

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 21 October 2003

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

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN** (Leader of the Opposition): I rise on a matter of privilege. I move:

That a privileges committee be established to investigate whether the Treasurer deliberately misled the house in his answer to a question from the member for Mitchell in the house yesterday.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! I will accept that motion and deal with it after the opportunity has been provided for any member (including the Deputy Premier) to make either a personal explanation or a ministerial statement which may relate to the matter, but I do not presuppose that that will happen. I will take the matter on notice and deal with it immediately after I have heard other honourable members on matters that are usually dealt with in the first instance.

Mr **BRINDAL**: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, it is my understanding that matters of privilege take precedence and suspend all other matters before the house. The leader clearly rose on a matter of privilege.

The **SPEAKER**: The chair accepts them, and asks if they are seconded. I now call for notices of motion by private members.

Mr **BRINDAL**: I most respectfully draw your attention to standing order 132, which provides, in part:

The Speaker may, with the concurrence of the house, defer a decision on a point of order or a matter of privilege.

You have not, sir, sought the concurrence of the house to defer this matter.

The **SPEAKER**: I have already ruled on that point.

SMOKING BANS

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

Leave granted.

The **Hon. K.O. FOLEY**: Yesterday in this chamber, I said that I was aware of commitments given by people such as the Leader of the Opposition and other members of parliament in relation to the proposed smoking bans in hotels. In a number of discussions and meetings I have had with the Australian Hotels Association, it has informed me of discussions it has had with members of the opposition about this matter. Whilst not disclosing specific information from those discussions with the opposition, I formed a view from talking with the AHA that some members—

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order! Leave has been granted. The Deputy Premier will be heard in silence.

The **Hon. K.O. FOLEY**: Thank you, sir. Whilst not disclosing specific information from those discussions with the opposition, I formed a view from talking with the AHA that some members of the opposition held certain views and had communicated those views to the AHA by way of undertakings.

An honourable member interjecting:

The **Hon. K.O. FOLEY**: Yes, sure. I accept that this may not have been the case. The AHA has advised me today that

the Leader of the Opposition had not himself given any commitments on this matter, and references to undertakings by other members was overstating the position. I apologise to the house if any information has been given that was in any way misleading. It was unintentional.

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN**: I rise on a point of order for you to consider, sir. I ask you take into account what the Deputy Premier has said. There just seems to be a growing inclination to throw around accusations, as were made yesterday.

Members interjecting:

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN**: This is a serious issue.

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order!

The **Hon. R.G. KERIN**: Concerning the issue of privilege, yesterday, the Deputy Premier, without checking at all, used the privilege of this place to impinge on my privilege. While he does not control what is broadcast, the fact is that he misled this house yesterday and then allowed it to be broadcast that I had made commitments to the AHA, with South Australia basically being told wrongly about my position. So, I would just ask you, sir, to consider that it is too easy for the Deputy Premier to come in and apologise when he also admitted that he did not have the information he claimed yesterday to have had.

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order! Before the Leader of the Opposition rose to his feet on this most recent occasion, having heard the ministerial statement, and contemplating its possible relevance to the proposition which the Leader had put to the house about the necessity to establish a privileges committee, I had already formed the view that, if the Deputy Premier wants the chair, and indeed in all probability other members in this place, to believe that he is contrite about yesterday's remarks, he will need to do more than just apologise to the house. He will need to apologise profusely to the leader and withdraw. It is the chair's view, on reviewing *Hansard*, that he did reflect seriously on the reputation of the leader and impugned that reputation by virtually stating that the Leader had given an undertaking to the AHA. That requires a complete and profuse apology and withdrawal of any reflection on the good character of the leader. I leave it to the Deputy Premier to decide what might ultimately be his own fate.

The **Hon. K.O. FOLEY**: I withdraw completely, and I humbly apologise to the Leader of the Opposition, if I in any way have embarrassed him or offended him. I apologise.

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order! In so far as it takes us to the point where the Leader's good standing and fame have been restored by the remarks made, I think it is as far as we might need to go in this matter, as tawdry as it is. Unless there is some oversight I have made in the course of deliberations from the chair about it, I will otherwise leave it and proceed with the presentation of papers, notices of motion, and ministerial statements.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

Planning Strategy for South Australia—Report 2002-03

By the Minister for the Arts (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

South Australian Museum Board—Report 2002-03

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

National Wine Centre of Australia—Report 2002-03
 South Australian Motor Sport Board—Report 2002-03

By the Minister for Energy (Hon. P.F. Conlon)—
 Technical Regulator (Gas)—Report 2002-03

By the Attorney-General (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)—
 Regulations under the following Acts—
 Listening and Surveillance Devices—Records, Warrant
 Applications

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

Board of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium—
 Report 2002-03
 Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Manage-
 ment Board—Report 2002-03
 Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board—
 Report 2002-03
 River Murray Catchment Water Management Board—
 Report 2002-03

By the Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts (Hon.
 J.D. Hill)—

Carrick Hill Trust—Report 2002-03
 History Trust of South Australia—Report 2002-03

By the Minister for Social Justice (Hon. S.W. Key)—
 Community Benefit SA—Charitable and Social Welfare
 Fund—Report 2002-03
 Office of the Public Advocate—Report 2002-03
 Supported Residential Facilities Advisory Committee—
 Report 2002-03

By the Minister for Housing (Hon. S.W. Key)—
 HomeStart Finance—Report 2002-03
 South Australian Community Housing Authority—Report
 2002-03
 South Australian Housing Trust—Report 2002-03
 South Australian Aboriginal Housing Authority—Report
 2002-03

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

Actuarial Investigation of the State and Sufficiency of the
 Construction Industry Fund—Report 2002-03
 Construction Industry Long Service Leave Board—Report
 2002-03

By the Minister for Administrative Services (Hon. J.W.
 Weatherill)—

Department for Administrative and Information Ser-
 vices—Report 2002-03
 Freedom of Information Act 1991—Report 2002-03
 Privacy Committee of South Australia—Report 2002-03
 State Records of South Australia—Report 2002-03
 State Supply Board—Report 2002-03
 Regulations under the following Acts—
 Sewerage—Water Conservation
 Waterworks—Water Conservation

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. R.J.
 McEwen)—

Local Government Finance Authority of South Australia—
 Report 2002-03.

OUTLAW BIKIE GANGS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I seek leave to make
 a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: In recent days there have been
 some extraordinary claims made in defence of outlaw bikie
 gangs in this state. Indeed, the president of the Gypsy Jokers
 motorcycle gang, Steve Williams, told ABC TV on Friday
 night, in reference to my comments about bikie gangs: ‘We

definitely are not a criminal organisation, and I would like
 him to point out how we are.’ I also understand that he has
 today described himself as a security consultant. This was an
 amazing challenge thrown out by the head of the Gypsy
 Jokers. Let me assure this house today that the Gypsy Jokers
 do not have fortified headquarters and razor wire because
 they are trying to protect their gym equipment.

There are five known outlaw bikie gangs set up in South
 Australia, and they are: the Gypsy Jokers; the Hell’s Angels;
 the Bandidos; the Rebels; and the Finks. I can tell you that
 the police have been taking a very keen interest in the gang
 members, their premises, their movements, their shoot-outs,
 their weaponry and their drug dealing for many years. Let us
 be under no illusion: these bikie gangs are involved in
 criminal activities, and gangs such as the Hell’s Angels can
 trace their lines of command back to organised crime
 operations in the United States. I have been briefed about
 these chains of command in bikie gangs operating in the
 United States and other countries by both the FBI and, just
 a few months ago, the New York police department.

So, what is the evidence of widespread criminal activity
 within these gangs? For the benefit of the house, I would like
 to supply some interesting statistics that have been supplied
 to me by the South Australian police. Between April 1999
 and October 2003 the police have made arrests and seized
 goods from all five of these bikie gangs, including:

- More than 200 various firearms, ranging from pistols to
 sawn-off shotguns
- ‘Taser’ guns used for stunning people
- Hundreds of rounds of ammunition
- Numerous knuckledusters and other weaponry, including
 crossbows, machetes and ASP batons
- Cannabis valued at more than \$5 million, with almost
 every crop grown hydroponically
- A quarter of a million dollars worth of hydroponic
 equipment
- \$300 000 worth of amphetamines, fantasy, ecstasy,
 steroids and LSD tablets
- Large quantities of Sudafed tablets used for breaking
 down into amphetamines
- Many thousands of dollars in cash seized at the time of the
 drug seizures.

There have also been arrests made in relation to:

- Murders and attempted murders. However, matters are
 before the courts so I cannot elaborate on those matters
- Bombings of rival gangs.
- Numerous serious assaults on both the innocent
 community and between the gangs themselves.
- Traffic offences involving disregard for our road laws and
 the requirement to hold driving licences, as the rest of us
 are required to do.

On one of the more memorable raids, police raided the
 premises of a gang associate regarding the illegal importation
 of weapon parts, which included deactivated machine guns,
 mortar cannons, anti-aircraft guns, silencers and ammunition.
 On another occasion, police seized night vision goggles and
 found booby-traps placed around a large number of cannabis
 plants, which included a large quantity of dried cannabis.

These are not nice people, despite what we have been told
 on radio and television in the last few days. Yet we get people
 such as Professor Arthur Veno, a so-called academic and
 bikie apologist from Melbourne, who appears to be acting as
 some kind of new public relations spokesperson for the
 Gypsy Jokers bikie gang and who apparently flew to South
 Australia for that purpose, saying on ABC TV last week—

and I want to quote this guy, because I form a view that what he says is totally fraudulent, phoney and totally dangerous:

...the evidence is very clear from overseas studies that bikie gangs are not organised crime entities.

He went on to make this absurd statement:

They—

that is the bikies—

provide role models for the young fellows, and it's in our interest to keep people like them around, so that the young fellows come up and have a positive role model.

Professor Veno sounds like he is defending the Boy Scouts rather than a bunch of violent, drug dealing criminals. We have seen in this state murder after murder, rape after rape and drug deal after drug deal, and we have seen shoot-outs and bombings in our city and suburbs which are connected to outlaw bikie gangs. I hope I will receive—and I am sure I will receive—bipartisan support for what the government is doing in regard to bikie gangs.

Last week, I announced that I had given the police minister and the Attorney-General six weeks to find a blueprint for tackling the problem of getting bikie gangs out of South Australian security firms. Security firms and bouncers appear to be a perfect way for bikies to infiltrate nightclubs and other places where young people go for entertainment and where bikie gangs peddle illicit drugs, especially amphetamines. I want to find a means of ensuring that people associated with bikie gangs and organised crime can be prevented from holding a security firm licence, or have a licence stripped away if they take over or become associated with formerly legitimate security firms.

Any biker in this town going about his or her business, behaving lawfully, has nothing to fear from this government. However, I do not want there to be any doubt left in anyone's mind, including civil libertarians and Professor Veno, that this government is deadly serious about dismantling bikies' organised crime gangs. It is imperative that we as a parliament take the lead in this issue. It is about the safety of our community and the safety and welfare of our children.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The SPEAKER: I direct that the written answer to question No. 77 on the *Notice Paper* be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

QUESTION TIME

MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier explain the mechanism for the enforcement of the ministerial code of conduct and advise the house whether he is aware of any alleged breaches of the code by his ministers?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am not aware of—I mean, if this is some kind of fishing exercise, perhaps if the Leader of the Opposition is aware of a breach of the ministerial code maybe he can give me the allegation or the information and I can go and check it.

HOLDEN LTD

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): My question is directed to the Premier. What export successes has the Holden motor

company had recently, and are there likely to be further increases in exports from South Australia by Holden?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I have just returned from Outer Harbor, where I attended a ceremony that was also attended by the federal trade minister, Mark Vaile, and I am delighted to have been a witness to the loading of the first shipment of Holden Monaros leaving Adelaide for the United States, where they will be badged as Pontiac GTOs. This year, I am told that 5 400 Pontiac GTOs will be exported by Holden to the United States, and that number will grow to 18 000 next year. One must say that this is an extraordinary event. I was told today that it is the first time in decades that Holdens have been exported to the United States. People talk about taking coal to Newcastle: this is Holdens to the United States—Holdens to Detroit.

Also today was the announcement that is so important for South Australia: Peter Hanenberger, the Chairman and CEO of Holden, said that Holden will be exporting Monaros to the United Kingdom for the first time. I understand that the first Vauxhall Monaros will be sold in the United Kingdom from the second quarter of next year. That is very good news. I said that the next time I visit Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street, if they are already there, maybe I could be driven there in a Vauxhall Monaro. This means that, for the first time, Holden will be exporting to every continent on the planet except Antarctica—there is always further room for improvement!

The United Kingdom is the fourth new export market opened up by Holden in the last 18 months. It is only four months since 1 000 new workers began on the third shift at Elizabeth. Since then, the Elizabeth plant has been a 24-hour, five-day a week operation. Like the Economic Development Board, the state government and other automotive firms, Holden recognises that its future is in exports. This is despite the rhetoric of some commentators who wrote off the car industry a few years ago: remember all those economists, back in the early 1990s, who said that we would not have a car industry in Australia? Every doom watcher was out there piling into our car manufacturers, while the industry today provides \$5 billion in export sales nationally.

The Holden US export deal is a measure of the company's great success. The US market, I am told, sells about 11 million cars per year, and it is a significant achievement to penetrate that market. As I said, this is the first time that we have seen such a volume of our Holdens being exported to the United States since General Motors-Holden's was established in Australia in 1931.

I want also to give credit to the federal government. The new Thailand FTA delivers a zero tariff, down from 80 per cent, for cars over three litres from the second half of next year, while cars under three litres will go down to a 30 per cent tariff then. Sir, you will remember the debate: as Australia was lowering its tariffs, we had to face these massive obstacles of tariff and non-tariff barriers to try to sell into markets such as Thailand. An 80 per cent tariff barrier basically meant that you could not sell Australian cars to Thailand. I am confident that we will see Berlinas and other Holden models being sold from the Elizabeth plant to Thailand in the near future.

Chairman Peter Hanenberger says that it will give the company the opportunity to expand General Motor's presence in what is the fastest growing car market in the Asia Pacific region. I know that Holden has been actively pursuing regional free trade agreements for many years, particularly with Thailand.

Commodores will soon be on sale in Thailand under the Chevrolet brand. The company is now positioning itself to take advantage of its other export markets in Asia, the Middle East, South Africa, South America and New Zealand. Exports are the key to future prosperity. That is why the Economic Summit, in a bipartisan way, committed itself to the near trebling of our exports in the next 10 years.

MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. Is the Premier satisfied that his ministers are providing information to the parliament in accordance with the ministerial code of conduct? The ministerial code of conduct states that ministers must provide parliament with information when requested to do so, and also states that a minister has an obligation to be open and transparent.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): There is a register of parliamentary interest that applies to every member of parliament—and I would like to see a code of conduct for every single member of parliament. There is a register of pecuniary interests, which every member of this parliament is required to submit each August or so.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I appreciate that the Premier is talking about the parliamentary register, but this is about answers and information given to the parliament. The question is quite specific in that regard: 'are providing information to the parliament in accordance with the ministerial code of conduct.'

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The register is part of the parliamentary process. It is incumbent on all members of parliament, including ministers, to make sure that that is honoured.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: On a point of order, sir: I think the Premier is defying your instruction. The question was specifically about the ministerial code of conduct.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has now sketched the background.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Ministers are required to comply with the ministerial code of conduct, just as former ministers were. And former ministers, of course, got themselves into a lot of trouble. Of course, it is recognised that, at times, people inadvertently flout the rules by omission rather than commission and, obviously, their responsibility is to correct any errors.

TEACHERS, PROFESSION

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. With World Teachers' Day being celebrated in our state this Friday, how is the government making the teaching profession a secure one for our teachers?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I am pleased to announce that a further 34 contract teacher positions in South Australia's public schools will be converted to permanent jobs. Also, 54 school services officers, who provide administration and classroom support in schools, will be made permanent. A further 70 contract school services officers' jobs have been identified for conversion to permanency. This latest round of permanency offers coincides with the celebration that I attended this

morning at Burton Primary School to mark World Teachers' Day.

The state government's policy of lifting the level of permanent employment in the state's public schools and preschools has been a success. It is astounding to think that we have had teachers in our schools who, in some instances, worked for up to 20 years on contracts, and that not only creates uncertainty in those teachers' lives but it also creates uncertainty for the schools in which they teach and the children they teach. These teachers would sometimes not know from one term to the next where they would be teaching or, in fact, whether they even had work.

The previous government had a deliberate policy of lifting contract employment levels in the teaching work force. It was something that it set out quite deliberately to do. I am proud to say that the Rann government is once again turning teaching into a more secure profession. The latest round of permanent job offers comes following meetings between my department and the Australian Education Union, which together have been involved in a process that began in September last year. In that time over 1 200 staff, teachers, SSOs, early childhood workers, principals and preschool directors who did not have permanent jobs 12 months ago now have permanent employment within our department.

The latest group of teachers to be offered a permanent position are currently working on long-term contracts as coordinators in our primary and high schools and, until now, have had no fall-back position once their contract ended. Now they can go about their work with the knowledge that their work is valued and that they have a permanent role in the Department for Education and Children's Services. This is part of our government's commitment to enhancing the teaching profession and attracting and retaining quality staff.

MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Is the Minister for Industrial Relations aware that the ministerial code of conduct requires him to 'give parliament full, accurate and timely accounts of all public money over which the parliament has given him authority'?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations): Yes, I am. As the Premier said, if there is a specific accusation—and, I guess, it may well be the next question—the leader should come forward with it.

WORKCOVER

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Industrial Relations explain why he repeatedly advised parliament that he did not know the level of the unfunded liability of WorkCover, despite the fact that the minister's own observer at board meetings has confirmed that he provided the minister with monthly reports which included figures for the unfunded liability?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations): If my memory serves me correctly (and, obviously, I would want to check what the leader is alleging I said), my answers were quite consistent, namely, that the government relies on audited figures.

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: As a supplementary question, will the minister explain why, despite his responsibilities under the ministerial code of conduct and repeated requests for up-to-date information about WorkCover's unfunded liability, the WorkCover June 2003 quarterly report sat in the minister's office for a month without being read?

An honourable member: Far out!

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: We have trawled over this previously. It is another example of where the Leader of the Opposition and members of the opposition either do not understand WorkCover or do not want to understand it. It is one or the other. I have explained to the opposition time and again that the June quarterly report was no moment of greatness. This is the only time, to the best of my knowledge, that the opposition has ever shown any interest in a quarterly report.

What I was saying on behalf of the government was quite consistent. Time and again I have said to the Leader of the Opposition that the government relies on audited figures. The government relies on the actuarial report that is provided by WorkCover. As I have said time and again, the June quarterly report was WorkCover's report, and it was for WorkCover to announce, as it did. I also remind the leader that I said previously in the parliament that, as a result of questions asked by either the leader or someone in the opposition, I asked WorkCover when it would announce that quarterly report.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Giles.

REGIONAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS PROGRAM

Ms BREUER (Giles): Thank you, Mr Speaker; it's my turn.

The SPEAKER: Well, with the greatest respect, the member for Giles' being on her feet caught the eye of the Speaker. It is the Speaker's determination as to who shall have the call. Were honourable members so fortunate as to contemplate spending their travel allowance visiting other parliaments, they would know that in most other instances it is the person first to their feet who gets the call, and that it is a quaint practice in this place that we go for a list provided by Whips. The member for Giles.

Ms BREUER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Tourism. How does the state government's funding under the Regional Events and Festivals Program provide economic benefits to our South Australian regions?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): The member for Giles shows a keen interest in tourism development in her region and is particularly keen to support regional festivals and events in the electorate of Giles. The SATC funds a whole range of regional events. I am pleased to tell the house that this year (to date) we have funded 62 events. The allocated funding is a substantial increase on the amount awarded last year when we had \$411 000 funding 49 events and this year we have \$613 000 funding at least 62 events.

This funding is particularly important because it spreads the opportunity for tourism through our regions and allows areas to promote their assets and their natural charms to visitors. Under special circumstances it allows the tourism dollar to spread from Adelaide into the regions. We are particularly keen to market these regional events along with conventions and other events in the city (whether they be

university graduation ceremonies or business events) so that visitors who are already in the regions can visit country towns and their dollars can spread through the communities.

To this end we have started to market events proactively to those who intend to come to Adelaide so that they can extend their visit for longer and visit the regions. The special events held in the regions have a uniqueness about them. This year we have sponsored the Bay to Birdwood Classic, the Laura Folk Fair, the Gawler Gourmet and Heritage Festival and the Gongolope Festival. For those who are unfamiliar with this event, this refers to a poem of C.J. Dennis, who was born in Auburn. It commemorates the Triantiwantigongolope—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I thank the member for Unley for his pronunciation. There is also the Riverland Balloon Fiesta, the Melrose 150 and the International Pedal Prix. The significance of these events is not so much in the gate money and any entry fee paid to the organisers but more importantly the dollars that spread into the community via local petrol stations, delis, caravan parks, overnight stays, hardware stores and sports hire shops. These economic benefits spread throughout the whole community.

Whilst funding from government is substantial in support of these events, these are community building events and, above all, they could not occur without the support and enthusiasm of local volunteers who put in countless hours. I commend them for making it possible for regions to benefit from the many tourism festivals and events that the SATC funds.

MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): Will the Attorney-General explain to the house why, despite advice from the opposition, he has continued to act in direct contravention of the ministerial code of conduct? The ministerial code of conduct states that it is a minister's personal responsibility to ensure that any inadvertent error or misconception in relation to a matter is corrected or clarified as soon as possible. On 1 April the Attorney-General made incorrect statements concerning the professionalism of Professor Tony Thomas. These inaccuracies were highlighted in another place on 16 July and again on 15 September. On 18 September I asked the Attorney to correct his statements only to be informed that it was still in the process of preparing a ministerial statement. It took until 22 September—that is nearly five months—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member now engages in debate of the implicit allegation in the substance of the question in a fashion which I have tried to make the house understand is both outside standing orders and undesirable. It is the kind of thing which results in members on either side, but perhaps more particularly government ministers in responding to questions, to attempt to lay down points that are made—engaging in debate and, in doing so, getting involved in invective which leads to the sort of belief that it is fair to have a kick at somebody else because they have had a kick at you.

Question time is about seeking and obtaining information. The standing orders perhaps need modification in such fashion as will enable the kind of debate in which all members increasingly indicate a desire to participate. Such debate would then be fair and even-handed and be in the public interest, in that it would lead to the points which members, ministers or not, wish to put on the public record

in support of the point of view they have got, which has nothing whatever to do—may I return to the subject of my remark—with seeking and obtaining information, which is the purpose of question time, regardless of what some journalists and/or academics may like to describe it as being, and who see it as being part and parcel of gladiatorial entertainment in political terms.

That was never intended to be the purpose of question time and it would cause great distress to those people who framed the need for question time following the Bill of Rights of 1688, and developed the practices which we adopted in 1856 and have never sought to change in the manner in which I now suggest members want to change, by de facto activity rather than de jure resolution.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Some months ago, Professor Tony Thomas, who is an anatomical pathologist, appeared on one of Graham Archer's exposés on *Today Tonight* about the Henry Keogh case. Professor Thomas's purpose was to raise doubts about Henry Keogh's conviction with a view to his being released from gaol. At the request of the Cheney family, I made a long ministerial statement about the Keogh case, and the member for Heysen indicated her agreement with that long ministerial statement.

Some time later, Graham Archer and Professor Tony Thomas took objection to one paragraph in that very long statement in which a harsh judgment about Professor Tony Thomas's credibility as a witness was made by Magistrate Baldino. I had quoted Magistrate Baldino's adverse remarks about Professor Tony Thomas. They were supplied to me by the Forensic Science Centre.

As soon as I became aware that the case in which Professor Thomas had been a witness before Magistrate Baldino had been appealed to the Supreme Court and that Justice Mullighan had taken a different view of Professor Thomas's credibility as a witness, I came to the house and I withdrew and apologised, and explained the circumstances.

There was in that paragraph of the ministerial statement an assessment of whether Professor Thomas could be described as a forensic pathologist. People of goodwill disagree about that. Forensic pathologists and the Forensic Science Centre take one view and Professor Tony Thomas takes a different view of his qualifications. So, I have arranged to send Professor Thomas the ministerial statement. I have undertaken to give him the assessment that the Forensic Science Centre and other forensic pathologists make of his claims to be described as a forensic pathologist, and I will read them into the *Hansard* in a subsequent ministerial statement. And I have offered to Professor Thomas to read into *Hansard* his response to their assessment of his qualifications as a forensic pathologist. There is no provision in the standing orders of the House of Assembly for a person aggrieved by remarks made under parliamentary privilege to respond, as there is in another place. I moved a motion to allow that right but it was defeated in the last parliament. And who was it defeated by? The Liberal party. To overcome that, I am arranging with Professor Tony Thomas to read in his response to what other forensic pathologists in the Forensic Science Centre say about him, and how they dispute his qualifications to be regarded as a forensic scientist. That is taking a little time to arrange, but as soon as it is done I will be back here and I will do it.

Mrs REDMOND: I seek to ask a supplementary question. Could the Attorney-General please advise at what point prior to 22 September 2003 he became aware that the findings of

Magistrate Baldino had been overturned by Justice Mullighan in 1999?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: My recollection is that it happened when I was restored as Attorney-General, in the days and weeks after that. It was drawn to my attention by the victims of crime coordinator, or it may have been correspondence from *Today Tonight* or Professor Thomas. I will find out which it was and I will tell the member. But at a very early stage I came here and corrected it.

The points the Opposition are making today are remarkable, because it was only last week that the member for MacKillop made totally false allegations against Port Adelaide Enfield councillor Tung Ngo, saying that he had made racist remarks in the Messenger newspaper. I drew the attention of how false those remarks were to the member for MacKillop, and I said, 'I hope you will come back into the house and correct them.'

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: After I had been asked the question whether I would act against Councillor The Tung Ngo on the grounds that he had made racist remarks about Anglo-Australians, I went to the relevant Messenger newspaper and read the remarks of Councillor The Tung Ngo. In fact, the remarks that the member for MacKillop said had been made by the councillor were actually attributed to a third person—a workmate. Having drawn that to the attention of the member for MacKillop, in the evening he did the right thing and he came in here and he withdrew and apologised. But if we follow your reasoning, I would have stormed in here after question time and called a privileges committee before he had an opportunity to withdraw. I waited until he had had an opportunity to withdraw and apologise and, quite decently, that is what the member for MacKillop did.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Now, let's cool it. What we have just seen illustrates the point I made earlier in question time. Honourable members seek and desire debate. The structures of standing orders do not provide it. Let's not live a farce. Let's change them so that we can have that kind of exchange properly conducted within the standing orders—try it as a sessional order, if you will—so that those points can be made, for and against. It is not in order, and no-one took the point, for the Attorney-General to relate to what he considered to be a related matter. But it was not the substance of the inquiry from the member for Heysen. Equally, members of the opposition feel aggrieved and feel the need to interject during the course of such an 'answer' being provided by the Attorney-General in order to make the point, lest the Attorney-General does not properly in the dissertation put the whole thing on the record.

As another matter, and an aside, perhaps, since the capacity for citizens who feel aggrieved to have those grievances properly rectified by a simple statement of their grievances to where privilege has been used to improperly impugn their reputations, my view is now different from what it was during the last parliament. Other members might also have had cause to reflect on the way in which it is working in other houses of Westminster parliaments around the world and seen the articles there have been in CPA publications in that time.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is to the Minister for Emergency Services. What steps has the SA Ambulance

Service taken to ensure that it is able to deliver the best possible service to the community and to cope with constantly growing demand?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Emergency Services): Members would be aware that the government provided extra funding in the budget for extra ambulance officers. However, I want to talk today about the excellent work done by the Ambulance Service itself. Today, I was able to address the annual conference of the Ambulance Service and 68 team leaders, who are responsible for the clinical standards of their teams throughout South Australia and who were selected on the basis of their own clinical excellence. The newly appointed regional team leaders, who provide clinical support and leadership to volunteer ambulance officers, were also included.

The conference today addresses leadership as a key issue in managing change. I never fail to be impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of our ambulance officers, and it was a great opportunity to see the broad section of the ambulance community. The team leaders were also joined by operation managers and the staff of SA Ambulance Service.

In addition, on Sunday I was privileged to attend the graduation ceremony for 11 graduates of the intensive care paramedics and the 42 paramedics who graduated in the Diploma of Applied Science. In addition, three new officers received their Certificate 4 in Community Studies, Ambulance Transfer; seven students achieved their Certificate 3 in Community Studies, Communications; and six achieved their Certificate 4. More than 80 volunteer ambulance officers received the Certificate 4 in Community Studies, Ambulance Studies, while five volunteers successfully completed the Certificate 4 in Basic Emergency Care.

As I am sure the house will agree, this level of commitment to training is preparing the Ambulance Service to meet the challenges ahead. As many in the house would know, the government is awaiting community, volunteer and staff responses to the review of the SA Ambulance Service. We will continue to work with the service to ensure that the community receives the best possible service that we together can provide. I would simply like to take this opportunity to thank the management, staff and volunteers of the Ambulance Service for their ongoing commitment and pursuit of excellence and their commitment to our community.

PROPERTY VALUATIONS

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Will the Treasurer abolish the government's huge fee increases imposed on local councils for the supply of property valuations? I have been advised by local government executives that the cost to councils for property valuations has increased by 27 per cent over the past 12 months and by 44 per cent in the past two years. These increases in government charges are being passed onto South Australians through increased council rates.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Administrative Services): I will answer this question in my capacity as Minister for Administrative Services with responsibility for the valuation of land aspects of this matter. The first thing that is worth pointing out is that this is the same charging regime that existed under the previous government, conveniently forgotten by the member for Newland in asking the question. The second matter that needs to be pointed out is that the revenue raised through the charging of councils for

this service, that is, the valuation of land, only raises a proportion of the costs associated with providing that service.

It is true that over recent periods there has been a sharp escalation in those fees, but they still do not meet the costs recovery associated with the provision of that service. It is true that in recent years there have been significant increases in those fees and they are approaching the level where it could be said that they will meet that cost recovery and we have arranged for a review of the way in which the incidence of the costs of producing that valuation system is distributed amongst councils. It should be borne in mind by the honourable member that, if she is seeking to suggest that there should be a move away from the valuation of land basis for the distribution of costs between councils, it could have quite a dramatic effect on rural and regional councils that pay the minimum fee at the moment, which is a relatively modest sum that is provided for the provision of that service.

In some cases some of the large metropolitan councils are making large contributions towards the provision of meeting the cost of providing that service. Effectively, the whole of the Land Services Group provides a system of valuations which supports the rating base for the whole of local government. It is a very important tool for them to raise revenue and is a cost borne presently by the state government. We obviously pass on those costs to local government in an appropriate fashion. We are reviewing the incidence of those fees, but they do not yet meet cost recovery, so the complaint in my submission is not a proper one.

INCORPORATED HEALTH UNITS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Health. Does the annual report by the Auditor-General, tabled in parliament last week, set out the increase in both recurrent and capital spending by incorporated health units between the 2002 and 2003 financial years, and do these figures support claims made by the opposition that health and hospital funding was not increased?

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, sir, as the annual report, on the honourable member's own admission, has been tabled in the house and is readily available for all members to read, is it necessary for the house to entertain a question on what is in a document to which we all have access?

The SPEAKER: The question was not what is in the document but rather what would be the consequences of it, given a variation on it.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I thank the honourable member for the question because the shadow minister misrepresented the Auditor-General's Report, both to the media and in this house, by claiming that between 2002 and 2003 the Department of Human Services budget increased by only \$11 million. The shadow minister omitted an explanation from the Auditor-General—

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: On a point of order, sir, the minister has risen with a claim that I have misrepresented the Auditor-General in this house. I have not, and therefore take the point of order that the minister cannot make such a claim without a substantive motion.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Mawson! An umpire at cricket does not require the spectators' approval of their dismissal of the leading batsman for the opposition side to make the decision competently. I do not uphold the point of order. The minister is responding to a question of a kind which, whilst I personally disapprove of it, has been part of

the practice of this house over many years, where the minister is providing information according to what the minister believes to have been an inaccurate understanding of material tabled in the house.

An inaccurate understanding by someone who is a member of this house or someone outside it is neither here nor there. May I point out that that does not mean the minister has a free kick—the chance to beat any member of the opposition, or any other member of the house, around the head with inaccurate or misrepresentative statements of what they may have individually said from time to time and place to place.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The shadow minister omitted an explanation from the Auditor-General which is printed underneath the table that he quoted and which stated, 'The revenue included an accounting adjustment of \$28 million.' The whole truth, obviously, did not suit the member for Finniss. Yesterday—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson might be spending the rest of the day elsewhere if he persists.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Yesterday, the shadow minister also said, 'The state government has failed to provide the extra funds for health, hospital and welfare programs.'

The Hon. Dean Brown: Look at page 569 of the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Mr Speaker, for the record, page 567 of the Auditor-General's Report shows—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I seek your protection.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: No, I don't, not at all.

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Thank you, sir. For the record, page 567 of the Auditor-General's Report shows that recurrent funding to incorporated health services increased by \$130 million, from \$1 634 million to \$1 764 million. This includes—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

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

The Hon. L. STEVENS: This includes increases for federal funding under the health care agreement of \$41.1 million, veterans' affairs of \$5.4 million and specialised drugs of \$3 million. The majority of the balance was provided by the state.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Had the shadow minister turned over to page 568 of the Auditor-General's Report, he would have seen that capital expenditure by incorporated health units also increased by \$29 million. But, again, he conveniently left that bit out. This government has committed \$51 million for extra hospital beds, \$9.5 million for additional elective surgery, \$30 million for extra intensive care, \$13 million extra for mental health programs, \$8 million for dental services and \$26 million for extra nurses.

To enable a comparison with the record of the former minister, I table the following documents. The first is an executive document dated 5 August 1999 that details how the former minister took \$30 million from hospital growth funding as part of a \$108 million cut to DHS expenditure.

The second is the former minister's Budget Statement for 1999, which announced that there would be savings of \$46 million, cutting 14 000 admissions to our hospitals. The third—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call. She does not need the assistance of the Premier or the deputy leader.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The third is the former minister's Budget Statement for the year 2000, which announced that no increase in activity had been allowed for in 2000-01 and that this would impact on waiting lists for admissions for outpatients and dental services. I table those documents, because the member for Finniss is trying to rewrite history and, also, the Auditor-General's report.

LAND TAX

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): My question is again to the Treasurer. Acknowledging recent increases in property value based taxes and charges and council rates, will the Treasurer now consider reducing the rate in the dollar and increasing the threshold values for the payment of land tax? Recent increases in property values have resulted in many property owners paying state government charges and council rate increases well in excess of inflation. I have been advised by many aged and disadvantaged constituents on fixed incomes that they are struggling to pay these increased fees and taxes. Government revenue from land tax will increase by \$30 million this financial year.

The SPEAKER: Notwithstanding the last interesting piece of information, it is hardly relevant in explanation of the question. I acknowledge—the chair acknowledges, indeed—that it is useful material for debate, but it is not what question time is meant to be about.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I made the point yesterday, and have made it repeatedly. I assume these questions are either not run past the shadow treasurer or the shadow treasurer is so disinterested that he does not care about the reckless approach that members opposite take to budget management. If what the member is saying—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The Leader of the Opposition says 'windfall'. I respect the right of the opposition to have a policy difference to Labor, that is, that they want to cut land tax. Okay, that is fine: that is what good democracy is all about. But—and I say this to the media, in particular—the opposition is now saying that we should cut land tax, and they are entitled to that policy position, but we disagree. They now have to say what service they are going to cut, what other tax they are going to increase or whether they are running the budget into deficit. That is it: it can be no other. So, let us not have this consistent nonsense from members opposite who just play lazy politics and opportunistic opposition politics. I issue the challenge yet again: what tax is the opposition going to increase; what service is the opposition going to cut; or is it going to run the budget into deficit? I challenge the opposition to answer that question.

WORK FORCE SKILLS

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Given the results of the minister's own audit into skills needs in South Australia and her strong statements to this house on that

subject, will the minister explain to this house why the skills shortage list approved for South Australia to attract more skilled migration lists only half the number of occupations approved by the Victorian Labor government?

The commonwealth government has given South Australia preference in the area of skilled work force migration. The Victorian government obtained the same preference. The scheme makes it easier for skilled immigrants who wish to settle in South Australia to obtain the necessary requirements to do so. However, the South Australian government must declare those areas of skill shortage which are needed by our community. It does this in a document known as 'Employment Opportunities in South Australia'. Despite our ageing population and our smaller and declining population base, the Victorian equivalent list of skills shortages is twice the length of the South Australian list.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): The member for Unley should be thanked for his question. I point out that skills shortage is a function of two balancing situations: one is the amount of jobs available and the other is the skill set of the population base in which those employers seek staff. In our situation, we have the extraordinary position whereby we have large numbers of youth and mature age unemployed people who are seeking jobs at a time when there are job vacancies.

Whilst we do seek skilled migrants (and that is an active and legitimate way to fill those positions), the primary role of the Minister for Employment, of course, is to upskill the population. It is unthinkable that we would focus only on importing skills and not do what the Minister for Employment should do, which is upskilling individuals in our community who, to date, were neglected by the previous government. Those are the people who have dropped out of school, out of training and out of employment. Those are the people who live in postcodes where the previous government gave inducements to businesses to descend into a region with the highest unemployment in our state.

They are the people who surround the new industries and the new opportunities but, to date, have not been given the opportunity to join those lists of employed people. Our role is to upskill those individuals who have been neglected and forgotten for too long.

COMMUNITY RADIO

Mr RAU (Enfield): My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. How has the government continued to support the continued viability of ethnic and non-English language broadcasting?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Multicultural Affairs): The state government has again supported community radio by providing a \$24 000 grant to Radio 5EBI for its annual radiothon. I was pleased to attend the launch of the radiothon at the Byron Place premises of Radio 5EBI and to speak during the Serbian program when the appeal for funds was launched. I was pleased to be there with the member for Hartley and the Hon. Julian Stefani.

It really beats me why the opposition does not make the Hon. Julian Stefani its spokesman on multicultural affairs, because he gets around to function after function. He understands the intricacies of ethnic communities. He is there all the time trying to lend a hand and, really, the opposition needs someone who can point on a map to some of these countries from which our migrants come, and I think that the

Hon. Julian Stefani would do an excellent job if held that shadow portfolio.

Radio 5EBI hosted the National Ethnic Media and Multicultural Broadcasters Council and Annual Conference last year, which was subsidised by the state government. Indeed, it is one of the first decisions I took as minister. In June this year, I approved a grant of \$5 000 in addition to the government's annual commitment to go towards youth programs on radio 5EBI, such as the pioneering Croation program for youth. These youth programs will engage young people from ethnic communities and will help to encourage a younger generation of broadcasters.

I was also pleased on Sunday to be at the launch of the new frequency, AM531, Radio Televisione Italiana, which the Leader of the Opposition attended; and I am pretty sure that the Leader of the Opposition could point to Italy on a map! I think that the Leader of the Opposition actually spoke at that function, which was good.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No, I was there almost on time—only a couple of minutes behind schedule. In fact, the formalities started, I think, half an hour after I arrived, so I cannot imagine to what the Leader of the Opposition is referring.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: He says, 'Two hours'. The future of community radio rests with encouraging young people from the ethnic communities to take a hand in broadcasting. Radio 5EBI has come to be known as the meeting place for South Australia's multicultural communities. It broadcasts (in, I think, 46 different languages) information to people of linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. This is particularly important for migrants and those with limited English. So, in response to the member for Enfield I say that the government will continue to support and foster the growth of ethnic and non-English language radio.

WORK FORCE SKILLS

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is again to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. In view of the minister's last answer, will she tell the house whether she is aware that her failure to include medical researchers on the skill shortages list for South Australia could mean the loss of a pre-eminent researcher in leukaemia from the IMVS? South Australia has at least one pre-eminent medical researcher working here on a work permit. The person to whom my attention has been drawn is a researcher in the field of leukaemia working at the IMVS and the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This doctor cannot seek permanent residency because his profession is not listed as a skill shortage in the South Australian document entitled 'Employment opportunities in South Australia'. It is, however, listed in Victoria, so this researcher may leave South Australia to become a permanent Australian citizen in Victoria, which he can do.

The SPEAKER: Order! Notwithstanding his helpful explanation, as the member for Unley knows even better than the chair, he was engaging in debate.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): The member for Unley will, of course, realise that skill shortage is a matter for debate. As South Australia receives more medical research funding per capita than any other state in Australia, it would be difficult to mount an argument that we are actually short

of research activity. It could be argued that we are short of every kind of skilled activity, if he particularly wants to encourage the migration of one individual, but I cannot really understand how we could logically explain that we have a shortage when we have more researchers per capita than any other state.

ADELAIDE UNITED

Mr SNELLING (Playford): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. With the advent of South Australia's newest National Soccer League team, Adelaide United, what has been the government's involvement in the team's use of Hindmarsh Stadium for their home games?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I thank the member for Playford for his question and his ongoing passion for soccer. Last Friday evening, I had the pleasure of representing the government at Hindmarsh Stadium to witness the first game played by Australia's new National Soccer League team, Adelaide United.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: No, it's not, as a matter of fact. On 4 September, the South Australian Soccer Federation publicly announced that it had received the necessary financial backing of the Pickard Group to enable a team to represent South Australia this season. Since then, things have moved very quickly with the team being given formal approval to enter the competition as the Adelaide United Football Club, with, of course, Basil Scarsella being named as the inaugural chairman of the club and John Kosmina (a former South Australian) being appointed as the club's first coach.

Very early in the process, the government indicated its support for the concept of a team for all South Australians. I met with Gordon Pickard and Basil Scarsella (as did the Premier, who I understand is the No. 1 ticket-holder) and indicated to them that the Office for Recreation and Sport, the managers of the Hindmarsh Stadium, was to negotiate terms and conditions for the hire of the stadium for the season at similar levels as those provided for Adelaide City Force, conditions which I am advised have been recognised by the NSL as arguably the best for any NSL team anywhere in Australia.

Having had the pleasure of welcoming the Adelaide United players onto the pitch for their first game last Friday and witnessing a great game with over 15 000 spectators, the government is pleased that we are able to support in such a significant way a team which truly aims to represent all soccer supporters in South Australia. Their win over the Brisbane Strikers will go on the record as a remarkable victory made all the more so by the fact that the team was only established after members of the Adelaide City Force Soccer Club voted at their AGM in late August not to field a team in the 2003-04 NSL competition. The Adelaide United Football Club will play all 12 home matches at Hindmarsh stadium, and I wish the club and its many supporters all the best for a great season.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: In answering a question today, the Minister for Health claimed that I had misrepresented the figures in the Auditor-General's Report. I deny that. On page 569 of the Auditor-General's Report is the section of the report to which I referred yesterday and which the minister deliberately ignored today. I refer to item 6. headed 'Contribution from government' (the recurrent expenditure for the Department of Human Services). Paragraph (a) headed 'South Australian Government Appropriations' shows an increase of \$6 million from \$1.414 million in the financial year 2001-02 to \$1.420 million. Paragraph (c) headed 'Grants from other South Australian government agencies' shows an increase of \$5 million from \$29 million to \$34 million. If you add that \$6 million and \$5 million together, you get \$11 million. I compare that \$11 million increase from the state government with 'Commonwealth government grants' on the same page which increased from \$919 million to \$978 million.

Mrs GERAGHTY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the member said that he was seeking to make a personal explanation. This sounds more like something for a grievance debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Torrens invites me to consider whether the information being provided is part of the personal explanation. In view of the detailed nature of the arithmetic given by the minister in his answer, as long as the deputy leader sticks to the arithmetic which explains to the house why it is or where it is (or both) that he has been misrepresented, then he is within standing orders. The moment he transgresses from that into justification of doing so, he is in debate and will be out of order, and I will rule accordingly.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is exactly what I am doing. I am highlighting—

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not need the reassurance of the deputy leader that I am correct.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Page 569 of the Auditor-General's Report under the heading 'Commonwealth government grants' shows an increase of \$59 million from \$919 million to \$978 million. Those are the figures that I used in the parliament yesterday: a \$59 million increase by the federal government; a \$29 million increase by the state government. I rest my case. My explanation rests on those facts.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out for the benefit of the deputy leader that he is not making a case. His explanation is sufficient.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

BUSHFIRES

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I have spoken about this previously and I will continue to speak on this vitally important matter until I am satisfied that the government is addressing it properly. I refer to the bushfire risk that we are all facing in the state this summer. I was concerned to read only a number of weeks ago that the Department for Environ-

ment and Heritage was planning to cold burn only 40 hectares of our national parks and reserves—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY:—the deputy leader says that it is 36 hectares—out of a total area of 12 000 hectares. In the old measurements, 40 hectares is about 100 acres, so 12 000 hectares equates to about 30 000 acres. If you work out the figures, you see that it involves an absolutely minuscule percentage. It is less than 0.5 per cent—in fact, about one-third of 1 per cent.

An honourable member: Equivalent to the median strip in the South-Eastern Freeway.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Perhaps. As I said, I was extremely—

Mr Koutsantonis: Percentage of what?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I just explained that. If the member for West Torrens would listen and not interject in a silly manner, he would understand what we are talking about. I was extremely concerned about this small area, and I continue to be concerned.

I had a discussion with a fire prevention officer in the Adelaide Hills who is employed by one of the local councils, and he explained to me that they actually burn strips of several kilometres long by about 50 or 100 metres wide, thereby creating some strategic firebreaks. I was encouraged by that. They do this in a mosaic fashion, and they stagger these breaks along certain areas through the Adelaide Hills. This raises the point that the shadow minister for Emergency Services, the member for Mawson, raised.

The honourable member attended the Third International Wild Land Fire Conference in Sydney a couple of weeks ago. He did a radio interview with, I think, Leon Byner on 5AA last week on this matter and, on his visit to the eastern states, he also travelled to Canberra and personally inspected the areas that were devastated by the fires earlier this year.

The shadow minister for Emergency Services has correctly drawn a comparison between what happened in Canberra and what we are faced with here, particularly in the Adelaide Hills, this summer. He raises the awareness of the extreme fire risk that this state faces.

The government has committed \$10 million over four years, and I guess that is a good start. It is planning to employ a number of experts to oversee the assessment and carry out the work associated with fuel and hazard reduction. We used to see sheep and stock in our parks and reserves that would help to reduce the fuel load, but we have not seen them for a number of years. I think this is due to representation from certain members of our community, resulting in stock and sheep being taken out of our parks and reserves.

In closing, in the short amount of time that I have left, I continue to be concerned and worried about the many residents in the Adelaide Hills who have moved into the area since Ash Wednesday, 20 years ago. Some of them are not really aware of the bushfire risk that they face.

Time expired.

DIMITRIA FESTIVAL

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): I am always stunned when members get up to grieve in this place, but the member for Kavel never ceases to surprise me. Last Sunday I had the good pleasure and the good fortune to be with the member for Morphett at the celebration of the 25th Dimitria Greek dinner dance which is held at Port Adelaide and in the member for Port Adelaide's electorate.

An honourable member: Did you dance together?

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: No, we didn't dance together, but we should have! We nearly did. The member for Morphett was there with his lovely wife Johanna, and we got up and gave representations from our respective leaders to the people there at the dinner dance, and they were very impressed with our attending. So I remind all honourable members that the Dimitria Festival will be on 2 November at Thebarton Oval. It will be the 25th anniversary of this community-based event, and Greek communities from all over South Australia will be attending. I urge all honourable members to attend and help celebrate the Dimitria Festival. I will also be attending the St Dimitrios Church in Salisbury with my very good friend, the member for Playford, to celebrate the liturgy of St Dimitrios and, again, I encourage all members to attend the festivities afterwards at the local church with Father Chris up there at Salisbury. He is very welcoming of all members of parliament to come and enjoy the festivities.

Yesterday I met with John Lewis from the AHA and with several pub owners from my electorate to discuss smoking bans.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Bright should be careful, he should be very careful. But, Mr Speaker, I was interested in their arguments. I have to say that I have not been very sympathetic to publicans or to their cause in regard to poker machines, but as a Labor member of parliament I believe that it is probably a God-given right of a worker, after a hard day's work, to go to his local front bar, buy a beer and have a cigarette. I have to say that, if people in positions of power have their way, there will be no smoking in cars, there will be no smoking in restaurants, there will be no smoking in nightclubs, and there will be no smoking in outdoor areas anywhere because of littering problems. So, the average worker cannot smoke at home because his wife throws him out because she does not want smoking around the kids—which is fair enough—and he cannot smoke in the backyard because of the smell. He goes down to his local pub, and he cannot smoke there either. Where is a bloke left to smoke?

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: Well he won't, and we will save on hospital bills.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for Bright says we will save on hospital bills. It is typical of the sympathy he has for blue-collar workers. But I understand the point that he is making: that smoking is hazardous to our health and we should not be encouraging it.

Mr Snelling: But it's not proven.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: That is a very good point, but I will not argue that here today. I will just say this: if we are going to ban smoking because it is harmful to our health, then we should ban gambling. All we can say is that once people reach a certain age of consent, they can make up their own minds and they can do as they please, as long as they are harming no-one else. What concerns me would be if any organisation in this state were to get an exemption. I would want to see this across the board. If it is going to come in, and we are going to deny blue-collar workers the right to go into the front bar of their pub and have a smoke and a beer, then I want to make sure that the Kerry Packer's of this world—when they walk into a high rollers area in the casino—cannot light a cigar. I want the same rule for the workers as it is for the bosses. I think that is a very fair way to deal with this, and I cannot imagine any Labor member of parliament proposing

that there be any differences between the workers and those who are more privileged than others.

But, sir, I have to say that I do not believe that we should ban smoking in pokie rooms. I think people are old enough to make up their own minds. Personally, I have an opinion about poker machines, but I think that banning smoking is a covert way of trying to stop gambling. If we are serious about trying to stop gambling, then we just stop gambling. Let's not beat around the bush if we are serious about problem gamblers. The Minister for Gambling, with the Independent Gambling Authority, is tackling it head on. He is not talking about other measures—he is talking about problem gambling. Although it is important to stop second-hand smoke, and the way it affects workers in these establishments has to be dealt with and dealt with quickly because of the Victorian court case and because of workers' rights, I think that we also have to understand that people deserve to go out and enjoy themselves, have some refreshment, and if they want to enjoy a cigarette—as long as it harms no-one else and everyone else in the premises knows it is a smoking area—why stop them?

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): I wish to use this griever to congratulate the government on its huge windfall gain to their last two budgets of some \$1 billion—a windfall gain over and above budget predictions relating to revenue income of over \$700 million in the previous budget and \$360 million in this budget—identified in the Auditor-General's Report. With this massive inflow of cash directly into the Treasurer's coffers from increased property values, mainly due to huge increases in stamp duty, and other increases in taxes and charges, most South Australians would believe that this would be a very good reason for this government to be somewhat generous in areas of expenditure, that it would offer some financial relief to a range of people in our communities most in need of financial relief, such as pensioners and self-funded retirees already battling increased power bills.

With electricity prices established by this Labor government at an increase of some 32 per cent and gas prices increased by 12 per cent by this Labor government, the Premier and Treasurer have accepted, without murmur or acclamation, a \$1 billion windfall collected from home and property owners. However, the Premier and Treasurer have so far ignored all calls to give some of these funds back to the community by way of concessions on the now excessive electricity charges, compounded by the extraordinary 12 per cent increase on gas charges, making extremely difficult the battle for people to find extra income to compensate for these outrageous increases. In a truly mean-minded and mean spirited approach, this government has not only refused to give financial relief for its broken promises of not raising taxes and charges, but it has also thought of other mean-minded ways of ripping more and more dollars from all South Australians.

The Valuer-General's Office provides a service to value properties throughout local government areas of the state to assist local councils to set rates on every property in those areas, and, for this service, the Valuer-General's Office charges a fee. The value of South Australia's properties, as most people would be aware, has risen exorbitantly in recent times, and this has assisted the creation of this Labor government's \$1 billion windfall. Over and above this

windfall tax grab, the Valuer-General's Office has increased fees by a staggering 25 per cent.

Last year, Tea Tree Gully council paid a \$129 000 service fee to the Valuer-General; this year, the council has been invoiced for a total of \$161 000, a 25 per cent increase. The West Torrens council has reported a 26.8 per cent increase in this year's service fee, which has resulted in a 45 per cent rise over two years. As councils' only real revenue raising measure is to apply rates to properties and landowners, ratepayers will have to dig even deeper into their hip pockets to pay these additional costs to councils, applied by this government through the Valuer-General's department.

However, this mean-minded tax grab by this Labor government does not end there. As a consequence of the Valuer-General's Office accepting this top-up windfall, through excessive property and land valuations, a flow-on effect of further increased costs to residents of South Australia, through the emergency services levy, land taxes, water and sewerage charges, also occurs, taking a further \$1 million or more from constituents, as all these rates are based on the rising property valuations from the government's Valuer-General's Office.

It is time that the state government woke up to the burden it is placing on all South Australians and either reduces the percentage amount for these services or introduces a flat rate fee for capital property valuations, irrespective of increasing property values.

The opposition has called on this government to review the iniquitous valuation system created by exceptionally high property increases, which has initiated a financial imbalance and which has created a huge number of asset-rich, cash-poor residents in South Australia. The government has agreed to review this process. However, it is not due to report until the middle of next year, which will be too late for any relief to be afforded by councils, through the rating process, and too late for any relief from the other government-owned agencies, which also tax on land valuation. This means that the government, for another year, will reap more of these financial windfalls to the detriment of the already overburdened people of South Australia.

The hypocrisy of the Rann government is breathtaking, as it continues to break its election promises of no increase in fees and charges and steals several more million dollars from South Australians by this new iniquitous stealth tax, leaving local government to deal with the questions from disgruntled ratepayers. The government acknowledged, in its budget papers, that additional revenue would be generated by the emergency services levy related to property value growth. This additional exercise to collect more millions of dollars for state government coffers is an exceptionally mean-minded, double-dipping attack on already overburdened ratepayers.

Time expired.

TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr RAU (Enfield): My remarks today are directed to the news we received last night of Australia's having entered into a trade arrangement with Thailand. In so doing, I cannot help but draw members' attention to the cartoon (Bill Leak's contribution) which appears in *The Australian* today, where there is apparently a large stall headed 'Apec Markets' at a sideshow. Under that are a number of very large pigs, named respectively 'Indonesia', 'Europe', 'China', 'USA' and a very small pig called 'Thailand'. The Prime Minister, pictured wearing a very large hat and a huge star with the word

'Sheriff' written on it, is pointing to the very small pig and saying to the chap running the stall, 'Could I have the little white one, please?'

It brings to mind the question of these trade deals. I do not know whether or not the exact terms of this trade deal will be good for us: I have not read them, and I do not know anyone who has. However, it does illustrate a particular point, that is, when the Australian government enters into any sort of negotiation and treaty with another country, it is not obliged to do anything other than simply sign on the dotted line, and it becomes law. This is a very big difference from a country such as the United States, as, if it wants to enter into an arrangement of this type, it is all very well for the executive arm of government to decide that it is a good idea. However, it then has to run it through Congress, and that gives the states and the people an opportunity to examine the details of these agreements and to either agree or disagree.

We have not seen this deal. I am not picking on the Thai deal because I think it is bad: I do not know whether it is good or bad. However, it does lead me to a very important corollary of this, that is, the United States free trade deal currently being negotiated. Every now and again, we hear these little bleatings about what a great thing it will be for everyone. The President is coming here shortly and, no doubt, we will hear a lot more about it once he arrives. However, the fact remains that there is no draft of this treaty in circulation, quite possibly because it does not yet exist. However, the fact is that we, as representatives of the South Australian people elected to this parliament, will have no say at all about this. Our senators, who are sent to Canberra to represent this state, will have no say at all, and no member of the Australian public will have any say at all about the American free trade deal, whatever its terms might be. It will be purely and simply a matter for the decision of executive government.

This arrangement with the United States, in particular, where we are dealing with an economy the size of an elephant compared to a mouse, when you are looking at ours, potentially—and I emphasise the word 'potentially'—from a domestic point of view, could be the most significant single step in Australia since the imposition of uniform tax in the 1940s in terms of the disruption and the impact on the states within Australia and the people who live within Australia, in terms of the upset of arrangements in our law.

Internationally, this represents the largest single potential impact on our sovereignty that has ever confronted this country, yet where is the debate? It is not happening here, and it is not happening in Canberra. The newspapers are full of tiny little slivers of what might be in this agreement, yet nothing is going to happen. I am one who is strongly of the view that, when Australia enters into these international agreements, the time has come where it is not good enough for them to slip through unnoticed and unscrutinised by the parliament and simply be signed off by the executive government of the day, whomever it may be. The time has come where these things should have at least to run through the federal parliament.

I realise that a practice has now been developed whereby the federal parliament debates these things, but, in the end, that is academic. There is no constitutional impediment to the signing of these agreements, irrespective of what the parliament might say about it in any debate. I conclude by briefly referring to the remarks of Dr Mahathir, who is not generally a person whom I would like to be aligning myself with. Nonetheless, he made some remarks about the distinc-

tion between fair trade and free trade. He said that, in calling for fair trade (and I quote from *The Australian*):

Rather than free trade, fair trade can be free, but free trade can be unfair.

And that is what we are asking. It is nothing much, really: we are ready to be exploited, but we must be fairly exploited. There is not such a huge distinction between a country like Malaysia and our country when it comes to dealing with the United States.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I pay a tribute this afternoon to our community service organisations. I had the pleasure last night of being able to attend the annual dinner to celebrate the commencement of Service Clubs Week and to recognise the achievements of a couple of service clubs which were the recipients of the Premier's Community Service Award and the Premier's Community Service Encouragement Award. The dinner was hosted by the Association of Community Service Organisations, and it was one of the most enjoyable functions that I have had the pleasure to attend. Last night the recipients of these two particular awards to which I have referred were a very good example of the many worthwhile initiatives undertaken throughout our community on a daily basis throughout the year by our service clubs.

As I said to the gathering last night, the service clubs play a very important role in our community and provide vital links into the community and opportunities for people to be able to get involved in their local communities and make them much better places for us to live. The commitment and dedication of members of service clubs is evident not only in their linkages across the globe, but I challenging anyone to enter a town, suburb or city in this state or nation that has not benefited by the work, involvement and efforts of any service club. I said to the organisations last night that were represented, including Rotary, Lions, Apex, Zonta, the Soroptimists and Kiwanis (and I am proudly an honorary member of the Golden Grove Rotary Club), that volunteers are innovative and creative, energetic and enthusiastic because they are always doing things to which they are truly committed. They gain a great deal of satisfaction from knowing that what they are doing really does make a difference.

Last night I was delighted to present to the Lions Club of Gawler the Premier's Community Service Project Award for its 'Adopt a Station' project. This project has strong community support, as the station is of considerable historic significance and I understand that local tradespeople have offered their time and skills to help out in the project. Young people have been involved, and in talking to the members last night a number of those who have been involved have gone on to gain full time employment and have gained significant in-kind support through a number of companies, including Scotts Transport and Nick's Crane Service. This is an on-going project and I have no doubt it will keep Gawler Lions busy for some years to come and they are deserving of our strongest congratulations. They presented a wonderful proposal to the organising committee and were very justifiably selected for that award.

The Premier's Community Service Encouragement Award, which brought with it a cheque for \$3 000, was awarded to the Apex Club of Murray Bridge for the development of its twin loss awareness kit. The twin loss awareness kit was developed to help parents who have suffered the loss

of a baby through a multiple birth, and such numbers are increasing significantly. This kit, developed sadly through personal experience, is much needed and has been taken up by 66 hospitals and birthing units since March this year. We all understand that there can be no greater trauma for any parent than to lose a child, and Apex Murray Bridge deserves sincere congratulations for its very important work. For a very long time we underestimated the grief suffered by parents of multiple births who lose one of those children.

I pass on to both organisations and all the service clubs generally my sincere congratulations. I hope they enjoy their celebration of Service Clubs Week and get out there and sell what they do for our community because they do a great job and we really appreciate their efforts.

BRUSCHI, Mr ELIO

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I rise for the first time in a grievance debate in the nearly 10 years I have been in this parliament to express by appreciation, gratitude, love and thanks to a very special constituent and member of the Liberal Party who tragically and sadly passed away in my electorate in the past few weeks. I talk of Mr Elio Bruschi, one of the kindest men one could ever meet. He came from Italy as a young man, at that time not having a great grasp of the English language. He had only enough money to get his wife and himself from Italy to Australia. From there, because of his absolute commitment to becoming an Australian and capitalising on the magnificent family upbringing and cultural background he had in Italy, he was an enormous contributor to South Australia and Australia, particularly in my electorate. Tragically, whilst working with his dearly loved son, John, in their vineyard, an accident occurred in a dam and we lost Elio Bruschi.

The whole community is much the poorer when it comes to the loss of Elio, although when we analyse what he has done for us over such an intense period of time, albeit that he was taken far too early from our community, we are all much richer for his commitment. He believed in the ideology and principles of the Liberal Party and assisted me into this house, and for that I will be eternally grateful. He was also enormously involved in the fundraising one has to do to get back into parliament each time. At the last fundraiser we had in the electorate just a few weeks before his tragic death, Elio was there raising most of the money, selling most of the tickets, providing wine from his winery and really enjoying himself on the night with the rest of the Liberal Party and the supporters of the Mawson Liberals.

Lucy, Sam, John, Anna, Sue and their families will be very proud of the fact that I have been able to stand up in the parliament today and talk about some of the commitments Elio made during his time here on earth. Elio was also a strong Christian and I know he has gone to a better and easier place than earth often is for many of us. Elio had a great understanding of viticulture. He had a concern and interest in community safety and was very supportive of Neighbourhood Watch and Community Watch. He had a love for the Lord, his church and Christianity that was up there with a love that I have not seen equal to or surpassed in anybody. Most importantly, he had a love for his family, his grandchildren and his community. The wines John is now making will continue to grow. The management and business practices Elio put into the viticulture enterprises of the Bruschi family will continue to grow. Many jobs already have been created by virtue of his commitment to our region and,

as the Bruschi enterprise continues to grow as a result of Elio's management and encouragement of his family into viticulture, we will see much more opportunity for the region.

I know, from moving around the electorate, that what I am saying here in the parliament today is strongly endorsed and supported by the broader community. It is only when a tragedy such as this occurs that we realise just how much one person can touch across the whole spectrum of a community, from the youngest in our district right through to some of the oldest.

I also want to talk about Elio's commitment to the bocce club. He believed in families, he believed in communities and he got out there and delivered on his beliefs on a day-to-day basis. The bocce club, as a community facility, is superb. Elio was President of the bocce club for some time, and he was also the bar manager, and he provided funding for that fantastic bar in that facility. It was Elio's real commitment and passion: he saw an opportunity for growing multiculturalism, and he did that through his support of the bocce club. Again, I want to place on the record my great appreciation for a wonderful man.

Time expired.

EMERGENCY SERVICES FUNDING (VALIDATION OF LEVY ON VEHICLES AND VESSELS) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 15 October. Page 468.)

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): The opposition supports this bill. As is the case with respect to so many bills in this parliament, there is bipartisanship when it comes to the workings of the parliament and the debate with respect to bills. Of course, at times, clearly this will not be the case—whether through the ideology and principles of the parties or individuals, or whether because of the belief that a policy which has been developed and which has resulted in a particular bill is one that, at times, cannot be supported by the opposition or individual members of parliament.

However, this bill is primarily what I would describe as a bill to tidy up some of the workings of the Emergency Services Funding Act, which was introduced only a few years ago. There are some validation requirements to deal with, which are addressed within the bill. The other main point is that, given that there are changes with respect to GST funding and matters around compulsory third party insurance, this bill addresses issues relevant to the aspect of the emergency services fund that deals with the motor vehicle section. Unfortunately, this is a section that is growing in respect of calls on emergency services, and that is the reason why the working party—and, ultimately, the government and the parliament—decided that a component of emergency services funding would come through motor vehicles.

In fact, if one talks to the CFS, the MFS and the SES (all of which, depending on where they are located, are accredited for road accident rescue), one will find that, unfortunately, they are doing an increasing amount of work year by year—and this year, especially, has been a bad year with respect to the road toll and road carnage generally, and their work is

increasing in that area. I also acknowledge that it is an expensive area when it comes to funding the vital equipment that is needed for saving lives when there is a road crash in the metropolitan area or country areas of South Australia. This is a nuts and bolts bill. We have been briefed on this bill, and it has been through the normal processes of our party. The opposition supports these amendments.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I thank the shadow minister for his indication of support. I think the shadow minister has said sufficient on the bill. The second reading speech speaks for itself, and the government is pleased to see its speedy passage.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (INVESTIGATION AND REGULATION OF GAMBLING LICENSEES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 13 October. Page 368.)

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I first want to acknowledge that I realise this is a bill that was part of the budget for the government for the year 2003-04—and, of course, we all understand matters around debate and legislative amendment with respect to the budget that has been tabled in the parliament. This bill seeks to amend the Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000 and the Casino Act 1997 in order to adhere to the measures announced in the 2003-04 budget. As part of the budget, my understanding is that the government made a decision to establish triennial probity reviews of the major gambling licensees, to be undertaken by the Independent Gambling Authority, with the costs of these reviews to be recovered from the licensees of the casino and the TAB (that was the first part of the strategy); and, secondly, to provide for the costs of the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner, in regulating the casino and the TAB, to be recovered from the respective major gambling licensees.

I understand that the licensees of the TAB and the casino, in addition to what are identified in the bill as their close associates, were subject to a comprehensive investigation by the IGA prior to being licensed, and one would expect that to be the case. But I understand that the Independent Gambling Authority then makes a recommendation with respect to that licence. The IGA has resolved that the ongoing suitability of the holders of major gambling licences should be reviewed triennially to ensure that the licensee concerned remains suitable. The opposition (and I, as former minister for gambling) supports that initiative. It is important that any organisation which has a special licence that gives it privileges that most of the rest of the community—or, indeed, business—would not have needs to be checked to ensure their suitability and to ensure that they are working within the requirements of the acts that I have already highlighted. The amendments to the Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000 and the Casino Act 1997 that are contained in this bill enable these periodic reviews to occur.

Also, importantly, as I said, as a budget measure this bill will recover the expense of the periodic reviews from those subject to the evaluations. The Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000 requires the Liquor and Gambling Commission to conduct regulatory functions for the TAB. I understand that this function has not been previously funded and will be funded directly by the TAB, the casino, and/or other close associates, and that proceeds will go back into the govern-

ment coffers in order that the evaluations and reviews can be done on a periodic basis.

I am advised that, at this stage, it is expected that about \$1.1 million per annum can be retrieved by virtue of this bill. Mr Speaker, I suggest to you and to all members of this house that that is not a small amount of money in anybody's language. In fact, if my memory of when I had the responsibility for this portfolio in government serves me correctly, the Independent Gambling Authority's total budget was about \$1.5 million. So, there may have been some small increases last year, but I do not say 'small' lightly in comparison to the amount of extra gambling tax that came to the state in the 2002-03 budget. Then, of course, you only have to look at the report tabled recently in parliament for the 2003-04 year, and some projections contained in it for beyond 2003-04, to see that there is a steep growth in gambling tax revenue projected until the year 2007.

In fact, I wish that at home on the farm I could see projected income increases in the dairy industry such as this government is projecting for the gambling industry. I can assure members that I would have a lot less grey hair and would not have to speak to the bank manager as often as I do. Indeed, whether it is dairy farming or any other business, it is hard to get growth curves such as I see in the gambling taxes of this government.

In relation to the revenue base of this government, of course we all know (and I talked about it only yesterday in the house) that hundreds of millions of dollars of increased tax revenue are flowing to the government through its budgeting process. Of course, that means that approximately 1.5 million people in this state, directly or indirectly, will be hit harder in their hip pockets in the next 12 months by a government that seems obsessed with ripping more and more money out of the community. I think the figure is close to or around \$30 million in additional gambling tax revenue for this year.

I am on the public record, and I am happy to reinforce it today, as saying that I believe the casino and the TAB should contribute to certain initiatives such as this. If you look at what the licensed hotels and clubs have contributed by way of gambling tax revenue, it has been significant, and, of course, the super tax came in as well, which was another double whack at particularly the bigger hotels in South Australia. I acknowledge—as, indeed, the government clearly does by this bill, and I think the community generally would agree—that the casino and the TAB should make some contributions over and above, as do the hotels and clubs, because they are involved in the gambling industry. I will rephrase that: I acknowledge that the hotels have been very up-front in relation to their own initiatives to address problem gambling and support programs to ensure that people can go out and spend some of their over-and-above disposable income by way of gambling for recreation without its becoming a problem. So, I do not have a problem as far as the casino and the TAB contributing is concerned.

I understand, from a briefing given to one of my staff, that, reluctantly, the casino and the TAB, in fairness to them, acknowledge to a degree what is happening with this government bill. I do have to ask a couple of questions of the minister in committee, though, about how much money this bill might potentially cost the casino and the TAB in the future.

Having foreshadowed that, as I have highlighted to the house, I am particularly concerned about the minimum \$30 million of additional tax revenue to be gained from

gambling this year; I have highlighted the fact that the growth curve of projected additional income from gambling taxation for the government is very steep right through until after the next election; and the \$1.1 million would go a long way towards running the Independent Gambling Authority. However, when you see all that extra money coming through, very little of it—very little, indeed—is going into rehabilitation and support for the churches and the charitable organisations out there at the coalface that are dealing with the mess (which is probably the best way to describe it) that a small but nevertheless significant percentage of the community in South Australia find themselves in through problem gambling.

One of the few initiatives that I have seen this government put forward since it has been in office to build on the portfolio of gambling that was developed and initiated when we were in government is the advertisements that the government purchased from the Victorian government. They are quite hardhitting, and, in fact, I think are very good advertisements because they would make any man or woman who has a problem with gambling think twice about the impact on their family. I am thinking particularly about the advertisement where the grandmother was supposed to go to see her grandchild perform at a concert and the daughter says to her mother, 'Where were you? Your grand-daughter was ready for you. You said you would be at that concert and, again, mum, you failed because you were gambling.' They are hard-hitting, reality advertisements, and I congratulate this government and the Victorian government for developing those advertisements.

Part of the additional cost of those advertisements, as I understand, again came from the South Australian Hotels Association, and a portion (not a big portion) came from the government. Hopefully, those advertisements have started to get the message home to some people who have a problem with gambling that they had better go and seek help. The trouble is that it is a bit like what I was just talking about on the radio in regard to mental health. Where do you go to get the help? Because, when you seek that help, you find that the waiting lists are long and you will have to wait for quite a period of time before you get assistance. Gambling is a disease, as I see it, and, once that disease gets hold of someone, they first have to acknowledge that they have a problem. It is similar to having a health disease associated with alcoholism: first, you have to get the person to identify that they have a problem. Once they have acknowledged the problem, you then have to get help for them quickly because every day counts. If they are at the point in their life where they have a gambling problem, they need to be able to get to Break Even and similar organisations for assistance urgently.

I place on the record the opposition's appreciation of all of those agencies which are committed to supporting people who have problems with gambling and, particularly at this point, to those who are involved in working with the Break Even program. But, what I am concerned about—and the opposition's approach is extremely disappointing—is my understanding that this \$1.1 million, either directly or indirectly, will go back to the Treasurer and into general revenue coffers.

This money should be going to help the problem gamblers. It is a \$1.1 million windfall gain for this high taxing and charging government, whose only fiscal management activity is about increasing the tax revenue bases. I need to say that, with respect to the additional taxes hitting the hip pocket of the South Australian community, there will be windfall gains

through the five year growth period of economic development and general growth in this state, particularly in the real estate industry, in relation to which this year \$100 million extra could be received in stamp duty.

There is plenty of money from the point of view of the extra taxes and charges, so, in proportionate terms, with a budget of approximately \$7 billion, \$1.1 million is only a small amount. I think most people would acknowledge that, in proportion to a \$7 billion global budget for the government, \$1.1 million is a small amount; yet, this government, which claims to have a social heart and which has a cost input to, I think, the Social Inclusion Unit and its board of about this amount of money just for administration, board fees and whatever, cannot see its way clear to allocate this \$1.1 million of additional money.

It was making that funding previously (and so were we when we were in government) from general revenue. So, I believe that no-one in this house can say that this is not an additional windfall amount of money. The government is not putting it into the area of problem gambling, and the government should be condemned for that. I think the South Australian community will be very disappointed when it discovers that, through the casino, the TAB and close associates, this government will get \$1.1 million, yet it will not be putting \$1 of it into problem gambling.

On top of that, we have the Independent Gambling Authority, about which I have spoken in this house on other occasions as, indeed, have other members of the opposition. Not only has the opposition talked about it but also, at one point, industry sectors were united in signing a joint letter expressing their concerns about the Independent Gambling Authority.

The Independent Gambling Authority needs to pay attention to those sorts of issues and to be far more willing to work cooperatively with industry across the board. I started to receive messages about this issue when I raised this matter in the estimates committees process, and I hope that the government is starting to realise that the points I raised are serious in terms of trying to improve things across all industry sectors.

It is one thing to talk about how you work as an authority or as an agency with those people whom you represent and serve and for whom you have an officiating capacity (such as the Independent Gambling Authority does) with some of the gambling industry sectors. The other side of it is to fund the Independent Gambling Authority properly so that it can get on with urgent research. The minister might like to tell me a little about this because, from year to year, it does change. I understand that the Independent Gambling Authority was looking at putting to government six to eight key recommendations in relation to urgent research.

The opposition also knows that, when we were in government, a national body was set up to look at some of the national problems in relation to gambling. I am not suggesting that we need to reinvent the wheel. We should let that funding and management process continue so that we come up with suggested outcomes to fix some of the concerns that are being looked at by the national body. However, I understand that the national body is not looking at matters such as the impact of problem gambling on families and, in particular, children. I think that the South Australian parliament needs to be able to get a really good handle on just what problem gambling is doing to families and children, because they are at the core of this issue. They are at the coalface of this matter.

I say again that I do not see in this bill where any of that money is going to grow that research and other requirements that I know the Independent Gambling Authority could be undertaking, even if it had a little more money; and I am not talking about big amounts. Therefore, unless the minister can advise the house differently when he speaks, the answer is correct: that this money is going straight back into Treasury, back into the general revenue of the South Australian government.

To be fair to the minister, I foreshadow that some amendments may be moved in another place. I think it is better if an opposition does that when bills are being debated in the house in which they are introduced. I also state that I will be asking a question or two in committee. Whether the opposition likes it or lumps it, it does not have any choice but to support the thrust of this bill, given that it is a budget bill, a money bill.

It is a great shame that this government can get media stories highlighting the fact that it has a social heart. It spends money on administration and bureaucracy with respect to the Social Inclusion Board, yet, when it has a real opportunity to make a difference, it is so mean-spirited that it will not allow this money to go where it really counts.

There is a lot of debate about child sexual abuse. The Leader of the Opposition delivered a speech today at the Police Associations' annual general meeting about the Police Paedophilia Task Force and the good work that it is doing. Not long before that meeting, as I was travelling to Adelaide this morning, I heard on a radio news report about the permanent damage that occurs when a child is sexually abused. There is a very strong commitment by members of the parliament—I am sure all members of parliament—to try to do what they can to tackle child sexual abuse. I put it to the house that if a father or a mother has a gambling problem and a child does not get up in time to go to school, it may be because mum and dad have been involved in gambling activities late into the night.

They may not even be out of bed when that child should be woken. Also, that child might get up in the morning (which many do, sadly, in South Australia) and often wake their siblings as well. If there is food in that home, are the children able to provide their own breakfast? Other things compound the situation when people become addicted to gambling. That children in such a family sometimes are not dressed properly, sometimes not fed properly and are also subject to stresses as a result of the arguments and the other difficulties that a family would have if a partner in that family (a mum or a dad) had a gambling problem.

Imagine that, for argument's sake, the wife cannot pay the bills, cannot put enough food on the table, or cannot buy new winter shoes and clothes for the children because the husband is gambling after work, or often during work. We have probably all seen the familiar vehicle parked outside a hotel as we drive past, and you wonder why they are always there after 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Families are suffering as a result of that. This can have permanent impacts on children for the rest of their lives. They are parallels, as I see it, to the impacts on children who are experiencing problems as a result of other things that are not right in their families.

This money should be going to assist those families. It should also be going to the churches in South Australia, because they will tell you that when people get into a major problem with gambling they can pick up the patterns. For example, someone will ask for a food hamper to get them through the week or they will go to the opportunity shop to

buy clothing for their children. This is happening on a daily basis across the state. One only need talk to people like Mark Henley, who is very committed and passionate about this issue, to know that these are not isolated cases. As I said, in proportionate terms one can argue (and reasonably so) that it represents a small percentage, but it is still a significant number of problem gamblers who are doing enormous damage to their families and their future.

So, if you are going to hit the bigger organisations and take some more money out of their coffers, which is what this bill will do, I want to know why the Labor government does not display a real social heart and put this \$1.1 million into breakeven programs, church welfare groups and other initiatives that will stop problem gambling. That is where this money should go, and everyone to whom I have spoken about this bill has said the same thing. They have said, 'What's going on here with the additional revenue of \$1.1 million? Where will that go?' And I have said, 'As I read the bill and as I understand it, it will go back into general revenue'—and they just shake their heads.

I invite the government today to correct me if I am wrong about this, because I would be pleased to see that \$1.1 million go into the areas that I have highlighted. However, if after everything I have said in the last 20 minutes is correct, while the opposition has no choice other than to support this bill, we will stand with the broader South Australian community in condemning this mean-spirited government that has not set its priorities in the direction in which it should in the best interests of the South Australian community and in this case particularly in the interests of those families who are suffering because someone in their family has a problem with gambling.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): It is inappropriate for representatives of the opposition to criticise the government's commitment to tackling the ills of problem gambling. Since coming to government we have demonstrated a degree of vigour about this issue which was simply absent under the previous government. The previous government felt that it had persuaded the community that it was serious about this matter through the imposition of a freeze. However, when it put the freeze in place it suggested that there would be some inquiry into gaming machine numbers, but it took no steps to implement that inquiry and it simply allowed the matter to drift on. It did not endorse the agency that was expected to carry on the task, and it took no steps at all to ask the Independent Gambling Authority to engage in that inquiry. Since coming to government, we have invested in the Independent Gambling Authority an additional \$1.1 million over four years.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It assisted the government to engage in the most extensive dialogue with both the church sector and the gambling providers that has occurred in this state and, as a result of that, we are seeing real benefits. For the first time, there has been a government that has been prepared to bring both sides of the debate together. Instead of having the prohibitionist debate represented by a prominent member in another place and those in the industry seeking to hang on for dear life because they were worried about their industry disappearing, we have ensured that a dialogue exists in the community about this matter. This is a more sophisticated dialogue than has occurred in many a long year. We have done this because we have been moti-

vated by the desire to ameliorate the undoubted harm that is caused by problem gambling in this community.

Contrary to what has been said by members opposite, we have also allocated hard cash to this issue: an additional \$4 million over four years for the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund. This money is applied to the very purposes which the honourable member lauds: that is, the advertising campaign. Further, this \$4.4 million has also been applied to the education department to assist young people to understand the perils of problem gambling. In total, those measures amount to an extra in excess of \$2.2 million per annum.

More importantly, as I said before, we have started a dialogue in the community about this matter, a dialogue which simply had not existed prior to our commencing this debate. That dialogue has existed at three levels. We do not accept this notion of gambling being a disease. There might be elements of disease associated with gambling, it may lead to people ultimately suffering a diagnosable disease, but we do not accept that characterisation of the matter. We believe that problem gambling is a behaviour and that it can be affected by people choosing to make decisions. One has to accept that, otherwise the harm minimisation model means nothing. They cannot be calling for harm minimisation measures if they fully accept that it is a disease for which abstinence is the only cure.

One can clearly affect this behaviour in two important ways, and we have sought to engage the community in this. First, we have asked problem gamblers to accept some responsibility for their conduct. Through advertisements we have challenged problem gamblers to think about what they are gambling with, and we intend to bring to the house a measure which we have called the family protection order which will allow some intervention by the Independent Gambling Authority to actually ensure that counselling or other services are provided to assist the amelioration of the harm caused by problem gambling.

The second phase of what we are doing is that we are beginning to see some serious harm minimisation measures, which are the first fruits of the dialogue that have begun to emerge from the church sector and the providers. The honourable member opposite sought to take some credit by raising his concerns during the estimates and saying that somehow they have been heeded and have created a degree of congruence or agreement between the two parties.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The honourable member completely misunderstand the process. Under his regime, the Independent Gambling Authority was not resourced or motivated by the previous government or clothed with sufficient authority to conduct the extensive inquiries that have been conducted by it under the leadership of this government. The Independent Gambling Authority has challenged elements of the industry, and therefore they are unhappy about it. They have complained (to those members who would listen to them) and made their views known about the discomfort they feel from being challenged because they engage in an industry that is having collateral harm on some members of this community.

Through engaging and challenging these two sectors and bringing them together under the very skilful leadership of the Independent Gambling Authority and through the good graces of the people who work with those who suffer the harm from problem gambling (that is, the church sector and other non-governmental organisations which care for victims of problem gambling) we are seeing agreement emerge on a

range of harm minimisation measures. It has nothing to do with the completely shallow analysis that has been proposed by the member opposite and had everything to do with the skill and commitment of the Independent Gambling Authority. It confronted both sides of the equation. It confronted the church sector and asked them to engage in a serious way with gambling providers, and it challenged the gambling providers themselves to seriously look at the harm that some of their products are causing to members of the community.

Out of that process, out of that serious dialogue for the first time, we are seeing real steps forward. I am sure a few feathers were ruffled in the process, but good outcomes are beginning to emerge. This government does not apologise for the approach it has taken in relation to problem gambling. It is light years away from the inactivity and sloth in which those opposite engaged when they were supervising this portfolio.

With those remarks, I commend the bill to the house, notwithstanding some of the remarks that I have sought to engage with and correct in the process of my response. I do appreciate the support of the honourable member and the opposition for the bill, and I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I want to pick up on some points that the minister made, and I need to correct the record on a number of fronts. So that it is clear, when I spoke about a disease, or used that as an analogy, I said that in my assessment at least (in fact, it is not only my assessment because I have spoken to many people about this who are far more experienced in these matters than I or indeed probably anyone in this house will ever be), once gambling gets a hold of you, just the same as with alcohol, or illicit drugs, it is like a disease and it is very difficult for a person to control unless they have the right support and intervention. If they have that support and intervention then the disease can be cured. That was what I was actually trying to say to the house.

I challenge anyone who does not agree with that, because you have only to have a look at someone who has a problem with gambling, and it is like a disease taking over the body. One need look in the media recently, where a gentleman who was supposedly banned from a gambling facility could not help himself. This happens every day. It is the same with drug addiction. I do not understand it completely but, whatever the illicit drug or the gambling does to that individual mentally, it is like a disease of the body because it takes over and nothing else seems to matter. All they want to do is get their next fix of that drug or get back behind that gambling product to which they are addicted. Of course, this is not new. Australia has often been talked about as being a country where gambling occurs, and I would like to put it on the record that people have been addicted to gambling as far back as the gold rush days and, in fact, for as long as we have been a colony.

In fairness to this minister, it is really the government that I am getting into about its mean-spiritedness with respect to this money. This minister was not in this house during the last term of office but, having had the privilege of setting up the gambling portfolio (and it is not that often that a minister gets a chance to develop a brand new portfolio), I do know what occurred and all the background to it. To be fair to the minister, he was not here—he was out in the private sector back in those days, so he might not have had his head around

all of it. But, substantial money was put into the Independent Gambling Authority—to the tune of about \$1.5 million, if my memory serves me correctly.

Not everything could be done in a 12 month period. I think I was sworn in as minister for gambling in about September 2001, and I can tell the minister that, whilst he may be busy with the gambling portfolio now, the amount of work and energy that went into the background of that was enormous. I want to put on the public record my appreciation of the Hon. Graham Ingerson and the Hon. Angus Redford for all the hard work that they did with the broader community and with the parliament and the government in getting to the point where it was agreed by the government and by the parliament that we would have a portfolio for gambling. A lot of work went into setting it up, and you cannot get everything done in a day. Rome was not built in a day, and I acknowledge that the minister here cannot get everything done in a day, either. However, I am saying that there is an opportunity here for the minister to put this money in the right place, if he can get a bit of that mean-spiritedness out of the Treasurer.

In raising this matter, I also want to talk about the dialogue that was involved. The minister said, as I recall, that little or no dialogue—or words to that effect—took place with all the interest groups. I think the penny might have finally dropped for the minister because the groups have been talking to him about it as well. We had a round table conference, where all the industry sectors (that is, those people providing the gambling products and those who have to pick up the unfortunate percentage of people who need support when things go wrong with their gambling, and it turns from recreation into a problem for them) were involved. That was happening and was going to continue.

The minister says that it is all talk, but all the codes had to be put in place, and the dedicated staff that I had in my own office were flat chat in consulting and working with the director of the Independent Gambling Authority and the community to get those codes developed. The then presiding officer and his colleagues worked so hard on all that. In fact, the then presiding officer even flew back, after his job transferred to Hong Kong, to finish some of that work. I want to thank Mr Green, the presiding officer at the time, for doing so.

So, to say that nothing was done is not correct, because a lot was done. But there is an opportunity to do more now because this bill is raising more money. And it is not only this bill that is raising money: it is all the other ways that this government, which is addicted to gambling itself in every way (and the community are talking about it) is raising more money. It is the Labor government addiction. I now bring into the funding question, under the heading of the costs of investigation, a question to the minister.

What guarantees or assurances can the minister give the parliament that the \$1.1 million per annum, as put to us in the briefing and within the development of this bill, will remain at that figure (which I understand the minister is arguing is a cost recovery), or can the minister use this clause as a backdoor way of hitting the casino and the TAB and its close associates with massive increases in the future? What guarantees do these organisations have that the minister will not use this bill for that purpose?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That question is covered by a simple answer. We cannot use this provision for the purpose of raising revenue or as some backdoor way of taxing both the TAB and the casino, because it would be in breach of the licence agreement that we have with both those

organisations in relation to the sale of the casino and the TAB. The licence agreement is enshrined in legislation, and would have the effect of triggering a compensatable event for which both the casino and the TAB would be able to recover against us.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Can the minister assure the committee that, in his opinion, there has been sufficient consultation with respect to this matter, because, as I have already highlighted, no-one wants to pay tax if they can avoid it?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is fair to say that neither of the organisations welcomed a revenue measure which seeks to recover the cost associated with regulating their activities. However, we have been in communication with both organisations (in both written and oral form), and we have provided assurances that the regulatory costs associated with this activity will be prudently managed. There is no sense in which we will put in place a massive bureaucracy and then simply send the bill to both the TAB and the casino, and we have provided that assurance to them.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: With respect to the revenue that will be raised, has the minister put to the Treasurer that this funding windfall should go into assisting further initiatives to help the organisations and individuals affected by problem gambling?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not need to tell the committee that the Treasurer is a man with an enormous social conscience who understands the harm caused by problem gambling. He is also a man who understands the other pressures that are on the citizens of this state. There are an enormous number of incredibly worthy causes all around our state. I know that you, Mr Acting Chairman, would be well aware of the serious demands on the resources of the state government that exist within your electorate.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There are enormous resource demands from a whole range of areas, problem gambling being just one of them. I remind the committee that this revenue measure raises something in the order of \$1.4 or \$1.5 million. Since coming to government, we have put in an additional \$2.2 million per annum into this specific area targeted at problem gambling.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 passed.

Clause 5.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr O'Brien): Does the member for Mawson wish to comment on this clause?

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Yes, sir, I do. I believe that the intent as well as the wording of this clause is relevant. Does the minister believe that the Independent Gambling Authority should be subjected to fewer requirements under freedom of information than other agencies and organisations?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I cannot see how this has any relevance at all to the bill before the committee. This bill is about recovering fees in respect of regulations that are being conducted by the various agencies. It seems to be completely off the point, although I note that, when the honourable member established the Independent Gambling Authority, he actually provided that exemption for it. So, for all the good reasons that he promoted, I am sure they remain in place.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I wish to advise you, Mr Acting Chairman, and the committee, that I have no further questions in this area. However, in fairness, as I think it is appropriate protocol, I again foreshadow that at least a couple of amend-

ments will be moved in another place.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (6 to 9) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Gambling): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I thank all members for their contributions and the opposition for its support of the legislation.

Bill read a third time and passed.

SUMMARY OFFENCES (OFFENSIVE WEAPONS) AMENDMENT BILL

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

Clause 4, page 2, line 12 to page 3, line 14—

Delete subclauses (1) and (2) and insert:

(1) Section 15(1), penalty—delete ‘\$2 500 or imprisonment for 6 months’ and substitute:

\$10 000 or imprisonment for 2 years

(1) Section 15(1b), penalty—delete ‘\$7 500 or imprisonment for 18 months’ and substitute:

\$10 000 or imprisonment for 2 years.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

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

That the house do now adjourn.

MURRAY RIVER

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Through my attempt to keep in touch with all my electorate, I recently spent another day in Mannum visiting constituents and speaking to many major employers and business leaders. Many important issues were brought up on this visit and I take this opportunity to bring them to the attention of the house. I had an opportunity to visit Rivapak, the major packer of onions in South Australia. This company was recently set up as a cooperative by many local producers with a large pack house on the outskirts of Mannum. It was opened three or four years ago. Although a great success story, the directors and general manager had major concerns over recent government policy that they believe almost closed their operations.

Rivapak put together a state-of-the-art packing and storage facility that employs up to 50 people when performing at capacity. This group has invested multi millions of dollars in an industry it believes has a strong future in the region. Like many others, they have learnt that delivering the best quality consistently is the most important factor in being able to create a demand for their product. When you have that demand you must be able to supply. This facility has one aim: to pack the best quality possible. Its output, although massive, is centred on its Goldline product, which we know as premium South Australian onions. These are the premium onions produced for sale around Australia and are stocked by the Woolworths chain. In the coming season Coles and Bi-Lo should also become major customers. This is a major vote of confidence in their quality and in the premium they can attract. In fact, their onions receive up to two times the average price paid for other onions. This is because they

guarantee the consumer quality and reliability—the keys to good business—and they are suitably packed as a premium product and certainly sell very well and are well marketed.

However, when dealing with these major companies you must be able to supply the amount of product you have contracted for, otherwise you blow your chance and your market dries up. Recent government policies have, however, put this in jeopardy. The problem is that the government, through its lack of consultation with private irrigators, particularly these, when introducing the recent irrigation restrictions, almost killed this developing industry. After guaranteeing 16 000 tonnes of onions to their customers at the beginning of the season, the production of onions had to be cut back severely in this area. They have had to outsource production from areas not affected by water restrictions. A small amount of Goldline quality onions had to come from the state’s South-East and even as far away as Tasmania.

The government, when trying to achieve a 20 per cent reduction by imposing a 35 per cent cutback, has obviously not spoken to these producers who use all their water in a productive and efficient manner. One of the suppliers to Rivapak has cut back onion production by 25 per cent due to lack of water, and it is only that high due to the amount of rain we had earlier in the year. His potato production has been sliced to a far greater extent. Another producer has managed to maintain his onion production but has had to forfeit the usual rotation on his centre pivots. That usual rotation meant that the second crop of sweetcorn was planted. However, due to water restrictions this has not occurred this year and this was a large-scale operation. In fact, he was the largest producer of sweetcorn in South Australia for the retail market. Now the consumer and local economy are suffering because of it, with little South Australian sweetcorn. One wonders what governments are thinking when they put a 35 per cent restriction across the board. Surely some companies ought to be treated differently from others.

Due to a lack of consultation, these producers who were using their quota of water in an efficient and productive manner have been forced to suffer most because of the government’s actions. I bring this issue to the house because it may come before the house with the coming changes to the water resources section in the Integrated Natural Resources Act. I am not pushing a theory but my constituents have asked for full and proper consultation in future. They require far more surety in being able to plan their production in a better manner. You do not spend millions of dollars, as Rivapak has in its magnificent packing facility and its huge cool-rooms (as onions have to be kept cool out of season), to see it ruined because of the lack of availability of product, in this case onions.

Everyone, including the producers I met with, recognise that with limited resources they must be restricted because, if there is no water, you cannot have it. That was the case when everyone was aware of the lack of water in the Murray system and restrictions needed to follow, but they needed to be even-handed to all and due consideration had to be given to all those affected. All they asked for was for less of an ad hoc policy in future and guidelines need to be set so that producers along the Murray know how they will be affected in various circumstances.

Now is the time to get a framework in place. I appreciate that the government handed back a further 10 per cent of its water yesterday, but you cannot plant onions now. Different sections of the irrigation industry need to be treated differently. Because they did not plant back in February or March they

cannot race out there and plant onions now, so they have paid a price for the whole year, whereas many of the other irrigators pay a price for a few months. The whole rotation, and not just the onion industry, has suffered greatly.

Another major industry in Mannum is tourism, particularly houseboats and pleasure boat hiring. After meeting with several people from both industry and local government, they again brought home the need for infrastructure along the river to service houseboats. I have raised the matter before. My attention was drawn to the lack of sewerage pump-out stations between Swan Reach and Mannum. It must be remedied as quickly as possible for houseboat operators and, more importantly, for the health of the river and those who hire houseboats. These stations are vital to service houseboats to make sure the sewage is properly disposed of along the Murray. There are 96 kilometres of river between Mannum and Swan Reach, meaning a houseboat will be at most six hours away from one of these stations. It is not very encouraging for a person hiring a houseboat to find their toilet full and, being six hours from a pump-out station, one can only guess what happens. You do not have to be Einstein to work that out! We are not encouraging people to do the right thing at all.

A sewerage pump-out facility needs to be built at Walker Flat as soon as possible. It was also highlighted to me that, although not in my electorate, there is no pump-out station between Murray Bridge and Goolwa. The distance between these two stations is nearly 100 kilometres by river. With all the rhetoric about saving the Murray, we have two basic problems and what is being done? All these millions of dollars and all this rhetoric and there are no pump-out stations. It is high time we got our priorities right: less talk and more action.

As well as this issue along the river, it was pointed out to me that the wharf at Bow Hill is now in such a state of disrepair that people are no longer allowed to use it. The wharf used to have many large cruise vessels pull up to it, such as the *Murray Princess* and other tourist vessels so that people could disembark and explore the small township. What a lovely township it is, as the Speaker would know. It is a great little town. Now our visitors pull up alongside and have to get off on the riverbank. They can see this facility right next to them, but are unable to use it due to the lack of money available for repair and maintenance. It is a sad indictment on the way the government treats our tourism industry. Something needs to be done quickly before this historic asset is completely lost.

With respect to the houseboat industry (and I have to be very careful what I say), the management is in some turmoil. Apparently, the association has been accused of playing favourites, and some of the river's biggest operators are being overlooked regarding bookings.

Mannum is indeed a great place. It is Adelaide's river garden, and it is Adelaide's water playground. It is a garden by the river: it is a magnificent place. I congratulate the community of Mannum, particularly the Mid Murray Council, for turning it into such a marvellous place. It is a great environment, a great place to retire and a great place for retirement villages. It was a pleasure to visit my constituents at Mannum, and I will be back there shortly.

CHILD ABUSE

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): As the time allowed for the grievance debate is 20 minutes, I would like to address the

house on a matter that seems to have slipped from our attention, that is, what we are going to do about the abuse of children in our state (I am pleased that the minister is in the chamber, because I know she is genuinely concerned) and, specifically, the matter of this parliament's having passed legislation which enables people who were abused prior to 1982 to pursue a prosecution.

The minister will be aware that a number of people have availed themselves of that opportunity, and have presented themselves to the police for investigation. I am very disappointed that, to this point in time, the house has not been minded to set up a royal commission. I say that not by way of playing politics but because of what happened to so many of our young people in this state in a period that will not be looked back on as one of our brightest and best times by anyone who reads anything about it.

Much has been made of former magistrate Liddy, of the late Bob Brandenburg, of the gentleman who drove a bus—and much should be made of them. But every academic is generally agreed that that type of reprehensible behaviour represents something like 20 per cent of the real problem: that four-fifths of the problem takes place in familial surroundings, in families and in settings where the abusers are often known to the children concerned, and some of it, indeed, perhaps has some cultural roots.

I am not sitting in judgment on it, but I am speaking on behalf of our young people. I do not think that this parliament can avoid its responsibility day after day, when it reads in the paper about the havoc and devastation that just one or two have wrought. And this is just part of the problem, 80 per cent of which remains unhidden. But we are not doing anything. I am not talking about the minister; I am not talking about her department. I know that FAYS has put on more staff. The minister gets enough pressure about that. I am talking about this parliament, and this parliament's responsibility to help its community. That is not the minister's responsibility alone: it is the responsibility of every single person who sits in this house.

Again, what I am about to say is not a reflection on this minister or this government, or even anyone who is sitting in here who was a member of the previous government, or of John Bannon's government: it is prior to all these things. In 1978, a young man who was 13 years old and who lived in an orphanage was told that he was going on an excursion to the beach, and he prepared to go on his excursion. He was picked up at the orphanage, and that evening he found himself in Queensland. He was held in Queensland for three months (and I am going on his advice: I was not there, but I have no reason to doubt his word), and he claims that he was drugged with Rohypnol and other things. He eventually forcibly made his escape and returned to South Australia where, as a 13-year old, he reported what had happened to those who were supposed to be his carers (he was a ward of the state). He wanted to be interviewed by the police, and he tells me that the police wanted to interview him. However, at that time he was told that it was government policy that, for his rehabilitation, wellbeing, nurturing and future growth, no child could report such matters or could have any contact with the police. That is, by any stretch of the imagination, something that needs clarification and investigation, because that is covering up for paedophiles. It might have been done in the name of protection of the child, but what sort of child protection is involved when someone is systematically seduced over three months by a paedophile, when he wants to report it, and is competent to report it, and the police want

to listen to the report, and the answer is, 'No, you can't do that. You have to be rehabilitated. You have to go on with your life and grow and develop from this experience.'

In the meantime, while that person (whose name was given to me, and I can discuss it with the minister afterwards) may later have been found guilty of other crimes, they were never charged with that one. One year later, that boy absconded and went to Sydney. He tells me that he did that simply because he had no confidence that our system would protect him. It had failed him in the past, and it had failed him when it came to looking for justice and looking for an answer to what had happened to him, so he ran away to Sydney.

His experience in Sydney was, in a way, even more diabolical (a 14-year old lands in Sydney believing that people had forewarned that he was coming to Sydney), and he went from bad to worse. He has sorted out his life now, and I believe that he is going to the police commissioner. Hopefully something good will come from this parliament, because we have said that prosecutions prior to 1982 can now be looked at.

I think this house owes this young man—and many young men and women like him—a really good look at what we did and how we did it, and what our responsibilities are. I was not the minister at that time, minister Key was not the minister at that time, nor was anyone in this house, and the people concerned may well have acted in good faith, according to the dictates of the time. But that does not make it right. When we talk in this place about the stolen generation, we do so with the knowledge that no-one at the time thought they were doing wrong. But it is a matter that we now all find shameful. It is a matter for which we all rightly believe we should apologise. It is a matter that we believe the community needs to address with respect to those people to whom a wrong was done. If a wrong was done to the stolen generation—as, indeed, I believe it was—then a great wrong has been done to some of these children.

I could also talk about some of the orphanages around Adelaide. I know a woman of my age, with whom I have a good working relationship, who grew up in an orphanage situation, and she can tell stories of systematic abuse, and of abuse that was certainly physical and absolutely psychologi-

cal and, if it was not for the fact that she was a bit more savvy than I think a lot of young girls were at that time, she could have suffered much worse. She was capable of looking after herself, and she did not become a victim. But it was only her innate good sense that protected her.

I am not witch-hunting: I think we need to be very careful of witch-hunting. But, at the same time, I think that this minister, this parliament and this government owe those children a duty of care to address anything that we might have done wrong at the time. It is not our sins, but the *Bible* says that the sins of the fathers shall be visited unto the third and fourth generation—and, in many ways, that is what this is. They are not things that we did, they are not things that I think any public servant did, but they were done by probably a good person sitting there in the name and in the interests of the people of South Australia. They were probably also policies of people who were not bad, but who thought that they were serving the interests of South Australia. But they did not serve the interests of people who were damaged and bruised and who are crying out for justice.

It is one thing to remove their right to prosecute: it is another thing to say, 'No, these children were under our care, they were wards of the state; they were directly wards of a minister in this place.' In a very real sense, they were children to whom every person in this house—every public servant, for and on behalf of the people of South Australia—owed a duty. And, clearly, if this lad is right and if others are right, we have failed abysmally in that duty. We are very quick as a community to tell people such as Archbishop Hollingworth that he should apologise: we are very quick to point the finger at everybody else. But, when this very institution, the parliament of South Australia (the government of South Australia, which represents the people of South Australia), cannot say sorry, there is something wrong. I therefore hope that the government and the minister will look carefully at what the Leader of the Opposition has been calling for and revisit it, not as a party political thing but as a matter of justice.

Motion carried.

At 5.22 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 22 October at 2 p.m.