended 'no action' on the regulations and noted that:

- Fishers were given sufficient opportunity for input into the decision making process. The consultation process was exhaustive and gave repeated opportunities for detailed submissions.

- The committee provided a forum for the review of regulations, and has the power to recommend disallowance of those that breach its principles of scrutiny.
- The government is entitled to ensure that there is certainty in the management of a fishery.
- The management issues were complex, and the regulations provided an effective and final solution.

In relation to recommendation 6, the minority (Hon. Dorothy Kotz MP and Hon. Angus Redford MLC) of the committee recommended:

- The regulations should be disallowed and noted that the issue of equitable distribution should be decided by a court of law that has procedures and the expertise to adjudicate on such matters.
- Section 58 of the Fisheries Act 1982 previously gave fishers an appeal right in relation to allocations as a licence condition, and this right should not be extinguished by the regulations.
- Fishers were not sufficiently warned of the effect of the regulations (that is, the allocation would be final and not subject to appeal) and, consequently, they did not recognise the importance of the King Crab Advisory Panel and the consultations that were undertaken.
- Regulations should not remove appeal rights that help to protect a person's economic livelihood.
- It is unreasonable to use regulations as a device to avoid litigation.

In conclusion, having considered all the criticisms, the majority of the committee found that there was insufficient evidence to recommend disallowance of the regulations. However, there was unanimous support for a policy for the implementation of regulations under the Fisheries Act 1982 that relate to the schemes of management for fisheries.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland):** I will make a few comments on the Legislative Review Committee's regulations for giant crabs, under the Fisheries Act 1982. The issue is certainly one that caused the committee a great deal of frustration at several points, and certainly one of great interest in the complexities that were brought to our attention. Basically, within this area of giant crab fishing, two full-time giant crab fishers were originally given access rights to the giant crab fishery by the commonwealth government, which had jurisdiction over the resource in South Australia. In 1997, that jurisdiction was transferred to the state government, and the rock lobster fishers, who fished for giant crab on a part-time basis or took it as a bi-catch, subsequently sought authority to take a greater share of the available stock.

Various disputes have arisen as to how the fishery should be allocated to the different parties and consequently the King Crab Allocation Advisory Panel was established in 1999 by the previous state government to advise on an appropriate scheme of management. As a result of its recommendations, the regulations currently before the Legislative Review Committee were enacted. The effect of the regulations is to allocate 60 per cent of the fishery to the full-time giant crab fishers and the remainder to rock lobster fishers.

After taking evidence over a considerable period of time, and from those who were available to give evidence to the committee, the committee, on the whole, agreed with many of the comments that are now within this review report.

However, after taking evidence, the committee noted that there were criticisms of the regulations and the scheme of management, including:

- the total allowable catch (TAC) for the giant crab resources is too low;
- the TAC failed to ensure optimum utilisation of the resource;
- the distribution of the resource is inequitable;
- the right to review an allocation under section 58 of the Fisheries Act 1982 has been taken away by the use of regulations;
- the right of fishers to the resource is dependent on non-reviewable decisions, resulting in a breach of natural justice;
- the King Crab Allocation Advisory Panel made decisions about equitable allocation when it did not have the information or the expertise required for such a determination;
- the panel made errors in its calculations;
- the panel did not validate data used to calculate historical catches, which subsequently determined the distribution of the giant crab resource; and
- the Director of Fisheries has not obtained the best scientific advice in making decisions about the management of the resource.

Arguments were put to the committee against the regulations. The committee also noted arguments that the regulations were an inappropriate means of achieving the government's objectives. By extinguishing the appeal rights for regulations prevents courts from deliberating on matters such as the equitable distribution of the giant crab resource. Such a deliberation was seen to be of paramount importance in this matter, as there was evidence of flawed findings by the panel on inequity within the fishery.

The committee noted that the individual allocation of a fishery resource, or a change of allocation, amounts to the grant of a right. Some members noted that the use of the regulation in this case to reduce access to the resource unduly trespasses on the licence holder's rights and makes these rights dependent on a non-reviewable decision. This is why the Hon. Angus Redford and I chose to provide a minority report as opposed to supporting the majority. In this instance, under recommendation 6, a minority of the committee recommended that the regulations should be disallowed and noted that the issue of equitable distribution should be decided by a court of law that has the procedures and expertise to adjudicate on such matters.

Section 58 of the Fisheries Act 1982 gave fishers an appeal right in relation to allocations as a licence condition, and this right should not be extinguished by the regulations. Fishers were not sufficiently warned of the effect of the regulations, that is, that the allocation would be final and not subject to appeal. Consequently, they did not recognise the importance of the King Crab Allocation Advisory Panel and the consultations that were undertaken. Regulations should not remove appeal rights that help to protect a person's economic livelihood. It is unreasonable to use regulations as a device to avoid litigation.

It was on these grounds that the minority report was put by two members of this committee but, as I say, the major aspects of the report itself were supported by the majority of the committee. We believe that this is an extremely important aspect that should not (under natural justice) deny the right of anyone to an appeal, as this takes it into the realm of anyone with expertise being able to make a final decision.

Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: RIVERBANK— STAGE 2 PROJECT**

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** I move:

That the 188th report of the Public Works Committee, on the Riverbank—stage 2 project, be noted.

The Public Works Committee has examined the proposal to apply \$3 million of taxpayers funds to the Riverbank stage 2 project. The Riverbank stage 2 project is a continuation of the principles laid down in the Riverbank precinct master plan developed in 1999. The master plan presents a prescription for the future rejuvenation of the precinct, emphasising the integration of future project work in the area.

Previous projects in the precinct have been the Riverbank—stage 1 promenade project, completed in September 2001, and the Adelaide Festival Centre capital works, completed in October 2002. The Riverbank stage 2 project involves the construction of a pedestrian bridge linking north-south pedestrian movement between North Terrace and the river, a new ramp at the top of the AFC amphitheatre to facilitate wheelchair access to the river and general improvement to the entrance to the Dunstan Playhouse and surrounding area. The bridge will be a cable stay structure, spanning the 40 metres between the north-east corner of the railway station and Playhouse Plaza. The proposed ramp will provide access between levels three and four of the Festival Theatre Plaza. The Dunstan Playhouse will have a concrete wall and remaining plaza structures removed, allowing freer access to the Playhouse and providing aesthetic consistency with the precinct.

The project aims to provide access and amenity for pedestrians using the precinct's facilities and public spaces. The project further aims to add value and appeal to the precinct so that the functional and economic potential of this area can be realised. In particular, the project aims to create safe, equal and convenient pedestrian linkages; contribute to the arts and cultural development of the precinct; act as a catalyst for complementary investment by existing and future commercial operators; promote the precinct as a meeting place and as an area for recreation and leisure activity; and, create a bridge design that is visually and structurally light in form, preserves the existing site plans and responds positively to the Riverbank master plan.

The project has an estimated capital cost of \$3 million, with recurrent costs of \$25 000 per annum from 2004-05, plus a 2.5 per cent inflation rate compounded annually. The key benefits of the project are in the improvement of public access, increased safety and greater amenity to the natural and built environment. Construction for the project is scheduled to commence in August 2003 and be completed in February 2004.

The committee accepts that the current project forms a component of the master plan for the Riverbank precinct and, as such, seeks integration with those stages already completed. The committee is concerned that the master plan, while pursuing a rejuvenated and integrated Riverbank precinct, may not contain sufficient detail or cohesion to enable stages to be implemented systematically or for maximum cost efficiency, which may result in the occasional duplication of services and/or work required and which also prevents the committee from evaluating broader infrastructure issues such as stormwater management across the precinct.

The committee accepts that the stages can be implemented only as funding becomes available, but is of the opinion that

more detailed forward planning with regard to the whole precinct could provide cost and time savings in the long term. The committee notes the need for a north-south link across the Festival Plaza to link the city with the river, but has some concern at the capital cost of the project and the estimated recurrent expenditure required to maintain the bridge.

The committee also notes the engineering data regarding the stability of the proposed bridge and will retain an interest in this aspect of the project. The committee would further suggest to the proponents of the project that they consider naming the bridge in a manner that would provide a sense of community participation and ownership in the project such as through a statewide competition for school children. The committee is further concerned that the construction of the disabled access ramps on the upper deck of the amphitheatre will damage the aesthetic and functional integrity of this space and feels that the objective of enabling disabled access from the plaza to the river could be achieved through other means with less obvious impact on the visible fabric of the Festival Theatre complex. The committee was told that alternative ramp structures such as a straight ramp between the Dunstan Playhouse and the Festival Theatre would impact backstage and service facilities in the complex, but the committee does not accept that the proposed ramp system is the only or most acceptable solution.

The committee is of the opinion that exposing the Dunstan Playhouse entrance may cause some difficulty to drop-off traffic in periods of inclement weather and feels that the option of providing temporary and aesthetically consistent cover, such as canvas, sails or awnings, would provide effective protection for patrons without negatively impacting on the visual impact or effectiveness of the complex. The committee is also of the view that the removal of exotic trees currently located to the west of the Dunstan Playhouse would provide an improved vista across the river from the proposed bridge and plaza complex. While the committee is supportive of the project as an effort to enhance the aesthetic and functional impact of the Festival Centre, it remains wary of the extent to which such projects are capable of compromising the iconic nature of these spaces. In this instance the committee is supportive of the project and the objective of reinvigorating the Riverbank Precinct. Pursuant to section 12(c) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee recommends the proposed public work.

**Mr BRINDAL (Unley):** I commend to the house the report delivered on behalf of the committee by its much respected Presiding Member, who is one of the people sitting opposite whom those on this side of the house most highly regard and whom we think one of those most likely to succeed. If I were a betting man I would have a little bit of money on him; he will go a long way in a very short time, especially judging by the poor performance of much of the front bench in the estimates committees.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr SNELLING):** Order! The member for Unley is out of his place and also off the topic.

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member for Unley is exercising his responsibility as leader of business for the opposition, and this is where we traditionally sit, sir. If you want me to go back to my place, I will.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I will give you some indulgence.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Good; he is often indulging me, that man. The substance of the matter before the Public Works Committee was, as the Presiding Member said, quite interesting. One of the things that the committee wrestled with was the idea of taking away a fairly large portion of the amphitheatre. As most members would know, the amphitheatre is probably not the most used space in the Festival Centre complex. Certainly compared with the use of the Dunstan Playhouse, the Space Theatre within the Dunstan Playhouse and the Festival Centre itself, it would probably be the least used venue. Nevertheless, as the chair said, it is regarded as an iconic space, and it is quite peaceful and a lovely place just to sit. I can remember that over the years it has been used for some quite good performances. I think one of the real points we laboured over was that, for some reason, it was thought that because they need wheelchair or ramp access the easiest thing to do is strip a bit of that out and take away that space. It was obvious in the evidence given before the committee that there were alternatives.

The committee questioned whether those alternatives have been vigorously pursued and whether they have been properly costed. If the committee had been presented with a viable, cost effective alternative, nearly all of us, if not all, would have preferred that some other alternative were adopted, rather than intrude on to the amphitheatre.

The other interesting aspect of this project is a fairly spectacular footbridge, and the design looks like a mini Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, on a much reduced scale. Because the Playhouse has been named after the late, great, in the government's opinion, premier of South Australia, Don Dunstan, I will be really interested to see after whom the bridge is named. Who will the Mini Me be who will be destined to lie forever at the feet of the great Don Dunstan, because the bridge literally leads to his front door? It will be interesting to see who the government nominates as the person to lie in front of Don Dunstan.

**Mr Caica:** We'll ask the school kids to do that; you know that.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I know, but I also know that, given the way the Labor Party runs competitions, it will ask the school kids to do it and, if they do not come up with the answer the government wants, through a raffle or something else, they will probably pay some other school kid to put in an answer that it wants and then it will declare that it is going to be called—

**The Hon. G.M. Gunn:** They'll get Nick Bolkus.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I do not think that my friend and colleague the member for Stuart is putting his name forward to have the bridge at the feet of Don Dunstan named after him. I could be wrong, and he could speak for himself, but I doubt that members on this side of the house will be queuing up to be the Mini Me at the feet of the great Don. Much as some members opposite might think it a great honour, I do not think that we do.

On a more serious note, this is an important project for the state and in many ways it represents the continuity of government in that it was a project started under the last Liberal government. The whole Riverbank project was to provide a very nice boulevard that will eventually stretch unbroken from the Convention Centre, down past the Hyatt and to King William Street. It will be a good promenade, at least as good and arguably better than Southbank in Victoria. This represents the second or third stage of the redevelopment of the Festival Centre precinct, and it is part of an integrated

plan for the development of the larger precinct. It will add to, rather than detract from, the amenity in the area.

However, in commending this report to the house, I make a plea to the executive government. The project is more or less halfway through, and one of the things that I am sorry about on the Liberal Party leaving government is that we have not been able to find the resources to complete the project. The completed project will be something of which every member who has served in this parliament, the last parliament and perhaps the next parliament will be rightly proud, because the completed version includes landscaping of the river bank from the Convention Centre plaza down to the river, as well as some striking amenity and feature to the river bank. As premier Olsen said to the house a couple of times, it will re-create in the river a focus for the whole of the city of Adelaide and it will provide links between North Terrace and the river. I am sure that members would agree that it is curious that, in a city that has quite a large river/ornamental lake and beautiful gardens—

**Mrs Redmond:** No, it is not large.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Well, it looks large. The member says that it is not large, but if you look at it around Elder Park, you would think it was as mighty as the Murray in places. It is about the same width, in fact there is a weir, but it is not very long—she is quite right about that.

*Mr Hanna interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** I would say that, for the benefit of the member for Mitchell, in certain places, the River Torrens is possibly a might cleaner than parts of the River Murray. As I said, this is another stage in a project, which, I hope, the executive government will continue to pursue, because when we come to leave this place (whenever that might be), if we are part of a new redesign of the Riverbank precinct and the concurrent revamping of North Terrace, we will all look back on those things that we are proud of. We will get a report in a couple of weeks on the refurbishment of the emergency wing of the Women's and Children's Hospital, and we have done things at the Flinders Medical Centre, but that is part of the ongoing work of the government and it is perhaps not noticed. However, something such as the redesign of the Festival Centre, Elder Gardens and the Riverbank precinct is something on which you can look back and say, 'I was part of that and I am proud to have been part of that.' I commend this report to the house. I hope that the government will not stop here, that is, it will take it further and look at those aspects where perhaps we are losing iconic spaces to provide wheelchair access. I believe there is a way of doing both.

Motion carried.

#### STATUTES AMENDMENT (DUTIES TO PREVENT FIRES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 4 June. Page 3392.)

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** I am normally hesitant to get to my feet, but this is one of those occasions where I am pleased to support the bill so ably introduced by my colleague the member for Mawson. From reading the second reading speech, I am aware that the architect was the member for Davenport in whose electorate, of course, there would be a number of properties where, unfortunately, the owners have failed to take adequate steps to ensure that they are not a fire hazard. As I see it, we have two classes of problems in South Australia at the present time. First, we have many farmers

who want to take preventative measures to lessen the effects of bushfires but who are not allowed to do so because of the archaic, stupid laws and regulations we have in place. Secondly, we have people who live in areas and who have failed to take adequate measures to make their properties safe from bushfires.

May I also say, in my view, there are certain areas of the state where homes have been built where, if we had our time over again, they probably would not have been built. In the future, we should ensure that our planning laws are such that, if people build in some of these places, they will be compelled to take adequate prevention measures, because the Country Fire Service and other volunteers are often called upon to attempt to save these properties and they place themselves in great danger and at tremendous cost to the taxpayers. These things all have to be borne in mind. In South Australia, we do have very restrictive measures in relation to constructing firebreaks through native vegetation.

Prior to coming into the chamber, I was preparing a submission to the Premier in which I provide him with a number of photographs of where fires have burnt into a property. Another set of photographs clearly demonstrates that there are two sets of rules, whereby National Parks constructed a firebreak in the Flinders Ranges National Park of some 40 paces in width. I do not object to it, but if I, as a farmer, or one of my neighbours, did anything similar they would have all these nasty little apparatchiks racing around, at tremendous cost, wanting to prosecute whoever put in such a firebreak overnight (and I would hope that it would be maintained on a permanent basis) without obtaining permission. It was drawn to my attention, and I went and had a look and took some photographs, because I think it is important to record this information. I then took some photographs of a legal, approximately five-metre, break on a private property, which would be inadequate to stop a bushfire.

I say to the minister for the environment (and all those other bits he now has attached to his portfolio) that he and his bureaucrats will have to accept the responsibility when people are burnt. They will also have to pick up the public liability when properties are damaged if they do not change these stupid laws quickly. We have had the bushfires summit, where everyone agreed that these laws had to be changed. The time for talking, publicity, action and beating one's chest about what a great thing this talkfest was has gone: we want action, we want it now, and we want it so it is there to protect the community and the volunteers—we all know what happened in Canberra and in New South Wales. There is no longer any excuse that people do not know, or are not aware; everyone knows what the answer is. The only ones who do not want to move are the foolish people like Jasemin Rose and that little group, who are impractical. They want to endanger the lives of the volunteers—

**Mr Hanna:** That's unfair.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** It is a fact. It is a fact of life. If the honourable member ever attempts to put out a bushfire with a five-metre firebreak of native vegetation and drive along at the back-burn, he will get more than singed. These people may be well meaning but, unfortunately, they are completely misguided and ill-informed—and I am being charitable to them. I make no apology for the comment. The legislation that the honourable member currently has before the house will assist the volunteers and the Country Fire Service in protecting the public.

I have a view that the head of the Country Fire Service and his board should have the authority to order private and

public land managers to take certain steps within a prescribed time. If they do not do it, he or she should have the authority to order the construction of firebreaks and hazard reduction programs, and to act quickly. I believe that, in council areas, the council should have the authority to direct that certain action be taken—whether it be the construction of a 10-metre or a 15-metre firebreak, burning off or hazard reduction.

If the government does not take up some of these suggestions in the near future, it is my intention to bring a private member's bill to the parliament to address some of these matters. Unfortunately, if we do not act, we will have a calamity, we will have a disaster, and it is too late then. The time has long since passed when we should be acting on these issues. Everyone has been warned, everyone knows that the law is an ass at the present time, and that it is only staying in place because of the attitude of a few anti-farmer, anti-development people, who are an impediment to the welfare of the people of South Australia—

*Mr Brindal interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** But the private land-holder is not allowed to do that. The private land-holder would be charged with contravening this crazy Native Vegetation Act and regulations. The point I am making is that the property owner should be able to do it. I have given the example—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** The honourable member has, as usual, worked herself up into a considerable lather about something. I do not know what has taken her fancy today. However—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, she is smiling, and she doesn't often do that.

*Ms Rankine interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Perhaps I was a bit uncharitable.

**Ms Rankine:** I'm always smiling at you.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I am pleased about that. The honourable member has made my day. I do not often have young ladies smile at me. Let me say that this is the first in a number of steps that need to be taken to bring some commonsense to apply to the prevention of bushfires in South Australia. The Country Fire Service does an excellent job. It has been well led. It needs these other tools to support it because the aim should be prevention, not putting out fires. There is huge cost and disruption to the community when massive bushfires take place; and one has only to see what is taking place in the United States at the present time, where there are huge, uncontrolled fires and the sort of efforts that need to be taken.

I support the bill. I commend the honourable member for introducing it. I hope that the government will pick up the bill and support it. I will in the near future bring in some other amendments to the Country Fire Service Act to strengthen the ability of those in charge, as well as local councils, to ensure that the public is protected and that private landholders can take steps to protect their own properties and, indeed, protect the community.

**Mrs GERAGHTY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### VALUATION OF LAND (ACCESS TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 14 May. Page 2985.)

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Snelling):** I call the member for Torrens.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Are you speaking?

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** No, I was going to move that the debate be adjourned.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** No, it is my bill. I speak and close the debate if no-one else is going to speak.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Torrens has the call.

**Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens):** I move:

That the debate be further adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

AYES (20)

Atkinson, M. J.	Bedford, F. E.
Breuer, L. R.	Caica, P.
Conlon, P. F.	Foley, K. O.
Geraghty, R. K. (teller)	Hill, J. D.
Key, S. W.	Koutsantonis, T.
McEwen, R.J.	O'Brien, M. F.
Rankine, J. M.	Rau, J. R.
Snelling, J. J.	Stevens, L.
Thompson, M. G.	Weatherill, J. W.
White, P. L.	Wright, M. J.

NOES (20)

Brindal, M. K. (teller)	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Chapman, V. A.
Evans, I. F.	Goldsworthy, R. M.
Gunn, G. M.	Hall, J. L.
Hamilton-Smith, M. L. J.	Hanna, K.
Kotz, D. C.	Maywald, K. A.
McFetridge, D.	Meier, E. J.
Penfold, E. M.	Redmond, I. M.
Scalzi, G.	Such, R. B.
Venning, I. H.	Williams, M. R.

PAIR(S)

Rann, M. D.	Kerin, R. G.
Lomax-Smith, J. D.	Brown, D. C.
Ciccarello, V.	Matthew, W. A.

**The SPEAKER:** There being 20 ayes and 20 noes, I give my casting vote for the noes on the ground that it is private members' time, and other Independent members, or those not aligned with either the opposition or the government, have chosen to vote in a manner that will enable the debate to proceed for such other length of time as the house will itself determine in due course.

Motion thus negatived.

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Industry, Trade and Regional Development):** There are a number of reasons why we do not support this particular action, the main one being that all parties agreed to a process and that process is not yet concluded. That process is to engage all the key stakeholders in discussions—the key stakeholders in this case being the City of Adelaide, the City of Port Adelaide Enfield, the Valuer-General, valuers from both those parties, and the Australian Hotels Association. All those parties are still in negotiation and all agree that they do not have a position at this stage. It would be enormously disrespectful to all those agencies to now force a position on them without actually having concluded that process.

I do not believe that anyone in this house, having once engaged all those key stakeholders in good faith, would now wish to pre-empt that. I am surprised that the shadow minister

is even attempting to force this matter to a vote at this stage, because he happens to be one of the members of that committee. Surely he, along with the rest of us, would be respectful enough to allow that to be concluded.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning):** I rise to oppose this proposition. This proposition, if passed, would make us a bit of a laughing stock across the country in terms of the process of the valuation of land. It introduces into the concept of the land valuation legislation a restriction that would seriously inhibit the ability of the Valuer-General to undertake his statutory functions in accordance with the Valuation of Land Act and, frankly, that would also include any other valuers undertaking valuations under section 168 of the Local Government Act.

It is obviously a cobbled together attempt by the member for Unley to jump on the bandwagon of some concern that has been raised. It has been worked through in an orderly basis, between the relevant stakeholders, and indeed there are a number of propositions which continue to be entertained by government about ways of solving this issue. The relevant issue arises in relation to the particular valuation processes being undertaken by just two councils in the state, yet this particular legislation is legislation of very broad scope that would affect the Valuer-General in all of his functions. So, it is a sledgehammer to crack a nut, a nut that we are attempting to open with a much blunter instrument, and that is through the process of negotiation.

The proposed legislation would be out of line with every other jurisdiction within Australasia. The ability of the Valuer-General to value specialised properties, such as hotels, would be compromised. The particular concerns that are raised here fundamentally relate to questions of concerns about privacy of this information. There are particular concerns that are raised by stakeholders, including the Hotels Association, about the way in which this information is being held by local councils and the potential use that it could be put to. As I understand it, these stakeholders have no particular difficulty with the Valuer-General undertaking this role. They are concerned, however, with the two councils who adopt their own in-house valuation processes.

The Australian Property Institute's draft guidance note on valuing specialised properties specifies that valuers should use the capitalisation of income approach on the basis of net operating profit and that at least three years' past trading history should be analysed. This information is sourced from the financial statements that the bill is actually seeking to restrict and this guidance note covers a number of property types, including hotels.

The industry groups and the standards that exist for the proper valuation of specialised properties dictate that this is the very information that is needed to carry out this task properly. There have been many court cases about the valuation of licensed premises, and all those decisions require the valuer to determine turnover and profitability in order to accurately assess the value of the hotel. What we have here is a proposition that would turn on its head decades of case law about the proper valuation of particular specialised properties. Financial information is required to value all specialised trading properties. This methodology is consistent with not only what is happening in Australasia but also the rest of the world. Specialised trading properties are not limited to hotels; they include motels, caravan parks, cinemas, private hospitals, licensed premises, nursing homes,

quarries and golf courses, and many more. This will seriously constrain the Valuer-General from accurately valuing these properties.

The bill extends the meaning of 'financial statements' significantly to incorporate a statement of cash flows. It is possibly an unintended consequence, but this prevents the Valuer-General or his representatives from verifying rental levels on any income earning property. This has the capacity to vastly reduce access to market information required for valuation purposes. This has the potential to impact on the accuracy of valuations of all investment properties, commercial and industrial premises, and the ability of the Valuer-General to defend such valuations. The valuation base within this state is a crucial piece of infrastructure. If the member for Unley's proposition succeeds, it will be essentially ruined as a means by which useful and defensible valuations can be carried out.

The nub of this debate was concern about confidentiality and, in particular, confidentiality in relation to two particular local government bodies. In relation to the Valuer-General, all information collected by him or his representatives under sections 26, 27 or 28, which could be construed as private or commercial in confidence, whether financial or otherwise, is treated as confidential. It is never—and never has been—provided to a third party. I ask all members to think carefully before they cast their vote in relation to this matter. The government has placed on the record its commitment to working through and finding a solution to the issues of concern raised by stakeholders, but we should not debauch the whole system of land valuation in this state, effectively, to respond to this issue. I ask all members to oppose this proposition or, at the very least, to defer it while further discussions, which are pending and which are currently being undertaken by both the Minister for Local Government and also officers of the department under my responsibility, are exhausted.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** I listened with interest to the minister's comments. I think he has actually missed the point. The point is that, in a decent society, people's private business information is entitled to be treated privately. It should not be available at will to bureaucracy—

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Tell that to John Howard.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I do not know what the relevance—

**Mr Koutsantonis:** It's one of the first things he did.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** More importantly, it appears to me that the government and its instrumentalities at every level are setting out to take away people's rights and impose draconian measures upon them. One of the problems, which society will face in the very near future, is that governments will give such tremendous powers to bureaucracies, and these particular instrumentalities will become so arrogant and have so little regard for the privacy, rights and integrity of the individual that we will end up with tremendous public anger. It is already starting to apply.

I want to bring to the minister's attention what happened last week when some of my colleagues and I visited the far north of the state. It was brought to our attention that officers of the Valuer-General's department went to Rawnsley Park, having been to Arkaroola, attempting to change the valuation system to slug those people in a quite outrageous manner. These operators provide wonderful services to the community at these venues, and one of them told us that the valuers said, 'And we are going to go after all the tourist operators.' So,

I take it that it is the policy of the government to slug the tourist industry. If that is the case, it is an absolute outrage.

The Valuer-General needs to clearly understand that these people have rights and that they cannot provide the services or maintain a business if they are unfairly taxed. Before this debate took place, I wrote a letter to the Premier, supplying some information from the Valuer-General's office which was provided to me by one of my constituents—and I raised it with the Premier during estimates committee.

The debate on this bill gives me the opportunity today to raise my concerns. The member for MacKillop was present when we had the discussion, as were the member for Morphett and a couple of my other colleagues, and they were all appalled that these valuers would try to change the rules.

Arkaroola is a wilderness sanctuary which has protected the environment and provided a refuge for a number of animals. It has done wonderful work getting rid of the goats, and thousands of people go there every year. The cost of providing electricity would be in excess of \$90 000 per year.

**The Hon. J.W. Weatherill:** I hear you have done some work getting rid of goats.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Well, I have helped get rid of a few of them, and I make no apology for it. That is a slight skill that one or two of us may have—and there are not many up there at the present time. I am sure that the Minister for Emergency Services would like to join in on occasion, and we might be able to arrange something for him at another place that we are working on at the present time. I look forward to that.

Being sidetracked by the minister cannot get me away from the fact that it costs over \$90 000 a year to provide electricity to run the Arkaroola establishment, and they provide all their own water. Yet these valuers, sooled on by the Valuer General, want to up the ante on these hard-working, decent people, and it is an absolute outrage. I say to the Valuer General: where does he want to end up? What does he want for South Australia? Does he want to put these people out of business; does he want to belt the hotels around the ear; does he think people will continue to invest if their private information is going to be handed to the bureaucracy? What secrecy provisions are there to prevent that? Why should they know what the turnover is? It is nothing to do with the value of the property. When the Valuer-General sent these questionnaires to farmers, I had a discussion and told him it had nothing to do with him, and I stand by that.

I look forward to the next Liberal government dealing with these sorts of people. They need to be dealt with. I look forward to it, and they should be put on notice that Sir Humphrey may be important today but they should remember that the day of judgment of such people always comes around. We will note their behaviour, who they are and what the process is.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Stuart makes an unfair reflection on the public servants towards whom he is directing his remarks. He is imputing that they are not carrying out their duties in a bona fide fashion but rather have a vendetta against a particular group of citizens.

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable minister may seek some acknowledgment for the nobility of his cause in championing the integrity and reputation of the Public Service, but the parliament is unfettered in its responsibility to examine and comment upon that according to the subjective inclinations of any member from time to time. There is no point of order.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I do not want to unduly upset the minister. He needs to understand that he is here not as an agent of a bureaucracy or to legislate on their behalf but to protect the welfare of the average citizen. This legislation clearly indicates that the average citizen has rights. The minister has failed to appreciate that when an ordinary citizen is challenged by government, its agencies or the bureaucracy, he or she is at a great disadvantage because many are not aware of their rights and do not have access to legal representation. The government has unlimited opportunity to challenge them with its legal apparatus and resources.

I say to the minister: be cautious about sticking up for the Sir Humphreys all the time because they are not always right. If the honourable member had sat in an electorate office a little more than he has, he would know that and have to deal with some of these cases, particularly where there are people involved. In the minister's case, it would not really matter if he never went to his electorate office. I have had electorates like that in the past. I have had electorates where I have had 75 per cent of the vote. Minister, you want to be careful: some villain might change the rules, and West Lakes might grow rapidly with some really good stuff. You might get caught up in it, and you will be a bit more interested when some of these people come to you with some of these difficult cases where they have been the victims of some terrible, unfair actions taken against them.

**The Hon. J.W. Weatherill:** You wouldn't know what it is like to represent a seat like mine. You would not know what it is like.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** I have 1 100 Housing Trust houses in my constituency at Port Augusta, so I reckon I have some idea of what it is like. I make myself available. I am aware of what difficult neighbours are like. I am aware what happens when people cannot pay their power bills and who has to sometimes pay for them, and so on. I am very much aware of those things. I say to the minister: be aware at the end of the day that this parliament is imposing unreasonable conditions on people—and it should not be. We have every right to indicate the steps that we will take in the future to correct wrongs. That is the role of parliament. That is why we have elections, and that is why the parliament assembles—not to sit to support unfair and unreasonable actions.

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** This is important legislation that the member for Unley has brought to the house. I am disappointed at the minister's comments a few minutes ago in the house that the government does not recognise and does not seem to understand where the rating that provides the revenues for local government should be based. It does not seem to understand the history of it or the relationship between the rating of land—whether it be unimproved, improved or capital value—and the services provided by the local government sector, that third level of government. It does not seem to understand that there is not necessarily a connection between the profitability of a business and the capital valuation of the site on which that business operates.

I accept that quite often the site can mean that a business may be more profitable. If you put the same business manager in the same business on two different sites, the site may have some influence on the profitability. However, I would contend that the biggest influence on the profitability of a business would be the way in which it is managed. A poor manager in a particular business on a very good site will never do as well as an excellent manager on a mediocre or not

so beneficial site. I am not suggesting that the site has no influence at all, but I think the management has a significant effect on the profitability of any business. Whether it is a hotel with or without gaming machines, the way in which the business is managed has a large influence on its profitability. Why would this parliament—and why would this government and this minister—seek to provide local government with the power to tax management skills? That is what this is about: it is about whether we will allow the Valuer-General to use a system to set valuations which will allow local government to tax management skills.

The member for Stuart spoke about the fact that he and some other members recently travelled through parts of his electorate. We visited Arkaroola and a number of other places. We spoke to Doug Sprigg, the principal of Arkaroola Station, about his business there. As the member has said, it is a very well run tourist business and, because it is a very well run tourist business—it is run by a family who have worked in the industry for a great number years and who have a great understanding of the landscape and have developed a great understanding of the business they operate—it is a profitable business. That does not necessarily mean that, intrinsically, the value of that property has increased. However, that is what the minister and the government would have us believe in their opposition to this measure. They would have us believe that, because you appoint a good manager who runs a successful business, that automatically makes the property more valuable and automatically generates a greater amount of rate revenue for the local council. I think that is a nonsense.

I do not think that we should be going down the road where we start to base rates on management. We should not be giving local government the ability to set their rates, depending on the profitability of a certain site. If I have time, I might go further with that argument. As all members know, I represent a rural area, and most of the businesses (by number at least) in my electorate are farms. As anyone who understands the farming sector would know, neighbouring farms will be involved in quite different enterprises: one might be running sheep and one might be running cattle, another might be cropping and another might be a mixture of those enterprises.

Anyone who understands farming systems and the economies of primary industries would also know that, by and large, all farming enterprises suffer from very cyclical economic conditions. So, one day, you might have a very profitable sheep property next door to a cattle farmer who is suffering fairly hard times. Several years down the track, you might have the opposite situation. How ludicrous would it be for the Valuer-General to walk onto a farm and demand to see the books and set a sheep farmer a different rate from that of a cattle farmer on an identical neighbouring property?

That is the sort of direction in which we would be heading. In fact, it is the sort of direction in which we are heading. At the moment, the Valuer-General is only picking on certain industries and businesses and saying, 'We need to see your books.' If we allow the Valuer-General free reign in this area, it will not be very long before he is tackling other businesses and other scenarios, such as the one I have just painted where two farms might have at least a similar (if not an identical) valuation but the valuation might be completely different purely because one farmer runs sheep and one runs cattle. It might be valued differently even if they both ran sheep but one ran merino sheep to produce wool and the other ran cross-bred sheep to produce lambs. It is as simple as that. I

contend that the Valuer-General should desist from seeking new methods of refining his art. He should concentrate on the methods that have been used for many generations to adopt a fair and reasonable valuation.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Exactly. The land and businesses that he values are changing hands all the time. Many years ago I heard it said that the equivalent of all property in South Australia changes hands every 23 years. I do not know whether that is still the case, but I was told that many years ago. So, the Valuer-General could not mount an argument to say that there is not enough evidence in the marketplace upon which he can determine the valuation of any property, irrespective of the business being conducted on that property.

The Valuer-General seeks to put a valuation on licences granted by the government for certain types of businesses, but the licence is attached to the person operating the business, not the property. For instance, a person might buy a property on which a hotel has been established but not be a sound and fit person to hold a liquor licence. Would the Valuer-General change the valuation on that property because of the nature or the fitness or the character of the owner? I think not. I do not think the valuation of a property should be determined on the character or nature of the person who owns the property; the valuation is actually intrinsic in the property.

As I said, it may have a little to do with the business that is being conducted on that property, but I do not think we should give unfettered ability to the Valuer-General to use that sort of an approach when arriving at a valuation. There is plenty of evidence in the marketplace. The Valuer-General has access to all the sales, and he has experts working within his department who, in situations where there are not many sales in a particular locality over a short period of time, can use other methods to arrive at a valuation.

I also agree with what the member for Stuart said about not giving access to private, personal and confidential information to the Valuer-General. The minister might well say that confidentiality is protected, but I do not think we should risk that in this case, because there are many other methods by which the Valuer-General can make a valuation. Once again, I commend the member for Unley for bringing this measure before the house, and I hope that all the members of this house and the other place support this bill.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** We hear it all the time: location, location, location! Not unlike the beautiful areas of the South-East in the member for MacKillop's electorate, the electorate of Morphett that I represent, as we read in the newspaper the other day, is the most densely populated area outside of any CBD—the Manhattan of Australia. The property values in this area are astronomical. Just recently, a shop on Jetty Road, Glenelg sold for \$2.26 million (\$11 300 per square metre). If the Valuer-General wants to start setting values, let him look at what the market is paying. We do not want him to be a secret agent looking at private and confidential information.

I have a real problem when bureaucrats start setting the agendas in this place. I hark back to my days in my veterinary practice. I saw more dogs training their owners than owners training their dogs, and that is exactly what is happening here. The bureaucrats are running the departments. We are getting departmental-it is. Ministers have to stand up and say that this is not a commonsense way of doing things. Go away, think again, sit down, stay—drop this idea.



When I was involved in a large shopping centre running a veterinary practice, they wanted to plug my computers into their mainframe to find out what my turnover was so that they could set my rental. This is just a further step from that. Nobody has explained—and I fail to see any explanation—how, if you are renting a shop and the Valuer-General wants to determine the turnover for those premises so he can put a value on it and then charge land tax on that land, he will get access to the turnover. Will he expect the owner of the shop to demand that information from the shopkeeper? That is totally unreasonable and, as the member for MacKillop says, it will depend on the enterprise and the manager. Along Jetty Road at Glenelg we see many shops changing locations. They just move down the street to get a little more advantage from the location.

Even in a pristine and prime location like Jetty Road, Glenelg, some shop owners think there is a better opportunity if they move. I saw that recently where a shop moved only a matter of 20 yards, but they thought there was better exposure and hoped their turnover would increase. However, it did not increase the value of the property because the enterprises in that location were still so varied that you could not consider them as being a core base on which to value the property. Certainly it is only what the market will pay. At \$2.26 million for the shop in Jetty Road, you would have to get a rental return of about \$800 a square metre per annum. How many shops down there are paying that I am not sure. Most are paying \$500 or \$600, which is an incredible rental.

You have to be a very skilled manager to run an enterprise, pay those rents, make some money and enjoy your life at the same time. If the Valuer-General looks at those enterprises, sees the way those sharp operators are working and tries to set a value, how will that work? We saw Hungry Jacks shut down because it was not making any money. A number of shops come in, try out the location and find that their enterprise does not match the location and it does not succeed, whether because of the location, the enterprise or the management practices. You cannot use this system to value properties. The capital value and market value of a property are a long way apart. If members come to the district of Morphett, they will see that.

If one looks at the rates being charged by the City of Holdfast Bay, one will see, I am pleased to say, that the capital value on the rate notices is a long way below the market value. I make it very clear that, the day the capital value matches the market value at Glenelg, you will see not businesses closing but many home owners being forced from their homes. This is where we have to be careful about how we value properties. When we approach a business and start demanding the figures, the turnover and the financials, it is *1984* George Orwell stuff—Big Brother is watching you! This is where we start encouraging and forcing people to try to minimise their financial statements. We will have bottom of the harbour schemes—we do not want to see bottom of the bay schemes, with people having to minimise their turnover with two sets of books, because the Valuer-General will come in and charge like a wounded bull when he wants to value their property. This is private information. It is up to the individual shop owner to decide how they run their enterprise. That will then have a huge influence on the turnover of the business.

There is an old saying that turnover is vanity, profit is sanity. I know some businesses have a huge turnover but the bottom line, the profit, is minimal. I know of businesses where they have huge turnovers, yet they have gone broke.

If you are turning over \$10 million a year it sounds fantastic, but if your costs are \$10 000 001 a year, you are still going broke in anyone's language. To determine the valuation of a property you have to look at the bricks and mortar, the location and the sales going on in the district and see what is happening with the general trend in the area. We need to see whether they are knocking over old buildings and putting new buildings on the site, look at the site value and the capital improvements. We do not simply look at the enterprise or we will get a very skewed idea of what the land is worth. It is a ridiculous idea to go in and start looking at turnover. We have to use commonsense.

I support the amendment to be moved by the member for Unley and I urge the minister to go back and tell the dogs to sit down, stay where they are and stop slathering, slobbering and champing at the bit to get their teeth into people's profit and loss statements, their cash flows, and into their private lives and businesses.

The days of the communist proletariat running every business have long gone. We do not want to see them come back, and certainly in South Australia I will fight until my last breath to make sure that free enterprise is allowed to prosper and develop in this state. We have seen the push for extended shopping hours. We know the effects that will occur there. We know that people are having to work very hard to make a living nowadays, and it is very important that we do not get in their way and put more disincentives in the way of their making a living. This small amendment is a valuable one. Let us not stuff up the valuation of land.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I will not speak for very long, but I certainly want to support the motion. I am quite amazed at what some of our authorities will try to do. Being a land owner myself, I cannot believe how the Valuer-General can enter into an arrangement such as this. I was one of the members who went to the north last week and happened to come upon this issue, as previous speakers have said. I could not believe when it was raised with us that they were attempting to change the valuation of that part of his property where the resort was situated. They were then intending to charge extra for that, because that area was rated differently from the rest of the property, which comprised hills, valleys, roads and everything else. This matter was raised and we could not believe this was happening. When one gets back into this parliament one understands that the member for Unley has had similar problems with the Adelaide City Council; the principle is exactly the same. I certainly support the member for Unley and the others who have spoken here. All those who went on this trip have spoken today, and I certainly agree very strongly with the sentiments of the members for Stuart, MacKillop and Morphett. You see it at first hand and do not realise that this could actually happen.

I could not believe that the Valuer-General would do this. I understand that the Valuer-General has to value a property at a value that it would realise at a sale at a given date. But I cannot believe that this measure could come in where an inflated extra value is built around turnover. In establishing this valuation, I cannot believe that, in this day and age of privacy and civil liberty, people could be forced to hand over a copy of their balance sheet so that the Valuer-General can establish the turnover of the property involved. I cannot believe this is true, and I am yet to hear from the minister or anyone else backing this situation. Surely this is a try-on,

surely it is an issue out on the side and surely this would not be allowed by this parliament.

I certainly support my colleagues, particularly the member for Unley, in bringing up this issue, and I think it is very clever of him to have picked it up. I cannot understand why the Valuer-General should want to branch into this area, because we know that house and property values are skyrocketing so much that I am very concerned that to the average person the cost of a house is getting out of reach. We do not need to add further to overall valuations by adding complications such as this. Without further ado, I support the member for Unley's motion and support all those who have spoken before me.

**Mrs GERAGHTY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable:

(a) one second reading debate on the Statutes Amendment (Nuclear Waste) Bill and the Public Park Bill;

(b) separate questions to be put on each bill at the conclusion of that debate; and

(c) the bills to be considered in one committee of the whole house.

*While the bells were ringing:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** On a point of order, it sounded very complex, and I seek your advice, sir. If we suspend standing orders, I suspect that we can do anything, but are there any things we cannot do if we suspend standing orders? Is it still orderly to do this sort of thing? Is what is being proposed orderly, even though we are suspending standing orders?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, it is.

Motion carried.

### STAMP DUTIES (EQUAL ENTITLEMENTS FOR SAME SEX PARTNERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 30 April. Page 2842.)

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** I support the bill. I am fairly familiar with the terms of section 71CB of the Stamp Duties Act because it was something I came across in practice often. At the moment, that particular section, for stamp duties purposes, provides for there to be an exemption on properties passing between either married couples or de facto couples when they separate and divorce or, indeed, even when they stay together. For instance, quite recently in the latter part of my practising career a situation arose where a client had a property in his own name and he had been married to the same person for 30 years. When he discovered that, if he died, that property would pass through his estate, rather than automatically to his spouse, he wished to transfer the property so that it was in joint names.

The effect of that would be that that property would automatically pass to his spouse in the event of his becoming deceased. That is a standard provision in our stamp duties legislation and, as I understand it, all that this bill seeks to do is to make that same amenity available for people in same sex relationships, who have been in that relationship (as for de facto couples) for a period of at least three years. On that basis, it seems to me that, to be consistent with other legislative provisions which we have passed recently through

this house, it is only reasonable that people who are in a bona fide same sex relationship and either are splitting up or wishing to ensure that their partner can have that benefit should be able to gain an exemption, in the event that they make application and sign the necessary statutory declaration to be lodged with the stamp duties commissioner.

The bill seems to me to be quite simple in its terms and essentially deals only with the definition; that is, to change the definition of what currently has been 'spouse', and I think the other one was 'de facto relationship'. What will now occur is that there will be a definition of 'same sex partner' and 'domestic partner'. It will simply impact on the provisions of sections 71CB and 71CC of the Stamp Duties Act, so that it gives people in a same sex relationship—in exactly the same circumstances as if in a heterosexual de facto relationship or a married relationship—the rights which would normally accrue to them under that act to obtain exemption from stamp duty, if they seek to have some sort of transfer of the property. As is the current situation for these people, it will only apply to what is essentially the matrimonial home, or the former matrimonial home (now the domestic partner home): it will not give them any further rights than what is currently the case for people in de facto relationships or marriages. On that basis, it seems to me to be only fair, equitable and reasonable that this bill be supported.

*[Sitting suspended from 6.02 to 7.30 p.m.]*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Acting Premier):** I commend the member for Mitchell for this initiative. It is consistent with endeavours by this government and others to ensure that we modernise legislation in this state—progressive law reform which, as I said, has been a consistent hallmark of this government, I believe, in this area in particular. In this instance, the government is supportive of the measure put forward by the member, but I understand that the Attorney-General is undertaking a comprehensive review of the issue of same sex couples as it relates to all major pieces of legislation. The preferred position of the government is to have a consolidated approach (perhaps that may be in the form of an omnibus bill, or however the Attorney chooses to address this matter). But there would be a broader sweep of legislation that needs this type of reform. From my position as the Treasurer of the state, I support the measure. I think it is a sound, sensible measure, and from the Treasury portfolio of this government we will be supporting this measure. But it will be for my colleague the Attorney-General to determine the timing, which I assume will be later this year, if not early next year.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I commend the member for Mitchell for his consistency and for his commitment. There was no doubt, if you believe in same sex legislation, that a bill such as this would follow. However, with all due respect to the member for Mitchell, I oppose this bill, because I, too, base my argument on consistency, and—

**Ms Thompson:** But not logic.

**Mr SCALZI:** Unfortunately, a lot of members in this place who have been critical of my approach to this issue have not put forward a logical argument in this place. But I believe it is important that we do so for the sake of our constituents. I do not support the bill. The Deputy Premier has said that there is a discussion paper that the government has put forward on removing legislative discrimination

against same sex couples. I note that, on 17 February, the Attorney-General said:

... to remove unjustified discrimination against same sex couples.

The Attorney said 'unjust discrimination', which would imply that there is such a thing as just discrimination.

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Unjustified discrimination. It would therefore mean that there is justified discrimination. I believe that we should be able to discriminate in favour of marriage.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The time for private members' business has expired. The member for Hartley will have the right to continue next time we attend to private members' business.

Debate adjourned.

### CORA BARCLAY CENTRE

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** I seek leave to make a brief ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I responded to a question from the member for Wright on the Cora Barclay Centre today in question time. In relation to the deputy leader of the opposition's decision whether to provide funding to the centre in 2001, I said:

The former education minister waited two months for a response from his good friend and, when it came, it was somewhat disappointing because the deputy leader, as the then health minister, refused. He simply said, no. No funding from him for the Cora Barclay!

I went on to state that the minute informing minister Buckby of this decision came from the Hon. Robert Lawson MLC because, as I said to the house, the former minister for human services could not be bothered to write the letter himself and that the Hon. Robert Lawson MLC was his junior minister responsible for disability services. And, as I said, I understand they also shared an office. The two statements are not intended to be inconsistent. While the paperwork shows that the junior minister took the decision, I believe it is reasonable for me to assume that, since the request for funding was made direct to the former minister for human services, and the letter rejecting it came from his junior ministerial colleague, the former minister for human services would have been aware of the decision to deny funding.

The former minister for human services was asked in the letter from the former minister for education to provide funding to the Cora Barclay Centre. That request was refused. If the former minister was not aware of his junior ministerial colleague's decision, given he was his junior minister, he should have been and it would cast serious doubt on the relationship between the senior minister and the junior minister and the competence of that minister.

### JOINT COMMITTEE ON IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION FOR CERTAIN SEXUAL OFFENCES

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** I move:

That the final report of the committee be noted.

This is an anticlimax because the government has already moved swiftly to carry out the major recommendations of the joint select committee. The committee's chair was the Hon. Gail Gago. Other members were the Hon. Andrew Evans, the Hon. Robert Lawson and the members for Reynell, Enfield

and Hartley. The joint committee was established on 29 August 2002 after the Hon. Andrew Evans had introduced in another place a private member's bill, the Criminal Law Consolidation (Abolition of Time Limit for Prosecution of Certain Sexual Offences) Amendment Bill.

The Hon. Mr Evans withdrew his bill to allow the committee to perform the task of evaluating the issues raised by the bill. The committee did so, producing a unanimous report, which was tabled on 28 May 2003. Within days of the committee's report being tabled, the government reached agreement with the Hon. Andrew Evans to have his private member's bill reintroduced and supported by the government. On Tuesday 3 June, the bill was reintroduced in the other place and passed the same day.

The next day it was introduced in this place and passed that evening. The bill received the Governor's assent on Tuesday 17 June and came into operation. The effect of this was to amend the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 by inserting a very brief next section, 72A. That section provides:

Any immunity from prosecution arising because of the time limit imposed by the former section 76A is abolished.

This process has given effect to the major recommendation of the committee to abolish the former immunity from prosecution for sexual offences that allegedly occurred before 1 December 1982.

On Wednesday 4 June, I delivered the second reading explanation for the bill. That speech addresses the major issues raised by the committee's report and the introduction of the bill. There is no need for me to cover the same information again today. Instead, I would like to thank members of the committee for their diligence in preparing the report.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

*A quorum having been formed.*

### SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CROWN LANDS (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation):** I move:

That the final report of the committee be noted.

As members know, the government's budget last year contained a proposition in relation to crown leases that proposed to put a minimum rent of \$300 in place. The legislation was introduced into this place. A select committee was established and has been examining that issue ever since. The select committee issued an interim report towards the end of last year, and a final report approximately a month ago. We, as a committee, discussed a huge range of issues. I think it is fair to say that the issue of the minimum rental was not resolved unanimously. However, the government did alter its position to pick up a suggestion made by one of the committee members that, rather than a minimum rent, we should adopt a service charge of \$300 for each crown lease that the department has to manage. There was a wide range of other matters discussed by the committee which had absolutely nothing to do with the legislation before the house or before the committee. In fact, the majority of the debate was about the conditions that might apply. The government was

persuaded by the entreaties of various members of the committee and members of the community who made representations to support a rapid freeholding policy so that this archaic form of land tenure—a perpetual lease—could be taken off our books.

To that end, sometime earlier this year I had my department write to all the perpetual lessees (other than those in the rangelands and the transition zones) offering them an opportunity to freehold at a price discounted from the \$6 000 announced by the government in the last budget, and giving them until some stage in September to do so. To date, 2 500 out of the 7 000 or so perpetual leaseholders have accepted that offer. I have arranged for my department to write to the leaseholders again with the changed conditions that were recommended by the select committee. Those changes give some substantial benefits to perpetual leaseholders, and try to take into account principles of equity as well as notions of hardship.

We have a provision which allows a certain amount of flexibility by a tribunal or an advisory committee which will be established under the chair of a judge or a suitably qualified person. That person will be advised by a couple of people from the SA Farmers Federation and Crown Lands and will make recommendations to me about issues to do with equity across a whole range of classes of perpetual leaseholders, particularly those who are required to operate under the current arrangements. The arrangement was in place well before this government came into office that a minimum cost for freeholding would be 20 times the rents that were paid. A range of other categories were also included.

In addition, the committee has recommended, and I certainly supported this, that a longer period be available for leaseholders who had waterfront properties, whether coastal or river frontage. So, there is a range of measures in there which will make it easier for people. I would certainly like to see this bill now passed through the parliament as rapidly as possible. I understand there is a long list of legislation that has to go through the parliament before the end of session, but I certainly believe it would be good if we got this legislation through. I would like to thank the members of the committee for the work they did in preparing this document. We did not agree on all things but I think we reached a reasonable amount of consensus on many things. It was a very good committee, as the Chair, the member for Fisher, said, and in particular I thank him for the sterling job he did as the Chair and, of course, the officers who helped us and all those who provided evidence to the committee. So, with those few words I conclude my remarks and commend the report to the house.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH:** I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

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

Motion carried.

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

**Ms THOMPSON:** I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

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

Motion carried.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** I move:

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

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light):** I rise to talk about the estimates committees. In terms of transport and planning, I had the opportunity to question those ministers, and one would have to say that the outcome was somewhat disappointing. In fact, the length of some answers by the ministers and the opportunity the opposition had to ask only a relatively few number of questions shows the arrogance of this government. I believe it is time that this parliament had a good look at the whole estimates procedure.

The current procedure was brought in by a former Liberal government in 1979 with the view of allowing the opposition to be able to genuinely question the government of the day; and the same operation has existed for governments of both persuasions. But I feel that it is losing its way. I know of many cases where ministers have given answers that have lasted for 20 minutes in this set of estimates. As I said, it applies to governments of both persuasions. It was set up to enable the opposition to question the government. I think it is losing its way and this government, while claiming to be open and accountable and laying issues on the table for questioning, I believe showed its absolute arrogance in terms of having as few questions asked by the opposition as possible. That should be a disappointment to the South Australian public, and demonstrates to me that the claims of openness and accountability and answering questions really counts for nothing when one hears the rhetoric from this government.

A number of issues came out of the estimates committees which, again, shows the government's arrogance. One of those things was Outback road gangs. Last year in its budget, the government cut one Outback road gang out of the two gangs we had. It was a cut of \$1 million. Numerous people—in fact, I have lost count of the number of people—have telephoned either radio stations or my office or contacted me about the condition of our Outback roads. They are deteriorating at a rapid rate. I made the minister aware of the views of the owner of the Copley garage and the fact that he is currently purchasing 20 new tyres per week to replace the tyres of people who are getting punctures around Copley. He advised my office that the same story can be told at Leigh Creek and Arkaroola and, when I asked the minister whether he would consider reinstating the funding that he cut last year because of these reports, the answer was a flat no.

It is all very well when you live in the city and do not have to bother about driving over country roads, dirt roads or, even worse, outback roads, because you do not encounter those conditions, but for the people in the Outback it is a daily issue that they have to face. Tyres, as members know, do not come

at a minuscule cost and, when you drive over these roads and have to replace tyres or suspension because of the poor quality of the road, it is a real problem. It is all very well for the minister to sit back in comfort, driving on bitumen roads but, for these people, it is a real problem. As I said, for the minister to just wipe the problem aside and say that as far as he is concerned there is nothing wrong with the roads and they are in good condition shows again the arrogance of this government.

I guess that, if you fly over them and view them from 3 000 feet rather than travelling on them for a few thousand kilometres, you would probably take the view that they are okay, because they look all right from 3 000 feet up. But the Copley garage owner tells us that there are roads that have not been graded since the Year of the Outback and that corrugations stand eight inches high, creating a ball bearing effect on the suspension of cars as they drive along. One of my friends who has a station out from Yunta says it is a waste of time buying a new car because the thing would be wrecked inside a matter of 12 months or 18 months because of the state of the roads, so people in that area stick with their old cars and keep repairing them because it is a waste of money to go and buy a new one.

So, as I say, it is all very well in the comfort of the city, driving on bitumen roads every day of the week and not encountering these conditions, just to wipe the issue away and say that it is not a problem. Well, it is a problem, and I will continue to harass the minister about this because people in the Outback have no choice but to drive over these roads, and they have no choice in the way they get stuck off their stations. It is a cost that they should not have to bear in terms of these roads being in poor condition. Many of the roads, it is reported to me, have worn back to the shale underneath the sheeting in many sections and that is what is causing the damage in terms of punctures to tyres.

There are other issues that I am concerned about arising from the estimates committees. One of the cost-cutting measures of this government is the elimination of poorly patronised bus services. I am advised that these are bus services that operate late at night. Naturally there will not be a plethora of people using these bus services late at night, but the whole idea of a public transport system is that, where there is a market failure (in other words, where there are not enough customers to support the service), the government steps in and supplies the service. So, I will be interested to see whether these are the services that will be reduced.

What happens to the people who are shift workers who might happen to use public transport to get home? What happens to those people who have gone out to dinner and are doing the right thing using the bus service and not wanting to drive home after consuming alcohol? What happens to them if they have to wait for half an hour or an hour at a bus stop? What other opportunity is there if they cannot afford a taxi and the government has withdrawn these services?

As I said, there are savings of an estimated \$1.85 million this year and \$1.95 million ongoing. Again, that it will withdraw these services just highlights the arrogance of this government. It does not matter a tinker about the people such as those on night shift who might happen to rely on public transport services for getting home at night. It is a matter of, 'Bad luck!' And all this in a budget that has delivered a surplus!

The RAA is not impressed with this budget, either. In the latest magazine, President Graham Walters says:

Despite the South Australian government itself acknowledging the existence of a huge \$116m backlog in State road maintenance, there has been no allocation to address this, and our road network is set to continue to deteriorate. The recently released Draft Transport Plan commits to clearing this backlog by 2018—but a 15-year time frame is completely unacceptable.

The letter continues:

Speeding fines go into the Community and Road Safety Fund to be spent on road safety. However, the RAA is aware that this Fund really just represents an accounting entry with monies from the fund simply replacing money which previously came from general revenue. In effect, it is a 'budget neutral' move and there is no extra money for road safety. It is totally unacceptable that South Australians pay increasingly more money on vehicle registration and licence fees as well as fines, plus some \$13m in fuel tax, and that this all goes straight into general revenue.

Again, it just shows that what this government says and does are two entirely different things.

I raised with the minister the issue of the Glenelg trams. Last year, the minister said that he would be continuing to investigate a private public partnership for this project. The former government and the former minister for transport (Hon. Diana Laidlaw) put this forward as buying eight new trams under a public private partnership (PPP), and for good reason. The fact is that there is good interest from the private sector in getting involved in this sort of enterprise. The fact is that you can save well needed government money in undertaking a public private partnership. Yet, this government has decided to use its own money rather than being able to tap into private sector funding. It harks back to this government's dislike of private industry and its choosing not to get involved with it. It is an opportunity lost.

It was interesting to note that in the budget papers, under the staffing of the Department for Transport and Planning, there would be a reduction of some 210 staff. When I questioned the minister on this, he said that it was a clerical error. As a former minister, I know that basically you signed off on the budget papers and either Treasury or your own department put those figures to you. I find it very interesting that a clerical error has got into the final draft of the budget papers.

Those papers showed that some 170 staff would disappear from Transport SA. The minister advised the Estimates Committee that it was a clerical error and that only 74 will disappear from Transport SA, whether they be through natural attrition, TVSPs or whatever. He said that most of these would be in back office areas. I raised with him the matter of what sort of impact this would have on service delivery to the public of South Australia. I cannot see how, when you reduce numbers by that amount, it cannot have some effect on the delivery of service by the department to the public of South Australia. The minister said that it would have no effect and that these were areas where they could gain efficiencies, thereby reducing the operational expenditure of the department. Well, I suppose we will wait and see.

Even if it is 74 people, those 74 people were obviously doing a job of some kind. I do not think that they were sitting there twiddling their fingers and sharpening pencils; they would have been undertaking some form of work, which, obviously, at the end of this financial year, they will not be doing any more. I assume we will be waiting even longer for a response from the minister to various questions from constituents, which will affect the service delivered to the South Australian public.

Another issue in the budget papers was the revenue that will be raised from a commercial fishing levy. I do not know

about you, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I remember that, prior to the election in 2002, the shadow treasurer and the then leader of the opposition (Hon. Mike Rann) said that there was no need to introduce additional taxes to fund the former Liberal government's budget and to fund those initiatives being put forward by the Labor Party at the election. They said that they had done their figures and there were sufficient funds there.

The Treasurer then came out and, in his first budget, created an artificial black hole. Of course, that was seen to be false when Access Economics, I think (and I stand to be corrected), showed that there was, in fact, a \$22 million surplus. Further, the Treasurer decided that he would not transfer some \$300 million—which had been the practice of previous governments, both Labor and Liberal, though not necessarily that amount—from the SAMAC accounts into the budget areas. Funnily enough, though, in this year's budget, the Treasurer has. So, one would have to ask, 'Why was it not suitable to transfer that funding last year for the budget, yet this year it is transferred?' It shows again the sheer arrogance of this government and of the Treasurer: he will manipulate the figures and transfer funds at will just to suit the argument he wants to put forward at the time. It shows to be a mockery the openness and accountability put forward by this government as one of the stakes in the ground upon which it will be judged. The openness and accountability suit only when the government decides to put them in place and use them.

We are still waiting to hear from last year's estimates where the savings will occur over the four-year term, and that was some 12 months ago. So, again, on one hand, the government says that it will be open and accountable but when it really comes to the crunch and they actually have to deliver, it is another story entirely. It just shows again the disdain and arrogance this government has for both the opposition and the public of South Australia, and that is extremely disappointing.

We also had the opportunity to question the ministers responsible for the offices of the North and the South. While I see the reason for an Office for the South, the Northern Adelaide Development Board is currently undertaking all of those processes in the north.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Not any more.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:** Why? Have you sacked them?

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** No, we haven't sacked them.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:** Well, what are you doing with them?

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** We're amalgamating them.

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:** The minister says that he is amalgamating them. He should know that all the functions to be undertaken by the Office of the North—this entity that is going to pull together economic development and training and all those things—are currently being performed by the Northern Adelaide Development Board. This is purely a duplication of the work of that board. The minister listed the groups that will form this entity and develop this policy. I well know that the Northern Adelaide Development Board already consults with those groups. So, as I say, I see this purely as duplication. Because there was an Office of the South, they said, 'My gosh, we'd better not be seen as neglecting the north; we'd better stick in an office for the north.' We will see what happens over time.

The estimates committee has deteriorated into a committee designed to stop the opposition from asking as many questions as possible. If the government was serious about openness and accountability, government members would not

ask any questions—this happened in some instances—and allow the opposition to ask questions unfettered. This would allow the government to be questioned on its budget genuinely, openly and with full accountability. I am sure that will not happen with this government, because they speak with pure rhetoric about openness and accountability. I am quite sure that we will not see any openness at all.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** It is with pleasure that I rise to speak to the motion. I started my experience with this estimates committee with B1—Bully No. 1, the Treasurer—on the first day of the estimates. Mr Deputy Speaker, you were the chairman of the committee, if I recall correctly. The highlight of the day is what is known around media circles in the parliament as 'the lunchtime review'. Before lunch, we asked a number of questions about consultancies. The member for Kavel asked whether it is true that the new Treasurer's instruction means that consultancies under \$500 000 would be kept secret—because the government claims to be open and accountable. The Treasurer in his usual style bashed us around the head with a few comments, such as, 'That wouldn't be right'; 'That's the policy'; 'Go and read it.' He confirmed that the Treasurer's instruction had come to him before it went to cabinet, and that cabinet had signed it off. This is the Treasurer's instruction which had the support of the highest levels of government.

All of a sudden, there was a lunchtime meeting. The penny dropped. The Treasurer's comments about this Treasurer's instruction were wrong. In actual fact the Treasurer's instruction did mean that consultancies of less than \$500 000 would be kept secret by the government and not disclosed. There was a quick lunchtime review and, all of a sudden, the Treasurer comes back and in his usual humble way says, 'Guess what? Now we're going to make it so that any consultancy over \$25 000 will be made public.' We had quite an experience with the Treasurer and the arrogant manner in which this estimates committee was undertaken. The general view of the media was that it was one of the more arrogant performances seen at an estimates committee hearing. We received answers from the Treasurer such as: 'You can answer your own question by reading the budget papers'; 'I point the member to the budget papers'; or 'Read the budget papers; I'm not here to do your work for you.' When you are trying to explore the budget and you receive those sorts of answers, the only conclusion you can draw from that is that the Treasurer had a completely arrogant approach to the whole estimates exercise.

The other beauty that came out was how Treasury is being treated specially by the Treasurer and that the other departments are being done over. The classic example was the underspend of the Treasury Department of \$6.9 million in the past year. The Treasurer's own department—Treasury—gets to keep it, but if we go and ask the other ministers—the ministers for health or education—whether they got to keep the underspend, of course they did not. The Treasurer and Treasury boffins are in there using one policy for Treasury, but the other ministers with priorities (if I recall, at the last election the priorities were health and education) get done over on their underspending, but the Treasurer and Treasury make sure that their little areas of the budget are treated differently from the rest of cabinet.

Cabinet ministers can think about whether this Treasurer is doing them over on detail. They need to ask themselves: why is it that Treasury is getting treated differently from the other agencies? Why is it that Treasury is being treated

differently by the Treasurer than are other agencies? That was the classic! The real example was that the Treasurer was in control: he will do what he wants and the other agencies can like it or lump it. The whole message is an interesting one for the government to consider.

The other issue I found really interesting in the estimates committee with the Treasurer was the great claims that the Premier and the Treasurer had been making prior to the budget. They went through the usual exercise of making all the pre-budget leaks about all the good news in the budget and there was a classic where the Premier on behalf of the Treasurer was on radio saying things like, 'We will cut 11 per cent of our budget,' and 'We will put 11 per cent of the budget for the Premier's Department and Treasury'—the Treasurer's own department—'into health and education because that is where our priority is.' What happened? The Premier was out there and, to quote the radio transcript:

I mean, I have cut my own budget in my department—I cut about 11 per cent of my own budget from the Premier's Department. I have told the Treasurer that I will put that money into hospitals. He came out and matched it and said that he had cut his department by 11 per cent and that money was going into hospitals and schools. It is about priorities.

It is about priorities. What did we find out in the Treasurer's own estimates committees? We found from those committees that the expenditure had not been cut by 11 per cent but in fact had gone up by \$3 million. The Treasurer spent the next half an hour in his own convoluted style trying to explain to the estimates committee that by spending \$3 million more it was actually a cut of 11 per cent, that more was less by some 11 per cent. It was an extraordinary performance by the Treasurer. It was fantastic to be there, one of the highlights of the parliamentary year, to sit there and listen to the Treasurer carry on in his style, trying to make the claims he did in the manner in which he did, which shows a few issues that the government needs to deal with.

It comes back to a theme evident during the whole of the estimates, namely, the absolute arrogance of this government in the way it is treating the process, along with a whole range of issues, such as the Cora Barclay Centre over the past fortnight. The whole way the exercise has been handled has shown the public how arrogant this government has been on that issue. One minute it is out there threatening to call in the Auditor-General and suddenly they realise they are in trouble and become a touch more conciliatory. As of tonight to my knowledge the matter is still not resolved. This is a government that threw \$200 000 at the Coffin Bay ponies, but it cannot throw \$150 000 to the Cora Barclay Centre. If it is about priorities, let us make it all about priorities. My simple message to the Treasurer is: you are the government, fix it. It is as simple as that.

The Treasury estimates was one of the highlights. For those who want to see a performance next year, I reckon they ought to sell tickets for the seats. It was one of the highlights of the day. You could not help laughing. The Treasurer saying that \$3 million more in his budget was an 11 per cent cut was almost Monty Pythonish; it was like a script out of *The Two Ronnies*. It was really good. I congratulate the bureaucrats or whoever wrote his script; it was really quite funny to see the Treasurer trying to justify to everyone that \$3 million more was an 11 per cent cut and the absolute classic about why his department should be treated differently from the other departments. If your priority is health and education, let the underspend in health and education go to

health and education; do not let the underspend necessarily go to Treasury.

Then I had the experience of the minister for the environment who, in fairness, did try to answer some questions. It was good to see him reading briefs, but I think I have now established that there are four things in this government's environment policy. There are four basic planks to it: the first one is license it, the second one is levy it, the third one is tax it and the fourth one is fine it. That basically defines the government's environment policy. The first one is levy it. We have the Murray River levy and the natural resource management levy. They are talking about other sorts of levies and, of course, they have the water catchment levy.

Then we have licensing. The absolute highlight of the environment estimates in this regard was the fact that the government has put \$1.5 million less into the EPA out of the government appropriation, but it has doubled the licence fees on business. So, the way this government is dealing with its environmental priority is to tax business more and cut government appropriation. That was the evidence given to the estimates committee. It has cut the EPA by \$1.5 million but do not worry, because it has put up all the costs to business. Through the licence fees it has doubled them.

So, it has introduced the Murray River levy, and guess what? There is not one extra cent of government money going into the Murray levy; the \$20 million a year is being raised from ordinary South Australians and ordinary South Australian businesses but, when you look at the government appropriation, guess what? It is simply not there. So, they license it, they levy it and they tax it. Not only do we have the water catchment levy but now they will pay payroll tax out of the water catchment boards, so we are raising a water catchment levy so we can pay payroll tax. So, the environment policy of the government is four-fold: license it, levy it, tax it, and the last one is fine it. On every piece of legislation the government brings in, it doubles the environmental fines on the basis that it will achieve an outcome. That has yet to be proven, but the four planks of the environment policy are easy to look at: license it, levy it, tax it and fine it.

We now find out through the estimates committees that the Botanic Gardens is having its budget slashed by between \$350 000 and \$400 000 and the minister is out there on radio saying, 'Do not worry; they will get a bit more capital works money this year'. But capital works money tends to be one-off, whereas the recurrent cut of \$400 000 will be every year. The government might give with one hand and take with the other for one year, but it misses out every year after that. Today he is talking about the importance of the parklands. The Botanic Gardens are an important part of that exercise. The Botanic Gardens are getting ripped off to the tune of about \$400 000 a year, and the EPA is getting done over to the tune of \$1.5 million out of government appropriation. When the government stands up and says that it is committed to the environment, we can say that it is committed to some degree, but certainly its budget does not reflect that, because it is putting in less government appropriation to the EPA and less to the Botanic Gardens.

Then we had the experience of the Minister for Industrial Relations and workplace services. What a farce! Apart from the fact that we had a 45-minute session on WorkCover, our first question occurred at the 17-minute mark of that session, so we had 28 minutes to ask questions on WorkCover. WorkCover has blown out, the unfunded liability has blown out to about \$350 million-plus, we have not had a CEO at WorkCover for about nine months, the claims management

has blown out to between \$120 million and \$140 million, but what do we get? We get 28 minutes of questions. We asked six questions and three of them were taken on notice. Look at the history of this minister in that regard and look at all the questions on WorkCover that have been raised in the upper and lower houses and in the estimates committees; the simple fact is that the government will not provide any information on it. We know that there are some issues with WorkCover, and we know that it concerns claims management. We also know that the government is trying to bring in its own people through changes to legislation, but the minister is basically stonewalling that information, and the parliament deserves better.

WorkCover is essential to economic development. If we have high WorkCover costs or a blow-out in premiums of the New South Wales or Victorian variety, that will send out a seriously negative message on economic growth and employment in this state. I know that employers and members of the business community are very concerned about WorkCover. They are concerned about where the government is taking it and about the lack of consultation. They are also concerned about the minister's gaining control and directing it away from the business community. So, how much time did we get in the estimates committee to ask questions—28 minutes! That was very disappointing. The minister gave duckshove answers and filled in the time to the best of his ability, trying not to give any answers.

There was a similar result with occupational health and safety issues. We know that we are going to spend \$14 million over the next four years to have fewer investigations completed per year than were completed in 2001-02 or 2002-03. In 2001-02, there were 1 153 investigations completed, and 1 100 have been budgeted for this year, but the government is spending an extra \$2.5 million this year and \$3.5 million extra every year after that on 27 new occupational health and safety inspectors. Those figures do not add up.

I pick up the comments made by the member for Light about the arrogance of the government in the way in which the estimates committees were conducted. The media have picked up on the fact that some members of the government are particularly arrogant. The Treasurer was the highlight in that regard with respect to backflips on consultancies, and in the way in which Treasury is being treated differently from other agencies. It really shows how some members of the cabinet are favourites of the Treasurer's and others are not, and the issues that creates will bubble away. I understand why some cabinet ministers are so annoyed about what is happening within the government so early in its tenure. That explains some of the ill will that exists at the moment. One of the highlights was the Treasurer's trying to justify the extra \$3 million that was spent when there was supposed to be an 11 per cent cut to his own budget, which never happened.

There was precious little in the budget or estimates in relation to my own electorate. There is a bit for Black Road, of which the Deputy Speaker would be aware. The Old Belair Road project has been cut and \$800 000 has been cut out of the Coromandel Valley Primary School. I think it is the first time in the history of the state that a primary school project has gone ahead—in this case, worth \$1.2 million—but not one cent of state government money has gone into it. In a \$2 million project, the federal government committed \$1.2 million, but the state government has withdrawn its \$800 000, so the school has been bullied into taking a \$1.2 million project instead of a \$2 million project. So, the

project that is going ahead is not as good as it could have been in, and there is not one cent of state government money going into it. I know that the residents of Coromandel Valley and the school community are particularly upset at the way this government has treated them in this whole process. They feel bullied into taking what is not their preferred position. There was no reason for the government to cut \$800 000 out of the budget. This is a government with a huge surplus. We all know what will happen.

There is no doubt that some members of parliament call this the hollow log budget, because, 18 months out from the election, the government will open the purse strings and spend like crazy. There was no reason for Coromandel Valley Primary School to be treated in such an outrageous manner as it has been by this government. I am sure the Coromandel Valley community will not forget the way the Labor government has treated them over that school. To put not one cent into the school project says something about this government, and it is unfortunate that it went down that particular path.

My summary of the estimates is that it was a mixed bag. I thought the first day was a very funny day. I thought the Treasurer put on a Monty Python type performance with regard to his portfolio. The backflip over lunch was one that had to be seen to be believed; that is, the arrogance displayed before lunch on that particular issue and then the change of position over lunch when he realised his own Treasury instruction contained an error. It had gone to the Treasurer prior to its signing off, then to cabinet and all the cabinet ministers had seen it and signed off, but apparently they had all signed off on something on which they did not intend to sign off. I guess that was an illustration of how the cabinet process did not work. If they are not reading Treasury instructions, members would have to wonder about what else they are not reading. The Treasury instruction would have been drafted, then it would have been signed off by the Treasurer and a cabinet submission would have been prepared. It would have gone to every agency and every cabinet minister would have seen it and signed off on it, and then it would have been distributed.

It has gone through that whole process with that error: either it was an error that was missed by everyone (probably around 100 people), or it was a deliberate exercise that was exposed and then changed over lunch. Members can make their own judgment about why that happened but it did happen; and we are pleased at least that we have been able to expose the government on the issue and get the consultancy backflip over the lunchtime review.

**Mr RAU (Enfield):** I will make a few brief remarks about the estimates process, and obviously I do this as someone who has participated in it only twice. In so doing, I admit in advance that I am speaking from a position of relative inexperience, but, hopefully, I bring some freshness to the question, not having been in parliament for that long. It occurs to me that as far as our constitution is concerned, there are only two kinds of people represented in this parliament. They are members of parliament who are but members of parliament and members of parliament who also hold an executive office. The purpose of the estimates, as I understand it, is for the members of parliament who hold only the office of member of parliament—and I say 'only' not to denigrate that office but to emphasise the fact that they have but one role (and in that people such as the member for Unley



and I are in the same boat)—and those who are members of the executive, who obviously—

**Mr Brindal:** A very leaky boat it is, too.

**Mr RAU:** —a leaky boat perhaps—and those who are members of the executive who obviously have another role, that is, to be responsible for a government department. It is very clear that the executive must be subject to the scrutiny of the parliament. This is a fundamental element of any democracy, because if they are not accountable to the parliament, to whom will they be accountable? It is obviously important that the parliament has a role in scrutinising what they do. My only question is whether the present system by which that scrutiny takes place is the best possible system that could be devised. I make the following observations. First, even though the constitution does not really recognise it, the parliament is basically divided into groups aligned by reason of party affiliation, and predominantly the members who want to ask questions of the executive arm of government are members of the opposition. Of course, members on the government side might well want to ask questions, but they will probably do that in a different forum, rather than estimates.

In any event, any member of parliament should have the opportunity to ask questions of the executive and to see what, in fact, is going on as far as the budget is concerned. This parliament has to be open for several days, and our friends in Hansard (who do a fantastic job) are obliged to sit here for days—and, perhaps, from their point of view, it is difficult to distinguish between the level of excitement during estimates and the level of excitement generally, I do not know, but, from my observation, there is generally less excitement at estimates than there is at other times, and that is saying quite a bit—

**Mr Brindal:** Should we stop and have a little clap for Hansard at this point?

**Mr RAU:** No—but I think tribute is due to the hardworking staff. Then we have our colleagues—dressed splendidly, as they are, in their official regalia—who have to sit here and listen to all of what takes place. Then we have the army of public servants assembled in the galleries of the parliament, waiting, waiting, waiting endlessly for the possibility that their minister might be asked a question, and they are the only person who can answer it. What are they doing in preparing these huge volumes of briefs? What are they doing sitting in the parliament instead of sitting in their offices doing something useful?

It seems to me that a better method might be this. Some time before the estimates process begins, it is established by means of inquiry which ministers have anyone who wants to ask questions of them. Sure, some of the ministers were questioned, but it seemed to me to be very much a case of people going through the motions; whereas, in the case of other ministers, there were quite a number of questions that people wanted to ask them, and there was scope for perhaps even a greater examination of them and their portfolios than actually took place. But instead of that, we have this measured system whereby everyone is allocated a certain amount of time, we have the phalanx of bureaucrats sitting in the back of the room, and we have three questions from that side, three questions from this side. And, of course, it is not letting any cat out of the bag to say that the three questions from the government side are generally not as probing as the three questions that might come from the other side.

Obviously, this should be an opportunity for genuine questions, which are directed towards giving openness to our

system of government. My suggestion (for what it is worth) is that the estimates process begin by ascertaining who will be usefully asked any questions at all. That can be done by people perhaps submitting notification to the Speaker (or whoever is the appropriate person) a week or two before estimates that the following people will be required. If someone is not required, they do not have to turn up. Ministers should not be brought here just for the fun of having them here. Those ministers who are brought here should be examined by those people who want to examine them, not be given a mandatory team of people on one side and a team on the other. They should be examined by those who want to examine them, and they should be asked genuine questions. If that means that they have to bring in advisers, well and good. But it should not be, in any sense, a pantomime—which, unfortunately, is what it is.

The other thing that I think needs to be mentioned about the whole process of estimates is that, as I understand it, it is possible in an estimates committee for someone to cause so much trouble that the whole parliament has to be recalled. As I understand it, that has not occurred. But it seems that it is conceivable that, if there is a ruling by a chair in an estimates committee to which someone objects, the whole parliament will have to reassemble so that someone can sort out some point that is raised—

*Mr Brindal interjecting:*

**Mr RAU:** —and I know that the member for Unley might be the very person who would raise such a point. But, obviously, if we can eliminate the possibility of such an absurdity occurring, that means that the rest of the members of the parliament who are not involved in the estimates committee can get on with useful work in their electorates—get on with doing the things that they are paid to do. I think that, really, those people who do not have genuine questions to ask would find much more productive ways of serving their communities and their electorates than sitting in here asking reasonably dull and uninformative questions—or, in fact, asking no questions at all.

With respect to the point of asking no questions at all, I would like to commend all those ministers who said to government members, 'We don't require you to ask those questions,' and gave time to the opposition to focus on the questions. I think that is a very intelligent use of what is, unfortunately, presently a poor system but, nonetheless, it is a use of that system which gets the best possible out of that system. I just want to end on this point: it is very important that members of parliament, in their capacity as members of parliament, have an opportunity to examine the executive arm of government at the time of estimates. However, the process we presently have requires public servants, staff of the parliament and other members of parliament—who have no real business being dragged into it—being brought here for no good purpose; and any system that can eliminate that has to be a great step forward.

It would also deliver to those members who genuinely do have questions a greater opportunity to ask those questions in a forum that was designed to answer them rather than a forum that is designed to be some sort of procedural playhouse. It seems to me that that would be a great step forward. I know that the Chairman of Committees said in his closing remarks yesterday that he favours some sort of reform. I do not believe, necessarily, that the particular proposals I have advanced are the only solution to the problem. I am sure they are not.

I am sure that others who have been here longer can think of better ways of doing it. But to eliminate the possibility of people being drawn in here who do not need to be here, and also to eliminate the possibility of the parliament being recalled because of some relatively trivial procedural argument in an estimates committee, surely, must be a tremendous step forward. With those few remarks, I conclude my comments on the estimates process.

**Mr BRINDAL (Unley):** Were I minded that this would be, in some way, a valedictory speech, I would have to be considering my future yet again because, frankly, there are not enough people here to make it worth the effort to be a valedictory speech. So, if the acting whip wants to go and drum up a bit more business, that would be good.

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** Yes, bring them all in.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Bring the state of the house to the attention of the Acting Speaker.

**Mr BRINDAL:** No, I do not want to bother. Most of them are probably listening, tuned up there, because of the work they have got to do.

**Ms Thompson:** If you will guarantee that you will resign now I will get them all in here.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I am sure that the honourable member would. The Labor Party is more anxious to get rid of me than anyone because, just perhaps, we are working better as a team and forming an ever increasingly effective opposition; and any wedge that members opposite could drive they would be quite grateful to do so, because I note of late that the newspapers do not seem to be giving the syrupy sweet dream run to this Labor government that it has enjoyed for its first year and a half. But I will not be diverted. The member for Ross Smith, interestingly a member of the government, described in his contribution this process as a pantomime. Now, it is very—

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** Why go back to your seat to interject? You carry on like a jack-in-the-box where ever you are. Be my guest. The fact is that the member for Ross Smith described this—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member for Enfield, sorry, described the process as a pantomime and, indeed, I agree with him, because if one part of the process has disillusioned me and disillusioned me profoundly it is the estimates process. Without sounding too old, I can go back to the time when John Bannon and Frank Blevins was in here—indeed, even before a Liberal government—when the estimates process—

*The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** I particularly liked Frank Blevins because he was an honest and honourable man who would always answer the questions. I can tell members, and the member for Stuart would back me up, that estimates used to be a fairly fearsome time. The ministers did not find it the most comfortable time of the year. Ministers actually answered questions, the questions were got through and the answers were delivered in the time promised to the parliament in the beginning of estimates, which did not happen last year. Ministers did not wax lyrical for 20 minutes about nothing; they actually answered questions.

Public servants ranged in their serried ranks behind the minister and actually performed a useful function. I challenge the member for Enfield, because in the four or five estimates that I was involved with there were legions of public servants,

all lined up, like battalions of the damned, but the only person who ever answered a question was the minister. And, if he was very, very lucky, the minister's head of department or some senior adviser on his right would get to answer questions, but all the rest behind were there for decoration. Not one of them was ever brought to the front to answer a question. If the minister half thought that the question was political, the standard answer was, 'I'll take that one on notice,' which means, 'I know the answer, or the answer embarrasses me, so I won't answer it.' That is what turns estimates into a pantomime. That is what makes all those public servants useless. If they were here to do the job that the member for Enfield suggests—to fill in the gaps and respond to the specific questions that the minister cannot answer—we would have a much more intelligent and critical process.

This, from a government that promised openness and accountability and the charter of budget honesty! If this estimates process is its charter for budget honesty, I would hate to see its definition of equivocation, evasion, or dishonesty. If this is the best that the government can do for honesty, South Australia is in real trouble—real trouble indeed. However, to give credit where credit is due, it is due to the member for Enfield, who pointed out a quote to me from George Orwell's classic book, *1984*, which is to the government's credit, because it must have read George Orwell. I am sure that the member for Elder is a great fan of George Orwell, who wrote a lot of books on the totalitarian state. I sometimes think that the member for Elder uses them for bedtime reading, being one of the very powerful triumvirate in this place. On page 32 of *1984*, George Orwell states:

Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.

Daily in this place, we have that reinforced absolutely by the way in which this Treasurer, the minister sitting grinning opposite (and with good reason) and the Premier reinvent the past—black holes and all. I do not know how South Australia survived eight years under Dean Brown and John Olsen! I am surprised that we are not crawling out of caves, having lost our ability to invent the wheel. We were so dreadful, according to the Treasurer, the Premier and all those ministers opposite. We did not do one good thing in eight years. We did not reduce the debt by two-thirds; we did not extend the Convention Centre; we did not build the expressway or the tunnel through the Hills; we did not build the extension to the runway; and we did not redo every building on North Terrace, repay the debt and keep South Australia out of trouble.

We did nothing—nothing at all—and we left it to the remarkable Kevin Foley, the remarkable member for Hart, Treasurer of South Australia, the Deputy Premier and Acting Premier of South Australia. His titles are endless and his glory transcendent. We had to leave it to him to save South Australia single-handedly. It is wonderful—he has just walked in! However, I do not think it is quite parliamentary for him to try to kiss me!

**An honourable member:** He probably feels sorry for you!

**Mr BRINDAL:** I feel sorry for me, too! Having said that, what did we manage to scrutinise in the budget? Not much, because the ministers opposite were great. I cannot talk for the member for Elder, but I did not realise just how skilful the Minister for Social Justice, Youth, and a number of other portfolios, was in answering questions in such a convoluted

way that the simplest question took about 10 minutes to answer before she turned it over to her Chief of Staff (and she was one of the rare ones who did so), only to get another five-minute diatribe, so that in the course of an hour, even though the Chairman was doing her very best to protect the minister—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** I think I was sane all the time, but it takes an insane person to know one. That is one of the premises of *Catch-22*. Nevertheless, it took 10 to 15 minutes to answer the simplest question, so that in an hour of questions on the budget—even if the government is good enough not to ask any questions—you get about four questions. If that is a probing analysis of the budget, one wonders what would—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member for Enfield says, ‘Ask shorter questions.’ The problem is that it does not matter how short the question is—in fact, the shorter the question, generally, the longer the answer. If you give a sabre-rattling five minute speech you might get a spirited answer from the Minister for Employment and Training, but it is a shorter answer. If you ask her a little question, you get an horrendous answer—you get three chapters of the Bible thrown in as a sort of bonus prize!

But we did find out some things. Youth Plus, for instance, is a very good scheme initiated by the last government (I think it was the member for Fisher’s idea originally), a scheme that tries to give kids in schools the opportunity to take part in conservation activities, in Red Cross activities, in scouting activities, in air training corps, in arts cadets in the country—all sorts of opportunities to take kids from the school context and give them some experience of volunteering and broaden their horizons.

Youth Plus is a really good pilot project, but how much is allowed for it after this year? Nothing. What we have got instead is Rann’s brigade of gardeners: the answer to the world; a reinvented work-for-the-dole scheme; something that he trashed up out of the eighties when he had 40 per cent unemployment. We are having Rann’s gardening brigade instead of Youth Plus. We are selling the kids out. If we actually look at employment and training, we see that we are abandoning government youth traineeships. I have had eight trainees (and I am quite sure a lot of members opposite have also had a number), and every single one of those has gone on to full-time employment.

Of all the programs I have seen any government embark upon in the last decade, youth traineeships have been the most spectacularly successful. They resulted in 70 to 80 per cent placement of people in long-term employment. That scheme has been abandoned by this government. Not only has it been abandoned by this government, the training costs to be borne by apprentices have risen 50 per cent. So we see a minister who not two weeks before stood in this place and berated the federal Treasurer because of HECS—some universities could charge more for their fees—ignoring the fact that the HECS component was going up and that people had to repay when they reached a certain level of income with low levels of interest. This was all iniquitous and against the needs of education for lawyers, doctors and nurses and was going to keep people in the western and northern suburbs out of our universities.

At the same time, she knew that cabinet had approved a scheme whereby panel beaters and hairdressers, bricklayers and plasterers, carpenters and plumbers, fitters and turners: the absolute core, the backbone, of the voting fraternity in the

Labor party, were absolutely duded. Some of them, for the six weeks or so that they were at trade school, will be paying one-third of their gross wage for the privilege of being trained to do jobs that her own skills audit says this state needs. Do we find that this government is keenly attracting business to South Australia? No. The opposition criticised the Olsen government for spending too much time going out and getting the EDSs, the Motorolas, subcontracting out—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The minister says it is a costly business. Let me point out that ABC radio is still running the furphy that we privatised SA Water. We privatised the service provision. SA Water is still solely owned by the government of South Australia and the people of South Australia. The pricing is fixed in South Australia. Guess what? It is still returning about \$200 million a year. That is not a bad return to revenue for some so-called privatised company. I have never heard of a privatised entity that pays over \$200 million a year in profits to the government. It seems to me a contradiction in terms.

*Mr Rau interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** Not everything privatised worked equally successfully, but not everything privatised was unsuccessful, either. On some things the jury is still out. The minister at the table well knows that South Australia had limited options because of competition payments and the demands of the federal government—rightly or wrongly—in some of the privatisation moves, especially the ETSA one. Was it right? Was it wrong? Only in the long term will we really tell. We are not going through a good period at present. No South Australian likes increased power bills, but the Treasurer and the minister are saying that it looks like we might be starting to get competition into the market. If we get competition into the market, there is the chance either that prices will be contained or that there may be genuine competition and prices might decrease. It certainly seems to have worked in the telecommunications area.

*Mr Rau interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member chortles no thanks to us. I can show the member where that was exactly the sort of thing that was being said by the government at the time they did it.

*The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The minister says that we should have done this and we should have done that. It is true he can say it—and I, too, can say it. There is nothing as brilliant in this place as hindsight.

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member opposite is carrying on a like a harpy—which is not unusual. When the honourable member has had the experience—and I hope it comes soon—of sitting on the frontbench—not sitting up there and pontificating from the lofty elevation that only ozone gives—she will find that it is not quite so easy. I suggest that she ask the minister whether it is quite as easy running a department as he thought it was before he did it, because, if he tells you truthfully, there are a few problems being a minister. It is not all wine and roses, and beer and skittles. Everyone sees the white car and says, ‘Hasn’t he got an easy job,’ but they should try sitting where he sits for a few days to see whether it is quite as easy.

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** We could go on but I won’t—because I will run out of time. I have not even started. The honourable member wants to try the answer of the Minister for Environment and Conservation on Clare Valley water. That will be

tested in this house because it is against the rules of this place to mislead the house. If I read *Hansard* correctly, the minister said, quite clearly, that 2.2 gigalitres of extra water is being pumped out of the River Murray this year—just because they can. They have a licence for 50 gigalitres; they have only ever used 36 to 38; and this year, just because they can, they will pump 2.5 gigalitres more. There are restrictions, so they will cram what they want to take out into the restrictions, to make the users who were using it last year suffer even more restrictions. But, in a good year, this government, so committed to the Murray, is letting its water entity just grab an extra 2.2 gigalitres—simply because it has a licence and simply because it can. And the honourable member tells me that is honest and decent.

*The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** The minister asked who started the Clare scheme. We started the Clare scheme. I was the minister and I announced—and stick by my announcement—that it would be done with purchases of water out of the river from existing licence holders; that no water would be taken from the river. You can ask your colleagues; you can ask the member for Colton and the member for Enfield; you can ask most members of this house. That is what I told this house and the people of South Australia. It is what Rob Kerin as Premier told the people of South Australia and, if we were in government, it is what we would have stuck by.

**The Hon. P.F. Conlon:** That's not what your minister said: it's not what Michael Armitage said.

**Mr BRINDAL:** The minister to whom the member refers would not have been the minister after this election, and when the premier on our side of politics gives his word that is generally the law. Notwithstanding any of that, this is about South Australia, in a year of crisis, drawing more water from the river, for whatever reason. That is what it is about. The minister can disguise it in any way he likes. He can chortle and say I am deluded and he can do what he likes, but can he explain to any person in South Australia, the member for Colton, the member for Stuart, the member for Hartley or myself why we have to save 20 per cent on water usage but, incidentally, our entity (SA Water), just because it can, will take more water out of the river because we will make a profit on it? Tell me how they can do it.

Tell me how the minister can stand here and say, 'We will give you \$10 off a rainwater tank.' I admit that it is a good start and is better than nothing, but the minister has not been down to the shop and priced even the most modest rainwater tank, because if he thinks \$10 will encourage anybody to rush out and buy a rainwater tank tomorrow because of the saving he has rocks in his head.

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** This is an important occasion, when we are reporting the estimates committees—which, of course, are one of the highlights of the political year. Members, I know, wait with bated breath to take part in this process which is supposed to inform them of the government's spending program for the forthcoming year. I am disappointed, having participated in the committees and having read some of the responses, at the effects that some of the decisions will have on my electorate. The road funding program for the north and for the rural areas is one of the most disappointing aspects of this government's period in office. It is obviously an urban-based government and has no regard for the needs of country people, particularly the road system, and no regard for the tourist industry. The decision which is taken in this budget to continue to run down the road

funding program will have long-term detrimental effects on the people of South Australia. The tourist industry is essential to small country areas, particularly in the north, and unless the roads are in good condition we are going to have difficulties in the future because people will be deterred from travelling in the north.

The other matter of concern is with the general area of services and the desire of this government to make life as difficult as possible for people who do business with government. It perturbs me that there is a continuing trend to impose on people charges and conditions, and give greater power to bureaucracy. It is a dangerous process and will eventually come back to bite the government. Therefore, I would say that the house, when considering this, ought to pay due attention to those of us who continue to complain about it.

There are a number of other issues in relation to my electorate, and I raised one of them today in relation to the education facilities at Booleroo Centre, one of the best schools in South Australia, and it has an excellent reputation in its efforts to conserve water. I call on the Minister for Education to take some positive action.

The other highlight of the budget is the decision to bring in some new taxes. I am sorry that the member for Colton is leaving, because I thought he would be interested in the way in which the budget will affect the long-suffering rural sector. There is still a great deal of confusion in the community about what the real circumstances will be for people who have more than one water meter. Some of my constituents from the Baroota area have drawn to my attention the problems they could face. One constituent had 14 meters, and 14 multiplied by 135 is a substantial number. Another constituent had eight and another 10. Various other people around the electorate, including people at Morgan and various other spots, are most concerned.

The government has to come clean and be absolutely sure of the situation. I appeal to it that people have to pay only one fee per business. The precedent is there with the emergency services levy. The process is in place, and it can be easily organised and operated. Madam Acting Speaker, I am sure you would agree that it is not the role of government to dip its hands in the pockets of the long suffering taxpayers purely at the behest of unsympathetic bureaucracy. If we are not careful, it will take over these arrangements, and Treasury will try to expand and take as much as it possibly can without due regard for the long-term economic effects. Therefore, that matter needs to be addressed.

We are still waiting to see the effects of the government's financial measures in relation to perpetual leases. There is an urgent need to show some greater degree of understanding of how these provisions will affect people in rural areas, and there is an urgent need in the field of education to ensure that adequate money is provided so that governesses or people who supervise children on these isolated stations are given training by government so they are proficient and skilled in these areas. It is an important area of education. It is important that these children in isolated communities have the right sort of instruction. In many cases the parents make a considerable sacrifice, and it is very important that the government shows a bit of care and compassion in relation to these people.

The School of the Air does a great job. The new computerised system it has installed at the school at Port Augusta is an outstanding effort, and certainly modern technology is bringing people closer to one another. A few weeks ago we

saw technology on the cutting edge, and it will obviously help these young people with their education. In conclusion—and I know we will be here for a long time tonight—I sincerely hope that, when we debate the next budget, it will be more flexible, will reflect the fact that there are people outside the urban area of Adelaide, and pay due regard to road funding and the education and health needs of those long suffering constituents who live in rural South Australia. I sincerely hope that the ministers will be more forthcoming. It should not be such a stage managed exercise, because budget estimates are meant to be a cooperative information providing exercise, not an effort with the government attempting to stamp its authority over the committees, because at the end of the day that does not do any good for the government or anyone else. It only downgrades the standing of this organisation in the eyes of the public.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright):** I join my colleagues in presenting to the house a summary of the incidents that occurred during budget estimates in which I was involved. I was lead questioner for the opposition in the estimates that were attended by the Hon. Paul Holloway in his role as minister responsible for minerals, and also the budget estimates for energy. It is very difficult to find a kind word to say about the presentation of the Hon. Paul Holloway. I will say this: he is a very decent fellow and someone for whom I have a great deal of time at a personal level.

However, there is no doubt that he has a formidable task ahead of him in dealing with a Labor Party that clearly does not understand the mining industry in this state and, for that matter, has no desire to understand it. For it is an industry that this government is intent on destroying. This government is led by a Premier who has spent a considerable part of his life campaigning, plotting and lobbying against the mining industry. After all, the man who is now regrettably Premier of our state lobbied against the very creation of the Roxby Downs mine, which is the most successful mining operation in our state and, after its impending expansion, will be the largest mine of its type in the Southern Hemisphere and, indeed, the largest uranium mine in the world.

This is the mine that was referred to by the Labor Party as the 'mirage in the desert'; and this is the mine that the Premier, in his younger years, urged people to boycott. At the time, Western Mining Corporation was in partnership with BP, and the present Premier advocated a boycott on the BP program.

So, the Hon. Paul Holloway has my sympathy that, it is in this frame, with a party of this calibre, that he is now charged with the responsibility of leading the charge, for want of a better expression, to develop the mining industry in this state. This is an industry whose budget, which is there to support, has been savaged, and we have seen the government's recognition that it has been savaged. This is an industry that puts \$2.2 billion into our economy each year. I have therefore followed very closely the government's touted achievements during its time in office.

I looked with great interest through the government's report of its first year in office: the things it touted as being its achievements. There were a variety of headings under those achievements, one of which was economic development. So, I went to the economic development area to look at their achievements, thinking that I would find a number of things relating to the mining industry. However, there was no mention at all of the mining industry in their economic

achievements, even though it is an industry that puts \$2.2 billion into our economy.

Some people might call me a political cynic, but I then thought, knowing this government as I do, that I would have a look at what this government says about its environmental achievements. It was there that I found numerous references to the mining industry, not in a positive sense but in a very disparaging sense—belt after belt on an industry that puts \$2.2 billion into our economy every year.

Is it any wonder that the industry, through its advocacy group, the South Australian Chamber of Minerals and Energy (SACOME), put out a two-page press statement expressing its disappointment with this government and its budget, and those aspects of the budget that, in theory, were supposed to support the industry. I confronted the minister with his government's lame presentation and, when I confronted him with questioning, he was initially speechless. I think I even saw his bottom lip quiver, and I had some sympathy and compassion for the man. Clearly, he had been deserted by his colleagues, and he was unable to offer any reason whatsoever for his party's not recognising this industry's vital contribution, and no reason for his government's not advocating on behalf of the mining industry. That is particularly disappointing not only for the industry but also for the bureaucrats who surround him.

I know every one of those people individually, because they all worked with me. I give the minister credit for not changing any of those staff. They are good quality staff who know what they are doing, and they are professionals in their sphere. I know how much effort those staff put in to ensure that the industry moves forward. I was disappointed for them on hearing the answer that was given as a reward for their efforts. The industry that they support is being crucified by a government that does not understand the industry and does not care about it.

I sincerely hope that the Hon. Paul Holloway is given a better hearing around the cabinet table, because he deserves it to advocate on behalf of the industry. Indeed, so quiet is his voice around the cabinet table that the industry has been absolutely astounded when I have pointed out to them, when they have said that they need a minister with more clout, that, in fact, their minister is the third most senior ranked cabinet minister within the government. They were incredulous about that. I pointed out to them that the Hon. Paul Holloway is the Leader of the Government in the upper house, that he has a status equivalent to that held by the Hon. Rob Lucas when the Liberal Party was in government. They were incredulous, because they know of the strength and capability that the Hon. Rob Lucas had around the cabinet table. They cannot comprehend that their minister is supposed to be of an equivalent status and ability to the Hon. Rob Lucas because, clearly, in their mind he is not. They see their minister as a nice fellow but someone who is not able to deliver, someone who loses every time he goes into battle around the cabinet table with the environment minister, someone who has never won a battle at that cabinet table.

What we saw through the budget papers was the mining industry being belted by an increase on their taxes. Their royalty rate will go up by 3.5 per cent. The minister's lame excuse for that was that this gave them a commensurate royalty rate with other states. I pointed out to the minister that the royalty rates for South Australia are lower for a very good reason: to encourage the industry to explore and mine in South Australia. Those rates had deliberately been kept lower for the reason that South Australia has a disadvantage when

it comes to mining. There is a greater layer of material over our mineral deposits than, for example, in Western Australia. Therefore, it will cost companies more to find our mineral deposits, because they are harder to find and, when they find them, it will cost them more to mine them because they are deeper in the ground. For that very reason, our royalty rates have been deliberately kept lower.

Now this government wants to elevate those rates. I put to the Hon. Paul Holloway, 'Did you not tell your cabinet colleagues about the geological disadvantage that South Australia has?' He was silent on that. He clearly did not even tell his colleagues of the importance of ensuring that we maintain a competitive balance with the other states by having a lower royalty rate so that there is a lower cost structure for industry. The Chamber of Mines and Energy is now saying that many projects that were to be viable may now not be so. Many projects at the fledgling stage will not advance, and South Australians will be the losers as a result of that. Regional South Australia, which would reap the benefits of employment from that, will miss out. That is a tragedy for the rural areas of this state whom already again this government is now starting to desert. One thing that South Australia knows about Labor government is that when a Labor government is in power they get flogged. They are starting to get flogged yet again after only 15 months of a Labor government.

I also asked the minister about the Targeted Exploration Initiatives South Australia (TEISA) program, which was successfully funded by the former Liberal government. It encouraged exploration which has seen new mining ventures that have made South Australia for the first time in many years regarded by the industry as the most exciting place in Australia to explore. That program has been savaged by .96 of \$1 million. The minister could provide no reason for that. He simply protested that they had kept the program going and that that should be good enough. He tried to pretend that the program would have been axed under a Liberal government. I pointed out to the minister that the TEISA 20-20 program was named by me (as minister) when I prepared the budget for 2001-02 to indicate 20 years of continual funding. The minister had no answer to that. Again, he was left with nowhere to go because of the lack of understanding of his colleagues.

I also questioned the minister about the SAMAG project. Unfortunately for the minister there was a public meeting in Port Pirie the night before the budget estimates. The minister made a statement at that public meeting which was repeated on the morning of estimates on ABC 639. It related to the government's Chair of the Economic Development Board, Robert Champion de Crespigny. The minister claimed on radio that Mr de Crespigny had no role at all in calling for the review of SAMAG, which is under way at the moment. That claim absolutely and totally conflicts with the claim made by the Hon. Rory McEwen, the Minister for Regional Development. I put that to the minister, and I even quoted a press release of the Minister for Regional Development in which the minister said:

Mr De Crespigny recommended a review of the project be undertaken, a request I fully endorse and have already taken action to implement.

The minister kept trying to avoid the issue. I finished up saying, 'Are we talking of two reviews; is there one review you are talking about and a different review your cabinet colleague, Mr McEwen, is talking about?' He said, 'No, there's only one review.' I said, 'Clearly you can't both be

right.' Clearly one or the other minister is telling porkies here. The minister said that he knew what he was saying because he had been briefed by Minister McEwen. I said, 'Yes, I know you have—you were briefed a couple of days earlier and you were told exactly what is happening, so why did you tell the people of Port Pirie that Mr De Crespigny had no role in the SAMAG project when he had recommended the review and the government was carrying out the review on his recommendations?' Again the Minister ducked for cover. It was interesting, as even the chair of the committee started defending the minister and his colleagues. At one stage I felt that it was one batting against four, but the way the Labor Party bats that does not worry me.

At the end of the estimates committee we were not left with too many answers. I put on the record that only two hours was allowed for questioning on minerals and petroleum—on a \$2.2 billion industry. The first three minutes was taken up with the commencement proceedings of the committee and we then had a long-winded ministerial statement for 16 minutes, so 19 minutes of the two hours was gone before the opposition even had a chance to ask a question. The answers were laboured and long winded. At the end of the two-hour period the opposition still had more questions to ask. The minister wanted to close up and finish the committee at 4 p.m. I objected to that, but I recognised the numbers: one chair supporting the Labor government, three Labor members against three Liberal members—four beats three every time.

The regrettable fact is that the questioning lines were stopped at that time, with unsatisfactory answers. This minister knew from the start that the time of that committee hearing had not been agreed to. He knew that from the start, but he still wanted to pull up stumps and go home at 4 o'clock. That minister let down the industry again by not even having the courage to face questions being asked on its behalf, and for that he should hang his head in shame.

I also had the opportunity to question the Minister for Energy. He is in rather an interesting position because after the last cabinet reshuffle, which clearly was a demotionary shuffle for him; he is a minister without any department reporting directly to him. He is the Minister for Police, yet police is in the Department for Justice that reports to the Attorney-General. He is the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Energy. Energy has been split in two: half is in Treasury and the other half in Primary Industries. His infrastructure and energy components in Treasury report to the Treasurer and Primary Industries reports to the Hon. Paul Holloway. Here we have the Minister for Police, the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Energy without a chief executive reporting directly to him. If that is not a gobbledegook mixture that this government is trying to govern with, I do not know what is. Even the chair was confused during questioning over the way in which this was occurring, and I had to get from my seat to assist the chair and explain that energy was split by this government, as illogical as it might seem, across two departments, neither of which directly reported to the minister, but we were making do with what we had.

The minister also has presided over a series of quite important cuts. The Energy SA budget has been savaged. Energy SA was an organisation that I had great pride in creating during my time as minister. I gave it the name and I am pleased it continues. This government has thrust it under the management of the Minerals Group, which I also created and I am proud of the individuals there and their management

style, but they are not energy experts. This government has taken the focus off the Minerals Group and taken away the direct focus on the energy group's two areas of speciality and instead cobbled them together, and that is not good for the state or for the opportunities we wish to have.

I have just been reminded that in the last reshuffle the minister lost his police portfolio but has retained emergency services, so it is emergency services that reports to the Attorney-General. I forgot about that aspect of his demotion. He had that taken away from him, I suspect because of the poor performance in the portfolio.

The Energy SA group has had its budget slashed, it has been thrust under minerals and it has also had its research funding savaged. This is a government that pays lip service to sustainable energy. Its own Premier made a big song and dance about the photovoltaic cells he put on the roof of his home. He invited the media to his home and showed that this was what he had done as Premier. I might add that they were partly paid for by the commonwealth government, because it is a federally funded program. He made a song and dance about it. The reality is—

*Mrs Geraghty interjecting:*

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** I am just making sure that the acknowledgment is going on the record. The reality is that this Premier pays lip service at the same time as the department is being butchered and slashed. Research funding has been cut by more than 40 per cent in just two years. Ask any university in this state what it thinks about this government because of its attitude toward energy funding. We have a Premier who puts photovoltaic cells on the roof of his house, but the same Premier is presiding over a government that slashed the forward advance in that industry. We also have a Premier who was happy to push the button of the system to start a wind turbine at Starfish Hill—a development, I might add, that was approved and encouraged by a Liberal government—yet the staff who were involved in the work on wind power have been dissipated with the wind. A lot of them have left government in frustration; others have moved to other areas of government. The whole effort and the momentum have slowed enormously and demonstrate further that this government has done nothing more than pay lip service to those areas of government.

We also saw cuts to the Remote Areas Energy Scheme (RAES) under this government—savage cuts that will affect people in rural South Australia and their opportunities to reduce the amount they spend on diesel by introducing sustainable energy. This is further evidence that in reality this government does not care about sustainable energy opportunities, unless there is a media opportunity in it for the Premier. If the Premier does not see a media opportunity in it for him, clearly, it does not take priority.

We also talked about electricity. There we got a confession; it has taken 15 months, but there we got a confession. Finally, the Minister for Energy agreed that AGL had paid too high a wholesale price for its electricity. That is an important confession from the minister, because the minister agreed that AGL has been able to lift the price of its electricity to South Australian consumers because it paid too much. In fact, AGL has been claiming a cost of \$72 per megawatt hour for its electricity. This Labor government approved a 32 per cent increase in the electricity price to South Australian households based on a \$72 per megawatt hour wholesale price at a time when electricity was available for half that price. That is the case today. Electricity is available

for half the price that AGL paid, certainly on the spot market, and contract prices are going that way.

There is nothing surer than that the price of electricity will plummet, because the Labor government has artificially allowed it to increase. Of course, the political motive behind this is obvious: boost the price of electricity, blame the dreadful Liberals for privatisation, let it drop down to where it should have been, then claim credit for being astute economic managers. I put very firmly on the record tonight that the price of electricity to households will come down very quickly by more than 20 per cent, and I await with interest to see what Labor members claim when that occurs. The reason that will occur is that wholesale electricity prices are now lower.

Time expired.

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** In 2002 the Labor Party assumed government in South Australia and we waited with some interest to see its first budget in July 2002. That was a significant disappointment, to say the least, but it was newly in office and one could perhaps forgive it for making some mistakes. However, as was clearly seen by the end of the year, its rhetoric in relation to being left with a legacy of debt was clearly proved inaccurate.

The budget for 2003 outlines what the Labor government proposes to do in respect of its application of public funds for the benefit of South Australians. I truly accept that, when a new administration comes into office, it deserves the opportunity, having earned it, to apply the funds as it sees fit for the benefit of South Australians. However, if the government fails to deliver on that, it has to be judged by that, and the budget for 2003, as delivered by the Treasurer on 29 May, clearly demonstrated that the decline and decay was setting in and that this is what we would be receiving in the lifetime of this government.

The estimates committee for 19 June, dealing with education and children's services, was allowed 4¼ hours. I am told that, historically, ministers would be available for questions for a day each on average, but that has significantly diminished, and the time allocated and the reduced opportunity for questioning is reflective of the government's refusal to be truly accountable for the decisions it is making.

The actual expenditure for education and children's services in the financial year 2001-02, in which the last government participated for some seven months, represented 25.2 per cent of the total budget spent in this state. It is reasonable for one to expect that, when a premier and his minister go to an election and promise that health and education will be priorities and that there will be more teachers and better schools for South Australian children, that would in some way be reflected in the budgets that they deliver. However, in education and children's services, the estimated result for this government's first full financial year of operation reduced from 25.24 per cent to 23.9 per cent of the total budget.

That was further shattered when, still below the 2001-02 actuals, the budget for the forthcoming financial year 2003-04 was revealed to be 24.27 per cent of the total budget, still approximately one full per cent less of the overall budget to be spent on education. How one can demonstrate that that is reflective of a priority is beyond me, but that is the actual position of this government. The Minister for Education and Children's Services attempted to turn that around and suggest that one has to compare budget to budget for the three years to which I have referred. That would be all right if all the

comparisons in the budget were presented in that manner. In fact, all the comparisons in this budget, as reflected in the previous two years, relate to actual 2001-02, estimated 2002-03 and budget 2003-04. That was a rather feeble attempt by the minister to deflect the diminished priority of this government to education and children's services.

I particularly make that point because the concern that I raised at estimates was that the minister herself seems to believe this, as she perpetuates the myth that the priority is continuing. For whatever reason, the Treasurer has completely hoodwinked her into believing that she has got some priority out of this budget. Such is the delusional position of the Minister for Education and Children's Services.

The opening statement by the minister sounded a bit more like an annual report, but it was a rather inaccurate annual report. Let us consider what has happened in the last 12 months. There have been 160 extra junior primary teachers—on the face of it not a bad start—for one-fifth of the schools that provide junior primary education in this state. Perhaps the other four-fifths could expect something in the budget to follow that, but they have got nothing, not a single extra dollar, for some equitable distribution of the claimed benefit of reducing class sizes for junior primary education. That demonstrates the reality in relation to the alleged commitment of this government to early intervention and to the early education of our young South Australian children. Then, of course, we had the capital cuts in the 2002 budget; and we have more capital cuts in the 2003 budget.

We had a slippage of some \$34 million in last year's budget for projects which were slowed down or cut. What happened was that the commonwealth funds that had already been paid over were found, the minister was caught out and she had to bring back onto the agenda the provision for the funding of those schools. Then we had the new plan for school maintenance programs. The minister had discovered that schools had accumulated significant funds in preparation for their plans for the forthcoming year, and she decided that she would introduce a new plan and make them spend it on her priorities. Then we had the new schools choice, that is, the teacher placement program. This is a new program where, instead of schools having some choice in relation to the team that they might pull together for the purposes of teaching their children, they now do all the work, all the processing and all the application and the department gets to choose who they get. That is what schools choice has now been redefined as.

Then we have the new transfer of the checking process for school fee exemptions, that is, for School Card to be transferred to the commonwealth service, Centrelink. Apparently that saves the state government \$2 million. However, their haste to transfer that liability resulted in last year's implementation of that project being a complete debacle. We heard repeated complaints from schools about the funds that they were unable to recover and, clearly, by the end of the year had no chance of recovering, especially from those parents whose children were leaving the school. Then we saw the implementation of the new legislation for children to stay at school until the age of 16 years. The Liberal Party supported this reform on the clear understanding that the government promised to ensure that the programs to support it would be in place. In February this year, the children were forced to stay at school, but it was not until April that one single person was put in the classroom to assist those children. Is it any wonder that we still have problems with truancy and absenteeism?

Then, of course, we have the class size issue. Apart from there being no extra support for junior primary or the many other schools in relation to class size, which is one factor in helping to assist the better delivery of education services, we have an increasing percentage of children—and it is acknowledged in this budget—with learning and behavioural disabilities and essentially no extra support for teachers. Then we have the actual operation of the department itself. The government decided to restructure the department, which is not unusual. Most new governments like to restructure; they like to place their mark on their new team. However, the first thing that this minister did was to tell her department that she did not trust them. She introduced a program whereby she personally had to sign off on every bit of expenditure over \$1 000. Members can imagine how that delayed the operation of the department and produced a significant level of morale diminution.

Last year she said that 55 full-time equivalents had to go and this year she announced that another nearly 100 full-time equivalents had to go. Very few of them have gone yet. Of course, that points to one further problem, that is, the incapacity of this minister to make decisions promptly to enable the department, restructured or otherwise, to undertake its task. There are still no decisions on this issue. Morale is at a depressingly low level in the department. The department is leaking like a sieve. The minister ought to be ashamed of her management or mismanagement and the shameful way in which she is treating her own people. Is it any wonder that they are raising concerns? Then, of course, there is the classic. At the conclusion of her opening statement, she tells us:

We are building a very real path to opportunity for the people of South Australia as they embark on lifelong learning.

What a joke! It may be that, because this minister has been stripped of some of her responsibilities and higher education has gone to another minister, she has perhaps just missed out on the fact that the Centre for Lifelong Learning at Flinders University has been closed down—as of 30 June: out, finished, end of story, no Centre for Lifelong Learning left. And, of course, illustrative of the problem that the minister has in getting on and ensuring that she knows about this, and that the government operates with some efficiency, notice is given to the personnel who are operating the centre, by letter of 14 June: two weeks before they are to close. That is the sort of insult they are delivered and have to deal with. The minister needs to get in touch with what is really happening in her department and what is happening in relation to education and the lack of priority that the ministers around her (particularly the Treasurer) are placing on that matter.

Let me relate one further example of what has happened in South Australia, to illustrate the change of focus of this government. The Cora Barclay Centre has attracted some considerable attention in the last few weeks—and deservedly so. This is an institution that provides support for children with severe hearing impairment and their families. It was established in 1945, and it is an institution in South Australia. It has had the support of ministers of both persuasions of government for years. I recall that, in fact, in 1984 the Hon. Lynn Arnold developed the extension of funding and programming for this institution to provide for assistance in non-government schools and reduced, in fact, those facilities needed in government schools by giving an extra responsibility to this centre. During the eight years of the previous government, that was continued.



Notwithstanding the Treasurer's claims today, let me say that in 2000—some three years ago—an agreement was reached between former minister Buckby and the centre that it would have a period of secure funding over three years. It had been through significant restructuring in the time leading up to that period and into the year 2001. Let me just read from the President's Report from the Cora Barclay Centre for the financial year ending 30 June 2001. Peter Phillips, the President, said:

The council has gone through a steep learning curve over the past couple of years, and I believe it is fair to say that we have all become much more 'business minded'. We live in an area of economic rationalism and, like it or not, we cannot sit back and be a 'charity' and complain as we go out backwards. Every dollar spent is considered carefully, and every avenue to increase the moneys available for service delivery is being explored. At the end of last year the centre put in place a service and funding agreement with the Minister for Education to guarantee specific levels of funding until the end of 2003. This gives the centre time to develop and seek alternative sources of funding both from within and outside of government.

In this report alone, some 250 persons, institutions, schools, local councils and charitable trusts made donations to this organisation, including some significant donations of \$10 000 and over. There were very significant donations of trusts and organisations such as the Rotary Club, which I think, from memory, in the last financial year contributed some \$40 000. It has had across the board support from the South Australian community, a very significant and generous contribution from the people of South Australia, a significant annual allocation from commonwealth government grants and an ongoing (for the fixed three-year period), secured arrangement from the state government.

This government has had 18 months since it came into office to sit down and negotiate what it might do in the future—review, of course, its financial position; make an assessment about whether, in fact, it had appropriately rationalised and that its funding position was clear; and that it had taken up the initiatives it had been advised to take up (for which it compliments the former state government—in particular, the departmental officers—for the support it gave in achieving that outcome).

What happened, of course, is that personnel from the centre then attempted, on a number of occasions, to make an appointment to see representatives of the new government. On 6 March they sent a letter to the Hon. Mike Rann, the new Premier, indicating the previous government's correspondence and requesting a meeting with him, the Hon. Lea Stevens and the Hon. Trish White. No written response. In August and October (months later), finally, they get meetings scheduled with the Hon. Mike Rann, minister White and minister Steph Key, but the ministers cancel, twice. On 21 and 28 October they sent a fax seeking an urgent meeting with the Hon. Mike Rann and ministers White and Key. No response at all. By January the situation is even more desperate and they finally get a meeting with the Minister for Education.

This is nearly a year after their first request to meet with her but, at that point, the minister refuses to assist the centre in its funding battles. Further attempts are made to see the Premier, and further attempts are made to set up meetings. Disability aspects are looked at to see whether some help can be given and, finally, on 10 March, they ring the Disability Services Office to be told that there is no new money and that the Disability Services Office will not fund submission-based requests. Further submissions are put to the Minister for

Disability Services, which were handled by the Hon. Stephanie Key, and, to her credit, she seemed to listen a little, at least. The Hon. Kate Reynolds in another place issued press releases and raised questions in the parliament to try to have this matter dealt with.

We made application on the centre's behalf on 18 April 2003; that is, I wrote to the Minister for Education (who has had the financial responsibility of this) and the Minister for Social Justice. Not one of them responded to that correspondence at all and have still not responded. They have not even acknowledged that correspondence to hear the plea in relation to this matter—not a single response. Again, in April, the member for Kavel wrote to the Minister for Education on this matter. He received a reply, which states:

Your letter has been referred to the Hon. Steph Key, Minister for Social Justice. The issue you raise in your correspondence falls within the responsibility of the social justice portfolio.

So that may be. This government may decide that it will transfer it over to the Hon. Steph Key to look after this matter, but where is the money? Still nothing and, by 18 June (last Thursday), no money. With two weeks to go and facing closure, finally, they get a letter and find out that the government is going to call a press conference. At 6 o'clock the night before a letter is delivered to them that says, 'Sell your building, cut your staff and cut your services and, if you agree to do that, we will give you \$40 000 to keep going and recurrent funding of \$40 000.' Well, what an insult to these people who have been operating for over 50 years in this state providing an excellent world-class service.

Clearly, this is not appropriate. But to add complete insult to this, what do we find? The next morning, when the centre representatives say they will have to go to the public to deal with this matter, they receive a phone call threatening that there will be a withdrawal and a review of funding if they proceed with the press conference. What a disgusting act on the part of this government to try to close down a service which, effectively, it has ignored for a year. It has been cut out of the budget. It has walked away from these people. The Treasurer comes in here today and has the audacity to stand up and say, 'Your government provided only \$600 000.'

What a despicable act on the part of the Treasurer to suggest to this parliament that the former government had in any way been derelict in its duty by providing a fixed commitment for three years of \$600 000. That is the way this government is going to treat South Australian children, that is the way it is going to treat South Australian deaf children and that is what we have to look forward to in the next three years of this government.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** I rise on a point of order, sir. The member for Bragg has made some statements that are clearly not factual.

**Mr Brokenshire:** Yes, they are.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Koutsantonis):** Order!

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** I think it is a very sad—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. If the member for Torrens wishes to move a substantive motion she may, but points of order must relate to the standing orders.

**Mr Brokenshire:** You have a future as a Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Social Justice):** I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland):** I must compliment the member for Bragg for putting so very succinctly the details of one of the most scurrilous dealings that this government, hopefully, is liable to indulge in only once. We have learnt from experience that the public of this state will not accept such sensitive issues being dealt with in such an insensitive manner.

**An honourable member:** Nor will the opposition.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Nor will the opposition, of course. We are part of the public of South Australia, and we are the representatives of the public of South Australia; someone needs to represent them, because, quite obviously, this government does not.

In terms of discussing the issues in budget estimates, it is quite difficult to know just exactly where to start. We have already assessed the budget as it was brought down, and we found it extremely wanting in many areas, but particularly where the Labor government has broken all its election promises. The changes to the budget which started off in the previous budget and which have continued through to this budget, in terms of increased taxes—further levies on the people of this state—will impost quite severely on each and every member of our community.

No other great surprise came out of budget estimates, unless you count the fact that the government has now changed its methods of reporting in the budget papers. One of the very poignant points that struck me, when reading the first of the budget papers, was in the introduction that gives some information to the public and to members of parliament on the changes to Portfolio Statement content.

In the explanation on how financial and performance information will be presented in these budget papers on a program basis, the penultimate comment states as follows:

There is no longer a requirement that the performance of a program be measured in terms of output quantity, quality timeliness, and cost.

So, we are led to believe that we no longer have a requirement that any of the performances that reflect a program that has an expenditure line paid for by taxpayers' money should be measured in terms of quantity or quality. That is bad enough, but it comes down to the fact that we will no longer have budget papers that show us whether the time lines set by this government in determining the expenditure of the people of South Australia will be a requirement. However, an even greater insult to the people of South Australia and to the members of this parliament is the absolutely amazing statement that there is no longer a requirement that cost need be a part of the budget papers.

That is obviously just exactly what happened to these budget papers, because cost seems to be something of the past. The appropriations of each of the portfolio areas have been fiddled around with so considerably that from now on it will be extremely difficult, as members opposite know, to read the difference between whether a program or a portfolio budget has been underspent or overspent.

Of course, because of the honesty and accountability that has not been apparent in this government, it is not surprising that the budget papers have been arrived at in this fashion. Quite obviously, it has been the will of this government to ensure that, when it talks about secrecy, it does not mean that it believes it is being secret, but it is certainly what it does mean by its interpretation of openness and accountability, because there is none in this budget. What is in this budget

is secrecy and a fiddling of the figures to make things very difficult for the people of this state to read the budget papers and, therefore, assess whether the expenditures undertaken by this government are relevant to their needs. What we do know is that there have again been excessive cuts to almost every portfolio area, with huge sums, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, being removed and held by the Treasurer in the Consolidated Account. Of course, the people of South Australia are not going to see this money that is held in the consolidated account and, unfortunately, the government is not prepared to advise the opposition or the people of this state exactly why those huge amounts of dollars are being held in Consolidated Account.

Openness and honesty are definitely something that this government totally lacks. Its interpretation of those words makes it a total farce when you attempt to read this budget, when you attempt to see where the money has actually disappeared to. But you know from the community that they are already hurting because of the lack of funding that has gone into our constituencies. One of the areas that this government rages to be the white knights in—charging in to support everyone—is social welfare, but in most instances in our constituencies it is those areas that have been cut, and those on lower incomes are already starting to feel the pinch of what this government has done in terms of cuts to this budget.

I want to discuss one of the responsibilities that I have as shadow minister, and that is the Office of Recreation and Sport.

**Mr Brokenshire:** Where has the funding for tennis courts and oval updates gone?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** There are many different areas where money appears to have gone in this particular area as well. Again, it is something very similar to what we have seen over the past few months, where we have, unfortunately, seen the demise of public events which will no longer be held in this state but which do bring an economic benefit and certainly support our sporting and recreation communities: or at least did support, but they certainly do not at this present time. We saw recently the international horse trials removed from the calendar of events because it was quite obvious the minister did not want an event on her parklands. Never mind that the parklands are supposed to be there for the people of South Australia. But this coming from a minister who, whether or not she still is, has been the president of one of the parklands conservation associations. I would suggest in that sense that she almost has a conflict of interest in respect of the decisions she took at that time. As a result of the intense public lobbying that took place, we managed to make this minister think twice about those international trials, and it is very pleasing to know that they will be held again in Adelaide this year. What will happen to them thereafter—well, that is still in contention.

We have also seen through the budget estimates another iconic event suffer. The event occurs only once every seven years in South Australia, and we have the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing admitting in budget estimates that there will be no financial commitment given to this very special, historic and well supported event: that is harness racing's Interdominion Championships. The minister admitted that Harness Racing SA would be left without financial commitment from the government to support the Adelaide Interdominion in 2005. Not only is the Interdominion well and truly at risk because of lack of government funding: the minister also put another proposition in the

estimates committee, involving annual funding of some \$650 000 distributed among the three racing codes in South Australia. That is thoroughbred racing, harness racing and greyhound racing.

There is a suggestion that the \$650 000 will be put under greater scrutiny in terms of assessment and criteria from next year onwards. The minister has generously agreed that, because one of his numerous reviews has not quite concluded and he has not had enough time to make up his mind about it, in the year 2003-04 he will enable the \$650 000 funding to continue to be distributed to the three codes of racing. However, once the criteria has been changed, and once the minister has had an opportunity to look at the review results and the recommendations and has determined that a change will be made, there is no guarantee that that funding will be available, as it has been continuously available for the three racing codes.

The Interdominion Championships is a series that is recognised as a major event for harness racing. It is held once every seven years in South Australia, and obviously it is classed as the equivalent of the Melbourne Cup in harness racing terms. Private sponsorship and government funding has enabled this event to be hosted by South Australia. Without government assistance for the 2005 Interdominion, once again we will see a high profile sporting event lost to South Australia.

**Mr Brokenshire:** What are we going to get? Anything?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Well, we are going to get absolutely nothing. The previous Liberal government managed to encourage many different events into South Australia, and make sure that there was economic benefit that underpinned the economic stability that we brought to South Australia, but the continual loss of these events to South Australia is something that we all will regret in the future, not only in terms of economic benefits but also the huge benefits to the racing industry, particularly the Interdominion. The National Harness Racing Authority needs a guarantee by October this year that South Australia is financially capable of hosting the 2005 Interdominion, or it will be allocated to another state. The government could well underwrite that guarantee under conditions of its choice. But to categorically walk away without any negotiation about supporting this event is arrogance of an unbelievable proportion.

Harness racing in South Australia provides annual funding to the national pool of funding over a seven-year period. This funding then comes back to the state hosting the Interdominion. South Australia's harness racing will have committed some \$450 000 to the national pool. South Australian harness racing will lose this huge investment if this event is lost. Harness racing itself will feel a severe impact if this icon of harness racing is not brought to this state. South Australia could well lose much more than the \$450 000 that harness racing is investing in this. Harness racing itself could be well and truly devastated as a racing code, with the major impetus created by an Interdominion series being removed from its calendar.

Of course, at present it is necessary for harness racing itself to make sure its sponsorship drive is well and truly under way—which it is—but the minister picks this particular moment to suggest that there will be absolutely no funding to assist the Interdominion. Members can imagine that the racing industry itself is out there seeking sponsorship from a host of businesses and private enterprise support to put on this event, but the government is saying that there is no way it will support this event financially in South Australia. What

kind of message does that send to the sponsors, to the people that harness racing will be approaching in an attempt to get sponsorship to ensure that the Interdominion does happen in South Australia?

**Mr Brokenshire:** It's a disgrace.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** It is an absolute disgrace, as the member for Mawson says.

**Mr Brokenshire:** He should resign.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** Well, it is quite amazing that, in answer to all the questions put to the him with regard to harness racing and having support for holding the Interdominion here, the minister stated:

If there is any way that I, as Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, can assist the harness industry in respect of its endeavour to host the Interdominion without providing it direct financial support, I will be happy to do so.

After further questions, the minister stated:

The Office for Racing has said to Harness Racing SA, 'If we are able to support you, if we are able to work with you, we are happy to do so. However, there is no commitment of a financial nature from government'.

Harness Racing SA wrote to Major Events some time ago seeking the funding required to ensure that the Interdominion is brought to South Australia. Major Events wrote back and said that there was no funding for any event other than those already programmed until the year 2005. However, Major Events was quite happy to offer harness racing a spot on its web site if it wanted advertising and promotion of this event. Well, thank you very much, Major Events and government, but the racing industry has some wonderful web sites itself and is quite capable of ensuring that the Interdominion, if it is held here in Adelaide, has enough promotion through those sites. And, considering that Major Events is going down the tube rather quickly because it seems to be losing more major events than it is supporting, who would look on the web site of Major Events? To see what? That half of the things that used to be there are no longer there?

We talk about Major Events wanting to assist by offering its web site. How does the minister say he will assist? If he can help in any way, quite obviously, he will do so. No part of nothing is still nothing. However, the minister offered to take himself to Globe Derby Park on Interdominion championship night and present the cup.

**Mr Brokenshire:** Why? So he can get his picture in the paper?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** That is exactly right. So, the minister will help harness racing if the Interdominion is brought here, without his financial support, and he will be willing to go out to Globe Derby Park, stand on the track, make a big announcement to the crowd and happily pass on the winning cup to the owners and trainers of the winning horses. That just about takes the cake. This minister is not willing to offer assistance but he is willing to take some kudos on the night. He is willing to offer nothing in assistance but he will shake the hands of the winners, and he will be made to feel good on the night because he can present the winning cup without giving one dollar to assist harness racing maintain the Interdominion here in South Australia. That is so farcical and so arrogant that it is unbelievable.

There were many different areas under my responsibility where major cuts were made across the board in the budget. In the Department for Administrative and Information Services, apart from several millions of dollars that were taken out in other areas, savings efficiencies totalled

\$27.386 million. That is nearly \$30 million of savings initiatives which, of course, are cuts from the entire budget.

But I think this is the area that concerned me most. I have representative responsibility in the House of Assembly for Aboriginal affairs, and I have never been so disgusted in my life as when I saw the minister sit there and not be able to answer the financial questions asked of him because they were too embarrassing for him to answer, and that is that the savings initiatives created in the state Aboriginal affairs budget cut \$2.852 million over a four year period from essential services, which is what the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is all about. This is not about cutting health or education or adding money into those areas, but about essential services.

Time expired.

**Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson):** I rise in response to the Appropriation Bill, the estimates committee and in a sense as an address in reply to the budget. First, I was disappointed with the lack of answers from the Minister for Police and Treasurer. I have expressed concern since the Treasurer's appointment as police minister because, having had the privilege of being police minister for 3½ years, I know that you need to rally your colleagues around you to get increased budgets in policing. How do you rally your colleagues around you when you are a Treasurer who takes pride in pulling in the purse strings at a time when you do not have to pull them quite as tight as this Treasurer is and at a time when the South Australian community is crying out for more police officers? In fact, tomorrow in the parliament several hundred petitions will be tabled from people who want to see this government get real when it comes to law and order initiatives.

This government is not a tough on law and order government, as it wishes to project. This government is a plastic government that lacks substance. Whilst some elements of the media will continue to assist the government in getting a false message out to the South Australian community, I am confident that within the next year or thereabouts the absolute majority of the South Australian community will see through this plastic government. I feel for those people who are not ministers in this government, because I know that they are in touch with their electorates to a reasonable degree. They are very disappointed with this cabinet, although not so much the whole of the cabinet because I have quite high regard for some ministers in the cabinet. This cabinet is a Clayton's cabinet, and only a couple of people in the whole of this government have any say. It is all media driven.

You only have to listen in the corridors around in this parliament. Being a younger member, I have been privileged enough to have been here for a couple of terms, and I now have more drive, adrenalin and energy than I probably have ever had. I am interested to note that, when you listen in the corridors now, you hear for the first time backbenchers in the Labor Party openly admitting that they are not confident about the government's direction, and they are worried about its lack of strategy and real substance. They are worried about it, and so they should be.

The community is the even more worried. Let us talk about the economy for a moment. We no longer have a State Bank disaster. I remind the parliament that that was the largest single corporate loss in Australia's history. Indeed, in real terms it is probably even as big as the HIH collapse today, some 10 years down the track. That has been fixed. That is not there any longer. Until now we have had four years of successive growth. For a couple of years we have

been tracking very closely to the national employment levels. Until the Labor party got into office we have seen a re-energisation of infrastructure projects. The only infrastructure project this government has is the airport development which we had tied up. However, sadly we saw September 11 and Ansett, and the subsequent collapse of that project. I give credit to and support this government in its hopefully facilitating the redevelopment of the airport. If you talk to people in the construction industry, you learn that very little is happening other than re-announced projects, which do not create jobs and help to keep a vibrant economy. I know that in a state like South Australia you must keep your eye on the ball when it comes to economic indicators. We watched them and tracked them, and we were not happy with them from 1993, when we came into office, until about 1997, because the state was then known as a basket case. Fortunately, it turned around and from 1997 the trend indicators clearly showed that South Australia was back on track.

We have now seen four or five years of sustainable growth. However, what worries me now is that this government's budget papers, for the second year (the second budget the government has brought down), show that the government anticipates in the forward estimates an increase in unemployment and a reduction in economic growth, and those two factors—(a) a reduction in job opportunities, and (b) a reduction in economic growth—equal (c) an economy which is at best flat and probably worse than that, a negative economy. That is pretty sad, because the community of South Australia deserves better, but they will not get it when a government does not know how to prioritise; they will not get it when a government is driven by a couple of selected people; and they will not get it when a government makes its economic and strategic planning the night before based on what story it can get on the front page of the *Advertiser* the following day. That is what it is about.

This government gets very nervous if it goes a couple of days without a front page story or without a lead story in the media. So, it sits up, reinvents itself and says, 'What do the public want us to say?' and then goes to the media. That is not leadership: leadership is sometimes about telling the truth; sometimes it is about saying things people do not want to hear; and sometimes it is about very hard and real decisions which may be unpopular at the time but which are in our long-term best interests.

I feel for those Labor Party backbenchers who are passionate about their electorates, because they know deep in their heart that those three things are not happening with this government. As a thinking journalist said to me, 'Robert, parliament can legislate; that's easy but, if you haven't got the police out there on the beat to actually manage, implement and police that legislation, it's not worth the paper it's written on.' That is true, and the South Australian community is starting to see that right now. I asked the minister, 'Can you tell me why there were 31 police officers off general patrols?' A general patrol is there to answer the call of the community at less than a minute's notice when they need assistance. That is what a general patrol is about.

It does not matter how clever or sophisticated, how intelligence-based or information technology-based the police are: the No. 1 priority is that the community want to see blue shirts out there, and they want to see them there quickly. In my own area, we have the Office for the South, which the minister himself admitted was a political decision—not a decision to assist my community, but a political decision because the community said that they had had enough of the

smoke and mirrors in 1993 and wiped out the Labor Party. That is why the government brought in the Minister for the Southern Suburbs; it was not because the community really needed a Minister for the Southern Suburbs to deliver.

I have a high regard for the Minister for the Southern Suburbs, but he is powerless. I cannot even ask the minister a question in this place unless it is handballed to another minister, and if members have a look at *Hansard*, they will see the record. In my own local service area 31 officers are off general patrols, backfilling into CIB and tactical response before they have even been given the opportunity to qualify through to CIB rank. There are two probationary constables in the one car, I am told. Not only that, even before they are trained and qualified in pursuit driver training, they are having to do pursuit driving. Two PCs together! I feel for those officers. Kadina is short eight officers and Ceduna is short five officers because those positions have not been filled.

I asked the Treasurer one simple question: how many police graduations will take place at the Police Academy in the state between 1 July and 1 December 2003? That was a pretty elementary question, to which I think the answer is zero, because I do not think there is a graduation between now and 1 December 2003. Do you know what the Treasurer said? He started to prattle on about how many they are going to recruit. That is not of interest to the community of South Australia when they need police assistance now. It is not of interest to police officers who are stressed and overworked. It is not of interest to the families of those police officers who see their husbands and wives bring the job home because they have had to do twice the load. If the government is serious about law and order, when the State Bank debacle has been fixed by the Liberal government in partnership with the South Australian community, and this government now has a surplus left to it—then, if it has half a brain as a government, it will get its priorities right and recruit more police, but sadly this government is more focused on the media.

I am proud and privileged to be the shadow minister for police, having had the opportunity of representing the police as the Liberal minister for 5½ years, and I will continue to bat for the police and call for support for them, because they deserve it. It does not matter how good your hospitals and your education system are, if you cannot get a police officer in your hour of need, if you cannot get the police to protect you when someone is robbing your home or business or assaulting your family, it does not matter how good the hospital is if you cannot even make it to the hospital. This is what this government does not realise, and that is sad.

I want to touch on a couple of my other portfolios. I refer, first, to volunteering. Where would South Australia be without volunteers? I am proud to say that my family came here in 1840 and loved this state with a passion. I would never want to live anywhere else. We have had thousands of volunteers. Whilst I acknowledge that there is bipartisanship to a great extent in respect of volunteering, in a year where we have a surplus budget and when the former Liberal government has addressed and fixed most of the problems—we started the Office of Volunteers and instituted the first Minister for Volunteers, and this government has continued with that, the Premier having taken up that portfolio because he recognised its importance—guess what happened to the budget of the Office of Volunteers for this year? It was cut. We are talking about a minuscule amount. This is a \$7 billion-plus budget, and hundreds of thousands of dollars

of a small budget that is not even worth about \$3 million a year was cut.

The government says that it knows how to prioritise, yet it spent \$1.8 million on a minister who claims that he is an independent minister. I have not seen any independence since he joined cabinet, and he has kept other Labor members out of cabinet. If this party gets back into office for a second term, the Premier has signed an agreement that this minister can have a second term. Loyal backbench Labor members: beware! They were able to find \$1.8 million with a click of their fingers, but they cut the volunteer budget. I say let us have less from the mouth and more real monetary support for these people; the \$465 000, the one in three volunteers. They are passionate about this state and their community, but what do they get in return? A cut in their budget.

I turn now to gambling. I appreciate the work that the Minister for Social Justice tries to do, but again from my observations she does not have a big voice in cabinet. I asked some reasonable questions of the Minister for Gambling. I was the first minister for gambling, something of which I am very proud because it is an issue that needs to be addressed. I said to the Minister for Gambling, 'Minister, your Treasurer has ripped \$35 million more out of the gaming industry alone. Tell me how much money out of that \$35 million are you putting into research for problem gamblers? How much money are you putting into Break Even, given that you were happy to come out with an announcement, jointly funded by the Australian Hotels Association and other organisations, when it came to some advertisements for which you bought the copyright from Victoria, because you are going to get more demand on Break Even? How much more money did you put into food hampers for the kids, wives and husbands who are starving at night because people have a gambling addiction? How much more money are you putting in out of the \$35 million? Maybe \$1 million? Maybe the \$34 million you put into your war chest for the next election, but how about \$1 million this year to help those families, as I have in my electorate kids who are not getting breakfast in the morning because, sadly, one of the members of their family has a gambling problem?' The only answer I could get from the Minister for Gambling was that it was the responsibility of the Minister for Social Justice. Where is the whole of government approach? It is not there and it is appalling.

I will touch in the last few minutes on another of my portfolios in which I have immense pride: the emergency services portfolio. I refer to the tens of thousands of volunteers, men and women, out there 24 hours a day in all the elements protecting life and property. I will touch on the emergency services review. I do not oppose further change if that change is for the better. When in government we made changes, and that is what the community expects. If you do not make changes in government what are you there for? Notwithstanding that, when you make changes they have to be for the better.

I remember what happened in 1987 with St John when it was pushed into the South Australian Ambulance Service—a service of which I am proud. But I am also proud of the St John Ambulance Service. A situation now exists with SAAS where tens of millions of dollars of public money goes into providing a similar service to what St John was providing. Someone said to me this week that there are fewer ambulances in South Australia now than when it was St John—a volunteer organisation!

The minister said that he was not prepared to debate the emergency services review in the budget papers or estimates

because there was not a budget line, which I dispute. The minister also said, 'You'll have plenty of time all night to debate the legislation when it comes in for the emergency services review recommendations to be implemented,' and I acknowledge that. But, whilst I am prepared to support change if it is right, I am not scaremongering and I am not out there in the media attacking the review. I am out there talking to the volunteers, but the government is not out there. It is trying to do a snow job on them.

Finally, after a great call from my colleagues, the volunteers and me, the minister apparently (although I have not received advice on this) has been generous enough to give an extra 10 days for the volunteers to respond to a 43-page review.

There are three or four key things in that review about which the volunteers are concerned, and I believe we have a right as a democratic society and as an opposition, with a responsibility to represent the South Australian community and to try to keep a government that purports to be honest, open, and accountable at least a little honest, which is what this government is at best (and the people of South Australia are starting to see through that—it is a trickery government) to ask the government and the minister to tell us what they are on about with the review so that I can relay it to the volunteers. If they are going to dispense with the CFS board, which has given them autonomy and protection, why are they not putting volunteers on the commission? Tell me about the 43 stations that the review flags will be recommended for collocation in the rural and regional areas and the 10 in the peri-urban areas so that at least those people know that that may occur. Guarantee me that, at the end of the day, whatever occurs will first and foremost be for the support of the volunteers of the SES, CFS, Surf Life Saving Association of South Australia and marine rescue. I am told, 'Wait until the legislation comes in.' That is not open, honest and accountable, and I will continue to fight for volunteers.

Time expired.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the budget estimates. I was pleased to have the opportunity to serve on many of the estimates committees during the past two weeks. I would say at the outset that after 20 years now of serving on estimates I am still not happy with the way they operate. I believe we still need to work on them to get them to work in a more streamlined fashion, although if we are talking about being in a streamlined fashion I acknowledge that this year, perhaps more than most years, the government sought to assist the opposition by saying it would not ask any questions if we were happy to see the estimates conclude a little earlier rather than a little later, and that worked on quite a few occasions. The only negative I see there is that some government members also wanted to ask questions, and I would never take away from the government its right to seek to highlight some of the positives. I guess the issue of introductory statements needs to be considered, because I believe that ministers can probably get the information out in estimates through answers to questions rather than in introductory statements. That is particularly so when only half an hour is allocated for a portfolio. If a portfolio has, say, three hours, an introductory statement is perhaps most applicable, but if in half an hour the best part of 10 minutes is taken up with an introductory statement then the amount of questioning is very limited.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the number of questions asked by members from other than one of the two

major parties, namely, the government or the opposition. On quite a few occasions the chair asked questions and I felt that in some cases in particular it took away significant questioning time from the opposition. All those things are still cause for concern, in my opinion. At the same time I acknowledge that all the shadow ministers found them to be very beneficial and were able to investigate in much more detail just what the implications of this budget are. Also, as someone who served on many of the committees, I continued to learn some of the intricacies of the departments. I thank the various departmental officials for the amount of work they have done, and perhaps that is the last comment I would make on estimates. I wonder how many days, weeks or even months of preparation time goes into estimates and, if it is used simply to prepare answers to possible questions, perhaps some of that time could be spent in other ways assisting our society and South Australia as a whole.

I come to some of the specifics. First of all I served on the South Australian Tourism Commission estimates. It disappointed me that less money is being spent on tourism now than had been spent previously. I say that because the previous government decided that as one of the key things it could do to help regional areas was to put money towards tourism. I suppose, as a member who represents Yorke Peninsula, including the area from Port Wakefield through to Hamley Bridge and down to Mallala, I recognise as much as, if not more than, the average member the importance of tourism. Many years ago when the Yorke Regional Development Board was first established—

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Koutsantonis):** Order!

**Mr MEIER:** —the then chief executive officer of the board had a survey undertaken to determine what the key economic ingredients were for Yorke Peninsula. When the report was released, it was identified that the most important economic ingredient for Yorke Peninsula was Innes National Park. I thought it would have been barley, wheat or something along an agricultural line, but I was wrong. The chief executive said that the board wanted to make Innes National Park the most visited park outside the metropolitan area, and in that way all the people in all the towns on Yorke Peninsula could seek to stop tourists on their way down to Innes, and on their return, and that would help the respective economies. He was 100 per cent right and Innes National Park is the most visited national park outside the metropolitan area of South Australia.

Our government spent a huge amount of money on helping to develop that park. One of the key developments was the bitumen road that is now in the park. The previous road was a nightmare for most of the year, and I travelled on it quite often. Any tourist who comes to the national park now would be delighted at not having to suffer damage to their vehicle. The other thing that the tourism office provided money for was the bituminising of the road from Corny Point to Marion Bay, forming a triangular route for tourists to use. I have received many positive comments along that line. In the vicinity of \$2 million was provided by Tourism SA yet we all know from an answer to a question in this house that the present tourism minister feels as though it was money that should not have been spent by the Tourism Commission. That shows the difference in thinking that occurs now.

Likewise, our government provided half a million dollars towards the Dry Land Farming Centre at Kadina. It is a national centre and I believe that it already equates to the Longreach cattle museum in Queensland. I was very interest-

ed late last year to speak to a busload of people from Shepparton in Victoria. A couple of the guys told me that we were not publicising sufficiently the National Dry Land Farming Centre at Kadina. They had been all over Australia on bus trips over the last few years, and they ranked the centre at Kadina as the best in Australia. They had been to the Longreach cattle museum, but thought that the centre at Kadina was far superior.

We have got the best right here in South Australia, and that would not have existed without funding from the South Australian Tourism Commission through the former tourism minister. I have complimented the Hon. Joan Hall before, and I compliment her again, for the work she did as minister for tourism, because she had great foresight in recognising the importance of tourist dollars being spent in regional and metropolitan areas as the way to attract people to this state. I ask the government to reconsider its priorities in tourism. We all know that maximum money must be spent on health and education but, if we do not spend it on making sure that the rest of our economy ticks over well and efficiently, we will not have additional money for health, education, police, and the like.

I also served on the committee that considered the estimates of the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, and the shadow minister has commented on that area. A lot has been said about TAFE in the past year and I hope that a better year is forthcoming in that respect. I was also pleased to be a member of the committees which examined the lines for Planning SA, Administrative and Information Services, SA Water and the Liquor and Gambling Commission. During the examination of SA Water, I asked a question in relation to the problem that so many of my farmers are currently facing because of the new River Murray water levy, that is, the new River Murray water tax. Some of my farmers have up to 17 water meters on their property. I asked the Minister for Administrative Services (Hon. Jay Weatherill) about this and he said, 'The fundamental answer is that Minister Hill is handling the application incidence of the levy'. Immediately I started to suspect that perhaps the government had not worked this out properly.

Unfortunately, I was not a member of the committee which examined the River Murray, but Mrs Joan Hall was a member of that committee and she asked a question on my behalf in relation to the tax on water meters and the massive cost increase that farmers will face. In fact, my sums indicate that bills in excess of \$2 000 will not be unusual and, if the government simply says, 'We will amalgamate the water meters,' I indicate that farmers could lose up to \$1 000 per year by having to pay for a higher rate of water once they have used the base rate of 125 kilolitres. In his answer it was very interesting to hear Minister Hill indicate that, amongst other things, the first levy will not be collected until October. He said, 'So we have several months to sort through some of the issues that have become contentious.'

I do not think it is a good thing to introduce a new tax when you do not know how it will operate. I see the issue of crown lands being revisited, because the government brought that in without knowing what was what. Then the member for Morialta went further on my behalf and sought information in relation to farmers who wanted to wash their machinery; and what the situation is regarding farmers filling their boom sprays so that they can spray their crops against pests and so on. The minister indicated that that is really in the hands of the minister who oversees SA Water, the Hon. Jay Weatherill.

It was handpassed to the minister I had originally asked. This troubles me greatly. I can see right now that the government will handball from one minister to the other as it sees fit. I say to all members: let us ensure that that does not happen, because it is not what we want.

Subsequent to that, I have also had more farmers contacting me and asking for further clarification, because the only clarification in relation to farm dams or tanks is that they must be not be filled with SA Water supplied reticulated water. Unless it is being used for domestic or stock consumption, or firefighting, a permit is required to fill a dam for any other reason. How on earth SA Water will find out whether it is being used for firefighting or any other reason, I do not know. I can already see the potential litigious nature of this new tax.

The other matter is that it is clearly identified that water must not be used to cool a poultry or piggery shed except by the following means: a sprinkler system used between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. and a fogging system used at any time. Again, that may sound fine, but on some of the nights when the temperature is still in excess of 35 degrees at midnight, I just wonder what the situation will be if they cannot use a sprinkler system. Will we have the inspectors going out and looking for fowl sheds whose lights are on at night, from where they might see a mist coming? This is not what we want.

I know members are aware that, if water restrictions had been introduced for the metropolitan area last summer, the estimates are that it would have saved the equivalent of half of one day's evaporation from the River Murray. That being the case, we would imagine, therefore, that these water restrictions, which will apply for the whole of the year, will probably save the better part of one day's evaporation from the River Murray. I am talking here about the people on reticulated water in built-up areas; I am not referring to the irrigators, who will also be affected. We have already heard from other members as to the potential effect that the water restrictions will have in that area.

This will not be the answer to the Murray's problems; we all know that. It is simply window dressing. It is a token gesture. I guess it will win some hearts and minds, but I would have thought that the government needed to take much more urgent action, and I hope that it is looking at what new reservoirs and desalination plants can be built. Yorke Peninsula is a classic case where we could have desalination plants all around the coastline. I asked that question of the Minister for Administrative Services, and received an answer in relation to the difference between the one on Kangaroo Island and the one that is proposed for the Todd Reservoir. However, no mention was made as to whether proposals are in hand for other areas.

The government has to be forward thinking in this area, because Yorke Peninsula is already short of water. I have for many years now found that new developments are not eligible for reticulated water. Residents can only have water from their rainwater tanks, and that is totally unacceptable.

There are many areas that I would like to touch on, but perhaps I will return to tourism for my final comments. I was extremely upset to see on page 29 of today's *Advertiser* an article headed 'Cost to insure takes puff out of rail tourism'. The article talks about the heritage railway groups across South Australia that are facing a looming public liability crisis, and I thought, 'Hang on, we have heard it all before.' We heard it a year ago, when some of these trains were to stop operating—when trains such as the Yorke Peninsula Rail from Wallaroo to Bute did stop operating; and when the Pichi

Richi train stopped operating but was then rescued for one year. We heard the Treasurer in this house screaming out at us that the legislation he had introduced would now provide the opportunity for public liability insurance to be capped, and that it would not continue to hurt the way that it had been hurting. And what has happened a year later? Zero! We will have these railways closing again.

Where is the tourism minister? I am afraid that the state government will have to come in and help with respect to the public liability for these tourist trains. If the government has to insure for the immediate few years to come, so be it. But let us see some real investment in tourism, because there is nothing like a decent tourist trade to help attract people to an area. People want things to do, and that is one thing that provides an excellent opportunity. Other states have managed to overcome these problems. I believe that we got a lot out of the estimates committees. It is a pity that this was not a more positive budget as far as the future of South Australia is concerned. I trust that the government will listen to what the opposition is saying and, hopefully, make corrections in the coming months.

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** The estimates process has been very tedious, and this debate is continuing that tedious process. Something in the vicinity of 20 members will be speaking for 20 minutes, generally, about the difficulties associated with the estimates process which, in itself, is painful. That has me reflecting on the virtues of the estimates process within this parliament. I believe it is extremely important that the opposition has the opportunity to scrutinise the decisions of the government, whether that be through the estimates process or through the committee structure. It is extremely important, and it is important that time is used effectively and in such a way that it extracts that scrutiny.

I think that there are ways in which the estimates system can be improved because, over the last week, it has been a little like drawing teeth. I believe that there are ways in which we can improve the system. However, having said that, I do not think that our government is doing things a great deal differently than what has been done for a period of time. I find it very interesting to hear the opposition members use terms such as 'arrogant' and 'not having the ability to ask questions', when, indeed, my recollections of times past—and I know that I have been here for only two estimates periods—is that not a great deal has changed and, if anything, it is a continuation of a process that needs to be reviewed.

I find it a bit much to have 20 speakers from the other side of the chamber (I understand that that is the number of members who intend to speak) talking about some of the inadequacies which they perpetuated whilst they were in government. As I said, whilst I was not here four or five years ago, I do recall sitting and watching estimates, and I often reflect why I might have been doing that given the fact that I am here now. It seemed that, in those days, there were only a limited number of questions. You might have three opposition members who could ask three questions each and that would be it.

I do not believe that when the present opposition was in government it allowed a proper scrutiny of its budgets. We hear the word 'arrogant' and we hear members say that we are not allowing them to do what they believe is their job. I suggest that if members opposite are upset at the process it might be because they are not using the time as effectively as they could. They actually want to lay a hit, and if they are cranky because they have not been able to lay hits it is

because they have not been doing their job properly, and that could be for one of two reasons.

Perhaps it is because members opposite are lazy in terms of their work in scrutinising the budget, or perhaps it is because they are just not up to it; and that is the very reason why members opposite are in opposition as opposed to being in government. I do not believe that the term 'arrogant' can necessarily be directed at our government because, certainly, it is the very reason why members opposite find themselves on those benches as opposed to being on this side of the chamber. I did find interesting today the contribution made by the member for Unley. I must admit to being very sad during the week because I actually like the member for Unley.

I think that he has been done over by members on the other side: he should be sitting further up the front bench. It seemed to me for a little while that he was going to hop into his car which, I am sure, is now compliant, and drive off into the sunset. The reality is that, with tonight's performance, he is back. I did not agree with what he had to say but his performance was such that he is back. He is a bit like Dame Nellie Melba: he has made a comeback and I think that the parliament will be better for it. Your side will be better for it, because you cannot afford to lose the member for Unley.

**An honourable member:** Are you talking about the member for Unley?

**Mr CAICA:** I am talking about the member for Unley. Tonight, he talked about the budget and listening to the government. He suggested that, in the times of premier Olsen and premier Brown, they did not do anything. I think that he failed to mention the tenure of premier Kerin as well, which is a bit surprising, given that, during the week, he said that he is 100 per cent behind the Leader of the Opposition, as are all members opposite. I am sure that he is a little disappointed that he did not mention that fact. However, it was a wonderful performance by the member for Unley, and I am glad that tonight he has shown that he is well and truly back.

I will not hold up members for very long, because it is a little like adding salt to an injury to go through this process. There is no doubt that the estimates process needs improvement, particularly in relation to the opposition doing its work, by asking proper questions and using the time more effectively than has been the case at this time. One thing that annoyed me more than anything else during the last week was the talk by the opposition about the long-winded manner in which government ministers responded to questions. It seemed to me that the way in which many of the questions were asked was nothing more than an opportunity for those in opposition asking the questions to do some political grandstanding.

So, as opposed to studying the budget and looking at a budget line, it was more an opportunity to ask political questions, which were in the form of political grandstanding and were not based on any budget line. We heard questions that were as long as the opening statements and, by the time a question was asked, we had forgotten it because there was so much political grandstanding in the process. There are ways by which we can improve the process, and I certainly believe that the structures of the parliament need to be established in such a way that they scrutinise the executive decision making of government. We know that that ought be the case in the estimates committee structure. So, we should work collectively towards ensuring that we can use the time properly and more effectively, so that there can be scrutiny of the executive decision making of the government, which I do not think we are doing well at the moment.



We talk about trying to circumvent the process, and that is why I am annoyed about the contributions that have been made by the opposition tonight. It seems to me that, from my recollection of the historical aspects of the Public Works Committee, for example, during the previous term the opposition, the then government, used everything in its power to circumvent some of the processes that allowed decisions of the executive to be scrutinised by the Public Works Committee. So, it is a little like people living in glasshouses. I stand by the fact that this government is open, accountable and transparent. However, certainly, I believe that this government is more than willing to look at the estimates process and other processes to ensure not only that that point is reinforced but that there is a greater level of accountability and transparency, which is to the benefit of the people of South Australia.

As I said, I do not want to take up too much time, because I believe that tonight's session is adding salt to the injury of what was a very tedious estimates process that is certainly in need of review and improvement. I know that, as a collective, this government will, hopefully with the support of the opposition, look at ways in which we can improve the estimates process. I reinforce the point that I appreciate the contribution of the member for Unley in the Public Works Committee. I am thankful that he is back. Clearly, tonight he has reviewed his decision quite favourably and will not pack up the things in his locker and go. He will not hop into his now compliant car and drive off into the sunset.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert):** I commend the member for Colton on his speech. I did note his comments regarding the member for Unley, and I do enjoy being on the Public Works Committee under the member for Colton's leadership, but I was concerned to hear the member's remarks about arrogance. I have been in this place for 13 years and I have not seen the likes of the arrogance that we have seen in this place in the past couple of months. Throughout my speech I will try to contain my anger, and that of my electors, but I am incensed over the budget and over the recent carry-on in this house. In a moment I will discuss how the budget, which is mean-spirited and without compassion, adversely affects so many people in my electorate and across the state.

First, however, I wish to bring to the attention of the house the pathetic manner in which the estimates were conducted. We are constantly being told that the Labor government is streamlining the process, making government more transparent and accountable, but from where I sit nothing could be further from the truth. In the past two weeks we have had estimates hearings that have been treated with disdain, and thus our parliamentary process has been treated with disdain and contempt. I quote the Treasurer, Mr Foley, in his opening remarks to Estimates Committee B on 17 June. I read these comments myself and I could not—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** Everyone else has been heard in silence. Am I offending you or something? I casually read these words when I picked up the committee report and I just could not believe what I was reading. It states:

The opposition is free to ask whatever questions the opposition wishes to ask and I as minister will choose to answer what questions I choose to answer.

These are the words of the Treasurer!

**Mr SNELLING:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Schubert is referring to debate which is

presently before the house. Your ruling earlier today was that such matters could not be referred to in debate.

**The SPEAKER:** I did not hear what the member for Schubert was saying but, if he was quoting what came from an estimates committee rather than from a second reading debate, he is entitled to do so in order to ensure that what he is saying about the point made by the honourable member whom he is quoting is clearly understood by the house. However, he cannot refer to another member's speech in this debate by quoting it.

**Mr RAU:** I am not sure, and I apologise in advance because I do not understand the rules properly. However, if it turns out that the matter that was raised yesterday, I think in question time or before question time, by the member for Unley in fact is the same matter to which the member for Schubert is now alluding, would it be in order for him to raise that matter given that, as I understood it, the member for Unley raised a privileges matter which was to be dealt with by way of a resolution?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Enfield makes an interesting hypothetical point, but because it is hypothetical I cannot say whether or not it is orderly. The chair must simply pay attention and make sure that there is not a breach of standing orders.

**Mr VENNING:** I apologise if I have transgressed the standing orders, but I have never heard such an arrogant outburst in this house in my 13 years. That is topped off only by the previous comment he made last July, when he said 'You do not have the moral fibre to go back on your promises, and I have.' So, I cannot believe this arrogant outburst. What is the point of holding such estimates committees if the Treasurer, the man responsible for the purse strings of the state, has such an attitude towards the processes of this parliament? What hope do we have of convincing those we serve that we are acting in their best interests? This is just a further demonstration of the arrogance of the Treasurer—something he, unfortunately, demonstrated to us all. We also heard from all the ministers during the estimates committees about unspent moneys. I was very aggrieved to hear that the Minister for Health had \$6 million or \$7 million unspent in her budget. That would have half-built the new Barossa hospital, but it had to go back to Treasury. What really got up my nose is that I understand the Treasurer kept his budget; he did not have to hand it back. I wonder what the other ministers thought about that. What hypocrisy and arrogance! I wonder how that will stand up at the end of the financial day.

We saw, yet again, the grandstanding on his statement that he had cut his department's spending by 11 per cent. I heard that statement on the radio; I thought, 'Gee, that's a grand statement. 11 per cent is a fair cut.' But what is the cut? Nothing! He has increased it by \$3 million. Not only do we get such arrogance but also dishonesty. This is a prima donna carrying on here. I mix in this place and move around the corridors, and I hear comments from both sides of the parliament. I hear about the unrest from the backbench—on the other side, as much as this side. No-one likes a prima donna, particularly when the words 'You can't be trusted,' and 'Treating this place with disdain', are used. I wonder upon whom the Treasurer is modelling himself. I think he wants the toughness of John Olsen, but the resoluteness of Stephen Baker, a former treasurer, because he must admire him. But, in order to be like this, you must have some credibility.

I have been doing estimates committees for over 13 years. They have degenerated to such an extent that it is now bordering on a farce. I know most members have highlighted this tonight, and we must now deal with this. Times have been cut back to a minimum. We are lucky to get in three questions per member per session; and when the government is asking its own questions, when we have highly paid public servants sitting in here, it could only be described as a farce. Estimates is all about the opposition asking probing questions. What sort of probing question will you get from a government member? This has been the practice of the past—every government has done this. I think it is time to address this situation. It is time to say, 'Hang on, let's cut back estimates times by half and only have questions from the opposition.'

I will give minister Holloway credit because he did stop questions from the government side so the opposition got a fair go. That was appreciated, and I think it ended up a constructive day. He did a fair job. I wonder how long we can go on without the Legislative Council's becoming involved. We have Legislative Councillors as ministers sitting in here, so why can Legislative Councillors not sit on the benches and prop up the numbers? It is high time we addressed that as well. In my early days of estimates committees—and I have chaired several of them—we normally adjourned at 10 p.m. or 9.30 p.m. The latest one I was on was 7.30 p.m. I wonder where we are going with all this?

I will now address my main concerns, and those of the people I represent—the 24 000 people who live in the electorate of Schubert. Through my electorate office I have seen an increasing stream of people who have been affected adversely by what I can only describe as a mean, devious budget.

I call it devious because the Treasurer and his razor gang have made cuts or increased charges in areas that he thought we would not find—things that they believed would affect only a small minority of people. But let me tell the Treasurer that he has managed to find a way to upset many people on a range of issues that they hold dear to their heart. He may have thought he was making cuts to or increasing the cost of something he finds trivial but, to them, it makes a world of difference. The first matter I raise is the high hopes that my constituents had—

*Ms Thompson interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** Sir, there is an undercurrent of noise. I did not interrupt the previous speakers and there is noise coming from across the chamber. I am not provoking anybody, and the continuous noise is just bad manners.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr VENNING:** There were high hopes in my electorate that there would be further funding to progress a new Barossa hospital, but there was no mention of it and nothing was mentioned in estimates, either. The waiting lists in our country hospitals are increasing. There was some expectation under the previous government that we would have a renal dialysis unit in the country areas and that need is now increasing. People living in the Barossa have to travel to Adelaide three or four times a week for the vital service of renal dialysis. I welcome the fact that the local Lions group in the Barossa last week took this on as a major project, and we will be asking the Minister for Health to assist with that.

In regard to the home and community service funding—and we have a very strong home and community service unit in the Barossa—I cannot believe that the government can cut

the funding of vital services that are tied to federal funding. Not only do you cut the money, but you also double the effect because you forfeit the federal funds that go with it. I think \$3 million was the short-term figure. Not only do you lose that money from the federal government (the extra \$3 million), but you also change the formula for next time. I cannot believe how short-sighted that is; it is bloody-minded, to say the least.

There have been cuts to treatment for autism. A lad of four years of age who suffers from severe autism lives in Tanunda. We are told at length that the only way to handle autism is to treat children before the age of five. What has the government done? It has cut funding for autism treatment for children under five. So, my constituents now take their young four year old from Tanunda all the way to Adelaide one or two times a week for this treatment. This is a cold, hard, callous act. People have children with disabilities and there, but for the grace of God, go I. These people are trying to do the right thing but this government is making it very hard. Today, we also heard what is happening at the Cora Barclay Centre. All I can say is that the government has drawn a brumby with this one, because it has come back right in its face.

I am very concerned about roads and, as we have heard from some of my colleagues, five of us toured the Outback—

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** What about Barton Road?

**Mr VENNING:** I have not heard much about Barton Road lately. I think you have given up on that. Is your mob not delivering for you? I thought that would have been the first thing they did. They have creamed you. Anyway, they are creaming the Outback. There has been a huge degradation of the roads, so much so that now people are flying rather than driving—in fact, we flew—because the roads are packing up. After the successful Year of the Outback, tourism ventures and other things, why would you want to cut the funds for gangs working on the Outback roads? The member for Giles is here, and she has a lot of these roads in her patch. I cannot believe how silly this is. For the few dollars involved, I cannot believe that this goes unchecked on the other side of this house.

In my electorate of Schubert we have a brand new road, Gomersal Road, which has been extremely well received, and people are very thankful for it. But now we have a problem of moving the traffic from the point where Gomersal Road intersects the Barossa Valley Way in Tanunda: we need to disperse the traffic around the community. We now have interconnecting roads and we have accidents and fatalities—and again the other night—because tourist traffic and heavy trucks do not mix. We have to separate them where possible.

We also have problems with our bridges. As I said before, these bridges are designed to carry trucks of eight to 12 tonnes, and we are putting 45 tonnes over them. What do you think will happen? You do not need to be Einstein to work that out. They are propping them up as best they can, but there will be an accident. I do not want to say, 'I told you so,' but you cannot expect the councils to spend the millions of dollars required. As I said before, the Barossa is leading the economy in this state. It is booming, its progress is booming, and the transport movements are huge. We have to keep up with it and provide safe and adequate infrastructure to keep up with this. However, we are not; we are right behind with it.

As I said before, I am blessed with some great schools, both public and private. I have one of the best public schools in the state in the Nuriootpa High School, and I want this government to give it priority. It has a fabulous wine

education program. Some members will be invited to a function in parliament house where they will be able to come along and enjoy the barramundi that is grown at this high school, drink the magnificent wine that is made at this high school, and eat food cooked and served by hospitality students. It is a great school and its curriculum is just tremendous, and we need to pay it the highest accolade. Surely the government could recognise this and give it reasonable facilities. Other schools—particularly private schools—have come along and copied the syllabus, picked up the ideas and run with them themselves and built their own facilities. Poor old Nuriootpa high, which has done all the work for 30 years, is still languishing in a couple of old garages, whereas the other schools have fantastic new wine facilities. It is hardly fair.

*The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** I personally invite you to come to my electorate and I will show you what we did in eight years. You tell me what you have done in 14 months. Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Not a thing.

*The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** You think of one project. Tell me one.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It is not proper for the member for Schubert to reflect on the chair like that. It is not my responsibility to do anything.

**Mr VENNING:** Sorry, sir; I was not reflecting on you. I was reacting to an interjection which is out of order. I also want to discuss the police in our small communities. They are very valued and we need them, particularly in as one policeman is being shared between two or three small communities. I also want to talk about the matter of car registrations. They have gone up hugely. Country people have no choice but to have at least two cars in their family. The cost of registration has gone through the roof. If you put that on top of the cost of fuel, it is massive.

To finish off, I want to discuss the River Murray levy. When that came out, I thought, 'This is a beauty!' because I do not think the government realised that farmers have more than one meter. The day after the budget, I got on ABC radio at Port Pirie and said, 'I don't think that the Treasurer understands that most farmers have more than one meter. Will he tax us so much per meter? I know that some people have 14 or 15 meters.'

**Ms Breuer:** That's sorted out!

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr VENNING:** That is not sorted out, as the member for Giles says, because, if you try to bulk them up, you pay a penalty. In each of your meters you have an excess water level and, as soon as you get into excess water, you go from 42¢ to \$1 a kilolitre. If you bulk them up, instead of having 16 excess waters, you have one. Also, it is the same with the leakage allowance. If you have 16 meters, you have 16 individual leakage allowances—one every 10 years. However, if you bulk them up, you have one. In some instances, it is impossible to bulk them up. This is just another issue like the Crown lease issue. It has not been thought through. I will be interested to see how the Treasurer will work out who will receive the one bulked up water bill. I am very concerned about this matter, as I am with many other issues in my electorate.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** I, too, will take the opportunity to reflect on the estimates committees or, should I say, the examination process of the budget. Not only is it the examination process that examines the government, the ministers and

their departments but also it really is an opportunity for us all to make a contribution.

I note that some members on both sides of the house have questioned the value of the estimates committees. I listened very closely to the member for Colton, who did have some important points of reflection on the process. I agree, in a sense, that the estimates and the estimates process play a very important part although, of course, there are areas of disagreement with the reflections of the member for Colton. I agree with the member for Bragg that things can always be done better, and I believe the member for Colton said that as well.

I have been in this place for almost 10 years, and have always been involved in the education estimates. In the past, when we were in government (not that long ago and, hopefully, it will not be too long before we are returned to government, because the public does deserve a good government), the estimates committees commenced at 11 a.m. and finished at 10 p.m. As the member for Bragg said in her contribution, we now have 4½ hours. Comments have been made about whether we should sit for so long or whether members of the Legislative Council should be involved in the estimates committees. Some have commented about the usefulness of having the public servants involved in coming to the estimates committees and providing all the answers.

Some would say that that is not money well spent, but I disagree. You cannot just look at what happens in this place: the whole process of gathering information, trying to prepare for the questions that will be asked and, of course, the questions on notice, is important and part of the accountability process of parliament and government. I believe that that has value in itself, because the value is not only set on the actual examination in this place, which is no different from any examination: all the work that takes place beforehand is of value, and the work that takes place after the examination is also of value.

If you measure things only in economic terms, you might not see the value. However, parliament and the democratic process cannot be solely measured in economic terms. If we did that, we would reduce the number of members of parliament, we would reduce the number of departments, and we—

*Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** My colleague is correct: we do not want a reduction in representation, and we do not want departments not being able to provide answers to all the questions that are rightly asked during the estimates committee hearings. Those opportunities must be provided. There is no question that the process can be done better. I note that it is 11.25 p.m.; perhaps we can organise our days better. We can organise the questioning process better; as the member for Colton rightly said, there is no question that it could be reviewed—and it must be reviewed so that we can do a better job.

I would like to reflect on the comments about the arrogance of the Treasurer. I disagree with some of my colleagues. When they say that the Treasurer has been arrogant in government, I believe they are only half right, because the Treasurer was arrogant in opposition as well. I can vouch for that, because I was on the receiving end. However, if I can be truly objective, the Treasurer and some of the current ministers have been less arrogant towards me since I have been in opposition. I do not understand why. Every time I used to get up to speak, minister Conlon (in opposition) used to say to me, 'Enjoy your last six months'; now he refers to me as the Lion of Hartley.

Another problem with this government is the way in which it has arranged its ministries. We have difficulty working out who is responsible for what.

*Mr Caica interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I hope it isn't one of those spaghetti charts that they did in the federal parliament.

*Mr Caica interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I will look forward to receiving help from the member for Colton. The arrogance began in the last year before they got into government. The problem with this arrogance is that it is not only members on this side of the house who have that opinion. I refer to an article in the *Advertiser* of Saturday 21 June, headed 'Getting rid of the empire builders', by Greg Kelton, which states:

Labor cannot expect to escape scrutiny on health, education and law and order. Both were made key planks of its election policy and have been constantly reinforced by Premier Mike Rann and his ministers. On Thursday, at the release of the long-awaited Menadue review of the health system, Acting Premier Kevin Foley said the State Government would always have more money for health.

That is what the Treasurer said. Under the Liberals, 24.7 per cent of the budget was spent on health; under Labor is has decreased to 24.1 per cent. If health and education are key planks, I cannot understand—

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** And law and order.

**Mr SCALZI:** And law and order. The Attorney-General is tough on law and order: greater powers for the Parole Board, build extra jails, tougher sentences—it all sounds great, but what has happened to the crime prevention programs?

**Mr Rau:** They're unnecessary.

**Mr SCALZI:** The member for Enfield says that they are not necessary. Try telling that to the Norwood, Payneham and St Peters and Campbelltown councils and Andrew Patterson and the representatives of the community which have had a successful crime prevention program. Their funding has been reduced. The graffiti program was so successful. This government is really keen on cutting down successful programs in the hope that it will implement better ones, but it is failing in this respect. I am glad the Attorney-General came in with his interjection. I will read from an advertisement in the *Sunday Mail* of 8 June. In the past eight or nine years of government we have never had such nice big advertisements from the Police Association. I will read it out, as it is important:

No extra police in state budget. To the South Australian community. The Labor government's second state budget has regrettably failed to allow for much needed extra police to serve you, the community. This failure leaves existing officers under pressure to operate without the support of adequate numbers. The stark reality is that today police numbers are spread too thinly. Time has brought greater than ever expectations of, and indeed demands on, South Australia Police and they cannot continue to meet the burden of their increasing responsibilities to the public without extra staffing. It is vitally important that you understand the implications of the government's decisions.

This is not the Liberal Party, the opposition or the member for Hartley talking about cuts in crime prevention programs: this is the Police Association. The government should take note. It is a responsible association, which obviously felt that this government is not responding to law and order, that maybe talking about being tough on crime and locking them away is just so much hype when you do not have the police officers out there.

An elderly lady, a constituent, phoned me the other day because she was concerned about disruptions in her area, involving noise and problems with her neighbours. The police

had been called in and she told me that the police had told her that they do not have the numbers to do the job. The police told her, 'See your local member.'

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** This only happened in the past 14 months?

**Mr SCALZI:** I will not say that.

**Ms Rankine:** When did it start?

**Mr SCALZI:** I respect the member for Wright as she went to school with me at Campbelltown, but she has this wrong. The problem is that this government has been very strong on rhetoric and very short on delivery. When you build up public expectation to such an extent, sooner or later you will be in trouble, and this government has reached that credibility level. The message is loud and clear.

I commend the police on the work they do and commend the Housing Trust on the work it does. As a local member for 10 years I know that these government departments and public servants do their best, regardless of who is in power. But when a government comes to power and says that these are the priorities, this is what it will deliver and then it does not, it is a serious problem.

I refer again to the Treasurer's arrogance. Terry Plane writes:

After the Treasurer's performance in budget estimates, observers commented on his apparent arrogance. That's the easy criticism. I saw him as combative, vengeful and contemptuous. He's always combative. Estimates is one place where he can exact revenge. . .

The reality is that I saw the Treasurer in that mode when he was in opposition. He was relentless; anyone who thinks he has just started doing that now—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I was on the receiving end.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** No, I am the gentle member for Hartley. So, let us get it straight. Now I want to come back to education. The member for Bragg has clearly outlined the problems in education. I see the estimates as a great opportunity not only to be able to examine the state budget as a whole but also to look at the programs in our electorates. I was fortunate to be on the education budget estimates and to ask questions about things that mattered to me and to my electors. For example, I asked the minister when the East Torrens Primary School gym will be funded and whether the kindergarten close to the former Hectorville school will be funded. I outlined the concerns that the community has and asked the member to make a commitment that the kindergarten will be funded and supported, as she outlined in a letter, in relocating to the East Torrens Primary School site.

The estimates give us the opportunity to ask questions about areas such as multiculturalism, and the Attorney-General has commented on the diversity of representation on government boards and throughout the Public Service. We asked questions about the problems with the aged in the multicultural area and what the government is doing to meet the increasing demands of the aged. Before I conclude I want to go back to education in general. The headline on the front page of the Australian Education Union journal reads 'Too many large classes'. I would like to read this paragraph from it, as follows:

Whilst these figures are an improvement on our last survey, many classes are far too large for effective education to occur. This is particularly true when we take into account that more students with disabilities are being mainstreamed with inadequate resourcing and there has been no formula adjustment to acknowledge their special needs. Add to that the disinclined students being required to stay in school longer because of the raising of the school leaving age and

the minimal support being provided system-wide for dealing with students with extreme behaviours. Research shows that class size is the single most important factor in determining students learning outcomes. As a union we must continue to take a stand on class size.

This is from the Acting President, Chris Waugh. I could have talked about the response to school councillors and so on, but if health, education, law and order are priorities, make sure that you deliver.

Time expired.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** I rise to make some constructive criticism in this budget debate. One of the advantages of being a new member of this place is that I do not have the baggage or the mentality of blame. The main agenda of this government is to show the former Liberal government as being a poor economic manager, but government members cannot do that. Their own budget papers reveal the state of the economy and how well this state is going. It is a shame that the government cannot move on from a budget of blame, bullying and belligerence. We must get away from that.

The Treasurer wants this to be a AAA economy, which is the most admirable aim. However, he does not admit that we already have a AA+ economy, and that was established before this government came anywhere near the coffers. Government members have forgotten their past, and I do not want to blame the ills of this state on what happened in the past, so I ask them to move on from the blame games they play.

Before I talk about the figures in the budget, let me look at the inflation rates. In the budget paper entitled Budget at a Glance, the very last page states that the CPI for 2002-03 was 4.5 per cent and that it is expected to decrease in 2003-04 to 3 per cent, and to 2.5 per cent in 2004-05. Although I cannot guarantee their veracity entirely, figures that I have received suggest that the true inflation rate in South Australia is about 5 per cent, not the 3 per cent that is forecast in 2003-04. I notice today from the estimates committees that are being conducted in the Northern Territory that the Northern Territory government is in deep strife because it did not allow for the right level of inflation when calculating its expenditure for the year 2003-04.

It is a shame that this government cannot be more open and honest, more cooperative and more bipartisan, as the Premier says it is going to be. Instead, government members use bullying tactics, blame and belligerence, and every time we ask a question there is a suggestion that there is some ulterior motive, that we are not trying to obtain information for the benefit of the people of South Australia and that it purely involves the game of politics. That is what one would think. As a new member of parliament, I know that for me and for many of my colleagues on this side we are not just playing a game.

Obviously, some strategies and tactics are involved and, in estimates committees, such strategies and tactics are employed to try to obtain as much information as possible from ministers. However, as we saw last year in estimates, many questions were not answered and, unfortunately, that was my experience this year. In the 25¼ hours that I sat in the estimates committees over the last two weeks, I saw evidence of a lot of duckshoving and filibustering. There were opportunities where information could have been given freely and openly, but the question was either taken on notice or the answer did not attend to the matter of the question.

This budget and the figures that were revealed in the estimates appear rubbery. In this house a while ago I said that I was not a lawyer, and when I made that statement I said that I was boasting, not apologising. I would like to double the worth of that statement when it comes to being an economist. I have heard that economists are only put on this world to make meteorologists look good!

When looking at the figures in this budget, I am afraid that the arrangements, the window-dressing and the smoke and mirrors confuse not only me occasionally but also many of the poor people in voter land who are trying to understand what is going on.

In the budget papers and in various speeches, we heard much said about no taxes being raised, but that is not the case. When we asked questions about this during the estimates committees, the answers were not always as forthcoming as we might have liked. Certainly the River Murray levy is the one that has gained most prominence. While that is a levy which I think everyone agrees has some value in terms of money being put towards rehabilitating the River Murray and the Murray-Darling Basin, it is a drop in the ocean compared to the total amount that will have to be put into healing the ailing Murray. The River Murray levy will have an impact on many low income households and many businesses will find the \$135 per annum an impost. A statement was made by a member in this house—I am not sure from which side—about the River Murray levy and that the irrigators should be paying this levy. Let me remind this house that the irrigators along the River Murray are paying 3.5 cents per kilolitre. One of my friends is already paying \$7 000 a year in irrigation levies. They are certainly already putting in.

We saw mining royalties go up. Although an increase from 2.5 to 3.5 per cent does not sound very much, when you talk to the mining industries and look at what they are doing in South Australia and the opportunities in South Australia, this is a real impost and it is an increase in tax. In Budget Paper 3, on page 3.2, under 'Increased tax compliance', it says 'New initiatives'. There are no new taxes but there are new initiatives which provide for an estimated revenue return of \$10.5 million in 2003-04. From the way which this budget and estimates have been treated, one would think that there were no new taxes, no new information and no new money to be spent, but looking at this budget paper there are new initiatives and new money, and certainly there will be some new levies—and I will talk more about those later.

Rental and mortgage duties are going up. We tried to get some answers on some of these issues during the estimates committees, but, once again, there was not a lot forthcoming. We know that a three-tier mortgage duty structure applies in South Australia and that the returns to the budget from stamp duties are in the millions—\$600 million extra was put into the state coffers last year. What happened? Where has it gone? We do not know. The Treasurer still keeps crying poor. Certainly reducing state debt is an admirable thing to do, and we did that when we were in government. We certainly had a debt which we had to reduce and we had to take some very unwelcome steps in some areas but, for the good of the state, those steps were taken.

I move on to primary industries, the area for which I was the lead speaker. I represented the Hon. Caroline Schaefer. There were some good things about the estimates committees in relation to primary industries. The minister (Hon. Paul Holloway) acknowledged in his opening statement the value of primary industries to South Australia. Two-thirds of our

exports, a total of \$5.025 billion—not million, but billion—comes from the primary industry sector. The government acknowledges the value of the sector, yet what does it put back—not very much at all. Certainly the money being spent on the national livestock identification scheme will add to our credibility as a supplier of meat and meat products overseas.

The enactment of the primary industries food safety legislation to provide assurance on food safety in South Australia with HACCP and quality assessment and quality control measures is certainly something that is very good. There are some good things in this budget but, unfortunately, you have to go through this budget with a fine toothcomb and a very large magnifying glass to find them. Some things have gone wrong in primary industries and they have been dragged on in that they were in last year's budget and they are in this year's budget. We see that in many cases when examining expenditure in the budget papers and we look at where there has been underspending and carryovers, and the carryovers have been blended with money from this year and it is presented as if it is new money and there is to be increased spending, yet there is not.

The saga of the river fishers drags on. I urge this government to be compassionate and scientific in its application of changes to the way in which the river fisheries are being handled and certainly the legal complications and legal predicaments of some of the river fishers.

That matter needs to be looked at very carefully and very compassionately. Opportunities are going begging in the lower dairy flats, because this government will not commit its funds to help rehabilitate the lower river flats. They cannot even make a decision (and this was a question that I asked in the estimates committee) on when they will turn over the ownership of the licences to the River Murray flat dairy farmers. At the moment, those are swamp licences, they are an unmetered licence, so metering the water restrictions there is something that will be interesting to see. I understand that 11 dairy farmers have already gone out of business in the Murray flats.

I have said before in speeches in this place, and I will reiterate today, that there is a flow-on effect of up to 1 300 jobs that will be lost on the Fleurieu Peninsula as a result of the decline in production by the dairy industry on the Murray flats. I understand that between Mannum and Wellington there are about 25 000 dairy cows, which produce a lot of milk. With respect to the whey plant at Jervois, the farm gate price there has been cut because of the rising Aussie dollar. I understand that, because the Aussie dollar is expected to rise again, the farm gate price for milk will again be reduced. So, the Lower Murray dairy farmers will be hit once again. That is another area where this government needs to look at what it is doing and, certainly, there were not too many answers forthcoming in our estimates committees on that matter.

It was interesting to hear today that there is some resolution of some of the Crown lease problems—and I say 'some' of the problems. I was amazed that the Minister for Agriculture did not have the responsibility for Crown leases; that had been handballed to the Hon. John Hill. We on this side of the house are quite happy to recognise the fact that Crown leases are part of primary industries. I am still waiting to find out where the completed Bovine Johne's Disease report is. I asked a question about it, and I was given part of an answer, but I would like to see a copy of the completed report. Bovine Johne's Disease and Ovine Johne's Disease are certainly very important disease factors in the health of livestock in South Australia.

Capital works in the primary industries portfolio have just been slashed to bits. Some money was put in there to upgrade and extend the intake pipes at the SARDI research centre at West Beach. That is good to see, because the SARDI research centre is helping to boost the aquaculture industry in South Australia. We do not need to go over the figures now, but we know how much aquaculture is adding to South Australia—millions of dollars; and, certainly, it will be in the billions of dollars in the near future, I am confident of that. Before I leave primary industries, I will talk about the water cuts. The 35 per cent cut to the producers along the river will be significant. I asked some questions about this during estimates, and I was under the impression that the potential for damage, the impact of these cuts, was not being completely recognised by the minister or some of his bureaucrats. I know of cases where people have spent thousands of dollars on achieving the 85 per cent efficiencies in irrigation practices, but they are still having a second whammy when they are having to cope with these 35 per cent cuts. I know of one large turf producer who will have to cut back his turf by 35 per cent. He is already laying off people. Jobs are already going because of these cuts.

I was not able to attend the education estimates committee, and I certainly hope that some of the answers that I have been reading in *Hansard* are not quite right. I am sure they are not misleading, but they are certainly not quite everything they could be. I heard today about the Glenelg Primary School amalgamation. That is something that I will have to find out about because, if that is a savings in the budget, I could not see it anywhere in the estimates. There was nothing in the budget for poor old Paringa Park Primary School. Where in the budget is the Brighton Secondary School volleyball centre—the state volleyball centre that has been promised for so long? I received a phone call from the minister's chief of staff to let me know that some discussions were taking place, but I have not heard any more since then.

We have heard lots about the Cora Barclay Centre. It is closer to home for me than that, in Morphett: it is the Ballara Park Kindergarten, which is one of the very few kindergartens in the south-western suburbs where they are teaching very young children to speak. We have Townsend House just south of my electorate, in the member for Bright's electorate. I am very proud to be associated with that establishment. Townsend House teaches the sign language Auslan for deaf people. But the Ballara Park Kindergarten is like the Cora Barclay Centre: it is teaching the tiny kids to speak. I will read part of a letter I received from one of my constituents about the Cora Barclay Centre and the funding for Cora Barclay. I will not say much more about it here because many of my colleagues have made contributions about that. This letter was sent to me from a constituent at Glenelg East re the funding for the Cora Barclay Centre. The letter states:

I am concerned about the funding for the Cora Barclay Centre. I have a son who is now 38 years of age. He is married with two children.

This constituent's wife contracted rubella whilst she was pregnant. Her son was born with no sight in his left eye, no hearing in his left ear and approximately 40 per cent hearing in his right ear. This chap is now 38 years old but, even back then, the Cora Barclay Centre took him in for three days a week and he was taught to speak. Townsend House was obviously offered. This letter also states:

Where possible deaf children should be taught to speak instead of just using sign language.

These people are obviously very proud parents. They point out that their son was able to learn to speak and he was able to get jobs. He would not have been able to get jobs if he had just learnt Auslan. Auslan is a very good language. I was at the deaf community church a few weeks ago and I spoke about that. While Auslan is a good language, if there is an opportunity to get young people to speak, we should be doing it as quickly as we can as early as we can. The Cora Barclay Centre does need the support of this government as does the Ballara Park Kindergarten in my electorate of Morphet.

We hear about health, education and law and order. The mantra goes on and on. It is admirable to have those aims but you need a good economy to support those aims. What do we get in respect of the police? We get four new police stations. That is very admirable, but the Police Association is not too impressed that there is to be no further recruitment of police. Crime prevention is being cut to billyo. I attended the estimates committee session that related to the Department of Human Services, and it was rather convenient that the generational health review was released that morning.

It was a clever diversion. It distracted us for a few moments. Certainly, the member for Heysen and I were ferreting away through the review looking for something other than just a lot of motherhood statements. Unfortunately, it contains a lot of motherhood statements, and all we get are cuts. I think there are 200-odd recommendations in the generational health review and I cannot find any money in the budget for them. What we do see is that HACC funding has been cut. The government cuts it this year; in fact, it cuts it every year. That is just a ridiculous thing to have done.

I cannot understand where this government wants to be in 2006 other than in opposition because, really, it is not the good economic manager it is trying to portray itself as. I

did ask about the new levy. I did not find out much about it from the Department of Human Services. I asked the Hon. Steph Key about the affordable housing levy. The state housing plan is a draft plan, which contains an affordable housing levy. The Housing Industry Association does not want a bar of this. I am told that it has not worked in Victoria and in New South Wales. I cannot verify that, but that is what I have been told. Certainly, it is an impost that we do not need. We know that housing is one of the most heavily taxed of all commodities: GST, stamp duty, land tax, local government charges, infrastructure levies and now we have an affordable housing levy.

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** And insurance. This government really needs to get its act into gear. It needs to forget the blame game; it needs to learn from the past and look forward. This opposition will be bipartisan if we can see merit in what the government is putting up. At the moment we do not see too much coming from this government other than just smoke and mirrors, the blame game, the bullying and the belligerence—certainly, no real direction for South Australia. Let us move this state forward. Let us manage the economy in the way that it should be managed. We gave members opposite a good start over the past eight years. For the past 18 months we have not seen a whole lot of progress. I am looking forward to it, and I am looking forward to riding on the new trams down at the Bay.

**Mrs REDMOND** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 12.01 a.m. the house adjourned until Thursday 26 May at 10.30 a.m.