

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 May 2004

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

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

Australian Crime Commission (South Australia),
Genetically Modified Crops Management,
Law Reform (Ipp Recommendations),
Motor Vehicles (Suspension of Licences of Medically Unfit Drivers) Amendment,
Problem Gambling Family Protection Orders,
Summary Offences (Offensive Weapons) Amendment.

RIVER MURRAY LEVY

A petition signed by 14 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to remove the requirement to pay the River Murray levy from SA Water clients who do not use River Murray water on the Eyre Peninsula, was presented by Mrs Penfold.

Petition received.

VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA

A petition signed by 32 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to reject voluntary euthanasia legislation; ensure all hospital medical staff receive proper palliative care training and provide adequate funding of palliative care procedures for all terminally ill patients, was presented by Mr Scalzi.

Petition received.

ANANGU PITJANTJATJARA LANDS

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Today I am heartened to report to the house the most recent developments relating to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY Lands). Recently I travelled to the APY Lands with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation and the member for Giles to meet first-hand with community members. We met with women and children, and they told me that they welcome what the government is attempting to do; that they want a stronger police presence; and that they want better health and education services for their families. We also met with the workers who are at the coalface of health and policing service delivery, and we listened as they told us of their work and of the difficulties they experience on a daily basis.

It is clear that petrol sniffing and the use of other illicit substances is one of the most debilitating symptoms of the problems of the APY Lands. After listening to the concerns of the community, I announced that the government would be seeking to increase penalties for those people found trafficking in petrol and other illegal substances to the detriment of the health and wellbeing of those living on the lands.

I am convinced that as a government and as a parliament we can, and will, make positive steps towards achieving better outcomes for the APY communities. We will continue to work hard to provide what successive governments have failed to achieve: better community safety, proper health services, appropriate and sound education opportunities and training for real and sustainable jobs.

I am also convinced that in the recently appointed Coordinator of State Services, the Hon. Bob Collins, we have found the right person to give the direction and clarity required to enable us to make positive change and overcome some of the problems that have been so apparent and so long standing on the APY Lands.

Bob Collins has brought to this role an exceptional understanding of the needs and aspirations of indigenous Australians. He has spent many hours meeting with dozens of people involved in service delivery here in Adelaide, in Alice Springs and also on the APY Lands. More importantly, he has met and held extensive discussions with many community members during the time he recently spent on the lands.

The government recently received Bob Collins' first report—I emphasise first report—and I can assure members that he has wasted no time in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the problems facing the APY community. But, he is not just telling us what is wrong; he is also finding solutions. He is looking at long-term, sustainable solutions that recognise the unique cultural, social and environmental conditions that exist on the lands.

Bob Collins has told us that he is convinced that there are fundamental structural problems in the current operations of the APY Lands Council and that this is impeding the delivery of important community initiatives. He says that the current situation is entirely unacceptable and that it is difficult to see how substantial progress can be made in achieving the desperately needed improvements on outcomes for those living on the lands. Bob Collins has provided us with a number of clear and strong recommendations and today I commend them to the house.

Bob Collins believes that once there is stability in the governance arrangements on the lands we can move forward in areas of critical need. He has also recommended a review of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act 1981, and has told the government that he will undertake a full consultation with the landowners.

There will be no undermining of land rights. In other recommendations, Bob Collins identified the need for more resources for SAPOL and for funding to upgrade the short-term detention facilities in communities on the lands. Funding will be made available to ensure that these services hit the ground as soon as possible.

This is in addition to the extra resources that have already been provided to the lands recently. I am advised that there are currently seven fully sworn police officers, including an inspector, present on the Lands at all times and, already, the feedback from communities indicates that this increased presence is receiving a positive response.

Additional health workers have been or soon will be employed on the Lands, including two health coordinators to work with Nganampa Health Service, four youth workers and a youth coordinator. Extra funds have also been provided for the NPY Women's Council to assist their support services for people with disabilities, including those who have suffered brain damage because of substance abuse.

Bob Collins will now commence urgent discussions with the commonwealth to ensure that there is no delay in the roll-out of funding for services delivered on the lands. The South Australian government is honouring its word that it would do whatever it took to urgently put in place a plan to deliver hope and badly needed services to the APY Lands. With the work that we have urgently commenced and the changes that will be made, we believe that ultimately the lives of our children and young people living on the lands will be saved and that they will have a much better and brighter future.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

APY Land Council and Community Safety in the Lands—
Report by the Co-ordinator of Government Services to
the APY Lands

Regulations under the following Acts—

Public Sector Management—Pecuniary Interests

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

Electronic Transaction—Exclusions

Legislation Revision and Publication—Road Traffic
Act 1961

Limitation of Actions—Negligence Claims

Rules of Court—

Supreme Court—Scale of Costs

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

Liquor Licensing—Long Term Dry Areas—

Cooper Pedy

Gawler

Grange

Normanville

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

Burra Clare Snowtown Health Service—Report 2002-03

By the Minister for Urban Development and Planning
(Hon. P.L. White)—

Crown Development Application by Industrial & Com-
mercial Premises Corporation to vary condition 2(B) of
approval for JP Morgan Office Complex at
Felixstow—Report by the Minister

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further
Education (Hon. S.W. Key)—

Education Adelaide—Report 2002-03

By the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (Hon.
R.J. McEwen)—

SABOR Ltd—Financial Report 2002-03

Regulations under the following Acts—

Genetically Modified Crops Management—Desig-
nation of Areas

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

Rules—

Local Government—Local Government

Superannuation Scheme—

Correction of Schedule IV

Government Co-contribution

Resolution Without Board Meeting

Miscellaneous amendments.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I bring up the 19th report of the committee entitled 'Inquiry into Obesity'.

Report received and ordered to be published.

QUESTION TIME

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Attorney-General. Has the Office of the DPP made any submission opposing the recommendation in the Kourakis report for the appointment of a Crown Counsel in the office who will report directly to the Attorney-General?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Yes.

ADELAIDE-AUCKLAND FLIGHTS

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What will be the benefits to tourism in South Australia of the new Qantas Adelaide-Auckland direct flights?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I thank the member for her question. As she knows, international tourism is very important to South Australia and the Premier and I were particularly excited by the prospect of direct flights from Auckland to Adelaide beginning later this year. As members would know, New Zealand is our strongest tourist destination from international sites in Australia, but New Zealand has failed to reach Adelaide because of the lack of direct flights and the disabling impact of both changing aeroplanes and the cost of getting from Auckland to Adelaide. The new Qantas deal will give us an assured three direct flights using its latest aircraft, the 737-800 aeroplanes, which will each carry 168 passengers. This means that an additional 26 000 international seats will be coming to South Australia each year and the new flights have the potential to inject \$16.5 million into the state's economy. Those additional tourists are estimated to bring 177 600 visitor nights to South Australia and those tourism numbers will be spread throughout the state, bringing bonuses to regional and rural South Australia.

It is not just the tourism dollars that will be spent but the opportunity for international business and freight exchange that will be good news for South Australians as well. The Tourism Commission is working for a strategic marketing plan to be developed over the next couple of months to make sure we capitalise on these new flights and the Premier will be involved in this project. One of the interesting statistics particularly worth noting is that in December 2002 there were only 2 974 inbound international seats per week into South Australia, in comparison with over 200 000 a week to the east coast. Those 2 974 seats equated to only 14 services a week. We have had a strategic attack on bringing more international flights into South Australia and over the past year we have improved our inbound seats per week from 2 974 to 3 707. By the end of this year we will have achieved 4 127 inbound seats per week—an increase of 39 per cent over two years ago. This is an astounding growth in international tourism numbers and one that will make a significant impact, together with our new airport and the Ghan in bringing tourists to South Australia.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Attorney-General release the written reply by Paul Rofe QC to the draft Kourakis report?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): My understanding is that there is a freedom of information request for that document. It was a preparatory document or work in progress—a response to a draft report published in a different final form. It is the wish, I understand, of the Office of the DPP and Mr Rofe himself that that document not be released. It will be determined according to normal freedom of information principles by a public servant acting independently in accordance with legislative criteria.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Enfield!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There may be more flights from Auckland, but that does not mean that the people coming are from Ork. The member for Enfield has the call.

COURTS, GUIDELINE SENTENCING

Mr RAU (Enfield): My question is also to the Attorney-General. What steps is the government taking to implement its policies on guideline sentencing?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Many members would be aware that last week a five judge panel of the Court of Criminal Appeal heard submissions about the sentence imposed on Jarred Damien Payne for causing the death of a nine-year-old girl, Abigail Ralph, by dangerous driving on South Road at O'Halloran Hill. The appeal was initiated by the Director of Public Prosecutions because, in his judgment, the sentence imposed in the District Court of imprisonment for three years with a non-parole period of 18 months was manifestly inadequate.

In filing the appeal, the Director also asked the Court of Criminal Appeal to establish sentencing guidelines pursuant to section 29(b) of the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988 as a guide to other courts determining sentences for offences of causing injury or death by negligent, reckless or dangerous driving. Members would be aware that section 29(b) of the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988 was inserted into the act by the current government to give the Court of Criminal Appeal the authority to establish such sentencing guidelines upon application of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Attorney-General, the Legal Services Commission or, indeed, by the court's own motion.

I was represented at the hearing last week by the Solicitor-General, Chris Kourakis QC. If members are interested, I would be more than happy to provide them with copies of the outline of arguments put on behalf of the government.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is out of order for the Attorney-General to respond to interjections.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Mr Speaker, I did not say a word.

The SPEAKER: I was helping you to avoid the temptation.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Anyway, I was offering members a copy of the submissions made on my behalf. Members may have noted from the media coverage of the hearings that the Victim Support Service and the Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service of South Australia were also represented at the hearings before the Court of Criminal Appeal. In the middle of April, I received correspondence from those organisations seeking financial support to allow them to engage lawyers to represent them in this quite historic hearing. I advise the house that a payment was made by the government to the Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service,

allowing it to appear, because, in my view, the first guideline sentence application to come before the court is clearly of significance, and the legislation refers to 'an organisation representing the interests of offenders'.

I referred the request for funding from the Victim Support Service to Michael O'Connell, the Victims of Crime Coordinator. Mr O'Connell, exercising his statutory discretion, granted funding to the Victim Support Service to brief counsel, who put submissions on behalf of that service as well as other victims organisations. Honourable members will be pleased to hear that this was not an excessive expenditure of the state's resources because all the lawyers who appeared for those organisations acted at Legal Services Commission rates. On behalf of the government, I thank them for their efforts.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to the Attorney-General. Were alterations made to the draft Kourakis report between the time it was first submitted to the office of the Attorney-General and its final publication? The Attorney-General stated publicly that the reason why Mr Rofe's response to the Kourakis report could not be released was that his response related to a draft report and not the final report.

The SPEAKER: Order! So that the chair can understand the question, does the member for Bragg refer to the Solicitor-General?

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct, sir, in the Kourakis report.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Yes, sir; and the work of the Solicitor-General was entirely the work of him and him alone.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a supplementary question. Were any of these alterations made at the suggestion of the Attorney-General or his office?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No, sir.

HUMAN SERVICES FINDER

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Health. How will the new internet based service directory allow the South Australian public to quickly locate health and other community services in their localities?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): Yesterday, I launched the human services finder, which provides detailed information on the human services provided by the government, community and private sectors. The finder contains details of more than 10 000 health and community services delivered by 2 200 providers from more than 2 500 sites across the state.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am having difficulty hearing the minister because of the noise coming from the government front bench.

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand the concern. I, too, am having trouble from the rumblings of the front bench near the Attorney-General. I do not know whether or not there are any grumpy-grumble beans involved, but the Minister for Health has the call.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Thank you, sir. As I was saying, the human services finder contains details of more than 10 000 health and community services delivered by 2 200 providers from more than 2 500 sites across the state. For instance, someone needing to find the nearest health centre or housing service can simply go onto the internet at

www.hsfinder.sa.gov.au and find a listing which provides the services address, telephone number, opening hours, public transport information and whether disabled access or language interpretation is available. The human services finder delivers on one of the aims of the Generational Health Review in that it provides accurate and timely information to assist people to access services. The finder will also assist service providers to guide members of the public to the most appropriate service to meet their specific needs and is freely available via the internet.

Those without direct access to the internet will be able to access it indirectly via various human services help lines, as well as via any service provider that has internet access. I must say that it was very pleasing to be able to launch this yesterday. It is an Australian first, in spite of the deputy leader's derisory comments. Of course, the deputy leader is always full of complaints when we know that he was never able to deliver on issues and matters such as these.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to the Attorney-General. What led to the Attorney-General's change to his level of support for the former Director of Public Prosecutions between 10 p.m. on Sunday 18 April and 5.30 a.m. the following day?

Members interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: No, he doesn't sleep. On the evening of 18 April, the Attorney-General said on radio to Father John Fleming:

I get on perfectly well with Paul Rofe. I've managed to maintain my confidence in him at a time when sections of the media were screaming out for me not to have confidence in him.

Less than 24 hours later, after a cabinet meeting, the Attorney declined to express his confidence in Mr Rofe when pressed on this issue during an interview with ABC radio—24 hours.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I think at Pembroke they did not teach the member for Bragg tenses. I suggest she study the tense in which I was speaking on Father John Fleming's program, and after question time I could, as a matter of technical grammar, identify the tense in which I was speaking.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: under standing order 98, we want an answer to the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That is a specious point of order. The Attorney-General is giving an answer to the question, in the kindest possible way. The Attorney has the call.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: In previous controversies about Mr Rofe's tenure of the job of the DPP, when even members of the opposition were howling at him, I had maintained confidence in him at that time, when the opposition was working closely with Graham Archer of the *Today Tonight* program to try to discredit Mr Rofe. I continued to express—

The SPEAKER: The Attorney-General is now straying from the question. The explanation he had given for the member for Bragg to assist her in understanding the tense of the terms used by him was entirely appropriate. All members of the house know, or they should know at least, that there is a point in time at which the sun rises; things change. The Hon. Attorney-General, if he has any further information.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes; so I had expressed my confidence in the DPP at that time. Throughout the time I have had the Kourakis report I have sought to be balanced in my assessment of Mr Paul Rofe's tenure as the Director of Public Prosecutions, to put before the public those matters in Mr Rofe's favour, of which the public should be mindful, and also the demerits as expressed in the Kourakis report and to summarise that report fairly.

AITKEN, Mr S.

Mr SNELLING (Playford): Has the Premier received submissions relating to the plea bargain in the Aitken case, and what action has he taken?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): On Wednesday 28 April I received a letter from the grief stricken mother of two young children who died when the Pajero their father was driving tumbled over a cliff on the South Eastern Freeway in January 2000. Firstly, I want to extend my sincere sympathy to Karen Chandler because a tragedy like this is every parent's worst nightmare. Ms Chandler's letter raised her concerns and misgivings about whether the justice system had dealt with the case against her former husband, Scott Aitken, appropriately, particularly given her concerns about the plea arrangements entered into by the office of the DPP and her former husband. I have raised this case directly with the Attorney-General and asked that he consider the matters raised by Ms Chandler and respond directly, and I have written to Ms Chandler to advise her that I have referred the matter to the Attorney-General.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will all members please switch off their mobile phones. That noise has devastating consequences for Hansard trying to record the proceedings here. What we hear on the amplification in the house is nothing compared to what staff supporting us have to hear in their earphones and, more particularly, it is simply quite out of order to have a mobile phone in the chamber switched on.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): Does the Attorney consider himself to be at variance with the Premier over the issue of whether the government should instruct the Director of Public Prosecutions to prosecute an individual case? During the 18 April talkback radio discussion between the Attorney and Father John Fleming the Attorney said, and I quote:

The government has never contemplated directing, under section 9 of the DPP Act, the DPP to prosecute someone he doesn't want to prosecute.

He went on to say:

I suppose there can be directions about individual cases. It's a possibility but it's just unthinkable in my mind. I would certainly never give such a direction.

Earlier in the day the Premier said that he would not hesitate to direct the DPP if the government believed this was in the public interest.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): As it happens, there is no discrepancy. However, I take the view that there are some authorities or discretions which the Attorney-General has that he should exercise without first seeking the endorsement of the Premier or the cabinet. I think there is a custom of doing that and I would not hesitate to do that if it were necessary; so, yes, on occasions there could be disagreements between me, as Attorney-General, and the

Premier and cabinet on how to exercise particular discretions. That is the right position.

However, in this instance, there is no discrepancy because the Premier was not turning his mind to whether he would instruct the DPP to prosecute a person whom the DPP does not want to prosecute. That was not in the Premier's mind. The Premier had in mind the common situation—the situation we have been debating ever since the Paul Nemer case—of whether it was appropriate for the Attorney-General to direct the Director of Public Prosecutions to appeal against a sentence that the DPP did not intend to appeal against, but which the Attorney-General thought should be appealed against on the grounds that it was manifestly inadequate.

EMPLOYMENT

Ms RANKINE (Wright): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What employment assistance measures are available in the local government areas of Salisbury, Playford and Gawler?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Wright for her question and acknowledge her long commitment to improving employment outcomes in her electorate. I know that she was present last week when I launched a very important package of employment programs in the northern suburbs. Yesterday the ANZ Bank released its April report on job advertisements, which showed a healthy rise of 6.7 per cent in South Australia. This compared to a slight decline nationally of 0.7 per cent. Over the year April 2003 to April 2004, newspaper job advertisements grew by 18 per cent in South Australia compared to 17 per cent growth nationally. This is good news and consistent with the state's very encouraging employment figures last month which showed South Australia's unemployment rate returning to its lowest level since monthly records began 26 years ago.

The April ABS labour force figures showed that the headline unemployment rate in South Australia had fallen by 0.8 percentage points in March to 6 per cent—more than double the national fall in unemployment of 0.3 percentage points. These positive indicators are very encouraging; however, there are areas where unemployment is higher than average. We want the unemployed people in these areas to have skills to take advantage of the excellent vacancy rates. This government will commit up to \$3.3 million over the next year in the northern metropolitan area to assist unemployed people to enter the work force. This is part of South Australia Works, a major new skills for work program that will assist thousands of disadvantaged job seekers to gain work skills.

The Northern Partnership, which is a collaboration between the state government and the region's three local councils and the Office for the North, has developed an employment and skills formation plan for the northern metropolitan area. Some of the excellent new programs which make up South Australia Works for the northern suburbs include projects that will recruit and train people for growing jobs in the aged care services including personal services for people in their homes and a community work bank which adds small parcels of work that are too small for a business to undertake a loan. This program will also train local people in operating a small business. Further, the projects will look at training unemployed people in grading, quality, preservation and presentation of packing vegetables from the Virginia market garden areas, and a pre-vocational metal

fabrication and mechanical engineering program designed to equip people to compete for jobs in advanced manufacturing.

There is also a very important Learn to Earn program, a 12 month pre-vocational program for young people. Participants will build and establish a rage cage, an outdoor multipurpose sports facility in the local community. We have direct case management and assistance for older unemployed workers through the Experience 40-plus program and an electric and refrigeration pre-vocational program for young indigenous people in trades where there are current skills shortages. Those who succeed in this program will be offered apprenticeships to continue. There have also been many initiatives to boost school retention in the region and to assist people who have missed out on TAFE places with alternative study options.

The government is putting in intense efforts to making sure that we are preparing local people for work through training, individual mentoring and matching their skills development with the work opportunities in the local region. This is part of a more focused training and employment strategy in the north. The Employment and Skills Formation Network, including local employers, government and community members, will help create ongoing employment programs to assist our unemployed and local businesses to meet their emerging work force needs.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): As a supplementary question, given that the minister has just used unemployment figures based on seasonal figures—which she did not actually acknowledge—yet the government very recently committed under the State Strategic Plan to use trend unemployment figures, can the minister tell us whether the government remains committed to the targets set in the State Strategic Plan or has already deviated from those targets?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I am very pleased to answer that question. Obviously it is important, as I think the leader would understand, that there is a bold commitment to employment and training in this state in the State Strategic Plan. That is the platform on which we are directing the programs, and some very innovative programs with case management, as I have just described in the northern region. One of the things that I think is important—and I have mentioned this to the leader before—is that we can swap statistics and numbers for each month, because the labour force figures—

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: On a point of order, sir, I thought my question was quite clear. Has the government now changed the target for employment in the State Strategic Plan?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The answer to that question is no. *Members interjecting:*

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I think it is important also to take up the other part of the question that the leader is asking about using seasonally adjusted figures as opposed to trend figures. This was the point that I think the leader was trying to make, albeit poorly, yesterday, when he was asking questions of the Premier. I want to say, as I have said to the leader and other members of the opposition in this chamber, that we can continue to swap numbers as long as we like. It was certainly a tradition that the previous government employed and is one that has been going for quite some years, as I understand it.

The thing that we do need to take into consideration is that we are working on ABS figures, and some concerns have been raised recently in a number of industries, particularly the retail industry but also other industries, about how those figures are put together. I remind the leader that the ABS itself in the most recent labour force briefing notes summary, of March 2004, notes in the analysis that seasonally adjusted labour force estimates are notoriously volatile on a month to month basis. Trend figures also—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Do you want me to answer this question or not? Trend figures which are also presented more accurately reflect underlying labour market conditions. I think that was part of the point that the leader was trying to make. However, the point that I make is that the ABS is now using concurrent seasonal adjustment to produce labour force estimates. This will result in monthly revisions to seasonally adjusted series instead of the previous annual readjustments. The point I am making is that, with the labour market statistics, even the ABS has announced that it will be looking again at how those figures are derived, because they are not very helpful.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I have a further supplementary question. Given the minister's previous answer outlining state government unemployment programs in three local government areas in the north of Adelaide, can the minister advise the house of what unemployment programs the state government is providing local government areas that the minister represents?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I thank the member for Davenport for his interest in these programs. We are presently looking at about 17 employment programs that are along the lines that I just described in the northern regions. SA Works is one of those major programs. As provided in a briefing for the member for Bragg, there are transition plans for each of those 17 regions. I am happy to provide them, but I do not have all 17 of them here. Examples include: SA Works, Regions at Work, Transitional Plan for the Whyalla Regional Development Board; SA Works, Flinders Ranges, Regions at Work, Port Pirie; and also SA Works, Regions at Work in the northern area. I have the City of Onkaparinga which is SA Works, and also one presently being worked at and which I briefly described, the Northern Partnership Agreement. In the western suburbs and in the north-west suburbs, work is being done to look at how we can address the skills, shortages and the needs, as we are doing in the other 17 regions.

SCHMIDT, Mr D.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): Why did the Attorney-General refer the case of Darren Schmidt to the Solicitor-General? Paragraph 61 of the Kourakis report states that the Schmidt case was referred to the Solicitor-General after the initial reference from the then attorney-general, Paul Holloway. Mr Kourakis criticised Mr Rofe's handling of that case in his report.

The SPEAKER: The question is directed to the Attorney-General, but it would be helpful, if the house and its members wish to be treated with the respect that should be accorded to them as representatives of their constituents, to equally refer to people discharging duties in public office by their title also.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Last year, as Attorney-General, I distinctly remember that a complaint was received from the investigating police officers

in the Schmidt case. It was conveyed through the Commissioner of Police to me, and I thought it was appropriate to refer it to the Solicitor-General.

Ms CHAPMAN: As a supplementary question, why then the Schmidt case, when other cases, including the plea bargaining case of Aitken, have not been referred to the Solicitor-General?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The Aitken case has only just arrived on my desk from the Premier. In due course I will determine how best to deal with it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Infrastructure might be keen to provide assistance, but let me reassure him that the Attorney does not need it.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The important thing with the Schmidt case is that I first sought an explanation from the Office of the DPP. As it was a case run by the DPP himself, it was appropriate to first get a response from him, which I obtained. As far as the Aitken case is concerned, I regard it as incumbent upon me, bearing in mind the independence of the Office of the DPP, to first get an explanation from that office of the Aitken case. Once I have seen that explanation, I will consider it.

Ms CHAPMAN: As a further supplementary question, if the basis upon which the referral of the Schmidt case was that the Attorney-General had a complaint about it, can the Attorney-General confirm whether he received a complaint about any other case during the period of the inquiry?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I will have this confirmed for the house but, as police minister, I was advised by the Police Commissioner that he had referred the Schmidt matter to Mr Kourakis. I will get that checked and confirm it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I made the point a little earlier in question time that, whilst we have more flights to Auckland, we are not dealing with the people from the Land of Ork, and I hope the opposition does not find any empathy with them.

ONESTEEL, DUST EMISSIONS

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What progress has been made in reducing the level of dust emissions from OneSteel's steelworks?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I thank the member for Giles for asking this question and I acknowledge her strong interest in the steelworks and its importance to her community, and her long association with this issue. Members might be aware of problems associated with red dust emanating from the OneSteel plant at Whyalla, and for some time OneSteel, the EPA, the government and the community have been negotiating an outcome which is both capable of ensuring that the plant continues and at the same time reducing the impact of the dust on the neighbourhood. Thankfully, we have made something of a breakthrough in recent times.

OneSteel has announced that it will relocate its crushing and screening operations to its iron ore mines at Iron Duke. This will take place over the next year at a cost to the company of \$10 million. The project is the first large capital project that was recommended by a dust reduction report

provided to the EPA in October 2003. The EPA expects the project will lead to a significant reduction in the amount of dust measured in the community adjacent to the Whyalla steelworks. It is a positive first step in a four-year dust reduction plan. The EPA is drafting licence conditions that will require OneSteel to achieve the national standard in dust emissions by the year 2008.

Other initiatives agreed to by OneSteel to reduce dust emissions include the following: covering stockpiles of coal dust with newspaper mache; increasing the moisture content in the ore that is processed at the plant (this will dampen the dust that lifts off the trains as they pass the city); and using new or modified carriages to transport the ore. That is quite a commitment to improvements. The government will continue to closely monitor progress being made by OneSteel and the EPA to improve the environment for Whyalla residents.

GAMING MACHINES

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Gambling. Why did the government reject offers by the Australian Hotels Association for a combined industry and concerned sector package of gambling reforms which not only included a staged reduction in the number of poker machines but also the doubling of industry funds for counselling services to \$3 million and a ban on all media advertising of poker machines? The Australian Hotels Association put this offer to the former minister and the new minister and also the Premier's chief of staff earlier this year.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Gambling): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Later today I will introduce two bills to the parliament and have a chance to speak about those in more detail. Since becoming Minister for Gambling I have undertaken a range of discussions with major stakeholders (as did my predecessor, the member for Cheltenham) about an important piece of reform legislation, which is being backed by the Premier. The Premier has said to both the former minister and myself, the government and the community of South Australia that we must do something about harm minimisation—and that is just what the government is going to do.

I have had a range of discussions. Since becoming minister I have met with the hotels association on three separate occasions: I have also met with the clubs association and the welfare sector. All of those discussions have been very worthwhile. The government is coming forward with a piece of legislation which adopts all of the recommendations of the IGA.

Some of the detail that the leader talks about I will certainly check, but we should not forget that this by itself is an important piece of legislation. However, the other things that go with it, such as the codes of practice introduced last Friday, are very important. The legislation which ultimately I took through the parliament, but which was largely the work of the previous minister, was very important. The advertising, the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund and the education program we have in schools as a package are all very important.

The other thing which is still to be discussed and which the IGA has talked about is having discussions in regard to a second tranche with respect to the codes of practice. All of this is before us and we look forward to the opposition supporting this legislation.

EVOLVE HIGH BEAM FESTIVAL

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Disability. How does the Evolve High Beam Festival, staged by the disability organisation Arts in Action, promote the art of South Australians with a disability?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Disability): I thank the honourable member for her question and acknowledge her powerful advocacy on behalf of disability groups in South Australia. The High Beam Festival is a biennial international arts festival; it is an unusual festival in that it picks up on the capacities and culture of disability and locates it in an arts format. It is a mixture of people with and without disabilities and is a celebration of art and culture in that community. It is at times very confronting, but it is an amazing cultural festival, and we as a government have been pleased to support it. It has been running for some years now and has received some international acclaim.

It is fair to say that the festival has not received the acknowledgment that it deserves in South Australia. It is better known internationally because it is the largest festival of its type in the Southern Hemisphere and one of a unique number of these festivals internationally. It does a number of things: it combines all the various forms of arts together and raises community awareness about disability, and it presents artistic achievements of disabled people, some of which are quite spectacular. It also provides opportunities at a community level for people to work in a very constructive way to promote opportunities for disabled people to participate in the arts.

The idea of enjoying an arts experience is often a neglected element of health and wellbeing, and it is something that the disabled community in South Australia have taken to. It has received strong support from a peak body called Arts in Action. We have been very pleased to get behind it. We also announced a small grant to assist the organisation that runs this event to document it, record it and to promote it internationally.

A large number of international and interstate visitors participate in this event. It runs throughout the week, and the shadow minister for disability accompanied me to a launch yesterday evening and will be going with me to another event tomorrow relating to this festival. I encourage all members to familiarise themselves with the program and to support it.

GAMING MACHINES

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Treasurer provide to all members, prior to the bill's being debated, a full briefing on the impact that the reduction in the number of poker machine numbers in South Australia will have on the state's revenue? In response to a question on the impact on revenue on 17 February this year, the Treasurer told the house, 'We will receive further advice closer to the forthcoming budget on what reductions in tax revenue in the forward estimates would be appropriate.'

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I will be happy to ensure that the house is adequately and appropriately briefed on this matter closer to the debate on the bill and once we have dealt with the budget.

WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. What action has the government taken

to address the nationally identified workplace hazard of falls from heights on construction sites?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I struggled to hear the member for Colton and now wish, in any case, to hear the Minister for Industrial Relations' response. The debate in which the member for Davenport and the Deputy Premier seek to engage is more appropriate to grievance and is certainly highly disorderly in question time. The Minister for Industrial Relations.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations): Thank you, sir. I thank the member for Colton for his important question. I know he has a strong commitment to workplace health and safety for all South Australians. Falling from heights has been identified by Australia's heads of workplace safety authorities as an urgent problem requiring a nationally coordinated approach in the construction industry. The government is committed to reducing the unacceptably high toll of workplace injury, death and disease. Through the allocation of an additional \$2.5 million in this year's financial budget and an additional \$3.5 million thereafter, South Australia is in a better position to address these issues. I am pleased to be able to report that South Australia is part of a joint Australian and New Zealand blitz targeting the biggest killer on construction sites: falls from heights.

This will be the first time that all state and territory workplace safety authorities have carried out a coordinated compliance campaign in the construction industry. Particular attention will be paid to finish, fit-out and building services installation work, areas that account for a large proportion of the fall-related injuries suffered by construction workers each year. During the campaign, inspectors will check that builders and subcontractors have identified the fall hazards at their sites and have put the necessary measures in place to prevent workers from falling. Inspectors will distribute guidance material to help employers maintain the site controls needed to effectively manage height safety, and they will be taking appropriate compliance and enforcement action wherever dangerous practices are found or appropriate height safety standards are not being met. Inspectors will also be on the lookout for outstanding examples of best practice and innovative solutions to fall hazards, so these ideas can be promoted throughout the industry.

The government has demonstrated the importance it places on safer workplaces by providing the biggest ever single funding boost to the state's occupational health and safety services. The Rann Labor government has funded a 50 per cent increase in the number of inspectors, which is a dramatic boost to South Australia's ability to address workplace safety hazards. We will continue to work to ensure that more South Australians go home from work safe and well.

The SPEAKER: The minister's reply, fulsome as it was, ought not to contain reference to any member by their personal name, the Premier included.

AUSTRALIAN PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister For Industrial Relations explain to the house why the Executive Director of the Australian Physiotherapy Association has written to South Australian branch members stating that either WorkCover or the minister misled the association about progress of the association's application for an increase in its WorkCover fee and service package,

which had been submitted 18 months earlier? In response to a question on 24 March this year, the minister stated that documentation related to the package had been sent back to WorkCover. However, the Executive Director subsequently wrote to his members about the minister's response, stating:

It would seem that either WorkCover lied to us about there being no outstanding matters impeding the Minister acting on this matter or the Minister misled Parliament.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations): That is certainly not the case. I am broadly aware of this issue and, to the best of my knowledge, earlier this year, documentation required to progress this issue was provided to my office from WorkCover. I understand that after the documentation was examined it was sent back to WorkCover for further information about the proposal and, as I understand, a revised document was received by my office just recently. These matters are being progressed but, of course, we must carefully assess the proposals that are put to us to ensure that the right decisions are made, and that is being done.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have a supplementary question. Given the long delay of 18 months in dealing with this matter, will the minister undertake to investigate what WorkCover actually told the President of the APA?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I am happy to undertake to do that because I think that both the Leader of the Opposition and I would like this to be brought to a head and concluded as soon as possible. I do not think we are in dispute on that issue, and I am certainly happy to undertake that. However, as I said, this is being progressed. The documentation has been provided to my office and, if it does not meet the quality that it should, it is our responsibility to get it right, and that is what we are doing.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): Will the Treasurer confirm that the GST bonus to South Australia amounts to \$268 million; and, if he will not, will he reveal to his ministers and the parliament what the GST bonus is?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I am more than happy to provide that information to the honourable member when the budget is brought down in a couple of weeks' time.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I have a supplementary question. Is the Treasurer advising the house that he does not know that figure now?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am advising the house that I do not have that exact figure at hand; you are absolutely correct, because—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The new shadow minister for finance is getting fired up. They do not have the courage to give the member for Davenport the treasury portfolio because Rob will not let it go, but they make him the shadow minister for finance, so we will see a little bit of a bullish approach by the member for Davenport. I have made it clear that the state is in receipt of a larger quantum of GST than was originally envisaged. We will await the federal budget to be brought down in a week's time and, when the federal budget comes down then, it will provide across the forward estimate period

the expected allocation to our state from increased GST revenue. It would be appropriate to wait until next Tuesday.

The interesting point and one of the funniest things I have heard in this house for a long time was from the shadow minister for finance last night, when he said in a grievance that we should cut taxes. I said, 'Okay, so why should he not ask people such as his colleague the shadow police minister and others to stop telling us how to spend money?' Then he said, 'Oh, no, you can spend money and cut taxes.' Then I said—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is my recollection, I stand to be corrected, but the discipline will be—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, I am happy to correct it now. If you did not say it, you did not say it. I will say that if members opposite want taxes cut, if they want GST revenue to be used to reduce taxes, the discipline on the new shadow minister for finance is to tell his colleagues to stop lecturing us on what to spend money, because the member for Finnis wants more money to be spent and he wants taxes cut; and he cannot say whether he wants—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has well and truly strayed across the fence and is now in the paddock called debate. The question warrants not the Treasurer's being able eloquently to demolish his opposition but rather his providing information to the chamber. The opportunity for debate occurs under standing orders in Orders of the Day at other times.

PROPERTY TAXES

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer confirm that increased property taxes such as stamp duty and land taxes have contributed to a windfall of \$386 million since Labor took office—and you do not have to wait for the federal budget.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I am again happy to advise the house that I do not have that exact figure in front of me—and let us hear it: 'Oh why don't you, why don't you'—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not come into the house with all those—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am not as clever as the member for Hartley, the member for MacKillop or the shadow minister for finance. I am happy to admit that I just do not have those exact figures right in front of me. However, what I will say is quite simple: yes, we have received windfall gains from property taxes, as has every government in Australia. With those windfalls, we have allocated increased money to health, policing and child protection. Right across government, we have expanded outlays significantly, but we have done it prudently to ensure that we have a buffer for a downturn.

If we adopted the spending policies of members opposite, this state would be broke. Thankfully, I can resist the pressures of members opposite (and a few on this side, I might add) to ensure that we keep our spending measured; that is, increasing outlays where we can by keeping a little in reserve to prepare for a tapering off of activity. My challenge to members opposite is simply this—

The SPEAKER: The question was about property taxes.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: And that was a challenge, sir. The challenge on property taxes is this: with every housing and land value boom, there must obviously be a decline and a flattening, and a return to the norm.

Ms Rankine: This is happening already.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Exactly. As one of my colleagues said, this is happening around the nation already. We are forecasting a reduction in housing activity in the next financial year. That is prudent. You must adjust your outlays accordingly. If I had listened to members opposite and spent that windfall, we would be locking our state into a financial disaster because, if members opposite do not care about a AAA credit rating or about good budget management, that is the policy that they can take to the next election. We do; we have; and we are delivering.

Mr SCALZI: I have a supplementary question. Will the Treasurer support the opposition's call, and that of the 400 people who attended the meeting on 11 February from the Land Tax Reform Association, for relief for home buyers and tax relief in the forthcoming budget?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Again, I am not sure what the opposition has committed itself to on land tax because they highlight an issue and give us all the rhetoric, but they do not actually say what they are doing. I stand to be corrected, but I do not recall the opposition saying that it will cut land tax; perhaps it will. We will have to wait until the budget. I apologise to the member for Davenport if I did not get it correct before when I referred to his *Hansard* last night. However, if you want to talk about land tax cuts, explain how you are going to pay for them. The opposition must explain how it will pay for it, because you cannot cut a tax unless you are prepared to do a number of things.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I must answer this, because windfall gains from property taxes—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will not answer interjections. The question is about property taxes, and it comes from the member for Hartley.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. Implicit in the question from the member for Hartley is that we should spend the windfall gain on tax cuts.

The SPEAKER: Order! Can I help the Treasurer? On a previous occasion it was pointed out that the Treasurer should not attempt to understand if there is any inference in the inquiry made by another honourable member. In simpler terms, the Treasurer should not attempt to read minds. There may be difficulty in any one of a number of ways of attempting to read minds—there has to be a mind in the first instance, of course. I therefore direct the Treasurer's attention to the explicit question and, if there is no further information to provide in response to that explicit question, another honourable member may wish to ask a question. The member for Davenport has the call.

STAMP DUTY

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): Does the Treasurer think it is fair that in South Australia when you buy a \$246 000 house you pay up to \$60 000 more in interest repayments over the term of the loan due to the stamp duty charges in South Australia compared to buying the same house in Queensland?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I do not know whether the figures quoted by the honourable member are

correct. They sound awfully large numbers. I might actually get that modelling run past. There is an argument now on the front bench. There is a blue going on: the member for Bright and the member for Davenport. I will get those numbers checked. But I find it ironic to hear a question like that coming from the member who gave us the emergency services levy. He introduced a new tax. The member for Davenport introduced a new tax. He is the tax man. The member for Davenport is the tax man of this state. He brought in a new property-based tax. That family he referred to would be paying an emergency services levy on the value of their property for every year they own the property, and that is courtesy of the shadow finance minister.

I say to the shadow minister: you are going to have to get your act together. You cannot accuse me of something when you are the architect. The member for Davenport is the architect of a brand new property-based tax, the Iain Evans emergency services levy, which was brought to you by him. The member for Davenport has no credibility on tax.

Mr SCALZI: I rise on a point of order, sir. The Treasurer has just referred to the member for Davenport by his Christian name, and it is unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear the instance in which—
Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson is out of order. The member for Mawson is highly disorderly. Can I say to the member for Hartley that the cacophony that followed the final question in question time had me believing that I had already called on the grievance debate. However, I could not hear what anyone was saying, if anyone was saying anything that was comprehensible. If the Treasurer did refer to the honourable member for Davenport by his name, the Treasurer is out of order and he well knows it.

BIOSCIENCE INCUBATOR

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Transport): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I would like to inform the house that the state government will invest \$9 million to help build Australia's first dedicated bioscience business incubator facility at Thebarton. The incubator will be built at the Thebarton Bioscience Precinct to support start-up bioscience companies, as well as helping to attract private investment funding. The incubator will include a specialised laboratory and office complex and offer expert business services through the state's peak biotechnology body, Bio Innovation SA. The new facility will help define Adelaide as the bioscience start-up capital of Australia and will be the first business incubator nationally to be specifically dedicated to the bioscience industry.

This initiative sends a clear message to bioscience companies that South Australia is the place for bioscience commercialisation. Experience shows that incubators provide start-up companies with opportunities for fast growth and strong economic returns. This finding was reinforced by Dr Maire Smith, the Adelaide Thinker in Residence who recommended the establishment of an incubator at Thebarton, citing its benefits in enticing venture capital, encouraging an entrepreneurial culture, and job creation in the bioscience

sector. South Australia already has an excellent reputation in terms of its ability to support budding companies, with Bio Innovation SA helping to establish 25 new companies in less than three years in South Australia. It is the fastest rate of new company growth in Australia.

The \$9 million allocation will help finance the construction of the facility which will be leased to early-stage bioscience companies with potential for strong growth. This supports the government's commitment last year to extend the Thebarton precinct to seven hectares, at a total cost of \$6 million. The precinct now includes eight commercial medical bioscience companies, which employ more than 300 people and which are collocated in 11 000 square metres of new laboratory, office and manufacturing facilities. This investment commitment follows the recent state government opening of the Plant Genomics Centre building, a \$9.2 million world-class research and development centre for Adelaide's bioscience industry. Plans for the construction of the incubator facility are expected to be finalised in the coming months.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

EVOLVE HIGH BEAM FESTIVAL

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): It is my pleasure to have the opportunity to address this house twice in two days on a grievance. Again, I rise to draw the attention of the house to a very positive issue that was mentioned by the Minister for Disability in response to a question earlier today. As the minister indicated, last night he and I attended the launch of the Evolve High Beam Festival 2004—indeed, the minister launched it. I thought it a good idea to let the house know a little bit more about it than the minister had time to do in question time. It is on for seven days and it continues until 9 May, and it is for everybody. It is centred on art works and artistic performance and the like by people with a disability, but it also involves family, friends and artists without a disability working in collaboration. I do not think it could be better expressed than what is said in the beginning of the program, that is:

Find out how the experience of disability can influence one's world view and the art that artists make!

It is a wide-reaching and varied program that is on over the next few days. Certainly, some of the musical presentations of last night were quite insightful and included a trio of blind performers singing songs which makes one think about how they experience the world in quite a different way without knowing colour, light and so on, but understanding a whole lot of other things about kindness and hope.

The festival aims to have a huge mix of everything from visual art through to performance, debate, workshops, dance, theatre, music and comedy. To give you an idea of the range of things that are included, there is, for example, a performance by the Big Country Choir. The choir combines the Tutti Ensemble, the Holdfast Bay Concert Band and quite a number of other people, with and without a disability, from places such as Clare, Balaclava, the Barossa and Wallaroo. Among other things, they will be performing at the High Beam Awards for literature and music which form part of the festival. There is also an event known as Somersault, which the minister and I will hopefully attend on Thursday. That is about installation and transforming places of the environment

into places of the imagination. I will be interested to see how that evolves on Thursday.

The nature of evolving is simply that it is hoped that, through this festival, people with and without disability will evolve in their understanding of the world and their enjoyment of and education in the arts. It is often overlooked that people with a disability have just as much need for culture and the arts as anyone else in the community, and they often find different ways of expressing that to others. Another item is *Confessions of a Blind Trainspotter*. A chap by the name of Jeff Usher will present the story of his life, his blindness, his music and trains. A number of members are familiar with Quentin Kenihan, who has been a well-known figure around Adelaide for a long time, and he was at the launch last night. Quentin is presenting a photographic documentation of the environments around Adelaide known as *My Town, My Level*, which is designed to convey the city of Adelaide from his perspective rather than that to which we are accustomed.

To give members some idea of the other musical items that are included, there is another item by the same Jeff Usher who does the train-spotting performance. He is a jazz player and performer and will perform at the Nexus Cabaret Space Theatre on 9 May, which is next Sunday. There will also be *Circles*, presented by the Tutti Ensemble on 7 and 8 May at The X Space. In terms of the visual arts, there is an item called *Too Many Legs*, a new body of work that enables the various influences of philosophy, history and psychology to inform the art work.

Time expired.

HOWE, Mr P.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): Motor neurone disease is the name given to a group of related diseases affecting motor neurones in the brain and spinal cord. Motor neurones are the nerve cells along which the brain sends instructions in the form of electrical impulses to muscles. Degeneration of motor neurones results in progressive weakness. Also, muscle wasting occurs, as the muscles have lost their nerve supply. The disease usually presents in one of three ways, depending on which motor neurones are predominantly affected and, as the disease progresses, symptoms may overlap.

Precise figures for the incidence of the disease are still uncertain, although estimates are around two per 100 000 in any one year. The number of people with motor neurone disease at any one time is five to 10 per 100 000. In a small proportion of cases (about 5 per cent), there is a familial pattern in which members of the family through several generations are affected. Genes involved in some cases of familial MND were recently discovered, but most cases, however, are sporadic and do not appear to have hereditary elements.

MND is not contagious and the cause is not yet known, but a great deal of research work is being carried out on it. Encouraging advances are being made in understanding both the disease processes and the way in which motor neurones function. Research is being undertaken in many scientific fields, including genetics, epidemiology, metabolic and cellular biology, and biochemistry. In South Australia, also, considerable research is being carried out in the neurosciences, and South Australia is part of a national program using donated brain tissue for microbiological research. The onset is gradual, and in the early stages of MND the disease symptoms are slight. This insidious condition affects each

individual differently with respect to initial symptoms and the rate and pattern of the progress of the illness.

The work of the Motor Neurone Disease Association in South Australia is very important, and I became aware of its commitment because a friend whom I admired became ill with motor neurone disease last year. This extraordinary person showed the same passion and courage in his illness as he did in his remarkable life. Peter Howe was known to several honourable members, and I first met him in a car park, where he berated me because of the advertising in the motor registration office in Modbury. While he had already raised the matter with the Hon. Di Laidlaw, the then minister, he wanted to let me know what he felt and asked me what I, too, was going to do about it.

Thus began our acquaintance and, over time, working at polling booths at various state and federal elections, I realised the depth of Peter's feelings about the importance of politics in people's lives. He had a love of magic and practical jokes and a wonderful sense of humour which came through on his real estate sign boards around the area, as well as in the now famous *Big Pete Colouring Book*, *Make Big Pete* (dot to dot) and *Find Big Pete*, which was a sort of 'where's Wally'. He became an important link for my constituents looking for rental properties (often, those who were disadvantaged and on fixed low incomes), and his work in that regard was highly valued. He was a great communicator and a person with a big heart.

Through Pete I was privileged to meet his immediate family—his lovely wife Gina and his son Hugo Sebastien Stamford Howe, who was born in January 1995. Pete's requiem, at Saint Ignatius Church at Norwood on 13 April, allowed me to meet other members of his family (his brother Greg and wife Margaret Byrnes and their family; and Pete's parents-in-laws, Arsta and Vladas Lazauskas, who are here today). I also learnt how much he loved his close and loving family and how loyal he was to his many friends.

A man's life cannot possibly be explored in a few words here today or fully appreciated in the few years in which I knew him. However, my close observance of his struggle with motor neurone disease reinforced my initial thoughts of this wonderful man. He was cared for by doctors who were also his personal friends—Roman Nowosilsky and Darryl Watson—and doctors at the Repat Hospital. He had great support from Margaret Patterson and her colleagues at the Motor Neurone Disease Association of South Australia.

Peter is no doubt with his parents Allan and Veronica and his beautiful sister Louise and he will be sadly missed and loved always by his family and legion of friends, to whom must go thanks for all their support and love through his very unique and special life.

HOSPITALS, FUNDING

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Members would be aware that yesterday we saw a key article in *The Advertiser* headlined 'Rural health cuts hit city hospital waiting lists'. There pictured was the Wallaroo Hospital Board Chairman, Graham Wearn, indicating that the health system is under pressure. Graham Wearn is a constituent of mine and chairman of what I am pleased to say is one of my local hospitals. Graham certainly was correct when he said that the health system was under pressure. The key reason for the pressure is that funding increases have not occurred in regional hospitals as they should have and, in particular, they have not occurred

in the case of the Northern Yorke Peninsula Health Services, which includes Wallaroo Hospital.

In fact, I was very disappointed to hear the minister say on, I think, 5CK this morning words to the effect that she was surprised that Wallaroo Hospital had cut elective surgery because, she said, health funding for the Wakefield region increased this year by more than 5 per cent and that it is up to regional authorities to distribute that money. In the case of Wallaroo Hospital, according to the hospital staff who oversee the finances, there was a less than 1 per cent funding increase. In other words, funding went back considerably, because everyone would know that there are such things as increases for salaries. There are also other pressures of increasing health costs and, if you get less than 1 per cent, you are going backwards; and unfortunately that happened at Wallaroo.

Earlier this year I highlighted to this house that Wallaroo will no longer conduct joint surgery at the hospital. In other words, you cannot have hip or knee replacements there, and this has meant that people on the waiting list at Wallaroo are now being sent to Adelaide and, whilst in most cases they were getting close to their operations at Wallaroo, they are still waiting months later to go to Adelaide. That is what *The Advertiser* headline was referring to: that city hospital waiting lists are continuing to blow out because surgery is not being undertaken in regional hospitals.

Further, recently the Wallaroo Hospital announced that it was having to cut elective surgery for another four week period over Easter, which came on top of a four week period over Christmas. So, for eight weeks in the past few months we have not been able to have ordinary elective surgery—over and above the joint replacement surgery. This is certainly becoming a hot issue in my area.

I have on two occasions presented petitions containing well over 2 000 signatures. I thank the Lions Club of Wallaroo, which was instrumental in distributing a petition calling for reinstatement of joint replacement and other elective surgery. I hope the government will take notice of the concern that exist in the area at present.

Additionally, heartache is being caused to people who are in pain as a result of having to wait an extended period of time to have this surgery undertaken, and this is putting enormous pressure back on to the city hospitals. The former Liberal Government made very clear that it sought to take surgery back to the regional areas—as close as possible to the community. This government seems to have reversed that policy.

The budget is coming up shortly, and I call on the minister and the government to make urgent extra significant funds available to Wallaroo and all regional hospitals to catch up on this situation so that joint surgery and ordinary elective surgery can continue as it should be continuing and increasing. Our population is increasing, and surely our hospital and health facilities should be increasing in equal proportion. At this stage we are going backwards, and this government has not shown the responsible attitude for which I had hoped.

REAL ESTATE MARKET

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): On two recent occasions, I have used the grievance debate to comment on the overvalued state of the real estate market and the consequences, particularly for small business, of deflation in housing asset values. As most members would be aware, the residential real estate market has now topped and in Melbourne and Sydney is in

decline. Recently, I warned that this decline could be of the order of up to 30 per cent. Interestingly, an International Monetary Fund study of housing price booms and busts in 14 industrialised countries since 1970 came to a similar conclusion. The study found that, in 40 per cent of those cases where housing prices have increased by more than 50 per cent, busts were of the order of 30 per cent or more.

For Australia, this would involve the destruction of wealth equivalent to over 100 percentage points of disposable income and a negative consumption shock to the economy of the order of 4 per cent of GDP. This is almost twice the relative destruction of wealth that occurred in the United States following its equity crash. Of further concern is that the IMF study suggests that housing price busts generally last four years, which is twice as long as equity price busts.

The study also found that housing price busts tend to have a very much stronger negative influence on consumption and have a stronger and quicker effect on the banking system than similar busts in the equity market. The IMF study points to the disastrous impact of the collapse of the real estate boom in Japan on that country's economic health. The Japanese economy is still mired in deflation 15 years after its 1989 asset price bust. Members may well recall the dramatic plunge in Tokyo real estate values and the phenomena of negative equity that emerged.

Similarly, the US has experienced very modest recovery following its 2000 equity price crash. The reason for the severity of the impact of the Japanese and US equity crashes lies not only in the events themselves but also in the slow response of policy makers. As Australia enters a period of declining real estate values, the question to be asked is: how far the fall and how rapid? Will it run to nearly 30 per cent, and how quickly will this slump or crash occur?

Irrespective of the answer, it would be prudent for all governments to commence in unison the development of an aggressive policy response to a real estate bust. The commonwealth would obviously be the lead player, putting into play a stimulatory economic package at the national level, if required. However, each of the state governments should be prepared to play a complementary role with stimulatory packages of their own. The planning should already be under way.

Members will probably recall the slow emergence of the last major recession faced by this country. Month by month, the unemployment figures rose as hundreds of thousands of Australians were thrown out of work. Month by month, the community awaited a firm policy response from the federal government. When the response finally eventuated, it was generally deemed to be too little too late. This recession could have been foreshortened by several years and its unemployment impact diminished by several hundred thousand if a rapid policy response had been forthcoming. A dramatic real estate slump may not occur, but a prepared federal and state response would, however, be a prudent step.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I rise today to talk about the Occupational Therapists Association and, in particular, driver assessment and rehabilitation services. This service is provided to many people and often as a result of either a road crash or when a person suffers a stroke or some other physical disability from which they are able to make a recovery. Before they go back onto the road they need to undertake an assessment of their driving capabilities, ensure

that they can go back onto the road with confidence and that they can react to the varying conditions which exist while driving along our highways and in the metropolitan area.

I met with two people from the Occupational Therapists Association, who expressed some concern that there was a possibility that funding to their association, and therefore to this particular service, might not continue. Currently between six and eight occupational therapists are available in South Australia who are driver trained and able to deliver those services to people undergoing rehabilitation or to people who find themselves in need of that assessment. I compare that to 70 such officers in Victoria who undertake the same job as the occupational therapists in South Australia.

Members have only to do some very quick figures to know that Victoria's population is not 10 times that of South Australia's, so on a per capita basis that means that there are many more occupational therapists able to deliver a very needed service to the community.

One of the other things that was discussed was the fact that these services are available only in the metropolitan area because there are not enough occupational therapists to deliver the service to country people. For instance, if you or one of your family is unfortunate enough to have a stroke and you live in the country and you wish to undertake an assessment or need some help in gaining your confidence to get back on the road, that help is not available. You would have to come to the metropolitan area to undertake this service, and you would also have to pay for it.

The fact is that this issue will not go away. As the age profile of South Australia gradually rises as baby boomers reach their 60s and 70s, no doubt the demand for this particular service will increase over the next five years or so. In Victoria, a course—the certificate of driver assessment—can be undertaken at the La Trobe University. The University of South Australia is currently emulating this model through its professional certificate of driver assessment, and the hope of the occupational therapists is that, in five years' time, increased access is available to the community via this strategy.

However, it does require the government to get behind this service. At the moment, the question is whether the people who are employed in it will be subsumed into Transport SA or whether they will continue to work in collaboration with Transport SA but at arm's length—and to me that would seem to be the best way to go. We spoke only a few months ago about elderly drivers and the provision of medical certificates and the Registrar of Motor Vehicles having the ability to suspend a person's driver's licence because of some medical condition. The occupational therapists perform a very valuable service in getting those very people back on the road, if they are able.

Time expired.

COMMUNITY CABINET MEETING

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is good to see you in the chair again. Can I say, it warms my heart. Today I first thank the Premier and his cabinet for holding a community cabinet meeting within my electorate a few weeks ago. It was extremely well attended with over 500 people turning up to the event. It was held at the Thebarton Senior College. Local communities and local activists came to speak to their elected representatives one on one. The cabinet had a cabinet meeting in the morning at the West Torrens council chambers, where it later received

a submission from the West Torrens council about certain issues. I understand that some of the issues that the council addressed were stormwater management, traffic issues, a form of waste disposal that it is worried about, cleaning up the Port River outlet and a number of local issues.

During the day, the Premier went to Cowandilla Primary School—which is in the electorate of my very good friend, the member for Ashford, just around the corner from where I grew up—where he planted some trees and encouraged young people to get involved in the Premier's Trees for Life program. The Minister for Emergency Services and I attended the Brooklyn Park Fire Station, where we met with the local fires and ambulance officers and discussed their conditions. The minister was on hand to talk about any concerns they might have had. The Minister for Education visited a number of schools in the electorate, and I heard that was very fruitful. The Treasurer visited local communities within my electorate who are concerned about stamp duty and taxation issues. Overall, the response was fundamentally positive.

I was surprised at the level of interest in the community cabinet. It was extremely well attended. It is my understanding it has been the highest—

The Hon. M.J. Wright: Record number.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: A record number of people attended the community cabinet. A number of questions were put quite frankly to the cabinet and a lot of questions were asked. It was extremely well catered for by the Thebarton Greek Senior Citizens' Association, who cooked a barbecue for us and, of course, I wish to thank the staff in the Office of the Premier and Cabinet who made it all possible and who did all that hard work making sure that local residents could voice their concerns.

What interested me most was the level of activism amongst local residents who take a very keen interest in their local communities. Questions ranged from abolishing plastic bags to no nuclear waste dumps in South Australia to the Premier's fight on law and order and bikie gangs. Questions were asked about the Bakewell Bridge and the upgrade of that bridge, which the government has committed \$30 million to, and residents quite rightly wanted to be consulted on that, and the government gave assurances that they would be. Overall, the community was very grateful for their attendance, as was I. As I said at the community forum, it is important that residents have the chance to meet the decision makers one on one. The interesting thing about these community cabinets is that it is not just the ministers and their political staff who attend, but it is also the CEOs, the people who implement the policy decisions, and they are able to hear first hand the local residents' concerns and give quite blunt answers to their questions.

I found it very informative. Some of the questions came from children as young as eight or nine years old who prepared questions in school earlier that day to ask their local representatives and their ministers. I can say that South Australia's future is in good hands, given some of the questions that we were asked by a lot of the younger South Australians who were in attendance. They showed concern for our environment, our community, our finances and our law and order programs. I think the Premier is doing an excellent job getting out there and meeting local communities, taking his cabinet and his government to the people, and doing what Mark Latham calls 'politics in the raw', democracy—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The Premier's. I am a very proud member of the government.
Time expired.

SCHMIDT, Mr D.

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

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: During question time I undertook to clarify matters relating to the referral of the Schmidt matter, after questions raised by the member for Bragg, to assure the member for Bragg and members opposite that that was the matter referred to by the Police Commissioner.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will tell you what happened. The Police Commissioner was concerned about matters relating to the Schmidt case, and the Police Commissioner wrote to the Attorney-General and pointed out that there was no established process for dealing with these matters at this particular time; and, as it involved matters relating to the DPP and it was a serious matter, he did not feel that it was appropriate to refer it directly to the DPP's office. Accordingly, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Justice, Kym Kelly, advised that the matter be referred to the Attorney-General, which the Commissioner for Police then did. The Attorney, as he advised the house, quite correctly referred the matter to the Solicitor-General.

I said in my answer that the matter was, from my recollection, sent to Mr Kourakis. In fact, the Attorney's account of the situation was correct. I offer my apology to the Attorney, because I did not hear his earlier answer that the matter had come from the Police Commissioner. I had assumed from the questions from members opposite that there was a suggestion that the Attorney had gratuitously referred that matter. I wanted to ensure that the house knew that it was actually a matter that arose from a concern held by the Police Commissioner.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I did not hear it. That was a mistake—I did not hear the Attorney's answer. I apologise to the Attorney and wanted to clarify the matter for members.

**CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT AND
PALLIATIVE CARE (PRESCRIBED FORMS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

**GAMING MACHINES (MISCELLANEOUS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Gambling) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Gaming Machines Act 1992. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This is an historic piece of legislation which the government has introduced and which is to put in place all the recommendations that have been made by the Independent Gambling

Authority. The main part of the legislation relates to the removal of 3 000 machines from the system. The Independent Gambling Authority has recommended to government that not only should we have less machines in the system if we are to be serious about problem gambling but also we need to have fewer venues.

The Premier has come out in strong support of the recommendations of the Independent Gambling Authority, because he knows, just as we know, that if we are going to have an impact on harm minimisation it is important to take account not only of this particular issue—which, of course, is important in its own right—but also a range of other measures that have already been put in place by this government. Some of those include the codes of practice that came into operation last Friday; the family protection orders legislation which recently went through the parliament; the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund which is in place; and the Dicey Dealings educational program which is in schools. So, we need to look at this as part of a package.

The Independent Gambling Authority—an independent statutory authority—has said that it is of the strong view that this, coupled with other measures, will make a difference to problem gambling. The government has come forward with this legislation, which is all about taking 3 000 machines out of the system and—as the Independent Gambling Authority has recommended to government—we will have fewer venues. The Independent Gambling Authority makes the strong argument that with fewer venues we will reduce problem gambling.

Obviously, there are other elements to the bill that are important in their own right. I will not speak for a long time today, nor will I go into all the detail. However, one important concept which I would like to draw to the attention of the house is that a very strong case was made by the clubs sector to the IGA to pick up its recommendation with respect to Club One. Club One would be a not-for-profit organisation that would be there to assist clubs in the running of their venues. It would have the capacity to operate gaming machines in existing venues or a new venue. The IGA has recommended that and the government has picked up that recommendation. We believe that Club One is not only an important component of this legislation but also an important component of giving that support to the club sector.

The bill also includes a provision for the Roosters Club to have the ability to keep trading until the cut in gaming machine numbers takes place. That will be in both pieces of legislation. I will not repeat that when in a moment I speak more briefly about the second bill. As I have said, this is an historic piece of legislation. It is genuine reform. This, coupled with the other measures that I have already outlined, will make a difference to problem gambling.

In the short time that I have had the pleasure of being the Minister for Gambling, I have had a range of meetings with a variety of key stakeholders. I may not name them all, but not by deliberate omission, because I do not have that list in front of me. However, to give some examples, I have met with the Hotels Association on a number of occasions; I have met with the clubs and welfare sectors; I have obviously met with the Roosters; and I plan to meet with others who have raised matters with me. In fact, just last weekend, I was in attendance to see another wonderful victory by Port Power, and the SANFL would like to come and see me as well. I intend to keep meeting with the various groups, and that is an important part of the process.

The government believes strongly that its legislation is correct. As I have said publicly, there is a bit of pain in this for everybody, but it obviously picks up all the recommendations of the Independent Gambling Authority. The other commitment that I give to all members—because this will be a conscience vote (we would give this commitment anyway)—is that briefings will be organised for members when they require them. I understand that the shadow minister will be getting a briefing later this week with respect to this bill.

This is a significant bill about which members will need to think carefully, and obviously they will pay it the due attention it deserves. I will leave the rest of the bill for members to study. I seek leave to insert the remainder of the second reading explanation into *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

On 20 June 2002 the Government directed the Independent Gambling Authority (IGA) to conduct an inquiry into the management of gaming machine numbers in South Australia. On 22 December 2003 the IGA provided its report to the Government. The full inquiry report was publicly released on 14 January 2004.

The Authority prepared its inquiry report following extensive submission and public consultation processes. All industry and welfare sector stakeholders had numerous opportunities to put their views to the Authority. With the information provided by these submissions and research specifically commissioned for this inquiry, the Authority formulated its position on issues as requested by the Terms of Reference.

The main recommendation of the report proposed a reduction in the number of gaming machines in South Australia by 3 000 or 20%. Other recommendations include the ability to trade gaming machine entitlements, regional caps on gaming machine numbers, new processes for establishing gaming sites, five yearly renewable gaming machine licences and the establishment of a single special-purpose non-profit gambling entity to assist the clubs sector (to be known as Club One). The Authority's report outlines the rationale for these recommendations and the potential benefit, together with a package of other measures, to address problem gambling.

The Authority concluded that there is a causal relationship between accessibility of gaming machines and problem gambling and other consequential harm in the community. The Authority is satisfied that both the total number of gaming machines and the number of places where gaming is available should be reduced. The recommendations of its gaming machine numbers report are formulated to achieve that result and the Authority believes that there is support in the evidence that such action, when implemented with other current gambling reform measures, including the new advertising and responsible gambling codes of practice, will be effective in addressing problem gambling.

This Bill reflects the recommendations of the IGA report.

The current freeze on gaming machine numbers in South Australia expires on 31 May 2004.

As previously indicated, this Bill will be a conscience vote for Members of the Government.

The reduction of 3 000 gaming machines is to be achieved through an initial cut of machines from large venues which will yield 2 461 gaming machines with the remaining machines to be removed through a compulsory relinquishment of a portion of machines associated with those sold through the newly established gaming machine entitlement trading system.

One gaming machine entitlement will entitle the holder of a gaming machine licence to operate one gaming machine.

The initial 2 461 cut in gaming machines is to apply as follows:

Venues with 28 or more gaming machines to be reduced by 8 machines; and

Venues with 21 to 27 gaming machines to be reduced to 20 machines.

Venues that have less than 20 gaming machines will not be required to reduce their number of machines.

The proposed trading system for gaming machine entitlements is to be established in the Regulations. A trade system by way of tender process would be operated by the Government; direct sales between licensees would not be permitted. Gaming venues wishing to sell entitlements would nominate the number of machine entitlements they wish to sell and (if they wish) a reserve price for

each entitlement. Purchasers with pre-approval for additional machines could then bid for these entitlements.

The additional reduction in gaming machines to achieve the full 3 000 reduction in gaming machine numbers would occur through relinquishment of a portion of gaming machines sold through the trade system.

It is proposed that for every 3, or part thereof, gaming machine entitlements sold in trading, 1 additional gaming machine entitlement would be relinquished. For clubs this relinquished machine entitlement would be transferred to Club One, for hotels the relinquished entitlement would be cancelled.

The progressive cancellation of entitlements will achieve the 3 000 reduction in gaming machines. Once that goal has been reached hotels would no longer be required to relinquish machine entitlements but sales would become subject to a 33% commission. The revenue raised from the commission would go to the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund. Club sector sales would not be subject to commission but would still be required to relinquish machine entitlements to Club One.

It is proposed that one round of trading of gaming machine entitlements would occur before the initial reduction in gaming machine numbers. This would aid the transition process for those venues that wish to continue to operate 40 machines and are able to purchase them through the trading system. The maximum number of gaming machines at any hotel or club is to remain at 40.

The Bill explicitly provides that no right to compensation arises for gaming machine licensees from these amendments or as a result of the cancellation or lapse of a gaming machine entitlement under this Act.

To provide a level of certainty on the future financial position of gaming venues the Bill provides that the taxation on gaming machine revenue will not be changed for a period of 10 years.

Amendments in this Bill will also allow the licensing of a single special purpose non-profit gambling entity to assist the clubs sector. This entity is referred to as "Club One".

Club One will be established as a board with specific minimum skills requirements on appointments. The intended operations of Club One will include:

1. Service assistance to club venues, for example management expertise and consulting services;
2. Assist existing clubs to relocate or co-locate machines to improve profitability;
3. Place gaming machine entitlements in gaming venues through the use of a newly established special club licence; and
4. Establish and operate gaming machine venues in its own right.

Club One will be able to receive machine entitlements from existing clubs and also be able to purchase entitlements in the trade process.

Club One is an entity that has the capacity to provide a significant advantage to the club industry. ClubsSA has indicated that it envisages that this entity will be able to distribute funds to clubs and sporting associations for the improvement of club facilities in the State.

Involvement in Club One will be totally voluntary for clubs. It is also proposed to provide for flexibility for clubs to amalgamate and relocate. This will assist clubs to be more profitable.

The Bill also provides for the date by which the Roosters Club Incorporated must cease trading at its current site, if it has not previously been relocated, to be amended to the commencement of the machine reduction provisions of this Bill. While the Club has advised that it has identified an alternative site it has not yet been able to address all of the technical requirements to move its operations. This amendment will provide the Club with the opportunity to use the provisions of this Bill to assist its transfer to alternative premises.

The Bill also proposes other measures consistent with the recommendations of the Authority.

Gaming Machine licences are to become renewable every 5 years. While an incumbent licensee would have the generally accepted expectation of renewal, the licence renewal process will provide an opportunity to satisfy the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner of on-going suitability, with specific reference to social impact on the local community and commitment to responsible gambling principles. The Commissioner would assess applications for renewal having regard to guidelines issued by the Authority for this purpose.

The test for issuing a gaming machine licence for a new site will be strengthened. In determining an application for a gaming machine licence the Commissioner will now also be required to have regard

to the likely social effect on the local community and in particular the likely effect on problem gambling. Again the Commissioner will be required to have regard to guidelines issued by the Authority for this purpose.

The Bill also provides for regional gaming machine issues to be addressed. The Authority identified the significantly above average number of gaming machines in provincial cities as a matter of concern. The Bill will enable regulations to restrict the movement of gaming machines in geographic regions. It is intended to initially use this provision to assist to reduce the number of gaming machines in the State's provincial cities.

In addition to implementation of the Authority's report into gaming machine numbers the Bill also includes a number of technical amendments including the removal of the State Supply Board as sole gaming machine service licensee. Other technical amendments have been included following recommendations of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner to strengthen regulatory and administrative processes.

The Gaming Machine Service Licence authorises the licensee to install, service and repair approved gaming machines, their components and related equipment. As required by the *Gaming Machines Act* the single licence is currently held by the State Supply Board. The Board fulfils the role of this licence through the appointment of agents approved by the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner, which carry out the work on the Board's behalf.

On 7 March 2003 the Government announced its support of an amendment to the *Gaming Machines Act 1992* to remove the State Supply Board as Gaming Machine Service Licensee and replace it with a more competitive arrangement. This decision was consistent with a finding of the national competition policy review of the Act, which found that the existing sole service licence held by the State Supply Board was inconsistent with competition policy principles. The National Competition Council has stated that this amendment is necessary to meet competition policy requirements.

The provisions of this Bill provide for Gaming Machine Service Licences to be issued to suitable applicants. The Liquor and Gambling Commissioner will issue licences subject to normal suitability assessments. The Commissioner will continue to approve gaming machine technicians to conduct work on behalf of gaming machine service licensees.

It will be an offence under the Act for a person to install, service or repair a gaming machine unless he or she is the holder of a gaming machine service licence or is approved as a technician for the holder of a licence.

These amendments will enable gaming venues to choose their service agents within the strict regulatory controls applied by the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner.

The State Supply Board will retain its Gaming Machine Suppliers Licence requiring all licensees to deal through the Board for the purchase and sale of gaming machines and associated equipment. This is considered important to maintain probity and integrity in gaming machine regulation and the retention of this provision is consistent with competition policy principles.

I commend the Bill to the House.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

This clause is formal.

2—Commencement

This clause deals with the commencement. Subclause (2) provides that Part 2 (the extension of the moratorium) is to come into force on assent. The provisions reducing the number of gaming machines will come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation, but falling at least 4 months after the commencement of the provisions providing for the issue of gaming machine entitlements.

3—Amendment provisions

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Gaming Machines Act 1992* (extension of gaming machines moratorium)

4—Amendment of section 14A—Freeze on gaming machines

This clause provides for the extension of the present moratorium on gaming machine numbers until the new provisions limiting the number of gaming machines that a licensee may operate to the number of gaming machine entitlements held by the licensee in respect of the relevant premises come into operation.

Part 3—Amendment of *Gaming Machines Act 1992* (gaming machine entitlements)

5—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

This clause introduces definitions that are required by the new provisions.

6—Amendment of section 14—Licence classes

This clause provides for a new category of licence, namely, a special club licence to be held by Club One. It defines the Club One's right to operate gaming machines on licensed premises as agent for the licensee.

7—Substitution of section 14A

This clause provides that a gaming machine licence is to have a term of five years. It provides for random allocation of expiry dates to existing licences.

8—Amendment of section 15—Eligibility criteria

This clause deals with the right of Club One to hold a gaming machine licence (in addition to the special Club licence which does not authorise it to operate a gaming machine venue in its own right). It also modifies the criteria governing the grant of licences. The Commissioner is required to have regard to the likely social consequences of the grant of the licence on the local community, and in doing so, take into consideration any guidelines or criteria established by the Authority.

9—Substitution of section 16

This clause substitutes section 16 of the principal Act. The new provision limits the number of gaming machines that a licensee may operate by reference to the number of gaming machine entitlements held by the licensee in respect of the relevant premises. The upper limit on the number of gaming machines that may be operated in any particular set of licensed premises remains at 40.

10—Amendment of section 24—Discretion to refuse application

This clause amends section 24 which deals with the Commissioner's discretion to grant or refuse an application. The Government believes that it is appropriate for the Commissioner to have a general discretion to refuse a licence but that the converse should not apply. The amendment provides accordingly.

11—Insertion of section 24A

New section 24A deals with the grant of the special club licence to Club One and the conditions affecting the licence.

12—Insertion of Divisions 3A and 3B

Clause 12 inserts divisions 3A and 3B. Division 3A (new sections 27A and 27B) deals with the renewal of a gaming machine licence. Division 3B (new sections 27C to 27E) deals with the issue, transfer and location of gaming machine entitlements.

13—Amendment of section 29—Certain applications require advertisement

This clause requires that an application for renewal of a gaming machine licence be advertised.

14—Amendment of section 37—Commissioner may approve managers and employees

This clause makes a consequential amendment relating to the approval of managers and employees.

15—Amendment of section 70—Operation of decisions pending appeal

This clause enables the Commissioner, the Court or the Authority to make appropriate temporary orders to suspend the effect of an order or decision pending an appeal.

16—Insertion of section 71A

This clause inserts a provision stating Parliament's intention that there should be a moratorium on increases in the rate of gaming tax for the next 10 years.

17—Insertion of section 88

This clause excludes any claim to compensation as a result of the amendments.

18—Amendment of Schedule 1—Gaming machine licence conditions

This clause adds a gaming machine licence condition limiting the number of gaming machines in a licensee's possession to the number of gaming machine entitlements held in respect of the relevant licensed premises.

Part 4—Amendment of *Gaming Machines Act 1992*

19—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

Approved gaming machine manager is currently defined to include a director or member of the governing body of a licensee. The definition overlooks the case where a natural

person is the licensee. This clause amends the definition so that the term also includes a natural person licensee.

20—Insertion of section 7A

This clause confers on the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner further procedural powers to deal with hearings:

- power to grant an application on an interim basis
- power to specify that a condition of a licence or approval is to be effective for a specified period
- power to grant an application on the condition that the applicant satisfies the Commissioner as to a matter within a period determined by the Commissioner
- power to revoke the licence or approval, or suspend the licence or approval until further order, on failure by the applicant to comply with the above condition
- power to accept an undertaking from a party in relation to the conduct of proceedings and, on failure by the party to fulfil the undertaking, to refuse to hear the party further in the proceedings subject to any further order of the Commissioner.

21—Amendment of section 14—Licence classes

The licence classes under the Act are adjusted so that—

- there may be more than one gaming machine service licence

· it is clear that such a licence is to be held by the proprietor of the business and not employees personally performing the work of installing, servicing or repairing gaming machines (who will be required to be approved as gaming machine technicians, see proposed new section 50).

22—Amendment of section 14A—Freeze on gaming machines

23—Amendment of section 15—Eligibility criteria

The amendments made by these clauses are consequential on proposed new Part 3 Division 4A.

24—Amendment of section 26—State Supply Board to hold supplier's licence

The State Supply Board is no longer to hold a single gaming machine service licence.

25—Insertion of Part 3 Division 4A

New provisions are inserted modelled on sections 73, 74 and 75 of the *Liquor Licensing Act 1997*. These provisions allow continued operations under a licence by the devolution of the licensee's rights in the following circumstances:

- the death of the licensee
- the mental or physical incapacity of the licensee
- abandonment of the licensed premises by the licensee
- the bankruptcy, insolvency, winding up, etc, of the licensee.

26—Amendment of section 30—Objections

The Commissioner is empowered to allow an objection to an application for a licence to be made out of time. A provision is added to ensure objectors are parties to the proceedings on an application to which they have objected.

27—Amendment of section 36—Disciplinary action against licensees

28—Insertion of sections 36A and 36B

Various changes are made to the current provisions relating to disciplinary action against licensees:

- provision is made for the Commissioner to hold an inquiry, on the Commissioner's own initiative or on the complaint of the Commissioner of Police
- the forms of disciplinary action are extended to include a fine not exceeding \$15 000 and disqualification from obtaining a licence
- a disqualification may be made to apply permanently
- a suspension or disqualification may be made to apply for a specified period, until the fulfilment of stipulated conditions or until further order
- any disciplinary action may be directed to have effect at a specified future time or at a specified future time unless stipulated conditions are fulfilled
- the Commissioner is required to give the licensee and the Commissioner of Police at least 21 days' written notice of an inquiry and afford them a reasonable opportunity to call and give evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to make submissions
- the Commissioner is allowed to hear and determine a matter in the absence of a party if the party does not attend at the time and place fixed by the Commissioner.

29—Insertion of section 38B

The Commissioner may, on application by the holder of a gaming machine service licence, approve a natural person as a gaming machine technician for the holder of the licence.

30—Amendment of section 42—Discretion to grant or refuse approval

In order to be approved as a gaming machine technician, the Commissioner must be satisfied that the person is a fit and proper person to personally perform the work of installing, servicing and repairing gaming machines.

31—Insertion of section 42A

Part 3 Division 5 of the Act makes provision for the advertising of applications for licences and for objections to be made to such applications. A new section is inserted making similar provision in relation to applications for approvals under the Act.

32—Amendment of section 43—Intervention by Commissioner of Police

The Commissioner of Police is empowered to intervene in any proceedings for approval of a person on the question whether the person is a fit and proper person.

33—Amendment of section 45—Offence of being unlicensed

This amendment is consequential.

34—Substitution of sections 48, 49 and 50

Offences relating to:

- management of a gaming machine business or positions of authority in a licensee that is a trust or corporate entity
 - employment in gaming areas
 - approved gaming machine managers and employees carrying identification,
- are made to apply in addition to the licensee.

A new offence is added requiring the work of installing, servicing or repairing a gaming machine to be personally performed by the holder of a gaming machine service licence or a person approved as a gaming machine technician.

35—Amendment of section 51—Persons who may not operate gaming machines

The list of licensees and others prohibited from operating gaming machines is extended to include the holder of a gaming machine service licence or a person in a position of authority in a trust or corporate entity that holds such a licence, or an approved gaming machine technician. An exception is made for operating gaming machines on licensed premises as necessary for the purpose of carrying out gaming machine servicing duties.

36—Amendment of section 52—Prohibition of lending or extension of credit

The offence under the section is amended so that the licensee is also punishable where the licensee's gaming machine manager or employee contravenes the section.

37—Insertion of section 53B

The Commissioner is empowered to give directions to secure gaming machines against unauthorised use or interference. The power may be exercised where gaming machines are left on licensed premises after the premises have been vacated by the licensee or the Commissioner has any reason to believe that gaming machines are not adequately secured against unauthorised use or interference.

38—Amendment of section 59—Licensee may bar excessive gamblers

The offence under the section is amended so that the licensee is also punishable where the licensee's gaming machine manager or employee contravenes the section.

39—Amendment of section 69—Right of appeal

The section currently allows an appeal against a decision by the person the subject of the decision. This clause amends the section to ensure that the right of appeal extends to other parties to proceedings such as objectors or the Commissioner of Police.

40—Amendment of section 72B—Recovery of tax

If default is made by a licensee for more than 10 days in paying gaming tax that is due and payable, the Commissioner may suspend the licence until the amount, and any fine, is paid.

41—Amendment of section 74—Annual reports

This amendment is consequential.

42—Amendment of section 82—Service

Provision is made for service of notices and other documents under the Act on persons other than licensees.

43—Amendment of section 85—Vicarious liability

Under this amendment, if there is proper cause for disciplinary action against a trust or corporate entity, there will be proper cause for disciplinary action under against each person occupying a position of authority in the entity unless it is proved that the person could not, by the exercise of reasonable care, have prevented the misconduct.

44—Amendment of Schedule 1

These amendments are consequential only.

45—Amendment of Schedule 3

This clause extends the Roosters Club licence until the new provisions for reduction of gaming machine numbers comes into force.

Ms CHAPMAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

**GAMING MACHINES (EXTENSION OF FREEZE)
AMENDMENT BILL**

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Gambling) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Gaming Machines Act 1992. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Once again, I would like to make a few comments. This is a very short bill, which provides for the extension of the freeze. Members would be aware that the current freeze is due to expire on 31 May. Members would also be aware that the bill about which I spoke earlier is an extensive bill and, obviously, members will need to give that careful consideration. The government would prefer to debate that at the earliest opportunity but, realistically, we are not going to get that large a bill through both houses of parliament in the remaining couple of weeks.

This bill provides for an extension of the freeze and also picks up what I referred to earlier about the Roosters Club. It is also an important bill, and it is important that it passes through both houses quickly.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I am not too sure whether the interjection was in regard to this or the other bill.

Ms Chapman: The other bill.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: We will take that up when the debate is on. This bill needs to go through both houses quickly. There are only a couple of clauses and, as I said, it is a very simple bill. The debate on this bill has already occurred, and the bill has been brought forward to provide the opportunity for the other bill that I introduced earlier and to enable members to give it careful thought and to consult with the stakeholders, to undertake the dialogue they need to in their own constituencies—to undertake all those responsibilities. It is particularly important in regard to the fact that the freeze is due to expire on 31 May, and we simply need to extend that until the other piece of legislation is debated in this parliament and we have an outcome either way.

Ms CHAPMAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

SUPPLY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 3 May. Page 1966.)

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): I support the bill, which, in summary, is to provide for \$1.5 billion to be appropriated from Consolidated Account to enable the Public Service

effectively to continue to carry out its functions and duties on behalf of the people of South Australia. Importantly, according to this bill the money must not be issued or applied other than for the purposes as appropriated by this parliament for the 2003-04 year. It is consistent with precedent that annually funds of this order are provided. I am a little puzzled as to why so much is needed, particularly in a circumstance where it seems clear that the government has underspent significant funds from the 2003-04 financial year. Nevertheless, I do not take issue with the important need of the Public Service being able to continue to operate pending further deliberation and determination by this parliament for the 2004-05 budget, the process of which will commence with the announcement of the budget by the Treasurer later this month.

In today's contribution I hope to identify the importance of education. The Premier has said on a number of occasions that his government is the education government. It is committed to having better schools and more teachers, and frequently on public occasions he has supported his government's commitment to that. I wish to highlight the contribution that I and many other South Australians would expect ought to be given appropriate attention in this year's budget.

In March this year the Australian government announced its funding to schooling for the next four years. On that occasion, it announced that \$31.3 billion dollars would be made available for schools over that period, an increase of some \$8 billion over the current quadrennium. It is important to understand that school funding is a joint responsibility between the states and territories and the Australian government. Each level of government contributes funds to schools, with the states and territories having the major financial responsibility for state schools. Why is that so? Of course, it is the states that own the state schools and manage them.

Whilst the Australian government is the primary source of public funds for Catholic and independent schools, it must also be acknowledged that parents make a very substantial financial contribution to these other sectors. For the record, in the 2003-04 year total public funding (state and commonwealth) in each of the jurisdictions was some \$19.9 billion to state government schools, which have some 2.25 million students. The government funding total (state and commonwealth again) to non-government schools, which provide for 1.04 million students in Australia, was \$6.2 billion.

Whilst that is a substantial difference, it is important to note that the other funds sufficient to educate children in the non-government sector of course come from parents. It is interesting to note that they contribute some \$4.1 billion across Australia for the education of their children, totally independently of whatever contribution they may make in state and federal taxes and charges. I also note that the Australian government's commitment provides a funding increase to state government schools of about 6 per cent per annum.

Disappointingly, and in comparison, the average state and territory government budget increase last year to state schools was only 2.1 per cent. That, I note and ask the house to note, is a rate below inflation. This year the Australian government, via the education minister (Hon. Brendan Nelson), also announced the conditions for funding. For the record, conditions of funding are not new. They are already in commonwealth law, and they make provision for the Australian government to issue terms and conditions for funding to be made available.

I am informed that, although it has this provision, on not one single occasion has the current Australian government

exercised its rightful entitlement to withdraw funding as a result of any non-compliance with a condition. In any event, I make the point that this is not unusual, and in every period of allocation it is not uncommon for conditions to be set.

The Australian government in the announcement this year was determined to ensure that schools maintain excellence and deliver meaningful information to parents; that students are free of bullying and abuse; and that there is a greater consistency in education across the country. In order to achieve that, it set out the following requirements. The first was to ensure that a child's year 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy test results are reported to his or her parents against the national benchmarks. This occurs in only four states and territories at present: the ACT, the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Victoria. In the other four states, parents are still kept in the dark as to how well their child is performing against the national standard.

The second was to ensure that schools have timely, plain language student report cards so that parents can properly and easily assess how well their child is performing and whether their child needs additional assistance. The third was to make publicly available information about the school's performance so that parents can make informed decisions about school selection and so that poorly performing schools can be identified and targeted for action. Such information could include the school's academic outcomes, improvements on previous years, school leaver destinations (that is, who has obtained employment and what percentage has gone on to higher education and the like), teacher qualifications, staff retention rates and absentee rates (that is, whether there has been high turnover of staff and whether there is a high absentee rate of the students attending).

Fourthly, there is a move towards greater national consistency. Presently, everything from school starting age to educational standards differs from one state to another causing some difficulties. It is particularly important to note that, in this day and age, in the 21st century, we have some 84 000 students a year who move interstate. That means that they are moving from one jurisdictional set of school requirements, standards and regulations to another as they do so. Education providers will be required to move to a common school starting age by 2010 and to introduce common testing standards in the key subject areas of English, maths, science and civics.

The fifth is a commitment to deal with bullying and abuse through the adherence to the national Safe Schools framework. It is fair to say that there have been genuine attempts by the state and territory jurisdictions in the past, and this is to ensure that it is brought to an acceptable standard for the 21st century. The sixth condition is to meet performance targets in literacy, numeracy, information technology, science, civics and vocational education and training.

That is the Australian government's commitment to providing, from its perspective, a record amount of funding, but also to set a framework ensuring that, when legislation that gives effect to the funding for these priorities is introduced in the national parliament mid-year, we have some achievable and uniform targets with which to comply.

The announcement of these conditions was made by the government on 11 March. On 23 April, some five or six weeks later, the ministers of each state and territory met with the federal minister at what is commonly known as MCEETYA. These meetings are held on a regular basis to ensure that important education issues across the country are operating as best they can. I do not make any comment in

relation to the meeting itself but on the day the meeting took place the question of funding was on the agenda. It is interesting to note that, on that day, our own state education minister issued a press release about the meeting that had taken place interstate with the other ministers, in which she said that the Australian government had:

... backed down from its plan to strip funding from students who did not meet literacy and numeracy benchmarks under the next four years' school funding agreement. . . states and territories won a small victory in the schools funding battle. . . during a heated meeting of the education ministers in Sydney.

That was the minister's claim in her press release. That was an issue for our minister in South Australia and, apparently, for the minister from Tasmania. None of the other ministers from around the country seemed to have the same misunderstanding—to put it at its highest—about what the Australian government intended. Clearly, it was not of concern to them; they knew what the rules were, namely, that the government can set conditions. They read the rules and clearly understood that at no time in the publication of the conditions, in subsequent interviews or in the provision of any documentation had the Australian government, through the federal minister, stated that children would lose funding as a result of their personal failing to meet literacy and numeracy standards. But that is the representation that the minister gave when on 21 April she stated the following on ABC radio:

Money will be taken away from us in South Australia if schools fail to reach 100 per cent achievement benchmarks for students in year 3.

We now know that to be complete and utter nonsense, but it is a concern that, on ABC radio on 22 April, the day after the minister made the statement and the day before the meeting in Sydney, the ABC interviewed the Hon. Brendan Nelson who made it quite clear—as if it was not clear enough—that 'under no circumstances' would the additional \$31 billion in funding be withdrawn because of under-performance. He made it absolutely clear on that day.

The minister acknowledged in her radio interview on the next day, Friday 24 April, that she was grateful to the ABC for Dr Nelson's interview, which made the position clear. It may not have been clear to her, but other ministers around the country seem to have it fairly clear. She said that she would make some demands about having things in writing, and the like. In fact, what was clear from the ABC was that not only had the federal minister made it clear but our own state minister was embarrassed about the fact that the ABC pointed out that it had simply telephoned the federal minister who was able to clarify the position to them, and perhaps on the next occasion she might similarly pick up the telephone.

The statement in the minister's press release on the following day was made with the full knowledge that this matter had been floated by her in the lead-up to the MCEETYA meeting. It was made categorically clear before the day of the meeting that she was attempting to have some mischief with this, suggesting that, in some way, she forced the Howard government to back down from its plan to strip funding from students who did not meet literacy and numeracy benchmarks, etc. What absolute nonsense. I suggest that the minister, rather than waste time on her misunderstandings—at best, one could place it at that, if not mischievous—ought to direct her attention to how she can ensure that all our state schools are able to enjoy the benefits of these moneys, and that she and her department work hard to ensure that these objectives are achieved in the priorities that have been set.

It is apparent that Australian parents want clear information about their children's progress; they want to have clear information about how their school is progressing; or, if they are selecting a new school or changing to a school interstate they want information as to the performance of that school for the purposes of what they have. It is not just a question of what the parents want. It is also absolutely imperative that we give our children the best opportunity and that we do not effectively continue this ridiculous situation of concealing and keeping this information away from parents and children. To leave children hidden in schools that we know are at the bottom of a list—whatever list or league table we want to call it—without telling parents is absolutely scandalous.

The other important benefit of making sure that we have this information available and on the table, information to which parents are entitled, is that schools need to be accountable. Comprehensive reporting to parents on school performance is taken for granted in many other countries. It is not a case of labelling schools, as the minister suggested. It is a matter of identifying under-performing schools to ensure that they receive assistance in order to improve. If inadequacies are not exposed, they can never be tackled. So, I urge the minister to have a fresh look at this position and ensure that we follow suit so our schools in South Australia do not miss out on this extended funding.

I was interested to read the publication by Dr Kevin Donnelly, launched yesterday, in which he makes reference to the importance of addressing why our schools are failing. I will refer to his booklet as published after 10 years of research, and in one of these important areas in relation to curricula he states:

That Australian authorities need to critically examine home-grown approaches to curriculum is vitally important as there is an increasing consensus overseas about what constitutes a rigorous and sound curriculum. As noted in the introduction—

which refers to his own report—

... it is possible to identify the characteristics of those education systems that are the most successful in international tests.

He refers to the characteristics applicable in the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Singapore, Japan, Ireland, Korea and Hong Kong, and I will read them, as follows:

- adopt a strong, disciplined-based approach to school subjects (especially maths and science);
- enforce system accountability and explicit rewards and sanctions (identify under-performing schools and reward successful teachers);
- define clear educational standards (not outcomes), as in the case in Australia) linked to textbooks, teacher training and classroom resources);
- have greater time on task in the classroom and an emphasis on formal teaching;
- have regular testing and high risk examinations; and
- provide a differentiated curriculum and a range of school pathways (recognising that students have different abilities, interests and post-school destinations).

A number of other recommendations are made, but I suggest that the approach of Dr Donnelly adds even further authoritative weight to the important direction in which the Australian government is taking Australian children in their areas of responsibility. Hopefully, our state minister will, over the period of time leading up to the budget (which is only a couple of weeks away), ensure that, if the Treasurer has not addressed these issues adequately in the budget, he does so.

As I have highlighted by the statistics in this year's budget, this area is tragically and chronically under-funded and, if it is not addressed, this situation will be perpetuated and South Australian children will continue to be disadvan-

taged. It is not enough for the minister simply to say to the house, 'We have increased funding per child in South Australia.' That is not surprising because, of course, South Australia is losing children on a daily basis. We are losing not only in the numbers coming into our school system (that is a population issue), but we are also losing students from the state system. I am totally committed—and I make this clear to the house—to a strong and viable public school education for our children to ensure that they have the same opportunity in our schools as do children across the country. I ask the minister and Premier to take note of that issue in relation to this year's budget.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): I rise with my colleagues to support this bill, for it is essentially a procedural bill that is introduced to the parliament at about this time each year, and on this occasion the bill enables the appropriation of up to \$1 500 million for the intervening period until the passage of the state budget. Like some of my colleagues, I am a little surprised by the quantum, but it may be that in administering the Public Service the government wishes to embark upon many of the projects that have been delayed or stalled in their capital budget.

In that vein, I focus initially on a matter in my electorate that is associated with the expansion of the Hallett Cove shopping centre and requires, for the project to proceed, the building of a new road in part funded by the state government. This is a particularly important shopping centre to the communities of Hallett Cove, Sheidow Park, Trott Park and surrounding areas. It is placed prominently on Lonsdale Road and comprises at this time some 30 shops, including a supermarket. The intention is that a \$40 million upgrade of the centre will occur through the addition of another supermarket, a discount department store and approximately 70 specialty shops, which will make this a very impressive centre in the area. It is a much needed facility. It will provide work for the construction industry and, importantly, a significant number of jobs particularly for the youth of the community. Hallett Cove has one of the largest youth populations in the state, and I have no doubt there will be no shortage of applicants for the new vacancies in the employment market that are created when the shopping facility is completed.

However, I am concerned that there is a potential staller of the project, namely, bureaucratic indifference within the state government, notably, within Transport SA. There are a number of unique aspects associated with the road infrastructure development in that the existing shopping centre was poorly planned, and those poor planning decisions go back 17 years so that at this point in time they obviously cannot be reversed. However, the situation can, of course, be improved. At the moment, the main entrance to the shopping centre is either via Ramrod Avenue from within Hallett Cove or externally from Lonsdale Road, and that entry is made through a controlled intersection, the traffic lights, of course being the responsibility of Transport SA.

The developers of the shopping centre and the developer of an adjacent retirement village complex also planned for the area have, between them, made what I regard to be an extremely generous offer to the state government, that is, that they would fund the placement of new traffic signals at the intersection of Lonsdale Road with a new road to be placed at the opposite end of the shopping centre from Ramrod Avenue. I believe that gesture is particularly generous, and the developers recognise that making such a gesture would

entice the government into agreeing, with the City of Marion, to fund the new entrance road on that southern side of the shopping centre.

The entrance road would be built on part of the old Adelaide to Willunga railway line—in fact, a railway line that was decommissioned during the time of the Liberal government under Premier Steele Hall. Unfortunately, the railway tracks were later ripped up under the Dunstan government, thereby removing a transport corridor for the southern suburbs. That having been done, the land is still owned by the government and provides an excellent opportunity for a new entrance road.

However, the government has been stalling on the funding of this new road. It has also been stalling over the configuration of the traffic lights, and this bureaucratic stalling and indifference has led to a situation whereby a \$40 million project is under threat. I, for one, will be yelling loudly and clearly in this chamber at the perilous path on which this government has progressed in regard to this project, because if we lose it the developers certainly will not be hanging around in South Australia. I know, from conversations they have had with me, that they regard this project as a test for the government—a government with which, to date, they are clearly not particularly impressed, particularly over the Hallett Cove site.

So, what is now being proposed by the City of Marion, the developers of the shopping centre, the existing tenants of the shopping centre and the residents is that the existing traffic lights at the junction of Ramrod Avenue and Lonsdale Road remain but a new set of traffic lights be placed at the new road intersection. It is not a problem for the developers to fund the lights. But, enter the bureaucrats from Transport SA, who have a totally different view from everyone else in the community and say, 'No, the traffic lights cannot go there because they will be too close to the other set of lights.' It has been put to them that there would be a benefit by synchronising the lights, but they refuse to accept that benefit.

An assessment is being done by respected traffic engineers Murray F Young & Associates and, in their extensive reporting of this matter, they have strongly highlighted the benefits of leaving the Ramrod Avenue intersection as it is and placing the new traffic lights there. One of the most significant benefits is that two sets of lights would allow the traffic mainly doing right-hand turns into Hallett Cove to turn at two intersections, which would reduce the amount of time the traffic has to be stopped at lights.

Every southern member of parliament should be aware of the import of this issue. Indeed, the members for Karna, Reynell and Mawson should be aware that, if two sets of lights rather than one go in, their constituents will benefit because they will not be stopped for any longer than they are now. However, bureaucratic indifference takes no heed of even a respected traffic engineering company like Murray F. Young and Associates. I can only implore the government at this time, through this parliament and the minister, to utilise some of that \$1 500 million that will be facilitated through this bill to be used sensibly for the government's proportion of the new road and for the bureaucrats to agree that the second set of traffic lights, to be private sector funded, should go in so everyone can get on with their jobs, a \$40 million shopping centre upgrade can be built and the local area can take benefit from that centre.

It defies any logic whatsoever that the previous minister for transport would not intervene. I made numerous telephone calls to his office, but he had absolutely no interest in this

matter. However, that is not surprising because he has demonstrated that he had no interest in any matter related to transport or to any other of his portfolios. I can only hope that the new Minister for Transport will do what the previous minister would not do and utilise sensibly this funding made available to her to ensure that this decision is proceeded with haste and the money utilised in part to put in that new entrance road.

I turn now to the matter of funding provided to encourage mining exploration in South Australia. In so doing this is my farewell to this portfolio after four years and I put on the record my congratulations to my colleague, the member for MacKillop. I am delighted to have witnessed his promotion to the front bench. I know of his passion and enthusiasm for the mining industry and I know he will represent it proudly, particularly against a Labor government, which traditionally has been bad for the industry, and he will ensure that funds are utilised appropriately. It is important that I put on the record the opposition's concern about a recent announcement by the Premier.

Recently we went through yet another one of the government's farcical summits, namely, the Economic Development Summit that was addressed by the Premier, the Minister for Infrastructure and the Deputy Premier. As part of the series of good news announcements the government imparted to the public was one in relation to the mining industry. The Premier made an interesting announcement: a new financing package to encourage mining in the state. In so doing he set a target of \$3 billion of mineral production by the year 2020. He allocated for that purpose \$15 million over five years. The Premier described it as being far-reaching and the most visionary funding and planning that had been provided for the mining industry in the state's history. When I heard that announcement I was intrigued because the monetary figures and time line were something I had seen before. It was not surprising that I recall having seen them before, for in fact I announced the same targets with the same years in 1999.

In 1999 the resources task force report prepared for the then Liberal Government recommended a target 'growing to \$3 billion of mineral production and \$1 billion mineral processing per year by 2020'. It is exactly the same target foisted upon the public by this Premier after two years in office, while pretending it is something new. It is five years old, but at the time the target was announced I also ensured that funding was in place. The funding put in place over a four-year period was \$23.2 million. The Premier has announced \$15 million over five years. We find that the Premier has plagiarised a Liberal government announcement and his government has done nothing for two years. Having now plagiarised and reannounced it, he then made one change: he cut the intended funding.

The news for the mining industry, which is aware of this, is that it has a government that tries to pretend it is looking after the industry, which knows it has done nothing for two years, and it now announces funding of \$15 million instead of \$23.2 million and the industry is supposed to be grateful. I can tell the house that the industry is not grateful and has treated the Premier's announcement with the contempt that it deserves. The industry knows that it is not about to champion it.

I note that the member for Giles is sitting in the chamber and is very quiet on this issue. I guarantee that she will not be silly enough to be out there championing this issue in her electorate as she knows full well that she will be left with egg on her face. It is indicative of the treatment of business by

this government. In closing on the mining industry, I also noted with interest in the press over the weekend a reference by the government about needing to do something to move ahead the opal mining industry. I will give the Premier a hint: if he goes back to the Liberal government documents he will find a Liberal Party initiative, Opal SA, that is fully funded. He may like to plagiarise that, but at least allocate the same amount of funding and he might be able to help that industry too. We know he is so bereft of ideas that he has to scan elsewhere and this may be his opportunity.

I will briefly refer to another area of government finance allocation, for it may be that this allocation will come out of the \$1 500 million facilitated by this bill, namely, the government announcement of a \$64 million gift to gas industry participants to enable them to enter the national gas market but to keep down their prices. The reason the government has done this is that its own internal advice tells it that without a government subsidy the prices under the regime set up by Labor would, from 28 July this year, go up by about 22 per cent. That would have been an increase of about 22 per cent for South Australian households. It did not want that to happen because it was getting close to the amount it had already let electricity go up by. So cabinet in its wisdom, sitting around the table, thought: we will throw money at it. It has taken \$64 million, but that is okay because we have had a windfall from property taxes, so it decided to use that. If cabinet thinks it will avoid an increase in prices under the regime this government has set up, it is deluding itself and its Labor colleagues, for it is highly likely we will still see increases in the vicinity of 10 per cent, even after this massive subsidy.

Add to that the fact that it had already enabled a creep factor to occur. This government has been increasing the rate of gas at a faster rate than any other government in the past five to 10 years. Under this minister, it has enabled the price of gas to go up by far more than the CPI. During the two years I was energy minister and preceding that, when the Leader of the Opposition had responsibility for energy matters, both he and I were absolutely determined to ensure that South Australian gas consumers paid a fair price for gas and that companies were kept to the CPI. But not so under this government, for the record shows that under it much higher increases have been approved, to the extent that gas has gone up under this government in the vicinity of 12 per cent since it came to office. That means that this amount, with the increase that will inevitably occur, will still see the price of gas go up by about 22 per cent. In other words, even with a \$64 million subsidy, gas will go up by close to the price that this government has allowed electricity prices to increase. It would seem that the government will not see too much return for its \$64 million. It is also interesting to reflect on the fact that the \$64 million goes to the same companies to which the Premier so eloquently referred as bloodsuckers, both publicly and in this chamber.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Whom was he referring to?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: He referred to companies in the energy market as bloodsuckers. The same companies that retail electricity will be retailing gas; we are going to see the same companies enter the market. In this respect, I refer to Origin Energy, an electricity retailer and currently the state's only gas retailer; and to AGL, an electricity retailer, which also wishes to retail gas—and why shouldn't it? After all, it is the Australian Gaslight Company; it has part of its market interstate and wants part of it here, too. TXU will likewise be retailing gas, as it does electricity—perhaps under

its new title in a year and a half's time, or whenever the sale to Singapore Power occurs. These are the same companies to which the Premier previously referred.

I particularly encourage the Labor Party back bench to reflect on what I have said in relation to gas prices and to hold their minister and cabinet to account. If they believe that their constituents are not in for a horrendous increase, they are totally deluding themselves. Of course, one thing of which we can be sure is that none of the \$1 500 million allocated through this bill will assist South Australian electricity users. Those people have been absolutely belted by this government—including most of the people in this state. Under the Labor government, we have seen electricity prices increase by 32 per cent.

Ms Breuer: Who sold the power?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Every time the member for Giles, or any of her colleagues, interjects with, 'Who sold it?', they simply demonstrate their ignorance. You could almost pick up an American rendition associated not with the economy but with electricity and finish by saying, 'It's the national electricity market, stupid.'

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): There are any number of issues on which I would like to address this house, such as the economy and the government and its spending. However, given the shadow portfolios that I have just been allocated, I will try, in the first instance, to stick to those issues which come under those portfolios.

First, I want to refer to the child protection review by Robyn Layton QC, which was handed down early in 2003. We are now almost halfway through 2004 and there is precious little evidence that the government has spent any money on addressing the some 206 recommendations that came out of that review. Indeed, to date, they have not even had an official government response. In fact, on 23 March this year, the new Minister for Families and Communities spoke about a review that was carried out. I am not sure who carried it out, but I imagine it was Family and Youth Services staff.

The review came about as a result of the child protection review report by Robyn Layton. That report recommended a comprehensive assessment of the workload demands on FAYS staff, and the former minister called for a detailed investigation into those demands. In his statement of 23 March this year, the minister indicated that the report that came about from that investigation was 'deeply disturbing'. He went on to say:

It documents an inability to meet our responsibilities to the children in our communities, and it highlights the enormity of the task.

The investigation identified some quite startling and, as the minister said, quite alarming statistics. It stated that nearly 70 per cent of notifications were re-notifications, that is, they were matters that had already been alerted to FAYS. Five per cent (that is, one in 20) of the tier 1 notifications were not investigated within 24 hours. Tier 1, of course, is the most serious level of notification and indicates that there is urgent and dramatic need for intervention. However, one in 20 cases was not even investigated within 24 hours. Almost 10 per cent of tier 2 investigations were not investigated at all, and 23 per cent of tier 2 investigations were not investigated within seven days. Those are indeed alarming statistics and alarming findings.

They went on to make a further finding that in 24 per cent (that is, almost one in four) of the very high risk cases and 18

per cent of the high risk cases (that is, almost one in five) reassessments were not done within three months. That is indeed alarming. The people who undertook the investigation found that a lot of basic information was simply not available, including staffing by program and staffing levels generally for a 10 year period, expenditure, program outcomes, and so on. They are alarming statistics and alarming findings. Nevertheless, the government seems to have done virtually nothing.

As I have said, in her report, Robyn Layton made 206 separate recommendations. However, for the ease of reference by the government, she kindly divided the recommendations into those which had significant cost implications, those with moderate cost implications, and those with little or no cost implications. First, I want to refer to some of the recommendations which Robyn Layton QC suggested could be implemented without significant cost implications but on which the government has still not acted.

The first recommendation was for the setting up of the South Australian child protection board and regional protection committees. As far as I am aware, the government has taken no action to implement that recommendation. Similarly, there was a recommendation to refocus FAYS on social welfare work in lieu of incident-based interventions. In other words, prevention is a far better way to approach a problem than simply undertaking acute intervention. We all know that the intergenerational report into the health system carried out by John Menadue reached the same conclusion, namely, that prevention at the coalface and in the community would be worth a whole lot more at the end of the day than continually undertaking urgent and acute interventions. However, in spite of that recommendation, nothing has happened.

The third recommendation to which I want to refer is to 'develop a collaborative child protection focus within DECS, involving community strategies'. I will mention here specifically a number of the Layton recommendations. Recommendation 7 recommends a statewide home visit nursing service, which would take children through the developmental milestones from birth to three years of age. Given the very short time that new mothers now have in hospital and the fact that many of them find it quite difficult to access health care centres and so on, the idea of a statewide home visit service to ensure that mothers are in touch with people who can check the developmental milestones of their children is an important way of identifying those who might be at risk. On reading the report, it is self-evident that the people who conscientiously take their children to child health services (I do not know what they are currently called, but that is certainly what they were called when I was taking my babies to them) are largely concerned about and interested in their child's development.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: CAFHS.

Mrs REDMOND: That is right; CAFHS. Thank you, Attorney. The children who are likely to be at risk are also the ones whose parents are generally unlikely to take them regularly to CAFHS so that those milestones can be checked. So, the introduction of a home visit service so that all children do get reviewed as to those milestones is an important thing.

Additionally, recommendation 10 of the Layton report suggests school breakfast programs. Again, it is obvious that it will help those children who are most in need; that is, the ones who do not necessarily have a stable family life and who do not necessarily have a parent offering them any breakfast

before they go to school are the very ones who, with other indicia, are likely to be at risk of coming into strife later.

Recommendation 10 refers to after-school and vacation care and recommendation 14 to flexible care options. Clearly, again these are programs, which, in Ms Layton's view, could be implemented in a relative straightforward way without massive cost introductions, yet the government has taken no steps to introduce them.

There is also recommendation 15 about the parenting skills program. Again, it is self-evident that the people who are likely to be most at risk are the ones who do not by the nature of their own background have parenting skills and who would probably be largely helped by them. Another recommendation of the Layton report, which she viewed as being in the low cost or minimal cost category, was expanding what is known as the Magellan program in the Family Court (recommendations 107 and 110). That is a special program in the Family Court which expedites court processes dealing with cases of allegations of child abuse. The explanation given by Robyn Layton in her report does make it clear that the implementation of this will require training with appropriate adjustment for local conditions; nevertheless, it is not something that would involve a great cost as the program is already in place.

Just looking briefly at the recommendations with moderate cost implications recommended by Robyn Layton (and I will not go through all of them as 16 recommendations are identified by her review in this category), they include creating statutory offices of the commissioner for children and young persons and the guardian for children and young persons, providing priority services for children under the guardianship of the minister and implementing a screening and monitoring unit in the South Australian police department to be compatible with, and therefore part of, any national or state system ultimately in the development of a national paedophile register, as well as providing a child sex offender treatment program for treatment of adult sex offenders, whether they are in prison or on diversionary programs. Suffice to say, with all those recommendations (and, as I said, Robyn Layton said that, in her view, they would not require significant cost input by the government), the government has done nothing to bring about the introduction of those programs.

I move away from the Layton report for a moment and refer to the care and support of adults with disabilities. Again, the government seems to be sadly lacking. As I move around the electorate of Heysen, I regularly come into contact with quite a number of families who have raised children with profound disabilities, sometimes—

Mr Goldsworthy: And Kavel.

Mrs REDMOND: Yes, and in the electorate of Kavel. In fact, the member for Kavel and I regularly attend meetings jointly representing people from the Hills area generally with parents of profoundly disabled children, and sometimes they are the natural parents and sometimes, out of the extraordinary generosity of their own hearts, they have fostered children with profound disabilities. The thing that I can never understand is that these people who have raised these children (whether they are their natural children or whether they are their fostered children) have saved the state an enormous amount of money. Once these children would have been institutionalised but they are no longer institutionalised; the families care for them in their own homes. However, when you have a 20-year old who has the mental development of an 18 month old and still requires nappies, it is obviously a

very difficult task to continue to look after that person once they are an adult.

A number of issues arise from this. One of the key issues is the fact that, when the parents become too old, frail, or indeed pass away, they will not be there to look after these adults any more, even though the adults clearly need care, and clearly it would be unjust and unfair, having not institutionalised them for their whole lives, to then institutionalise them. Obviously, as they become older, the parents are very concerned about what will happen to their adult disabled child once they can no longer care for them.

In addition, there is the issue of the need for respite care for these people. That respite is both for the child—to give them an alternative stimulating environment—and for the parents. It is hard to comprehend the level of effort that such parents put into their children. Whereas most of us who are blessed with children who do not have such disabilities are able to get time off within a few years—that is, not having that absolute need to be with our children 24 hours a day and to be looking out for them—these parents have to keep doing it year after year, every day of the week, 24 hours a day.

Respite care can be quite difficult to obtain, and I have come across a number of situations. I have had two cases in the last 12 months with people who are fostering children: they are doing a service for the community and with very little financial reward for themselves. They take on a huge task yet, when they wanted to put their children into respite care for a week, they were told that it would cost them \$1 000 to do so, even though the children would otherwise have been wards of the state all along.

One of the other areas about which I am concerned is that of post-school options—and I hope to say more about that later this week. In essence, what happens is that many children with disabilities can get a certain level of care, and I guess there is some level of respite, too, if they are able to attend school with some support or go to special school, but when you reach the situation where the child has finished his or her formal schooling and they are now a young adult what are they to do if they are not independent enough to go to a sheltered workshop? The difficulty is that the money simply is not increasing sufficiently for the increasing numbers of parents who are having to avail themselves of the post-school options. In fact, I have a request before the minister at the moment concerning people who can access money towards those post-school options, whether they could do it by way of organising some alternatives for themselves as they believe that they could make better use of the same amount of money. They are asking the government not for an increase in funds but simply to be given the ability to better allocate it themselves.

In the few minutes I have left, I will refer to a number of issues in relation to the housing portfolio because obviously some significant issues are arising in relation to housing around our community, and particularly in the area of The Parks. First, I note that the South Australian ALP platform issued as Labor's plan for housing contains the following statement:

A Labor government will formulate a comprehensive housing plan in consultation with industry, relevant groups and organisations in both the private and public arenas.

Integral to the plan will be the establishment of sound development and urban design principles, which take into account the broader issues affecting state infrastructure development.

Two years through this government's term, no such housing plan exists and, furthermore, the waiting list for Housing

Trust homes has increased; the number of new tenants has decreased; and the number of existing tenants has decreased.

The number of Housing Trust rental properties went from 49 543 to 48 271. Even though we have an increased waiting list, we have a decreasing number of properties available. The Labor platform also indicates:

A Rann Labor government will encourage greater community involvement in devising new housing and accommodation alternatives for people with differing housing needs and income levels.

I point out that no new alternatives have been developed and, in fact, we have seen a closure of a record number of supported residential facilities. In a similar way, in their platform Labor promised:

Labor will address the needs of older South Australians by:

Formulating a comprehensive housing plan in consultation with industry and organisations in both the private and public arenas to include a strategy for housing older South Australians.

The reality is that the Rann government has stopped the building of about fifteen aged care facilities by stopping the Homestart aged care loans. So, far from bringing in its promises, the Labor government has done exactly nothing and, indeed, another one of their platforms is:

Labor will work with local housing organisations, services and the Social Inclusion Unit to reduce the number of homeless in this state by 50 per cent. . .

If the number of homeless is to be reduced by 50 per cent during the life of the government, one would have expected that at least by half way through there would be some reduction in the number of homeless—one would have hoped that at least 25 per cent less would be homeless but, in fact, there is no evidence whatsoever that there has been any reduction in the number of homeless. In fact, referring to an item that the member for Davenport raised last night concerning the level of stamp duty and home ownership, the ALP South Australian Branch housing policy states that they want to 'increase home ownership through providing flexible and innovative schemes to assist low and moderate income earners by way of low start loans, income geared loans, low deposit loans and deferred repayment of taxes and interest'.

Not only have they not introduced any new incentives for home ownership but now that the mean price of houses in the Adelaide metropolitan area has increased to \$246 000, and given that the first home buyers exemption comes to something like half way to that amount, the reality is that, if anything, the gaining of entry into the housing market by low income earners has become dramatically more difficult under a Labor government than it ever was under the previous Liberal government. Further in relation to housing, the policy of the Labor party says that they will ensure that public housing rents remain affordable and are set at levels which reflect the capacity of tenants to pay. The reality is that the Labor government did precisely the opposite. In its first budget, it increased the proportion of a tenant's total income which has to go to the Housing Trust rent from about 23½ per cent to 25 per cent. So, how they can justify the idea that they set their rents at levels which reflect the capacity of tenants to pay is simply beyond me, when they are in fact increasing not just the amount of the rent but the proportion of the rent in terms of the tenant's available income.

Time expired.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I, too, wish to make a contribution on this very important supply debate. I think it is important to reflect exactly where we are at this stage of—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: And you're the man to do it.

Mr SCALZI: The Attorney interjects; but it is important to note that in February this government celebrated—and I cannot say that the public celebrated—two years in office, with a major reshuffle. It is important to note that two years is the halfway point of the present term, but this is only a recent phenomena. Up until recently we had three year terms for state governments, so this would have been two thirds of the way into this present government's term and, indeed, similar to the federal government term, which is now heading to a federal election. So, the argument that the government uses that it is still trying to deal with the problems of the last government is really a bit much at this stage of the electoral cycle.

The Rann government inherited solid economic conditions and ample revenue to honour its pre-election promises, especially given the windfall in property valuation based state taxes over the last two years. Despite this, South Australians have been faced with a lack of action on energy prices, industrial relations uncertainty, falling exports, and fear of increased unemployment and underemployment in comparison to other states.

Although the property boom has been good news for those wishing to sell and for the government, which has pocketed substantial increases in land tax and stamp duty revenues, pensioners and self-funded retirees on fixed incomes have certainly had little to celebrate. As I stated previously, and as the Minister for Infrastructure would vouch, on 11 February this year, for the first time since the last election, around 400 people in my electorate at Felixstow were organised by the Land Tax Reform Association to protest against the exorbitant unfair increases—

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Caica): Order! The member for Kavel will not interject.

Mr SCALZI:—and the Minister for Infrastructure was present. I note that he often interjects in the house, but at that public meeting he was very quiet indeed. He was listening to the people; so, I hope that his listening comes to fruition in this state's budget. I know that he put the case to the Treasurer of how difficult it was for him that evening because—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Joe, it was easy. There was no pressure whatsoever.

Mr SCALZI: You don't feel any pressure? The minister did not look too comfortable that evening. I very much doubt that he would have coped if he had to attend a similar meeting of 350 people about Lochiel Park. I give the minister credit for attending that public meeting although he was not his usual outspoken self, as he is in the chamber. Perhaps he does not feel comfortable in front of public meetings.

I refer to concessions on which the government has also deferred action. It is of much concern to me that concessions have not been increased while utilities and charges such as council and water rates associated with recent rises in property valuation have risen sharply, impacting on pensioners and self-funded retirees especially. I refer to a press release by Senator Kay Patterson, the federal Minister for Family and Community Services, in which she commented on the federal proposal to extend concessions to holders of the commonwealth senior health card. Acceptance of the new federal offer, which has increased moneys available to the states by \$10 million, is on hold in South Australia as the state government has not yet accepted the co-funding obligation of 40 per cent of the cost of providing concessions. Federal funding would enable greater concessions for self-

funded retirees on rates, water and sewerage, energy and motor vehicle charges.

Both Western Australia and the Northern Territory have already accepted the proposal and offer concessions to commonwealth senior cardholders. Again, that was an opportunity for the government to have acted and cooperated with the federal government in order to get more concessions. But what do they do? They come in here and bag the federal government for short-term political purposes—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: They loved me at Lochiel Park, Joe. They just loved me.

Mr SCALZI: The minister says that they loved him at Lochiel Park, but he did not even go to Lochiel Park. I refer to the increase in government charges and taxes. This is a government which, in opposition, said that there would be no new taxes. I refer to an article by Craig Clarke on 26 April, which states:

South Australia's taxes have jumped more than 39 per cent in five years—faster than any other state. South Australians were hit with an average of \$1 513 in taxes last financial year compared with \$1 088 in 1998-99. The state also had the highest level of revenue from fines in the nation, with the equivalent of each person paying \$79 compared with a national average of \$55.

I note that the minister does not interject, because they are the facts. This is the highest taxing government. *The Advertiser* says that the details are contained in the Commonwealth Grants Commission's latest report. The article states:

The state government has reaped more than \$2.3 billion in taxes this past financial year. Five years earlier, South Australians paid \$1.6 billion. Tax experts have blasted the rises while business says state taxes are hindering jobs growth. Business SA has called for a cut to payroll and land tax and an overhaul of stamp duty. In its annual review of state spending and revenue raising, the commission found SA rated among the lowest taxing states based on raw figures. However, after the figures were adjusted on a per capita basis over the past five years, it found the rate at which SA's tax revenue increased was the highest of any state.

The statistics speak for themselves. One would have thought that, with millions of dollars coming in, this government could be doing more. The government prides itself on caring for the underprivileged, and the Premier says that he is the education premier, giving priority to education and health. However, when we look at their budgets (as a percentage of the overall budget) those areas have not been given the attention that the rhetoric of this government tells us they should have had. I refer to another article—

Ms Ciccarello: Why do you have to refer to the media?

Mr SCALZI: Why do we refer to the media? The media are important. They play a very important role in our democracy because they are the objective umpires. I refer to an article entitled 'Funding measures that challenge school rules'. The government and the Australian Education Union are fuelling this state versus private education rivalry. I think that it is unproductive, because what we really want is to extend the production possibility curve for education, to make sure that we have better education outcomes—not only in the public education system but also in the private system. Indeed, in the area of further training and education, we must view education as a lifelong process.

I am pleased that the leader has given me the responsibility for further education and training and youth, because they are very important areas. I know that the minister responsible agrees that, unless we get these things right in education and have flexibility for our young people, we are not going to deal with the serious issues of long-term unemployment and giving young people the self-esteem and the opportunities

that they require to contribute and participate in our community. Going back to the article, Prof. Dean Jaensch states:

Any fair assessment [when it comes to public/private education] has to consider both sources of money. A table published in the *Advertiser* (13/3/04) did just that, but it also included the funding provided by parents. It seems to me that any discussion about government funding—and that is what the argument is about—should exclude the parents' contribution. So, excluding that from the table, the result becomes interesting indeed. Reworking the arithmetic provides a figure of funding per student on the basis of the total funds provided by both levels of government: public, \$7 290 per student; private, \$5 691 per student.

I think it is wrong to fuel the state versus private education debate without acknowledging that education at a secondary level is the responsibility of state governments. I think we have to be honest about that and must acknowledge the contribution, as pointed out in that table in the *Advertiser* of 13 March to which I would like to refer. When we include the contribution of the parents, more is spent, but it is the contribution of the parents, and surely we are about choice. When we just compare the total state and federal contribution to education, private students get less than public students.

Indeed, if we did not have a healthy private school sector, the public school sector would not be able to maintain the standard of education that our young people deserve. So, rather than fuelling the debate of state versus private, let us be honest about the total contribution and let us improve the whole education sector. Let us be more flexible. Let us make sure that we have education programs that are meaningful and relate the world of work with the students in the secondary and in the TAFE and further education sector (the VET sector), so that students are able to achieve. And let us get away from this fruitless debate of state versus private education. I wholeheartedly agree with Prof. Dean Jaensch in his article. On education, we are again seeing a protracted debate. For an area that is essentially state responsibility, the latest figures show that South Australian spending on education has increased at the lowest rate in Australia over the last five years: 13 per cent as against the national average of 23 per cent.

This again demonstrates that the Rann government's public prioritising of education is not borne out in spending as a percentage of budget. I would note that the same analysis of per capita spending revealed in other areas of state spending did not fall below the national average. In other areas, I give credit to the government: it has not fallen behind the national average. So, you cannot use the figures to suit yourself. We have to be open and honest. I would like to refer to some things in my local area. At a local level we have experienced repeated delays with capital works. At East Torrens Primary School, I note that the gymnasium is going to go ahead but I am not seeing much work on Montacute Road. The member for Light was the minister at the time who signed that this should go ahead, and I would be too frightened to take him into the area, because nothing has happened. But there has been a commitment, and I look forward to that.

The relocation of the Hectorville kindy onto the East Torrens Primary School campus, an issue I brought up many times in the house, has not occurred and we still do not know where it is. It is disappointing that the community has received no satisfactory answer on these issues. The kindergarten closed at the end of 2003. Another local kindergarten (Murray Park) is struggling to raise funds for a necessary shade structure over outdoor play areas, whilst the government saw fit instead to fund a new computer, which in this

case was not required. We need the shade cloth: the parents have raised thousands of dollars; but no, we are not going to help you with the shade cloth, but here is the computer. Surely in the kindergarten they have computers already.

Other local issues have also dragged on, and the community has received scant information. I refer to the former Hectorville Primary School site. After three years of uncertainty the government revealed on 23 February that the site had been sold to the South Australian Housing Trust. I welcome the decision that something is going to happen. Local residents have endured two years of government inaction and ongoing problems with vandalism. Clearly, the management of the site has been a problem, with repeated repairs necessary and ongoing problems with squatting, dumping of rubbish and even stolen cars in adjacent streets. The community is still waiting on official word of the redevelopment of the site, and there are issues including the setting aside of land for the development of the community tennis courts for Hectorville Sporting Club. We were promised that we would get some tennis courts for that valuable club, the Hectorville Sporting Club.

Water drainage issues will have to be addressed as, indeed, will other important environmental issues. Yes, we are going to have Housing Trust development. Are they going to be ecologically sound and energy efficient? I look forward to the plans for that development. I hope it is not going to be two light globes and a snake again from the Housing Trust, and being told 'Cut the energy bills with that.'

Time expired.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I support this bill and take the opportunity to make some comments about the government's budget and in particular some of the areas where I see points for concern. The member for Hartley has just noted the East Torrens school project. I am disturbed to see that that has not made progress, because this was a win-win situation for that school community, and the delays that are occurring in capital works by this government are nothing short of disgraceful.

When we were in government, I well remember the shadow Minister for Education (Hon. Trish White) making a large amount of noise about the fact that over the eight years that the Liberal government had been in power there was an underspend of some \$124 million. She was lamenting long and loud as to what that could do for our schools, completely oblivious of the fact that there are times when delays do occur. I found it very interesting to see on 16 February this year a question from the Leader of the Opposition to the Treasurer with regard to the capital works program, and I quote the Treasurer's answer:

In 2002-03, purchases of property, plant and equipment by the general government sector were \$421 million; \$183 million lower than the estimate of \$604 million provided at the time of the 2002-03 budget. A significant component of this variation arises from accounting classification changes. Around \$80 million of capital expenditure was reclassified as operating expenditure to meet Australian accounting standards. The remaining \$103 million is largely the result of delays in project expenditure from that estimated at the time of the 2002-03 budget partly offset by higher capital expenditure by some health units.

Here is \$103 million in less than two years when, in fact, the previous shadow minister, now Minister for Transport, the Hon. Trish White, was complaining about, over eight years, a sum of \$124 million. We are aware that, when this government took office, it immediately put all capital works programs on hold to review them. As a result, if you talk to

building industry people in South Australia as I did last Thursday night, they will tell you that South Australia is losing tradespeople interstate because the capital works programs undertaken by the Liberal government are not occurring with this government. The number of tenders out there is minuscule. As a result, a lot of people are moving interstate, yet the state is crying out for tradespeople.

This government obviously does not understand that the wheels that turn the building industry and economy in this state result in part from the government having a robust and healthy capital works budget. When that is purposely delayed for no real reason, it has an impact on our economy and on the tradespeople within our community whom we need desperately. In October last year, I asked a question about the third river crossing of the Port River and when tenders would be let for those bridges. I was told that they would be let very soon. In reply to another question asked earlier this year, we were told that they would be let early this year, and although I stand to be corrected, I think it was before the end of March, but certainly very soon. We have still not seen them. We know that there are preferred tenderers, but the fact is they are not out.

The grain industry of South Australia is relying on these bridges to be completed by 2006. If they are not completed by the harvest of 2006, the industry will run into severe problems because of the transport of the grain to the new Outer Harbor berth. I congratulate the government on undertaking the deepening of Outer Harbor; it is what should be done to allow Panamax class vessels to come into South Australia. It is something that we indicated in the contract when Ports Corp was sold. The agreement was undertaken at that stage, and I am pleased to see this government continue that agreement. If these bridges are to be built, the tenders need to be out so that work can commence. The tenders first have to come in, which takes time, then 60 days after that the tenderer is required to commence work. Months can slip away very quickly indeed, and that does not count on any delays that might occur in the actual construction and building of the bridges.

There are a number of other areas that I think should be of concern to the public South Australia in this government's performance. If I go back to my old portfolio of education, I must say that I am very sad to see the wind-back of Partnerships 21 and control being wrested back by the department away from the schools in terms of decision making and their ability to control their own budget. A number of schools have approached me about what is going on in terms of their global allowance for the school, as well as the reserve funds that had been in the SASIF accounts, and exactly what they are being directed to do by the department in terms of priority maintenance as against what the school determines are the most important factors operating on their site. I think it is very sad because one of the factors—

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The member for Torrens asks what we did about non-P21 schools. She well knows the campaign that was run by the union against P21. She knows of the very strong union staff in those schools and the fact that, whether it was an advantage for the school or not, they held out against P21. If it was so bad, why did the member for Torrens' government, upon entering—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member must direct any comments through the chair.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: If the member for Torrens considers that P21 was the wrong way to go, why did the

government, upon coming to government, endorse the fact that the schools that were not P21 would become P21 schools compulsorily? At least we allowed them the option. There were significant benefits for those schools to come in. One of the benefits was that they had control of their own budget. I remember the union and the Labor opposition at the time saying, 'This will be the wreck of all schools; they will go broke; they will not be able to manage their own budgets; woe is us and doom and tide is upon us.' Well, sir, those schools and the communities embraced it, and they like it.

If we look at the SASIF accounts and the funds that are in those accounts, we see that they have gone up in those times. They have not gone broke. I knew that they would not, because the volunteer parents who serve on our governing councils are very conservative people. They have their school at heart, and they make sure that the best efforts of the school are put forward. They have done very well and I congratulate them. If it is so bad why does the government not reverse the whole system and bring it all back under departmental control? It is not. Parents are currently very concerned about the amount of control that is being gradually wound back by the department and taken away from them.

I turn to the issue of road funding in South Australia. The Britannia roundabout is the worst blackspot in metropolitan Adelaide in terms of accidents, and nothing is being done by this government to arrest that. A number of plans were drawn up under the Liberal government which were ready for action if we were returned to government. But, in two years, we have not heard a whisper of anything that is going to be done about that roundabout. Despite the noise that we hear about road safety, when it comes to the hard decisions such as fixing this roundabout, the government is lost; it is in the wilderness, not to be heard. I suggest to government that this is one of the priorities that they should look at in the May budget. I hope that it takes on the challenge, because I have seen the four plans, and it is not an easy decision in terms of the best solution for that roundabout.

Ms Ciccarello: Teach people how to drive!

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I agree with the member for Norwood—teach people how to drive. Many people in South Australia have no idea how to operate at a roundabout: the member is exactly right about that. Mr Acting Speaker, I do not know how you handle that roundabout, but I have no problems when I go around it because there are certain road rules to be followed. Unfortunately, however, a large number of South Australians obviously do not know those rules. That is where the government needs to step in and provide a solution, and at the moment no solution is forthcoming.

Rural road funding was wound back by \$10.5 million by this government in its first budget, and I was pleased to see that at least it was not wound back any further in the second budget. That \$10.5 million was allocated under a rural and arterial roads program. Now, on outback roads, about which I have spoken a lot in the last two years, road gangs have been reduced from two to one, so that the level of maintenance of outback roads has deteriorated and been wound back. When I was shadow minister, a lot of people wrote to me and raised the issue of the deteriorating surface of the roads, and particularly—

Mrs Geraghty: I hope you wrote to the federal government.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Well, when we were in government the two road gangs were there. We did not wind back and cut \$1 million from roads funding: 65 kilometres of sheeting has not been undertaken on our outback roads

because this particular road gang has been cut. As well, I think just over 20 contractors undertaking this work lost their jobs as a result. If one talks to the garage owner at Copley, one will find out how many punctures he repairs every week, and the number is not declining. When I last spoke with him he was repairing 25 punctures per week, which is good business for him. However, I can assure the house that it is no fun for the people who have to traverse those roads.

This government's failure to come up with a solution to the South-East rail situation is there for all to see. The blue gum industry will come to fruition in three to four years' time, and it will be interesting to see how the government will handle this matter, because the roads in the South-East are not built for that style of transport. The volume of traffic will be quite immense when the blue gums mature and are transported to the mill for processing. It will be an issue, and I warn the government to start thinking about it now, because in three or four years' time it will be a problem in the South-East and the road infrastructure will deteriorate unless it is addressed. I notice that the Mayor of Wattle Range Council said only the other day that one of the roads which links this area to Mount Gambier needs to be sealed so that trucks do not traverse the Riddoch Highway, which carries enough traffic already. This issue must be addressed.

One of the other areas of concern is exports. When the Liberal Party was in government, it put a lot of work into food exports from South Australia. I remember the Leader of the Opposition, then the minister for agriculture (Hon. Rob Kerin), taking numerous industry groups to trade fares in South-East Asia to promote South Australian produce such as wine, rock lobsters, oysters and vegetables—a range of South Australian produce—to ensure that our face was in those market places to enable us to develop those export markets. My information (and I stand to be corrected) is that this is not occurring now and, as a result, in trade fares in that area—and in Europe and elsewhere—South Australia is not represented. As I said, I stand to be corrected, but that is my information.

As a result, we would be seen as an unreliable supplier, particularly in the Asian community. I know only a little about Asian business and their ways of business, but I do know that you build up a certain rapport with these people over a long period and, if you become unreliable or do not continue to have contact with business people, they will turn to people with whom they can maintain a rapport and contact. Is it any wonder that we see our level of exports dipping? It is not because of the drought. That has now well and truly passed.

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Exactly. As the member for Kavel says, that was two years ago. That excuse no longer stands. The fact is that we had a bumper season last year and wine exports have been rising as well, yet we still see a downturn in exports from this state. It is something that this government should be seriously looking at, and it should be raising its efforts in terms of exports, particularly food exports. Everyone—including the Economic Development Board, I think—says that that is where our comparative advantage lies. South Australia has an excellent reputation in terms of clean and green production of food products.

The fact is that we have a very saleable commodity and a very saleable, marketable product that we can then put to the rest of the world in terms of exports, and the potential still has not been reached. It is not something that you undertake for just a couple of years and step back and say, 'We have

done a bit; we will let it glide for a while.' You have to be at it every week and every year to ensure that South Australia's face is in front of those importers in South-East Asia, America, Europe and elsewhere in the world so that we sell our product and improve our gross state product and, therefore, improve the chances of employment for young people in this state. This government is failing to do that adequately, and I think that is reflected in the export figures at the moment, and it is something the government will have to address.

Time expired.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): I rise to support this bill to provide \$1.5 billion for the year 2004. I will address a few of the issues that relate to a series of programs and policies that will enable public servants to continue the jobs that they do for this state and perhaps highlight one of the concerns that many people across the state have in terms of higher taxes that have affected the hip pockets of individuals. Very often, this has come down to the policies that have been determined by different government departments.

One of the major areas that has been focused on recently in the media is the massive problems that affect many thousands of South Australians because of enormous rises in land taxes—which, of course, have had very little effect on what I can only class as an opportunistic state government which continues to grab every opportunity to increase taxes and charges in each of its three budgets over the last two years, contrary to its bare-faced election promises not to do so.

The obvious requirement for revenue to come into government is something that each of us here recognises, but when it comes to the point where that revenue is going beyond the normal bounds of expectation, particularly in the hip pockets of individuals out in our community, it behoves all of us to consider that certain programs now need to be reconsidered by this government, particularly the ones that affect the hip pocket, which appears to be one of the major areas from which this government raises its revenue. We have seen huge increases in taxes and charges over the past couple of years, and I doubt that this budget that will come before us will be any different. I can only hope that I am wrong, but the massive hikes and increases that have been placed on so many of our services across the board, which our government subsidises and supplements, have been quite outrageous.

The Labor government has continued to rake in hundreds of millions of dollars in windfall revenue because of what can only be classed as meteoric rises in property valuations, and with alarming arrogance has turned a blind eye to the thousands of South Australians who now face dire economic hardship.

According to our Treasurer, anyone who owns a second property in this state is a wealthy person. He goes on to say that they should be very happy for the valuation increases because on his rationale their property is now worth so much more money. Never mind the fact that the huge grab in land taxes has placed some property owners under so much financial pressure that their only option may be to sell their property. Never mind the fact that not only do those so-called wealthy property owners, many of whom are self-funded retirees, have to pay now in some cases more than \$10 000 a year in land taxes. Also, they have to grapple with the increases in water and sewerage rates, the emergency services levy and council rates, all of which are impacted by the flow-on increases due to these land valuations that we have been

seeing with this meteoric rise over the past couple of years. Never mind the fact that for some rental property owners land taxes now consume the majority of any rental income that may be derived from their investment properties.

It is important for members to recognise that, where accommodation is at a premium out in our residential areas today, for the first time we have seen an increase in waiting lists for housing through the Housing Trust, and where we have private investors who are prepared to invest in privately managed rental properties they are providing a service to the state, because those areas of accommodation are not being attended to by the state. If we remove those rental property owners from the investment area that provides that type of accommodation, it will come down to the government itself having to look to replace those investment funds from its own revenues, and that also affects the taxpayers of this state once again. It may seem in some instances that people who have dollars to invest are rich, but if they are also providing a service to the community that should be recognised as well. I do not say all are.

However, the Auditor-General in his annual report last year identified that the government would gain in its last two budgets some \$1 billion over and above budget predictions, not to mention some \$230 million extra in an unexpected GST bonus. The state government does not appear in any way to be doing anything with these revenues, other than stashing them away or hoarding, after breaking key election promises of no increases in taxes and charges. The government does not appear to be, nor is seen to be, investing any of that revenue into South Australia. It is not spending the windfall, but just seems to be sitting on a rather large and growing war chest, waiting to try to buy an undeserved second term in office.

Again, it means that if investment moneys, through government, are not put out into the public arena, that has an effect on the economic stability that underpins the very economy of the state. It certainly has a very negative effect on people who may look to invest in this state and see that there is nothing on offer. It means that employment continues to decrease because the amount of money sitting in government coffers is not out there in the economic turntable to enable job employment to increase rather than decrease.

For every dollar the government withholds or underspends in any given budget, it can have a great effect on the economic stability of the state through the lack of investment moneys, which means that components that build and grow infrastructure, usually owned by small businesses, can be affected quite dramatically if the money is not out there to purchase the items that cause our economies to grow. It also affects small business. I will come to the small business sector in a moment.

I am disappointed that the Treasurer appears to do nothing for the hard-working South Australians who have tried in their own way to secure their financial future with investment properties, when he himself has seen the wisdom of an investment property, albeit interstate. I do not know what sort of message the Treasurer intends to send investment in this state. Financial investment in this state underpins our economic stability, but the Treasurer's message appears to be 'invest anywhere else, but not in this our own state.' If the Treasurer had been at the public meeting on land tax in February of this year, he would have seen that his preconceived ideas of property owners as being allegedly wealthy were so far off the mark as to be laughable. His wealthy property owners myth would have been shattered.

Far from being wealthy, these people were mainly self-funded retirees, people who had inherited property, people who had worked hard to invest in a single extra property. I do not think there is anything in those statements that people in this chamber would not be able to understand. Many people across this state have battled on low incomes and have managed to put some savings aside to invest in what they call the 'venerable shack'. That is a second property and does not make them wealthy. There are many people in this chamber who know people in that situation. It may be relatives and family friends, but it does not necessarily mean that these people are wealthy.

The mere fact that there has been an increase in value on properties across the state does not mean that they are wealthy, either. The only way they will benefit from this alleged wealth that the Treasurer says is in their bank accounts would be to sell the very properties that allegedly make them wealthy. I cannot imagine the battlers, who have either inherited properties that could have been in the family for up to one 100, 60, 50, 30 or 20 years, would consider themselves wealthy individuals who should be ripped off by a Treasurer who considers that they are the people from whom we need to ensure that the revenues and coffers of government get a fair percentage from their hip pockets.

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

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Before the dinner break I spoke about land tax, which is one of the major issues that has been talked about by tens of thousands of people across the state in recent times. I suggested that, if the Treasurer had attended the meeting in February, where 300 people met to discuss the problems they faced because of the increase in land tax, his wealthy property owners myth would have been shattered. I suggested that, far from being wealthy, these people range from self-funded retirees, people who have inherited property, and people who have worked hard to invest in one additional property. The fact that some people who have been hit by this huge land tax increase do not, in fact, even own a second property.

If we take the example of some South Australians who run a small business from their principal place of residence, such as bed and breakfast owners, we find that these operators are being charged land tax on their entire principal place of residence instead of looking at a pro rata formula based on the exact area used for their business, which would obviously be much fairer and equitable. We are advised by many of these people that it is getting to the point where the return for their labour is being outdone by the amount of land tax that is now being extracted from them. We have a situation where, if no relief is given in this area, it is very likely that many of these people will take the decision to close down their businesses. Of course, that will have an extreme impact on tourism, which is one of the other economic benefits this state heavily relies on. If the accommodation factor is to be lessened in the different areas of the state it could well affect quite drastically a reduction in a large percentage of tourists who seek to use the smaller bed and breakfast accommodation that is available to them in all areas of the state.

The government's arrogance in not taking any action in this instance is certainly pushing small business operators to the point where their business is no longer viable. I have written to the Treasurer on this matter asking him to redress the situation, which has been put so strongly by people involved in this industry. However, to date, I have not

received an answer. Apart from stretching the resources of the average property holder, this government may cause dire and irreversible economic damage to this state's investment industry, and we can include the real estate industry and, as I have mentioned, the tourist industry. Many tourists prefer the low-cost and unique atmosphere of the bed and breakfast establishments. However, if this is ruined, I would suggest to the Treasurer that the tourist dollars will disappear very quickly.

It is not acceptable for this government to ignore the plight of taxpayers by ignoring the inequitable system of land tax for which this government is wholly responsible. There is no justification when some property owners are facing land tax increases from what was previously hundreds of dollars to what is now, in some cases, well over \$10 000. As I said earlier, the Treasurer seems to think that people would be grateful that increases in property valuations means that their properties are worth more. However, they are worth more only if these people want to sell the property, and the majority of people to whom we have spoken are not in that position. Instead, some rely on rental income for their retirement and others just want to enjoy the family shack, which will be passed onto other family members in perpetuity. This government has to take note of this, and do it now.

Despite the government's much vaunted fixation on the credit rating and the hundreds of millions of dollars in government coffers, I am afraid that the arrogance of the government is alive and well in the iniquitous valuation system. This results only in penalising South Australian citizens by ripping more dollars out of the hip pockets of those who are genuine, hard-working people who have only sought to be self-sufficient and, in fact, to lessen any financial burden on this state.

I spoke earlier about government investment into the underlying economic stability of the state. The effect of non investment can have a vast range of impacts, and we are seeing that with small business across the state. Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at the end of last month show that the number of South Australian small business operators has now fallen by 13 per cent in the two years to June 2003. That is the largest decrease in small business enterprise in any state. I would suggest that this is another signal to the Rann government that, whatever economic strategies it thinks it has in place at the moment, they are highly ineffective.

I think it is necessary to recognise that small business is the backbone of the state's economy; it is certainly the biggest single provider of jobs. We have now seen a fall of some 13 per cent in small business operators in South Australia over a two-year period compared with the national decrease of only 0.4 per cent. In fact, when we look across the border to our neighbouring state, Victoria increased the number of small businesses operating in its state by some 6 per cent. On average, we have had a new small business minister every eight months, the department responsible has been subject to three restructures and is still without a CEO, and services to the small business community have been cut. These are just a few of the matters that have caused issue and concern across the state, not only to members of the opposition but also to our many residents and citizens.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin: Everyone but the government.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Everyone but the government, as the leader says. Unless these matters are addressed in the coming budget, I would assume the opposition has been correct in its impending gloom in terms of how this govern-

ment has tended not to deal with economic strategies, has sat on dollars underspent in previous budgets, and has cut huge amounts of dollars from every portfolio area and disadvantaged the people of this state.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased to be able to contribute to the supply debate. Like most other members, I will concentrate on the issues of finance and the economy. I think the government is exposed on both counts. Poor budget management, which has only been covered by the fact the government is raising huge amounts of taxes, is one issue. However, what is happening to the economy of South Australia is a very different issue, and I do not think the whole story is being told. By poring through the masses of ABS and other economic data that comes out the government is looking very hard to try to find anything positive and concentrate on that, whereas any proper assessment of the overall figures coming through ring some very loud alarm bells. The opposition sees that as a real problem, because we intend to be back on the other side of the house in two years' time. Like many others, we spent between 1993 and 2002 trying to fix up the mess created largely under the Bannon years, which was a major problem.

The Premier was a senior minister in that government. What we found when we came to government in 1993 was an absolute mess: not only did we find a huge debt but total mismanagement across the board. The former Labor government had no idea what was going on in the economy. Over those eight years, we worked very hard and it was in the last four or five years that things turned around, and at the time of our losing government South Australia was right up there competing very well with the rest of Australia on many of the indicators. We had made up a lot of lost ground, ground that was lost in the mid 1980s to early 1990s, and it is a real pity now for anyone who follows the economic data to see to what we have reverted.

That really does ring some major alarm bells. It is something that the economic commentators are trying to ignore at the moment. Quite frankly, they are the same commentators who were forever making horrible predictions that what we were doing was not sustainable—'Yes, you improved employment but that will drop off soon.' I remember John Spoehr. Quite often we would have big cuts in unemployment; we would be doing very well on the unemployment front, yet you would pick up the paper and read that he was predicting that within 12 months unemployment in South Australia would be way up. He has been very quiet in recent times. About the only spark lately is when the Treasurer took him on. The Treasurer has taken on most South Australians recently, but he got hairy-chested towards John Spoehr, which was a little surprising, but we saw that happen.

The biggest problem that the government has is that the Treasurer and cabinet do not understand a fundamental difference; that is, the economy is one thing, the budget is another. What they have failed to recognise is that, when you run a state budget and bring it in surplus, it does not mean that you are running a good economy. The only way in which this government has been able to have surpluses is to have excessive property taxes, and this is at a time when the other indicators are slowing down. The real problem is that less money is coming in through exports and tourism (which are two of the major funnels) and the government is also taking a heap of money out of the economy through excessive

property taxes. That will cost jobs and investment and, as a result, it will slow down the whole economy.

What the current government, particularly the Treasurer, has to start to understand is that there is a specific difference between what is the state budget and what is the state economy. Unless you get the two of them working together and understand your fiscal policy, that is, what you do with taxes such as property taxes, you will have a major effect on the economy, you will continue to get it wrong and you will see the trends which we are seeing currently. As I said, after eight years in government and fixing up the last mess, what we see happening now with the economy and WorkCover is a major disappointment. Over recent months, when we have asked questions on some of these topics, it has appeared that the ministers do not understand much of what is occurring with employment, the economy, tourism and the economic drivers.

That is a major concern to me because it seems to have been the reaction quite often when we have asked about exports—and I will come back to exports and the Premier's answer yesterday—employment and women's employment; that is, it has been an absolute surprise. Yesterday, when we asked about the number of small businesses that have disappeared from South Australia in the last couple of years, it was a major surprise. When we asked about the number of women operators in small business, it seemed an absolute surprise. The answer we get to most of these questions is: 'Well, we will have to go and check that.' A cabinet which is watching the economy would have reports. Ministers would be taking what we call pink notes into the cabinet and informing members of cabinet and saying, 'Look, guys, we are in major trouble, our exports have been dropping'—unlike what the Premier said yesterday.

If he had any idea of what is going on in the figures, he would have shown much more regard yesterday to what I was saying and not said, 'It's the drought,' because, as I explained later, it is not the drought—the drought was the other year—

Mr Brokenshire: There should have been a red alert coming out of the Premier's office.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: That is right. Because we have no champions for industry and these other issues within the cabinet. Cabinet does not seem to be informed about what is happening with this economy. Quite frankly, one of the reasons may well be that anyone who tells the government the truth or has the temerity to say that something is not good—

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN:—cops a flogging, as the member for Mawson said. They get an aggressive response from the government and, quite frankly, I would not be surprised if that is starting to flow through to their own staff, their own advisers—'I'm not the one who is going to tell the Premier that unemployment has gone up. I'm not the one who is going to tell the Premier that exports have fallen for 16, 17 months in a row.' It seems that cabinet has no idea about what is happening. Perhaps they do not want to know. Members on the other side have a really surprised look on their faces when we ask questions based on absolute fact and many of them concern the measures that they have included in their strategic plan. When we ask those questions, all we get is a very surprised look and the reply, 'Well, I will have to go and check that.' It is the job of the ministers to understand what is happening in those areas.

It is really a major surprise that they do not understand that. I think that it comes back to no commitment on the economic front. I have mentioned in this house previously

that, when we started asking questions about employment, one of the big surprises was the interjection from the President of the ALP (which is disorderly anyway and should not happen—and a senior member of the Labor Party such as the president should know better) when he said, 'Haven't you got something more important to ask about?' Where has the ALP gone in recent times, if in fact jobs are not important to the ALP? Why would the president interject and say, 'Haven't you got something more important than employment to ask about?'

So much of the economic strategy has been based on the Economic Development Board. I reckon those guys on the Economic Development Board have done a damn good job. They have had commitment. They have put forward a heap of things to the government, but the government has done nothing about it. What the Economic Development Board initially said was, 'You need to develop a strategic plan and then base everything else on it, and you need to get on and do it.' They then waited for about 12 months for a strategic plan to be put forward, but, in the meantime, they said that none of these other policies such as the population strategy or anything else should be done until we have a strategic plan. We had a transport strategy and a population strategy, none of which bears any relationship to a strategic plan. I will come back to the strategic plan because I think that is a major disappointment.

I will not try to assess what the members of the EDB might think, I would not go there, but, quite frankly, they have made a commitment to this state through their time and effort and I believe that they have been let down very badly by this government. They are not saying that, it is me. I feel that they have been let down, because whenever they have asked the government to do something, it has taken the government forever to do it and it has been done without any commitment. It has only been done to meet the media expectation of whole thing. It appears that the government, having said 'We reckon we ought to have an economic strategy'—and members of the Economic Development Board have worked hard, they have put their report forward—has lost interest in what they put in their report. It is all right to say, 'We will tick off on all these recommendations', but when you start reading through those recommendations the government has done nothing about any of them.

The economy is just lost. It is a government which is absolutely locked into controlling tomorrow's *Advertiser*, what the media will say over the next couple of days, and, quite frankly, it seems to have absolutely lost its way. There is a whole range of issues, including the restructuring of the Department of Business, Manufacturing and Trade. They will say, 'Oh, but that was the Economic Development Board that wanted us to do that.' If members look at the history of what they have done with the former department of industry and trade, they will find that the government moved on it before the Economic Development Board even came into being. They said that they were going to scrap it, then they made it two departments, then one, and we have had a heap of acting CEOs. We have seen an absolute debacle. I might have said that it needs to be reviewed, and whatever, but they expected some finality to it.

We have a government that is more than halfway through its term and the Department of Business, Manufacturing and Trade has absolutely no direction. The morale within that organisation is shot. There are still good people there, although good people have left. Whether the people who have left did so in disgust or whether those who are still there are

there because they want to battle it through, they are getting no leadership or direction; no-one is willing to make a decision; and you have had that department sitting there, not being able to achieve what those people want to achieve. That is really starting to impact across the board.

I asked yesterday about the overseas officers—they have been under a cloud now for over two years, and they are a major driver in export development. I took a lot of delegations overseas. Those officers are terrific. They are fantastic people, and any minister from this side or the present government who has gone overseas has had nothing but total support and an enormous amount of help from them. Exporters have gone to Singapore, Hong Kong and China, and they have had an enormous amount of help. What are we seeing? We have seen two years of those people waiting to know whether or not they have got a job.

A young lady by the name of Cecilia Chan was working in our Hong Kong office. Affectionately known as Charlie Chan to many of us, she has now left because she did not know whether she had a job. Not only has she left, but she has gone to work for Britain. So, our investment with Charlie over 10 years and all those connections with our exporters have now transferred over, and she is now working for the Brits. Our exporters have lost a key operative, and why? Because no-one would make a decision.

This government gave no-one within that department any authority to make any decisions whatsoever and what are we seeing? I went to HOFEX in Hong Kong because I was asked by the exporters, as no-one from the government would go, and the exporters were expressing enormous concern not just about Charlie going but about the whole exercise. We did not have one person, either a member of parliament or from the government, travel to that major food exhibition in Hong Kong—or indeed in Asia—and the issue is that it was food and beverage that drove the success we had with exports.

I will come back to exports because, despite what the Premier told us yesterday, I put some facts on the table tonight which show that the Premier does not understand what is going on in this state and why our economy is starting to turn off in other areas. A lot of it is because the Department of Business and Trade has not been functional, and that is the fault not of those in there but the government giving no instruction or direction. It is a fact that they have taken their eye right off the ball with all the initiatives related to exports, and the government has just turned off, saying, 'That's not our constituency; they can do it all themselves'. Well, it is not working, and it is starting to cause some real problems for us.

Let us have a look at exports because we have heard many things over the last several months. When we left office, exports were running at about \$9.1 billion for a 12 month period; that is where we left it. We had grown it from about \$3 billion. This government, in its wisdom—and good on them—when it came into office, said, 'We as a government are going to triple exports in the next decade. We are going to triple exports. If the Libs can do it, we can do it.' If they knew how much effort we put into it, they might have understood that it is a bit harder than actually saying it—\$9.1 billion.

In the 2002-03 year, we had a drought and, yes, the Australian dollar did go down. We went from way ahead of Australia to way behind Australia, but the drought had an impact. The Premier, the present Minister for Agriculture who is the former trade minister, and others said that it was all to do with the drought and that, once the new crop—the bumper crop—started coming through, we would be back on

track. Well, I am sorry, because back on track means over \$11 billion in exports.

Where are we today? The figures came out this morning, and I will just run through them. Those opposite might be bored. Can I just read the figures to you about what our 12-month running total is with exports, because I think this tells a damning tale of what happens when you take your eye off the ball and you say that everything is someone's responsibility.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: That is right. These are the month-to-month figures. So, the running figures for 12 months have dropped every month since they came in basically. Listen to these figures: \$9.12 billion, \$8.95 billion, \$8.71 billion, \$8.58 billion, \$8.36 billion, \$8.25 billion, \$8.03 billion, \$7.94 billion, \$7.89 billion, \$7.61 billion, \$7.49 billion, \$7.44 billion, \$7.43 billion, and today's figure was \$7.34 billion. We heard only yesterday in this house that the reason they have fallen is because of the drought. Well, I have news for the Premier, because he might not understand. I know that there are more sheep in New Zealand than grain, but one of the major issues is that the drought has been blamed and, even yesterday, the drought was being blamed. I can tell the Premier that, in December last year and January, February, and March of this year, that bumper crop that was going to save our bacon has largely been shipped. Yet, even with our bumper harvest versus a drought, our exports are lower than they were 12 months ago.

Every month for the last 15 to 16 months, that particular month has been less than the corresponding month the year before. It is not like that in the rest of Australia—the rest of Australia has dropped, but by nowhere near as much. Where exports are concerned, we are absolutely in a state of denial about what the facts are. What it means for this economy is that instead of \$9.1 billion coming in (that \$9.1 billion was \$3 billion eight years before) that extra money was what was fuelling the investment in this state, and the retail spending in this state. The property market was largely fuelled because they have these big funnels. I will come to tourism in a moment because there is a very similar story.

We have now seen that, if you take \$2 billion out of an economy like South Australia, which is almost the level of exports that we took over in the first place, it is going to have a major impact. I studied economics and I might not have been the brightest one on the block, but I think I understood that. No-one over there seems to understand that. They are not worried about the export figure. They do not understand it. They have absolutely no idea.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Mawson! The leader has the call, he does not need all these little echoes.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The members for Giles and Torrens.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: But, as I said, when it comes to these economic figures, what we have heard from over there is very selective. It has been about private investments or whatever. Some specific figures have almost been plucked out of nowhere. I mentioned before about the tourism industry. I think that tourism is another one that we really need to focus on. We have seen so much money removed from the tourism budget over the last couple of budgets. We are wearing the impact of that. People in government, in private industry, everyone wonders whether advertising

works. The rest of Australia has continued to market their tourism products, but South Australia has stopped. I have had feedback from overseas about what has happened to South Australia. People from interstate say that they do not see Adelaide or South Australia advertised any more. If you are going to take the advertising money out of your tourism commission (most of the rest has been left there) but the advertising money has gone.

Mrs Hall: But the infrastructure has not.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Well, spending it on infrastructure as well, which long term would cost us enormously. The immediate impact that we have seen is to do with the marketing budget; we have seen that South Australian tourism has not recovered from the effects of Ansett and September 11, whereas the rest of Australia has. That is really starting to cost us dearly. This comes back to retail trade and the employment figures. We see that retail trade has dipped right away. We were leading Australia in the growth and retail trade for quite a while, but what we see now is that we have fallen behind, which is costing a lot of jobs.

The issue of jobs is an absolutely major issue for us. We have been highlighting the job issue for about 10 months now, but the government has taken no notice. After six consecutive months of job losses in this state, we still have the Premier, the Treasurer, the now ministers for family and youth, all out there making statements that, in December and January, never had so many South Australians been employed. Yet, we come off six months of consecutive job losses. Most of it is out to nine months; we are now to nine months. I will deal with March separately in a minute, because the government seems to have done a bit of a backflip there.

The eight months to February for the financial year, South Australia lost every month: full-time jobs for women, full-time jobs for men, full-time jobs (total), and total numbers employed. Conversely, the rest of Australia increased in every one of those months. You put it on a graph and Australia is going there and we are going there. When Australia is doing that well, to be going down is losing a massive advantage.

There are a couple of really bad stories within that and the worst one is that we had lost about 18 000 full-time jobs in that period. The big problem there—the one that this government was shocked by, despite the fact that we had raised it with them several times—was that 15 000 full-time jobs had disappeared for women in South Australia. That is what we saw in South Australia. We got that bad that we affected the Australian performance. Australia, in the same time, went up by 45 000 full-time jobs for women. If it had not been for South Australia (even if we had been neutral), Australia would have been 33 per cent better off by going to 60 000. It is a major issue. Only half of those went to part-time employment, the other half got shuttled out of the work force.

The figures in the last few days paint that as even worse, because we have seen over the last two years on top of that the disappearance of 25 per cent of our female small business operators. We are not reading about that because the government is not acknowledging it. The government is covering up all the time. Come to March: the March one showed that this government is not about sticking with a commitment to anything at all. In the middle of April, the week before the March figures came out, we had the release of the state's strategic plan. In the State Strategic Plan the government committed to some employment goals. Those goals are based

on trends and figures. For those over the other side and our visitors, I will briefly explain.

When the ABS bring out the monthly figures, there are trend figures and there are seasonal figures. We have been consistently using the trend figures. The government has been picking which one is best and just duplicating one for the other. In their own strategic plan, this massive commitment, a commitment that no other government in the world has ever made to be judged on set parameters. One week later the press release that came out quoted seasonal figures. The press release stated that even though trends are the more reliable reflection of the labour market, the seasonal figures said that. The credibility of all this: this is the toughest set of goals that any government in the world has ever committed to.

The Premier has committed to holding a press conference on those goals—in 2013! The employment stuff is serious. On the issue of women's jobs, the government has done nothing. We actually got a whole group of employers and industry people together one night, and what it really came down to is that it does appear that we have lost quite a few jobs in retail, despite the government's saying that we have picked up thousands through the deregulation of shopping hours. The number of full-time employees in retail between February 2003 and February 2004 has actually fallen from 60 000 to 49 000. That means that 11 000 full-time jobs have gone, and about half of those have picked up part-time jobs. So, there is a net loss of about 5 000 or 6 000 jobs out of retail, which is a major concern.

In fairness, to explain the whole thing, the Australian Retailers Association correctly points out that that is not just to do with deregulation; that is to do with the lack of growth in retail sales. It says that retail sales growth is the major indicator as to what happens with employment within the retail industry. That is a major concern. The loss of full-time jobs in South Australia; the fact that women are bearing the brunt of it; these jobs going out of retail and, no doubt, out of tourism and hospitality are major issues for this state, and issues that really deserve to be looked at and dealt with. At the moment, they are not.

Much has been made of the State Strategic Plan for a long time. It was announced about last May that we were going to have a strategic plan, and nothing happened until about November or December. Then, all of a sudden, it was put together very quickly.

Quite frankly, I do not know, and I would not in fairness ask the members of the Economic Development Board what they really think of it, because they should be very disappointed. I think we are all disappointed. It is not a road map. It should be a road map of how we are going to get somewhere. It just says where we are going to be, and it says nothing about how we are going to get there. I have said in this house on several occasions—and I have used exports, which has to be a huge issue for this government—that no strategic plan will mean a damn thing in relation to tripling exports, which is the most ambitious target that members of the government have set for themselves. Instead of tripling the figures, we are down 20 per cent after two years, but no strategic plan is complete unless, with exports, it tells you what products we are going to export; where in the state we are going to produce those products; what are the work force challenges; what are the skills we need; where we are going to house that work force; which markets we will go into; how the hell we are going to do it; and where the infrastructure dollars are coming from to achieve it. And we have heard none of that!

Basically, what we are going to do about exports and the strategic plan on how we achieve this tripling take up one paragraph. One paragraph tells us how we are going to triple exports. I will not even bother to read it because, quite frankly, it does not address one of those issues of which I just spoke. It does not address any of them, and just leaves us wondering what it is all about.

The other, major issue with the targets is that we have the government saying, 'We are the bravest government in the world. We are the brave hearts of government. For the first time anywhere, we are going to be willing to be judged against targets.' And when are they going to be judged for the first time? The Premier has said that the first judgment of how they are going against these targets will occur in June 2006.

In March 2006, we have the Commonwealth Games—but we also have a state election. This strategic plan, which in the first brave months in office the government committed to, they do not want to be judged against until the second term. As I said, the press conference will be in 2013! I do not know what position the Premier will hold at that stage, but a good look at the targets shows that this is not something that the government will really be able to judge against in a lot of areas. We will keep judging the government against the targets with employment, despite the games that it wants to play and despite the fact that after one week it will back away from a commitment.

There is in here a whole range of issues that really need to be looked at as to whether or not they are specific targets, and I will pick just one. In tourism, where we are really battling, I think members opposite know that they do not have the answers and will not be willing to spend the money, because the measure they have come up with in tourism is not the number of international visitors or international bed nights; it is not the number of interstate visitors or interstate bed nights. Those figures are available and have been used for years as the bench mark. What they want to be judged by is: what is tourism worth to the economy? That is a figure that will be called up by Treasury. There is no such measure. It is a measure that the government will bring up itself. That is absolutely ridiculous when you have the well worn, very well recognised figures which will judge how each state is going with tourism and which compare states and compare nationally.

The members of this government do not want to be judged at all against heads on pillows, people in beds or the number of people who come in. Why? Because they have no commitment to the tourism industry. If they had a commitment to the tourism industry, they could be committed to turning around the decline we have seen over the past couple of years, making it work and setting themselves some targets that actually push the industry, government and the state to achieve. Instead of that, we have this nebulous figure of what tourism is worth to the economy. My answer to that is: who knows? What we do know is that it will not be worth anywhere near as much to the economy if we do not have the people in beds, if we do not have the people coming from overseas or from interstate. And I do not think we are going to get that.

The strategic plan brings me back to where I was previously: that I really do not think the government has much idea at all about where it wants to go economically or on a whole range of other things. Having sat around that cabinet table with the member for Davenport and others over the years, I realise that one of the interesting things about being in cabinet

was that most members of our cabinets were actually champions for a sector, for causes, for regional South Australia—Di Laidlaw for the arts and a few other things, for example. We had champions for each of these areas. I suspect that what happens at the moment is that there are no champions. There are a few 'could have been champions'.

I have become a bit of an admirer of the member for Mitchell, because I reckon he gave it a pretty good call when he quit the Labor Party and said that they had deserted all their core beliefs. He also said that it was basically run by three bullies so the rest do not get a say. He said that it is not about achieving anything long term but very much about tomorrow's headlines. That is when they can get past today's. I think that the member for Mitchell deserves some credit for summing them up very early. Quite frankly, he probably should have stuck around to teach them a bit of that, because he has understood it, although I do not think the rest have.

Mr Brokenshire: What about the member for Florey? She agrees with him on that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson is out of order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: One interesting thing about tonight, sir, is the irony in your having to protect me from my own. That is the nature of politics.

To the budget. This budget has some real challenges, because they have to start thinking about the economy. Fiscal policy is about more than running a surplus budget; they are yet to understand that. What they collect on property taxes is not just swelling the state's coffers, it takes a lot of money out of self-funded retirees. As it flows through to rents, it takes money out of the pockets of some of those least able to afford it within the state, particularly in low value rental. It sucks money from investors who, if they had that money, would put it elsewhere. A lot of families would spend it on retail, tourism and other areas. It makes no sense to concentrate just on the AAA and run a surplus when there are other factors within the economy. The government needs to invest in infrastructure and other things.

There have been plenty of announcements. For example, we heard an announcement about the harbour. People on this side shook their heads about the announcement that \$300 million was to be spent at Outer Harbor. What was new in that? A little bit of money was to be spent on South Road, and I will give you give credit for that. I think it was \$29 million. The rest of the \$300 million was a re-announcement of what happened before. I am getting a bit sick and tired of hearing that everything is the biggest, the best, the world's first, the toughest, most hairy-chested—a whole range of superlatives—about what they are doing.

On the morning of the economic summit, the government announced the biggest mineral exploration program that Australia has ever seen. What was it? It was one of ours repackaged with half the money missing. What was it to be funded by? By putting royalties up by 1 per cent, raising about four times as much money as they were going to spend on the mining industry. The government said that this would create lots of these exports. For the mining industry, that package was a net loss of tens of millions of dollars. So, why was it the biggest, best and greatest? I have no idea. It is all about spin doctors labelling everything with things which are just not correct about them.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: That's right; the best. Stamp duty and land tax are the areas financing this government. I point out to members that, across Australia, most govern-

ments have been caught with their fingers in the till with respect to stamp duty. I acknowledge that Western Australia does not appear to have done the same thing. With stamp duty on conveyances, people can argue that they thought the property market would fall and that there would be fewer sales this year. What Labor governments across Australia are doing (with the exception of Western Australia) is understating their income from stamp duty by, in the case of New South Wales, probably \$500 million or \$600 million; in Victoria it is about \$300 million to \$400 million; and in South Australia it is about \$100 million to \$110 million. Governments can understate that knowing that they are going to get it, and then they can finance \$100 million of pressures with hospitals and whatever else, and still say that they came in with a surplus. Well, it is not honest budgetary policy. It is not sound, and it is not good budget policy; it is an absolute sham. This government and other state Labor governments are doing it. I am not too sure why Western Australia is not. Probably they have not put it down in the budget; we will have to wait and see.

That is what is happening, and it is giving this government what should have been extra money. Looking at the budgetary position, even though the government would have now received about \$326 million more in their term in stamp duty than they said they were going to receive, out of that \$300 million, you would think that they would have a war chest or something; but they do not. So much of that money has disappeared through mismanagement; it is just not there. The big aim of building this massive war chest has not happened.

On top of that, the government has had another windfall with the GST. The Treasurer knows how much he is going to get from the GST, but he has not told anyone. The Treasurer knows that the other ministers understand that, with stamp duty, they have all this bonus. Every time they go to cabinet, health grabs a bit because they have not got something sorted out, and they are in trouble somewhere else, and away it goes. We need opening bridges down at Port Adelaide so we will take \$30 million out of here.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I do not know if that one went to cabinet; I think that fell short. It is a bit like lolly shop. Perhaps we should be praising the Treasurer for not telling them how much he is getting in GST but if I was in cabinet I would not be too happy that the Treasurer is not confiding in the rest of them what it is all about. The Treasurer's obsession with the AAA is not in line with the ideas of the other people in cabinet, and I think there are major problems there. We will see that the spending will be equal and opposite to where media pressure is. Wherever the media pressure is, that is where the money will go. Do not expect this budget to put the money where it should go.

An honourable member: The DPP will probably get some.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The DPP will probably get some, and there are other areas that will probably get some, but they will not worry too much about the outback roads. Despite the influence on tourism, they will not worry too much about tourism infrastructure because someone else might reap the gains; it is not immediate enough. You spend it on infrastructure and it does not come back. Another government might benefit from looking after SA Water, roads, or whatever. So, do not expect much on roads where they should put it. We hear the whole road safety message is about 50 km/h and the people are heartily sick of that. Road

safety is largely about proper maintenance on an ongoing basis with no gaps of several years, and looking after the road infrastructure. After eight years of sorting it out—

Ms Breuer: Which roads?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Well, there were just a few, but now there are a lot.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for McKillop might think that he can hide behind the leader, but the chair can pick up his voice quite easily. The member for Giles is also out of order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Sir, I would never respond to an interjection, but looking at who is in the house, I will mention one road that might ring a little bit of a bell with the member for Giles—the road from William Creek to Oodnadatta. Last year after the work gang was pulled out of the area, I received a phone call from a local who expressed concern because, to save tourists from hitting great bulldust holes, they had been out putting iron droppers with flags on top in the holes. They rang me because the iron droppers were not long enough. Which roads? How many roads do you want? It is a major safety issue, it is an enormous tourism issue, and it is a huge equity issue.

Ms Breuer: Okay. What is the next one?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Do you want a few more?

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Mawson! The member for Giles will not interject. She can speak when the time comes.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Being sensitive and being savaged, I think I will wrap it up before I cop a flogging. There are many serious needs in the budget: health, education, law and order and roads. Law and order will see a test of this government. It does not seem to be able to manage the DPP process properly, and if that does not work let us see if it is willing to put its own money in. The River Murray deserves mention because we have heard so much rhetoric from this government about it. If you really go through the budget papers, more money is now committed to the River Murray but there is not as much coming out of Treasury. The money is coming out of the Rann water tax. The minister might be able to help me work out how much the levy will raise. I suspect that over the five-year term that we committed \$65 million to save the Murray, I think the levy is going to raise about \$125 million, which is pretty much right on the ball. That means that there is another \$60 million there. One of the issues for this government is that extra \$60 million. We do not want to see substituted what Treasury was committed to putting in any way. That is where it will be used. It is an unfair tax.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: That is a dishonest statement to make.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: That is not correct, and you know that.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: You are making a dishonest statement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister is out of order and the leader is out of order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The challenge is there for the government to show some commitment on the river.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: Commitment on the river?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We saw what happened with the Lower Murray irrigators.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: Compared to your dumped backbencher Brindal, we are going ahead with things.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We know what happened with the Lower Murray.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: You did nothing for the River Murray.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We saw what happened.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: For eight years you did nothing. Not one drop of water.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. I will name people in a minute. The leader has the call. The minister has the right to speak if he wishes at the appropriate time. The leader.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We would love to see the type of commitment by this government that was made to the Loxton irrigation scheme. The minister has asked what I did for the Murray and whether I ever put back a drop of water. I can tell the minister that I went to Canberra with the Loxton irrigators on several occasions. I made 20 or 30 telephone calls and wrote a heap of letters to the federal government over the Loxton irrigation scheme. If the minister in his time can match a scheme such as the Loxton irrigation scheme, I will not only be surprised but I also will be the first to pat him on the back.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I am becoming distracted. Can I mention the one thing that people should be clear on? We applaud the \$500 million but, unfortunately, not enough of it is coming this way. I applaud the \$500 million for the Murray, but have members ever heard the minister mention that, even if all the water is delivered, only 180 gegalitres actually flow past Renmark?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: This is what worries me about their commitment.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: What did you say?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! This is not a dialogue. It is the leader giving his—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The minister can work it out later—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for MacKillop!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: —but only 180 gegalitres are coming past Renmark. Anyway, I digress. There are some enormous challenges for the government. There is a whole range of challenges that have to do with not only the budget but also the economy. I urge the government to start thinking, in terms of fiscal policy, not just what surplus it can salt away and where it can throw money around but also where it can make a difference. I urge it to think in the long term rather than just seeking headlines and to start paying some attention to the real drivers of employment in this state such as exports, tourism and industry generally, because it has ignored them. We have seen what happened with the Centre for Innovation, Business and Manufacturing; we have recently seen a range of debacles; we have seen the level of morale within the government's major economic development agency; and we also see the level of morale across employment in the government at the moment. So I think the government has some real challenges and I urge it to take them all into account and start doing something that will make a difference to employment and the economy of the state.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): The members for Bright, Newland, Croydon, Fisher and I, as the class of 1989, have, if memory serves me correctly, contributed to something like

29 supply bills. Each of us has been lucky enough to have seen it from the perspective of both sides of this chamber. I think it is a unique class because each of those persons elected to the parliament in that year has served as a minister in a government. There is a certain irony in the almost obligatory mantra that comes from the opposition benches (whether it is us in opposition or members opposite in opposition) which is that the government should be doing better with less and, of course, waste not want not. It is the obligation and duty of an opposition to test and challenge the government on its expenditure. It is equally ironic when we see us on the government side, or members opposite on the government side, depending on the direct proportion of successful inoculation of the public servants by the ministers, to hear the ministers chant back, 'We are the best government since God created Eve.'

Mrs Geraghty: We never said that.

Mr BRINDAL: No, but the ministers do.

Mrs Geraghty: They do not. They just know that they are a damn site better than what was there before.

Mr BRINDAL: The ministers do, and I think it is true to say when we were there that we thought we were the best government since God created Eve as well. I think, therefore, rather than concentrate on the individual parts of the Supply Bill which have been adequately dealt with and will be dealt with by a number of my colleagues, I will make a somewhat unusual contribution that analyses in some small part the appropriateness of this system of parliamentary democracy which we have evolved to apply and safeguard the appropriation of public moneys on behalf of the people of South Australia.

Sir Winston Churchill once observed that democracy was an awful system—it had lots of failings and lots of faults—but went on to observe (and I paraphrase him) that, for all that, it is the best system of government that has ever been devised. I do not think any member would dispute that remark. For all of that, it has a number of failings that I think it is time all members on both sides of this chamber started to analyse, and analyse critically in the performance of their duties as a member of parliament who is elected and has sworn to uphold the best interests of South Australia.

I remember some years ago a former Labor Premier of this state, whose name I will not mention, having a discussion with me in the refreshment room. He subsequently left parliament, and I rang him when he was on a job interstate. At that stage he must have sensed that I was not very happy, and he said, 'Let an old member tell a much younger member in terms of political experience what happened to me,' and he described how, after seven years in politics, he nearly gave it away. I had been here seven years and was having problems because it was at the time of the Goodwood Orphanage dispute between our government, which was then in power, and the people of Unley, who wanted to retain the open space land. He told me that he nearly gave it away, and I asked, 'Why?' He said, 'Because, like everybody, I came here bright-eyed and bushy tailed and I thought that I could change the world. All I needed was an opportunity to contribute to debates and I would make a difference in South Australia.' He said, 'But, after seven years, I realised that in many ways politics is a tawdry profession. I do not mean that you necessarily have to be dishonest but, too often, you are forced to deal in half-truths and explanations that do not tell the complete truth because you know that if you were to tell the complete truth or act in the best interests of your electors you probably would not be there after the next election.' He then

said that he spent some time resolving this in his own mind because he thought he might not go on at the next election. He said that, having accepted the failings of this institution, he never regretted one further day of his political career because, he said, 'Despite all the failings in the system, I still realised that I could make a difference—perhaps not the difference that I sought to make when I came here, but a difference, nevertheless—and hopefully I could leave this place thinking that in some way I had made it the better for being here.' In many ways that has inspired me, and in many ways I hope that is what motivates many people on both sides of the chamber.

However, I am disappointed when the media and others tend to popularise and reduce this place and not let members do what members should do, which is speak and try to govern in the best interests of South Australia. It is inappropriate when the media is so intent on populist journalism that we get visions in the papers, cartoons and all sorts of things that seek to trivialise sometimes important debates or to diminish the contribution of members in this place because of particular characteristics. I say that because I am mindful of the age profile of the assembly chamber in South Australia. I am mindful that even on the benches opposite not many young people are represented, and in my own party thus far after the next election, unless my colleagues in the parliamentary party get very energetic and select some young people, the youngest person in this chamber on the Liberal side will remain the member for Davenport. At 46 years of age at the next election, he will continue to be the youngest person on our side in the parliament, as he has been for the past three terms.

I know that members opposite can boast one or two—I shall not say 'token youth', as I served with one of them on the Public Works Committee and I will probably be berated if I say that—young people opposite, and it looks at present as though they will have to serve an extraordinarily long apprenticeship before they grace the front benches.

The Hon. J.D. Hill interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I note that the minister at the table says 'absolutely', and that will be in the record to confirm for them the long wait they will have.

To return to what I was saying, both parties on both sides of the chamber owe it to the people of South Australia and we all, not just as members of a party but individually, owe it to the people of South Australia to look at who we are, what we can contribute and where we are going. I do not think my party—nor from observation do I think the Labor Party, on which I am not an expert—yet has the best mechanisms for choosing the best people to come into this place. It is difficult enough when successful and intelligent people look at the treatment that every member of this parliament is automatically accorded both by the media and the general public.

We are elected to one of the most responsible jobs that can be done in this state, yet in that Australian way, because in that sense we are tall poppies, we appear to be cut down at every opportunity. All members know that you get invited to civic functions and are treated with courtesy and respect, but as a general principle politicians are considered in the same region as journalists and regarded with anything but respect in the general population. That of a profession that should be attracting the brightest and the best and people who really want to contribute to making a better state and nation! I do not know why some of the young people I am trying to encourage to come in here would really want to come in when they see the appalling treatment given in some cases by

members of the media and the public to anybody who devotes themselves to the public service. That is an issue which Speaker Lewis and others have tried to address. It is simply not right that this parliament and people in the public service should be treated to the levels of disrespect they are given simply in the name of freedom of the press.

All parties, and we as members trying to work out who might be worthy of assistance in helping to gain a seat in this parliament in looking for people who will follow us, should be mindful of the fact that we need to evolve a system that gets good people into this chamber. Where are the next generation of Tom Playfords or Don Dunstans on that side of the chamber? Where are the people who will lead this state and nation strongly into the next century? If ever this chamber has needed good leadership it is now. We are in a global village, an economy where we are less than ever in charge of our own destiny. We are floating in the global pond and are at the mercies of the winds that come from other much bigger economies to our north, east and even to our west, and, unless we do those things which we tried to do in government and which I hope this government, listening to the leader and others, will try to pick up, we will be in a parlous situation.

There will be in the emerging world very much the haves and have-nots, and either we remain an advantaged nation and use all our advantages to assist those who are less advanced or we will ourselves be a less advantaged nation. When one travels, as we have the privilege of doing, and goes to Asia and sees the emerging economies up there, their strength, determination and resolution to become leading economies, to drive themselves forward, then the lethargy, apathy and other games played in this nation do not bode well for its future and do not serve the people well.

The time has come for this parliament to desist the hairy-chest beating and popularism. I am appalled that we appear to be engaged in a game that says, 'My chest is hairier than yours; I can lock up people for longer than you can lock them up; we're tougher on law and order than you'. It is a game played across both sides of this chamber and in most parliaments around the nation. It was the sort of game I was ashamed to see at the last election when both parties (my party and the Labor Party), following the Leader of the Opposition, stood up and said that there should be no new taxes in South Australia. I am not advocating that there should be new taxes in South Australia, but I am saying that a premier or leader of the opposition who gets up at the election and looks South Australians in the eye and says, 'We are not going to impose new taxes in the next four years,' is either a liar, a fool or possibly both.

If he is not a liar or fool and intends to keep his word, then he is putting the interests of South Australia, in raising enough money for roads, hospitals, education and all the other socially just purposes to which that money should be applied, secondary to telling the people of South Australia that they will not have to pay any more for the privilege of government. If that is the best our leadership can offer at elections, there is something very wrong. It is no wonder the general public remain cynical when they look to political leaders who say, 'We will not need to raise any more money during the next four years,' and proceed to do just that by saying, 'You did not read the small print: we obviously meant that everything would raise in line with inflation or that bracket creep would take care of this and that.' You suddenly see a government which gets huge windfall gains and which is trying to say that none of it was its fault, that it all hap-

pened by accident. As the leader said, in some cases they appear not even to tell you how they have got it.

I am sure other members agree that I have always been proud to be a member of this place. I will remain, so long as I am here and afterwards, proud to have served as a member of this place, but it only exists and should only exist so long as it is relevant to the people of South Australia. If the current executive government continues to treat this place with the disdain that progressively has crept in, where ministers do not really think they are either accountable or answerable to this parliament, where they think any old excuse will do, where they feel they do not have to answer questions or hold themselves responsible to this chamber, then one is left to wonder what is the purpose of the people of South Australia electing us and expecting us to sit here night after night when all we are doing is being involved in a set piece.

In fact, as far as I am concerned the people of South Australia can elect me for four years; they can decide that we can decide on the numbers and whether Labor or Liberal will govern; and, if Labor is elected to govern, its 10 ministers can go off and earn their 75 per cent loading and the rest of us can sit at home for four years because we constitute the numbers. There is simply no reason for us to come in here and go through set piece debates if the government will not listen; if the government will not tell the truth; if the government—

Mrs Geraghty: Your own people don't bother to listen.

Mr BRINDAL: Believe me, there will be more of my people listening than you would believe. Some of them will be up there listening to every single word; I have no doubt about that.

Mrs Geraghty: About you, yes, but not generally across the board.

Mr BRINDAL: I do not know about the honourable member's electorate experience, but I am constantly surprised at not only the number of times people hear something you say that you do not think they will pick up but also the letters I get from overseas, interstate and everywhere—just the weirdest places—saying, 'I read what you said about such and such in such and such debate.' I cannot imagine why anyone would want to read *Hansard*. However, I have learnt over the years that the people who do read *Hansard* are from the strangest places, and I am talking about worldwide. I recently had a letter from America from someone who had read something I had said about the dogs and cats bill, or whatever. I am no longer shocked by the readership *Hansard* has. However, what shocks me is the almost ceremonial nature to which this place can be reduced. It is either a fiercely debating chamber and it has some relevance or it is not. I do not mind getting 100 grand a year to go away and run a book stall, or something like that. I will willingly sit at home and let the government get on with its agenda for four years and then go to the next election, provided that is the deal. However, we presently do not have that deal: we have this farce that we call a parliament, where we all go through the motions. The ministers waste their time in even being here, and they resent being here because they have important things to do. We waste our time by being here because no-one listens to anyone. The whole thing is a joke. And we call this parliamentary democracy. It is an expensive and irrelevant joke.

As Mr Speaker Lewis has said, unless we start to reform this place, we are in great danger that this institution will find itself superseded. More importantly, not only will this institution find itself superseded but both political parties, unless they wake up to themselves, will find themselves

irrelevant to this nation. What has not escaped my attention—and nor should it escape the attention of anyone in the major parties—is the proliferation of Independents in this place. I do not think they come about by accident, and I do not think they come about necessarily because they are startlingly better than the average person put up by the party. I think they come about because people are sick and tired of parties which tell them one thing and do another; which say they stand for something when, in fact, they stand for nothing; which are more intent on spin and their own image than they are on the work of this parliament; and which have in them members who are so filled with bias, pettiness, vindictiveness and jealousy that their fights with one another become more important than fights across the chamber. That is what people are disgusted with, and they have a right to be.

Dr McFETRIDGE secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (FLOOD MITIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill seeks to amend sections 7 and 295 of the *Local Government Act 1999* to make it explicit that councils have the power to enter onto private land to carry out all works (including preliminary works) associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of flood mitigation infrastructure.

These amendments will resolve the uncertainty that has arisen from conflicting legal advice about the current powers of councils and their subsidiaries to enter land to undertake works associated within a watercourse, especially in relation to stormwater management and flood mitigation.

For example, the lower reaches of the Gawler River are under major threat from flood especially in the horticultural and residential areas of Gawler, Virginia and Two Wells. To address this problem the Gawler River Flood Management Plan was produced by the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board and approved under the *Water Resources Act 1997*. A central feature of the plan is the construction of a flood control dam on the North Para River at Concordia.

The plan provided for the establishment of an authority to coordinate the construction, operation, and maintenance of flood mitigation infrastructure and as a consequence, the Gawler River Flood Management Authority was created. The authority is a regional subsidiary constituted under the *Local Government Act 1999* and comprises the member councils of Light, Barossa, Gawler, Adelaide Hills, Playford and Mallala.

However, legal advice to the Gawler River Flood Management Authority has resulted in it being reluctant to proceed further and risk possibly acting without legal authority, and possibly exposing itself to significant liability given the nature of the project.

This amendment Bill makes it explicit that the functions of a council include the provision of infrastructure for its community including infrastructure to protect a community from hazards such as flooding. It will also ensure that adequate power exists under the *Local Government Act 1999* for councils and their subsidiaries to enter onto private land in order to carry out works associated with stormwater management or flood mitigation.

Without the current amendment to the Bill the completion of projects to provide flood mitigation infrastructure will be significantly delayed.

As the matter covered by this Bill will expedite necessary flood mitigation works in the Gawler River area as well as any future flood

mitigation works, the Government hopes the Bill will be dealt with expeditiously.

I commend this Bill to honourable members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

This clause provides for the short title.

2—Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

3—Amendment provisions

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Local Government Act 1999*

4—Amendment of section 7—Functions of a council

Section 7 of the Act is to be amended to make it clear that the ability to provide infrastructure within its area includes the ability to provide infrastructure that helps to protect any part of the community from any hazard or other event, or that assists in the management of any area.

5—Amendment of section 295—Power to carry out surveys, work etc

This amendment will make it clear that a council can, in acting under section 295 of the Act, undertake work associated with dams or other structures or facilities associated with stormwater management or flood mitigation. In doing so, it will also be made clear that the work can also relate to the provision of any service or facility that will benefit the area of the local council, or to the carrying out of any other function or responsibility of the relevant council.

Dr McFETRIDGE secured the adjournment of the debate.

GAS (TEMPORARY RATIONING) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

AUTHORISED BETTING OPERATIONS (BETTING REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Gambling): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I thank the opposition for its support of this bill in the Legislative Council. I will speak only briefly; I might speak further when the debate is held in this place. This bill will provide South Australian punters with the opportunity to have fixed-odds betting on racing events with the South Australian TAB. Until now, South Australian punters wishing to avail themselves of this service have been required to open betting accounts with other interstate TABs, meaning that turnover is leaving South Australia and the local racing industry. The advice I have received (which I am fairly sure is correct) is that we are the only state or territory that does not provide this facility, so this is an important step in the right direction. The volume of the additional estimated turnover is not great, but it is a matter of principle. This is certainly a service that should be provided to South Australian punters. The bill will also transfer bookmaking licensing functions to the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner and remove the licensing requirement for bookmakers' clerks.

The South Australian Bookmakers League welcomes these measures and has been very constructive in discussions that have taken place with both the government and the opposition. We have looked to provide some offsets as a result of introducing this measure. Unfortunately, that could not be negotiated because it would have broken the contract that

exists with the TAB. We have obviously had to move on from that discussion, but it is something that has been welcomed by the Bookmakers League, which has been very constructive in this debate.

This bill seeks to achieve a number of measures, but those details are contained in the second reading explanation. This bill, which I believe will be passed this week, will allow the TAB to provide this facility for the Adelaide Cup, which is South Australia's premier racing event. It will be a commercial decision as to when the TAB provides this facility for racing events. Obviously, with an event of the magnitude of the Adelaide Cup, there would be the expectation that fixed-odds betting will be available this year. That is a good thing for South Australian racing, and it is a good thing for the customers, the punters.

As I said from the outset, this bill has been supported by the opposition and we would like to acknowledge and thank them for that. I seek leave to have the remainder of the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This Bill proposes a number of legislative amendments to improve the regulatory arrangements for wagering providers that have arisen as a result of the review of the *Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000*. The review was tabled in the Parliament in late 2002 in accordance with section 92 of the Act which required the Act to be reviewed within 12 months of it coming into effect.

These amendments have also resulted from the National Competition Policy gambling legislative review.

It is proposed to amend section 9(d) of the Act to allow the major betting operations licence to authorise the conduct of fixed-odds betting on races. In providing fixed-odds race betting to the TAB, the Government sought agreement to provide some improved betting opportunities to bookmakers to offset the loss of exclusivity of fixed odds betting on races. The TAB did not agree to this resulting in the Government not being able to pursue these amendments without facing potential compensation claims from the TAB under the terms of its Approved Licensing Agreement.

As a result of the restriction imposed on the Government from the Approved Licensing Agreement, the Government focused its discussions with the South Australian Bookmakers' League on other options to assist the operations of the bookmaker industry.

Following those discussions, the Government has agreed to transfer the bookmaking licensing functions to the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner and to remove the licensing requirement for bookmaker clerks. The removal of the requirement to licence bookmakers clerks is consistent with the approach taken towards the TAB where outlet staff are not licensed. Those responsible for the setting of odds, that is bookmakers and bookmakers agents will continue to be licensed. It is proposed to establish a separate class of licence for agents.

The Bill also proposes amendment to section 46 to clarify that the existing practice of the holder of the major betting operations licence and the on-course totalisator licensees of printing the average and maximum deduction from bets on betting tickets meets the information disclosure requirements. Issues of further product information disclosure will be considered by the Independent Gambling Authority

It is proposed to amend the Act so that a bookmaker's licence can be granted to a body corporate. This amendment will permit a proprietary company (within the meaning of the *Corporations Act (Cwlth)*) to hold licences in instances where all of the directors and shareholders are licensed bookmakers.

It is proposed to amend section 55 of the Act to provide power to the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner to place time restrictions on permits to accept bets and section 57 to provide legislative support for the Commissioner in developing guidelines in the issuing of permits on grounds he considers appropriate.

Other amendments include:

- the provision of evidentiary assistance to the Independent Gambling Authority in relation to its function of assessing whether particular contingencies should be approved for betting purposes;

- the extension of the requirement for directors and executive officers of the major betting operations licensee to be approved by the Independent Gambling Authority to other persons of a class designated by the Authority for the purpose;
- a provision ensuring that no further betting shop licences may be granted (the provision does not affect the renewal of the existing Port Pirie betting shop licence);
- a provision enabling the rules relating to bookmaker operations to confer discretions on race stewards or other persons of a prescribed class;
- a provision enabling those authorised to conduct fixed-odds betting to make bets with persons authorised under the law of another State or Territory of Australia to conduct fixed-odds betting;
- providing regulation making capacity to refine the meaning of fixed-odds betting; and
- the deletion of a number of obsolete references.

I commend the bill to members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000*

4—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

A definition of *agent's licence* is added and the definition of *bookmaker* deleted because the Bill creates a new class of licence for agents rather than including agents within the ambit of the definition of bookmaker.

The definition of *clerk's licence* is deleted since the Bill removes the need for such licences.

A definition of *licensing authority* is added since the Bill transfers the licensing functions for bookmakers, agents, 24 hour sports betting and betting shops from the Independent Gambling Authority to the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner.

Obsolete definitions relating to the sale of TAB are removed.

5—Amendment of section 4—Approved contingencies

A new subsection is added to assist in the application of subsection (2) which requires, in part, the Authority to be satisfied as to the adequacy of standards of probity applying in relation to a contingency before approving it for betting purposes. The new subsection provides that the Authority may be satisfied as to the adequacy of standards of probity applying in relation to an event if the Authority has no reason to believe that the standards are inadequate having regard to the evidence of the past conduct of such events that is available to the Authority, whether from the licensee requesting approval of the contingency or from the making of such inquiries as the Authority thinks fit.

6—Amendment of section 7—Grant of licence

This clause removes obsolete provisions relating to the sale of TAB.

7—Amendment of section 9—Authority conferred by licence

This amendment enables the major betting operations licence to extend to the conduct of fixed-odds betting (or other forms of betting) on races or approved contingencies.

8—Amendment of section 13—Racing distribution agreement

9—Amendment of section 16—Transfer of licence

10—Amendment of section 17—Dealings affecting licensed business

These clauses remove obsolete provisions relating to the sale of TAB.

11—Amendment of heading to Part 2 Division 4

12—Amendment of section 20—Approval of designated persons

These clauses extend the provision for approval of directors and executive officers of the licensee to other persons designated by the Authority for the purposes of the section.

13—Amendment of section 28—Licensee to supply authority with copy of audited accounts

This clause updates an out of date reference.

14—Repeal of section 30

This clause removes obsolete provisions relating to the sale of TAB.

15—Amendment of section 34—Classes of licenses

This clause—

(a) transfers the licensing functions for bookmakers, agents, 24 hour sports betting and betting shops from the Independent Gambling Authority to the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner;

(b) creates a new class of licence for bookmaker's agents—an agent's licence;

(c) removes references to clerk's licences;

(d) allows a bookmaker's licence to be issued to a body corporate that is a proprietary company registered in SA if each of the directors and shareholders hold a bookmaker's licence;

(e) prevents any further grants of betting shop licences in Port Pirie.

16—Amendment of section 36—Conditions of licence

17—Amendment of section 37—Application for grant or renewal, or variation of condition, of licence

18—Amendment of section 38—Determination of applications

These clauses make amendments consequential on the transfer of licensing functions and the changes in classes of licences.

19—Insertion of section 38A

The new section provides that a bookmaker's licence held by a body corporate is suspended for any period during which any director or shareholder of the body corporate does not hold a bookmaker's licence.

20—Amendment of section 46—Player return information

The new subsection expressly enables the disclosed player return information to relate to average or minimum player returns across all forms of betting with the licensee in which the actual amounts payable on winning bets are not pre-determined.

21—Amendment of section 54—Licensed bookmakers required to hold permits

This clause is consequential on the introduction of agent's licences and requires an agent to act within a permit granted to the licensed bookmaker.

22—Amendment of section 55—Granting of permits

The new subsection contemplates the issuing of guidelines by the Commissioner setting out the circumstances in which permits will be issued or refused.

23—Amendment of section 57—Conditions of permits

The new subsection expressly contemplates conditions restricting the period during the day for which the permit authorises the acceptance of bets.

24—Insertion of section 59

The new section is consequential on the introduction of agent's licences. It extends the authorisation provided by a permit to an agent of the licensed bookmaker to whom the permit is granted.

25—Amendment of section 60—Prevention of betting with children by bookmaker or agent

The new subsection is consequential on the introduction of agent's licences. It extends the bookmaker's obligations to prevent betting with children to any licensed agent of the bookmaker. A breach would make the licensed agent as well as the bookmaker liable to disciplinary action.

26—Amendment of section 62—Rules relating to bookmakers' operations

The substituted subsection enables the rules to confer discretions on race stewards and persons of a prescribed class. See the validation provision in the Schedule for existing rules conferring such a discretion.

27—Insertion of section 79A

This clause authorises licensees to lay off fixed-odds bets with interstate licensees.

28—Amendment of section 91—Regulations

This new regulation making power enables the regulations to fix the scope of fixed-odds betting for the purposes of the Act.

29—Repeal of section 92

30—Variation of Schedule 1—Transitional provisions

These clauses remove obsolete provisions relating to the sale of TAB.

Schedule 1—Transitional etc provisions

The Schedule contains—

- (a) a transitional provision to ensure that licences previously granted by the Authority continue in force as if they had been granted by the Commissioner;
- (b) a transitional provision for the conversion of clerk's licences into agent's licences; and
- (c) a provision for the validation of rules imposing discretions on race stewards.

Dr McFETRIDGE secured the adjournment of the debate.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Transport): I move:

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

Motion carried.

SUPPLY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).
(Continued from page 2004.)

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): How many times have we heard it in this place: health, education, law and order? The mantra goes on and on. No more mantras: we want some action; we want some economic management. This government continues to hide behind some political rhetoric, some soft focus. If the economic management of this state was a photographic opportunity, it would have a very soft focus, and I guarantee even then you would see the cracks. It is a disgusting state when you have a Treasurer pretending that he does not have an absolute windfall gain from taxes generated within this state. He hides in front of his front bench. He is trying to hide it from the people of South Australia. He has more hollow logs than you see in any state forest. He is squirrelling away money. Come the budget of 2005, he will pretend that he is the saviour of this state.

I remind the Treasurer from where he came. He was there in the bad old Bannan days, the State Bank days. We should never forget that. People say, 'Oh, do not go back to the State Bank', but we should never forget those days. Let us look at last year's budget papers and how much the state gets from state-owned resources and state taxation. The actual figures for 2003-04 will be interesting to see, but taxes on property alone were estimated at \$783 million (that is the total, I think, according to these figures) and, of course, they will be much higher because we know there has been a GST windfall and a property tax windfall. However, \$2.47 billion was raised from taxes on property, gambling, insurance, motor vehicles and other taxes. The government has been rolling in it for a number of months now and it will continue to roll in it because the rest of the economy in Australia is going well.

We have heard from other speakers how this state is certainly not going as well as it should be or could be. And why—because the Treasurer is acting like a bank manager. He is just squirreling that money away. He is not managing the economy; he is not looking at how you stimulate the economy. You are actually allowed to spend money; you are actually allowed to manage the state. He has a duty to manage, to develop and to grow the economy, but that is not what we are seeing. We are seeing all the trend figures and the seasonal figures going down. It does not matter how you look at it, the figures are going down. That should not be

happening to this state, not when one considers the wonderful resources left to this current government by the former Liberal government. It is just a parlous state.

We have heard a number of speakers refer to property taxes. A question was asked in question time today about increased revenue to the state on land tax—\$386 million extra on land tax. I am reliably informed that this year alone there will be about \$1 billion—I repeat—\$1 billion in property taxes going to this government, not just the \$783 million that was forecast—and that is a huge amount. With property values expected to go up another 20 per cent in the next year, we can see \$1 billion plus next year. The Treasurer does not seem to want to let anyone know how much he is getting from property taxes. I have put two questions on notice to the Treasurer about properties at Holdfast Shores and how much land tax and stamp duty is paid. In both cases he said, 'It is too difficult to calculate: it is too much.' Members know what it is: it is too big a figure, that is all. There is probably not enough zeroes on the computer to calculate the millions that have come in from Holdfast Shores, and I will speak more about that development later when I refer to some of the local issues.

However, billions and billions of dollars are coming into this state year after year from state taxes alone. We have nine taxes on property—land tax, stamp duty, conveyances, mortgages, shares, rental, financial transaction taxes, emergency services levy, fixed property, the River Murray levy and the water catchment levy—and we are soon to have the natural resource management levy. An extra \$386 million in land tax this year alone—\$1 billion, I say that again, \$1 billion. The journalists on radio, television and in the print media should stop being commentators, they should start investigating and looking at the money this Treasurer and this government has and look at what they are going to do with it. I refer to one letter I received from the Treasurer while we were talking about land tax. I asked whether there was any way in which we could get remissions on land tax. If the Treasurer does not look at giving remissions on land tax in this budget, I will be very surprised. The other states are looking at it, apart from New South Wales where you are taxed when you go in and taxed when you go out on any property transactions.

Anyway, I wrote to the Treasurer about one of my constituents at Glenelg. He wanted to know whether he could have his property divided for the purposes of land tax because he has a little apartment on the back of his property which he rents out. He does not get much for it. He gets a few dollars for it: it supplements his income. He is prepared to pay taxes on that bit but he does not want to pay taxes on the rest, and I thought that was a fair situation. However, the letter we received said that it would be too costly to administer a regime where land tax was calculated on a reduced value depending on the apportionment between residential and rental dwellings. To implement such a scheme, Revenue SA would be required to monitor all land in South Australia and require the Valuer-General's office to provide separate values for each of the different uses of the property. That sounds all right, but then the City of Holdfast Bay sends out rate notices each year and sent one to this property and, guess what, it is divided between the residential dwelling and the flat. And that information is supplied by whom—the Valuer-General.

Why can the Treasurer not start apportioning land tax on properties where part of the property is rented out and part is your private place of dwelling? I highlight that in 1998 this chap's land tax was \$472 and in 2003 it was \$3 507—and he

will not get any help at all from this government. It is an absolute crying shame. What is the government doing with this extra money? It is not spending it at the moment. The moment the opposition calls for some spending the Treasurer says, 'This is a spend, spend, spend opposition. They just want me to spend. Where will we get it from?' I have just told the Treasurer where he can get it from: he can get it from the extra \$1 billion that he is receiving from property taxes and the \$1 billion he has got from other state taxes.

But then we have the GST. An article in *The Australian* on 26 February by Graeme Morris about GST, headed 'GST Greedy States and Territories' talks about the GST revenue for 2003-04 being about \$32.4 billion, and points out that all that goes to the states—100 per cent of that \$32.4 billion goes to the states. Under the GST, where all that money is going to the states, that is \$575 million more than they would have received under the old federal state taxes idea. It states:

Over the next four years, the states and territories will receive \$160 billion in GST money.

That is not small cheese; we are talking serious money there. Even the Treasurer must consider that that is serious money. It continues:

Each month the GST receipts collected in Canberra are electronically transferred to the states and territories.

It is not slow post, it is not pony express, it is not Cobb & Co; it is an electronic transfer every month of the GST. In 2003-04, \$32 billion is going to the states. This Treasurer needs to really look at what he is trying to do to South Australia. His AAA rating, it may be important, it may save us some money on interest, but it really pales when you see that sort of money, the GST and land tax being poured into the state coffers. To get this state going—the Leader of the Opposition spoke about it—we need economic development. So, what we saw when the government came in, there was all this brouhaha about the Economic Development Board, and we saw this line up of august ladies and gentlemen, some of whom have resigned now. I understand that Bill Woods is the latest one to go. I am not sure whether it is for personal reasons or whether there are political reasons there but the attrition rate with the Economic Development Board is really quite high. The Economic Development Board—it's a strange animal—has been given a lot of power and has set a lot of goals for this government, but I tell you what, with the people who are watching the performance of this government, watching what the Economic Development Board has set for them, watching the strategic plan that is there, it is going to be very, very difficult for people to maintain the faith. The Economic Development Board really will have to re-examine its purpose, re-examine what it is trying to do for this government.

Economic development boards are not new to this state. Don Dunstan—and he is certainly the Premier's mentor; I think he might have seances now to get in touch with him—had the Industrial Development Commission, and that was something that Don worked hard with and he brought in a number of things that did help this state, but we know that it was frittered away under poor management there. But Don Dunstan was not the first to realise that economic development was vital to South Australia. One of the first people who was way ahead of his time was the Hon. Tom Playford. Tom Playford had the Industries Assistance Commission. The Leader of the Opposition spoke before about this topic—industries assistance.

In South Australia it has never been all government and it has never been all private. There have been public/private partnerships. There has been a combination, a symbiotic relationship between public and private business and enterprise, and that is what past premier Tom Playford, the great premier of South Australia, had in his Industries Assistance Commission. This operated during one of the fastest growth periods of this state during our rapid industrialisation, when economic development was a central concern of successive cabinets, and all chaired by Tom Playford. Playford, though, would never have given over policy making to the Industries Assistance Commission, as Rann has given over to the Economic Development Board. The Rann cabinet has no expertise in economics.

What this government should be doing is they should be bringing down people like the member for Napier, the member for Enfield and the member for West Torrens. At least the member for West Torrens has run a chicken shop, he has driven taxis, and he knows what it is like at the coalface to run a business. The member for Napier, I understand, has some very good economic and financial credentials. He should be down there on the frontbench. Certainly, the sharp legal mind, the thinker over there, the member for Enfield, should be down there on the frontbench, because at the moment this frontbench has no expertise in economics, none at all. It is a complete economic vacuum over there. Certainly, with the members for Napier, Enfield and West Torrens stuck on the backbench there is no apparent inclination to get its hands on any economic expertise. The Economic Development Board has set up that strategic plan. They have goals for the government to work to but they are just not going to happen. It is a real shame that this government is all about rhetoric and photo opportunities.

Before I turn to local issues and some of my portfolio issues, I should remind the Premier what happened—he was there at the time; he should remember this—when the government relied on a think tank, a private sector board, to run this state. This government has very little interest in the economic development of this state other than getting photo opportunities. They have also shown that they have very little faith in the public servants of this state. It has been the first strike in 20 years, and the Minister for Industrial Relations does not want to even talk to the hardworking, genuine public servants whom I as shadow minister for local government, consumer affairs, volunteers, sport and recreation deal with. They are hardworking; they are dedicated; but, this government does not want to listen or talk to them.

The handing over of strategic policy development to the Economic Development Board reminds us of an instance when the government believed that all it had to do was have public sector activity controlled by a board and that board would respond to challenges. The last time that happened was with the State Bank. The State Bank Board controlled the bank, the government did not listen to warnings and look at what happened—\$10 billion worth of debt. The previous Liberal government worked very hard to overcome that debt and this government is going down that exact same path.

I would like to quickly address some of my portfolio issues in the last few minutes available to me. They are about local government. Local government is vital to this state. I am very pleased to have spoken to the minister for local government this afternoon and to have seen that he is a man determined to make sure that local government is seen as an independent tier of government, that we are not cost-shifting from state government to local government. It is great to see

the press release put out by the Local Government Association noting that the federal government has put money in to the funding of roads. It is also good to see the other press release welcoming the new state/local government relations in the compact that has been signed. That is good to see.

Regarding consumer affairs, we spoke about the billions coming into this state from property taxes alone, and consumers are looking for some relief. They are looking for some genuine tax relief, not only in the federal budget next week, but also in the state budget. Regarding sport and recreation, the hundreds and thousands of people who compete and are involved in sport or in running committees, helping out sporting organisations are looking for some relief as well. They are looking for some insurance premium relief. This government is not giving them any guidelines or legal help—it is giving them absolutely nothing. Volunteers represent \$30 billion Australia-wide—that is the economic impact of being a volunteer. In South Australia, they represent \$5.1 billion to the economy of this state. The government needs to get right behind them and I know that, from speaking to the parliamentary secretary and the Office of Volunteers, they are doing some very good work. I just hope the Premier appreciates that work.

I have to mention one local issue in particular. I know it is not the right thing to beg in this place, but I will beg the Treasurer to give Paringa Park Primary School the half a million dollars it needs to upgrade their buildings so that they can improve their toilets, which should have been condemned years ago. They need half a million dollars to do up the Bristol buildings that were brought out here second-hand in 1953. I spoke to the former minister for education; she was very sympathetic. I just hope that the present Minister for Education is as active as the previous one was—I hope the Treasurer listens.

Regarding Brighton Secondary School and the State Volleyball Centre, we have been consistently trying. It has been getting close, but it is still so far away. It is a state volleyball centre, not just for Brighton Secondary School. A sum of \$400 000 has been put aside from Sport and Recreation and I understand that \$300 000 should be available from the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) to complete this fantastic project—not just for Brighton Secondary School but for the state of South Australia.

Regarding trams, I direct my comments to the Minister for Transport. I understand there are some difficulties with the tenders and I will be the first to support this government in making sure that we have new trams by December 2005. I hope that is possible. I am seriously concerned though, from what I am hearing, that the tenders that have been put in are not quite what we would hope them to be. We do not want 70 per cent low floor trams. We do not want narrow trams. We want 100 per cent low floor, 30-metre long trams. We want new top line trams, not just second-rate trams. We cannot compromise because the budget has been blown out a little.

The government is getting millions in from the Holdfast Shores development. They are going to get millions more because, if the current government has its way, stage 2B will go ahead, much to the disappointment of many people in South Australia. This government is rolling in money. It is getting more money than it could have ever wished for in its wildest dreams. They should look after the state of South Australia. They should make sure that they care for this state the way the former Liberal government did. They should be planning for the future, not just putting it aside and not

having somebody to blame, not having the soft focus on the issues, but having a very sharp focus. I suggest that the Premier get behind the lens of a very good camera and have a look at that sharp focus. He should get out his telescopic lens and look at the various issues, not just stand in front of the camera looking for photo opportunities. He needs to be there; he needs to be proactive. He needs to show leadership. He needs to get this Treasurer and this cabinet working as they should be, not just as another photo opportunity, not just to have his name on a plaque out in the foyer of this place—he needs to be what he professes to be and that is the Premier of this state.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I rise to speak to the Supply Bill and, in particular, the adverse effects of this government's financial decisions. In my speech tonight, I want to lay off the rhetoric and put some actual cases forward. It is all very well for us to talk across this chamber, but when it hits home and hits the little people and business, when you can put a name to these people, it makes a difference. The Rann Labor government is halfway through its term in office. It has now been in government over two years. The financial cutbacks are now causing great concern in South Australia. In my electorate, in particular, we have gone from exports—and the wine exports are a large part of this—of \$9.16 million two years ago to \$7.3 million today. Labor simply blames the drought and the dollar revaluations.

An honourable member: And globalisation.

Mr VENNING: And globalisation. I wish to inform the government that South Australia did the best out of the drought that any state has done. I ought to know, because our family is on the farm. We got a reasonable crop last year and we sold hay and grain to New South Wales and Victoria; so, we fared better. How is it that today these states have recovered so much better and now are forging ahead and we are, again, becoming the poor cousin in the economies of Australia. No more of this blaming everything else—look at yourselves. It is there as proof. Long after I have left this place, the yearbooks and graphs will show quite clearly what happened in 2004, 2005 and 2006. What happened then? You do not need to look very far. You would know that the government changed the management here in South Australia and we have gone in reverse.

The wine and tourism industry and, therefore, the Barossa Valley, Mannum and Adelaide Hills have been largely responsible for the economic resurgence of this state's economy over the last 10 years. The vibrancy of the Barossa region has attracted millions of dollars of investment in private infrastructure. Huge investments have been made by very large international companies, as members opposite would know, who choose to spend and invest here in South Australia over other states and, indeed, other countries.

We have all benefited from these huge investments, with big increases in exports, big employment opportunities, a massive lift in our world profile and a real buzz for Australia, particularly for South Australians. We have a very good feeling of confidence and optimism because we are world leaders in benchmarking technologies and premium products. What would you expect a state government to do in this sort of climate to encourage it to continue, to ensure that government infrastructure keeps up and to maintain essential services at the highest level?

The previous government did just that: new roads (Gomersal Road); new schools (Tanunda Primary School and

a special education unit); food and water; an irrigation scheme (the BIL scheme); looked after our tourism with the BWTA funding and the tourism train; built a new performing arts centre; and a new hospital was coming next. All this happened over approximately six years: not a bad record.

What has happened in two years? What has happened in my region, in the Barossa particularly, in the last two years? As both the members of the government sitting opposite know—nothing. The tap has been turned off instantly, tightly, and there is nothing coming from it all. Someone has it wrong. Either we as a government were over-extravagant in this region or this government is playing an unfair game. The Barossa returns to this state tenfold every dollar spent there. We can rave about our economy and we should have: it has been very good; and a lot of this can be attributed directly to the success of the wine industry, the Barossa Valley and the Adelaide Hills. And what is the government doing about it? Nothing. It totally ignores commonsense; it totally ignores economic indicators; and here is the proof.

If members opposite do not believe me, they should accept my invitation, come up and be my guest. Hear it not from me but from the industry leaders. Come for yourselves. Do not take my word, because I am biased. I am a political person, but you come up and have a listen. What has happened since the government changed? The new government has frozen its spending in the Barossa and region. Plans for the new hospital have been scrapped; road funding has been slashed; school upgrades delayed; the wine education program ignored; and the wine train has closed down. Is all this true? Tell me if it is not true. Is this true or not? It has all happened in the last two years. The government cut the funding from the music festival and now it has to go it alone. Whose money is involved? Of course, the industry's.

What sort of message does that send to these people? I sat with the French boss of Orlando Wyndham (Pernod Ricard) the other day. Here is an international leader of business operating one of the five biggest companies in the world, and what is he hearing from the locals? 'Things are not so good. The government is not recognising us.' At least I will say that Minister Hill came up and made a very good speech, and I want a copy of that speech because he actually has been listening. But it was talk. I want to see him deliver on that speech, because it was full of a lot of the points I have been raising in this place over some time. Of course, the insult of all insults is the Barossa hospital: gone from the records. It has no priority whatsoever. To make it worse, the Rann Labor government has raised its tax collections to a huge amount, as other members have said tonight, through stamp duty, land tax and registration.

And who can forget the crown lease debacle where lessees are paying a higher rate and legislation has not even yet been passed by this parliament. All government service costs have been increased way over the CPI, and the government has cut its road funding to the lowest in Australia. That is a subject for another debate, but that is a disgrace when you see the number of trucks that are running through the Barossa. The movements of wine from all states are coming into the Barossa on these goat tracks. And what has been done? We built the Gomersal Road. This government should have gone on and upgraded all the internal roads, but no. There has been an absolute shut-down. Nothing whatsoever is happening.

So, what is going on? Is the government trying to hose down this new confidence in a premier business and tourism area? Well, it is starting to work. There is great concern at the way things are beginning to turn. I have to be very careful

about how I say this, but the confidence is turning to frustration. What is the Treasurer doing with his huge tax windfalls, including the GST windfall? What is he doing with all the money? I hope that it has not all gone on projects like the Sturt Street Community School, which came to the Public Works Committee a couple of weeks ago. There has been at least a \$3 million blow-out and it still has serious residue problems. When we were in government, as the minister here would know, we chose not to proceed with the upgrade of that school and we closed it, for obvious reasons, even though I am a person who always has been, still is and always will be interested in heritage buildings.

The building was beyond repair, it was not safe, it was structurally unsound and, worse, it was on a polluted site—and that pollution is still there. I do not know why the government did this. It said so during the election and it has gone ahead and wasted its money, and I am afraid that the saga is far from over. Is that where the money has gone? I certainly hope not. Is a Standard and Poor's AAA rating really this important? Why has the Treasurer such a fixation about it? Is it the aftermath of the State Bank disaster, Labor's greatest disaster in South Australia? What is the Treasurer trying to prove? That he can pile money up in the bank? Or is it an inferiority complex by Labor as an aftermath of the State Bank disaster? What is the cost of confidence? It just cannot be turned on when the Treasurer decides to open the floodgates in a whiz-bang election budget, which we will see in a year's time.

Well, Mr Treasurer, if you do not turn on the tap before then, the damage will be disastrous. Small businesses are already closing down and leaving the state. I believe that 3 000 have gone already. We have the best example of so many organisations in the Barossa, and it breaks my heart to see this government trying to reduce them to mediocrity, showing the losses that they currently are, and I will list but a few. I refer to the Barossa Wine and Tourism Association (BWTA), whose chief executive Barry Salter will resign in a few weeks' time, I believe because the government has cut the funding because he was employed as a marketer. The BWTA is the recognised role model for all other wine tourism regions in Australia, and, to prove that, it has won several awards.

Three groups, including local government, were brought together 10 years ago to work for the major strength in marketing in the region, namely, the wine industry, the tourism sector and the vintage festival and events. The Barossa continues to enjoy the highest average tourism expenditure per night of any South Australian tourism region outside Adelaide. The five major wine companies all have their major wine pressing plants and their headquarters in the Barossa. The Barossa accounts for around 46 per cent of Australia's total wine production, and this in the small state that we are. Every other wine tourism region in Australia would love the Barossa to become number two, three or even worse.

Strong marketing teams headed by strong people like Mr Salter, are dedicated to the Barossa will be the only way for this to be achieved: marketers in the Barossa, not in Adelaide—and that is what they are trying to do. They are trying to cut down the region's expenditure by taking the funds away from the region and creating these positions here in Adelaide. That goes against all the rhetoric we are hearing about regional development. A marketing manager will now be based in Adelaide and out of touch with the locals and the

region. It has never worked before and I doubt whether it will work this time.

We had strong, proven leadership by the CEO, Barry Salter. He has formed very strong links with the three organisations, a far cry from what the BWTA was five years ago when it was not running well. There were a lot of problems with it and the government was concerned about what it was spending there. It is now a great success. If members have any doubt about that, just ask the member for Morialta or anyone else.

Just a couple of weeks ago we had *Barossa Under the Stars*. What a success that was: twice. Two nights sold out. What does the government do? It goes and cuts the funds for the marketer. Is that stupid or what? That is what the government has done. Two of the most successful tourism events that we have had, and three weeks later the government announces that it is going to cut the funds from the marketer. That is b. stupid or I am not b. standing here. And you wonder why people get upset!

I want to talk about the Kapunda Homes project. This is another unbelievable stuff up. It is just beyond the pale. The Kapunda Homes project is a \$1.68 million extension to the Kapunda Homes facility—funded by the community through bequests and a budgetary surplus gained by shrewd local budgeting. It involves no government money. Kapunda has done the right thing, seeking and taking the advice of the relevant government departments along the way. It did not have to, but it chose to contact DAIS. It had its money, planning and contracts organised 12 months ago. Now, a year later, the project is still being tossed to and fro and has still not passed through all the processes. I understand that it is still to go before the cabinet on 10 May. Why? It is the people's money. What do the people who gave this money through private bequests, local and internal, really think about this? It is a joke. When I went to the minister, to her credit she gave me a very good hearing; she said it was with the Treasurer. I went to the Treasurer and he told me that it was with the Minister for Health—one to the other.

This is bureaucracy at its worst. People are getting very, very frustrated. I am very concerned about the delays of this project. This is a community project, driven by the community and funded by the community, therefore costing the government nothing or very little. More aged beds are desperately needed in Kapunda. I understand that as recently as last week another family was split up because an aged resident had to be transferred to Tanunda as no bed was available. This week another resident will be transferred from Kapunda when a bed becomes available elsewhere, again, splitting up yet another family.

The government, clearly, does not understand the implications of splitting up a family. I believe I need to remind the house that my electorate is a rural electorate, and many of my constituents are farmers or farmers' employees, and they like to have local hospital care, particularly when having their babies. I am very concerned that this funding, which has attracted federal money, is now going to be put into jeopardy. The federal government has funded six aged care beds here, and the money has to be spent by 25 January 2005. They have gained full-time aged care beds. If that money is not spent or used by 25 January, it will be in jeopardy. I am very worried about federal nursing bed licences.

I wonder on whose authority this minister's office can say to me and my office that these beds will be okay. An extension has already been given, and the beds need to be

occupied by 25 January 2005—only eight months away. I am a little confused that the state minister's office can speak with such authority given that these licences are granted by the federal government. Has the minister received an assurance from the federal government that the licences will not be revoked if the beds are not occupied by January next year? I doubt it very much, but I hope I am wrong. I do not understand what this government is thinking. Here we have a community that is willing to pay for its essential services. Why is this government hindering it when more beds are so desperately needed? It is beyond me. Does this government not realise that before too long it will need to build or extend more facilities, and it will be at the taxpayers' expense, not private. Why not support the local board and its vision? The member for Stuart has visited this issue with me and is of the same mind: he gets as passionate about it as I do. A deputation from Kapunda Homes met with the minister about seven weeks ago—on 15 March—when she gave her assurance that this project will be sorted out. She gave her word. Minister, this project is still being tossed around. What is going on? I am very concerned about this.

I want to talk briefly about SA Water's waste. All this, and the government is wasting money. SA Water pays out \$8 000 to people along the Adelaide to Mannum pipeline in lieu of their right to potable water. Water will not be chlorinated because of the damage done when the water flows from the pipes into the Torrens. I have no problem with people being compensated, but I prefer that the money be put towards smaller community filtration and chlorination plants rather than handed out to people willy-nilly. What does the government do? It hands out a cheque for \$8 000 to individuals. Eight grand in the hand! Whether or not they buy the tanks or pumps, they get the cheque. Some will just blow it. And guess what? Some already have. I despair. It was supposed to be spent on infrastructure, for rainwater tanks and pumps to supply drinking water to these people when they lose their potable water. It has not done that, so when people get sick because they drink the pipeline water or when the property is sold, what happens then? It is blown. It should pay the money only on invoices or to the company supplying the tanks and the pumps. It should pay the bills rather than hand out a cheque. It is a ridiculous situation.

I am very cross about the government's intention to build the opening bridges over the Port River: \$30 million extra cannot be justified. I want that on the record as many times as possible. It cannot justify an extra \$30 million. I applaud the government's decision regarding the \$300 million expenditure on Outer Harbor. Good on them; I want to see it happen as soon as possible. But it should save money by having a fixed bridge and spend it on deepening the harbour for the use of all South Australians and not a few people who want to sail a high masted boat from the old wharf into the river. That is plainly absolutely ridiculous and cannot be justified. I know that secretly many members of the Labor Party opposite agree with me that it is a gross waste of money and that the local member, the Treasurer, made that commitment without asking the Caucus or cabinet. There is a lot of ill feeling about that on the other side.

Finally, I get somewhat frustrated with the state going the way it is. All I can say about the coming budget is that I am looking to see money put towards the Barossa and Adelaide Hills. I promise members that any dollar spent in this region, particularly on roads, will be returned to the state tenfold.

Time expired.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I wish to make a brief contribution about the appropriation of \$1 500 million for the general services of the state. My comments relate to how I think that money should be spent. I would like to see some of it invested in my constituency. The first matter I raise is that today the Premier made a ministerial statement about the Pitjantjatjara lands. I sincerely hope that this government will take positive, long-term steps to resolve problems in the AP Lands. It has a unique opportunity. People on this side will most likely support it. If we as a government tried to do it, members opposite would have rustled up and hassled up every political agitator, church leader and others to say what a terrible thing we were doing. Those of us who have had some experience will realise that there are a number of important things that must happen. We have to open up the area and get some industry and commerce going there to give those people something constructive to do. I will say more about that matter at a later date.

Yesterday I raised with the Minister for Education an important matter about school-based traineeships. I explained to the house that there was an attempt made to prevent students from signing Australian work place agreements which are necessary to comply with certain award conditions. We know that there is an urgent need for apprenticeships in a wide range of fields in the state. Therefore, to encourage young people who have no intention of going to university to commence training while still at school so that they can get some experience and are aware of what is ahead of them is a very good thing. I call on the Minister for Education to take the necessary steps to ensure that these young people are not disadvantaged. If I do not get an effective response fairly soon, I intend to bring the matter to the notice of the federal minister in this area, because I am sure he would be interested to know that people are being prevented from signing work place agreements when it is the law of the commonwealth, and particularly when it is having such a detrimental effect on this excellent program which the schools run.

The next matter which I would like to talk about and with which the member for Flinders is involved, is the grave anomaly that currently exists in relation to the River Murray levy. No-one likes paying any tax, charge or levy, and I know what happened when we brought in the emergency services levy. What a challenging and interesting time that was for everyone! But, in regard to this particular levy, people who are never going to have access to the River Murray—people at places such as Marree, Oodnadatta, Yunta, Oodla Wirra and Terowie—are all suffering because they have terrible water schemes and poor quality water but are being slugged for the benefit of using it. I put to the house that this is an unfair situation and should be rectified. These people should not have to pay this levy because they have a less than adequate service and the worst quality water that you can imagine in many cases, and it is an unfair imposition on isolated communities.

In recent times there has been considerable publicity about people who suffer from mental health problems, and there is an urgent need to ensure that mental health facilities and nurses are available in the isolated parts of the state to provide services and treat and help people with this unfortunate problem. People cannot access those services if they are not available. Members will know from reading Saturday's *Weekend Australian* that this matter has been brought to everyone's attention nationally. There have been meetings at Ororoo and representations have been made. I urge the minister to intervene to ensure that those people who are

responsible for providing and coordinating services accept that there is a need and help organise people on the ground. I have received correspondence from Mr Gilbert—as have other members, I think—pointing out the difficulties in South Australia, and I sincerely hope that the Minister for Health will act upon this particular matter. I realise it is not easy. I realise that there are tremendous demands on the health budget, that we will probably never have enough money, and it is a matter of selecting priorities, but this is an area of high priority.

There is another matter of concern in relation to health services. A considerable amount of activity is taking place in relation to 'encouraging' hospital boards to amalgamate. I call upon the Minister for Health to ensure that, before any amalgamations take place, a public meeting is held in each town or district to ensure that the local community is fully abreast of what is proposed so it can debate the issue. I know that it suits bureaucracy to have fewer and fewer elected people to deal with because they get in the way. It is like bureaucracy in the parliament—it is often a jolly nuisance because people will not agree on what they want to do from time to time. I say that is bad luck. The local communities have built those hospitals and are entitled to have an input and a say. If they need professional help and guidance, that is accepted, but at the end of the day they are entitled to participate. So, I call upon the minister to ensure that there is full public consultation before any of these particular amalgamations take place.

The final thing I want to do during this debate this evening is appeal to the Treasurer to ensure that there is adequate money for the ongoing rural arterial road program, because it is important to the tourist industry and local industry. The Premier has indicated that he wants to triple exports. If you want to triple exports you have to have a road system that will allow people to ship the products to ports. We do not want any more of the absolutely outrageous activities of the department of transport inspectors at Nundroo—and the minister at the table is aware of this. The worst thing about that exercise is that, for over 20 years, road trains have carted grain from the Pintumba silo, which is not very far from Nundroo. The people who have the road trains have a workshop in Ceduna and the inspector drove past it nearly every day. If there was a problem he should have called in and discussed it instead of issuing on-the-spot fines, slowing down the whole process and acting in an unreasonable manner. It seems to me that the inspector (a fellow called Burford) has a peculiar outlook on life. Some of these people want to make life as difficult as they possibly can for people trying to do something for South Australia. The Premier has been urging people to produce more and export more. We agree with that. If that is to happen, keep bureaucracy, red tape and the little apparatchiks right out of it.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I was going to say something else but I thought I had better not.

Mr Williams: You stopped yourself. You did well, Graham.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am in a very good mood because it is getting closer to my bed time.

Mr Caica interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I am going to be good. Don't keep me going. I have another 11 minutes. I could easily go off on another tack. During the estimates committee I am going to raise with the Minister for Transport the question of these characters. If they want to play that game, two people

can play the rugged game. If commonsense applies, most people get on all right but, if you want to be silly, childish and vindictive, then you will get a whack in the ear in this place. So, I support the bill. There are many other urgent matters which we will be examining in the budget and we sincerely hope that the government looks after people in regional and rural South Australia. I know the federal budget will do that and I hope that this budget will do likewise. I support the bill.

Mr CAICA (Colton): I hope to be equally as succinct as the honourable member for Stuart, whose speech was indeed excellent—in fact, it was one of the best contributions from the opposition thus far. From my perspective, we have heard nothing but whingeing, whining and carping and, indeed, if we take on board the comments of the member for Light and others, a rewriting of history. There is doom and gloom. In fact, you could almost argue that the member for Light and others could be charged with misleading the house with respect to their particular contributions. That, of course, would not be the first time that the opposition has misled the house. If we look at history, ETSA would not be sold but, of course, it was. You could also say that we were not going to sell—we had to sell (I correct myself)—the TAB but, in fact, we did not because we gave it away. We did not sell it at all. But that has happened in the past and, thankfully, it is in the past. Those days are now behind us and we can look to a very positive future through what the Labor government will deliver to the people of South Australia. When I look at the invigorated front bench and its performance over the past two days—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAICA: I am talking about the opposition front bench. We have not had a reshuffle such as the opposition needed to invigorate the front bench. It has been very disappointing and, on the performance of the last few days, it will be some time before we see the opposition in government, and that can only be a good thing for the people of South Australia.

We have been in government for two and a bit years and I think we are doing a good job. It might be said that that is a little bit gratuitous and there is nothing worse than self-praise, but I think the community supports the Labor government at this point in time, and you only have to look at the polls to get that indication. That is not to say that there are things that we, as a government, cannot do better, because there are, and we will do so. We are in a difficult situation in South Australia. There is a lot more manufacturing on the eastern seaboard and we do not have the mineral resources that exist in Western Australia. We have to do things a little smarter and make sure we create here in South Australia a niche market and niche opportunities.

What have we done since being in government? We have set up a very good foundation from which to build. We cannot bring about what is revolutionary change because we only have a bucket of money that we need to use effectively, so it must be used sensibly. We have set up a foundation by making sure we will be able to introduce as we move forward structural changes to South Australia for the benefit of all South Australians, as we are a government for all South Australians. The initiatives we have put in place include the Economic Development Board, the generational health review, the Social Inclusion Unit, the results coming out of the drugs summit and the Layton review.

As mentioned by the member for Enfield, we are a government that undertakes a consultative process by using a level of expertise to engage the broader community in assisting in the decision-making process, that is, that we bring people along with us. If we compare that level of consultation with what occurred with previous governments, and the opposition which was once in government, decisions were made of which their cabinet was not even aware. Unlike the opposition when in government, we are about engaging the broader community and having it assist us in the decision-making process. We have set up that foundation, consulted and utilised expertise.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr CAICA: For the benefit of the member for Schubert, what is the downside and danger of setting up such a review that assists in developing a foundation from which to build? It is at your own peril if you do not adopt those recommendations, if you do not seriously look at them and adopt them. We have set up a process by which we have engaged the community and expertise to make sure we govern for all South Australians. That is how our finances will be utilised: to develop situations in the best interests of the broader South Australian community.

There is a risk in engaging such reviews. The risk is that we do not listen to those recommendations at our own peril. We will listen and we will implement those components of the review that will benefit South Australians. We have as a Labor government certain priorities and those priorities have been well aired in the past. They include, as a priority, all aspects of health, whether it be aged care, mental health and all aspects of the health sector to ensure we invest properly for the future of all South Australians.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr CAICA: Look at the QEH. The member for Schubert talks about hospitals and I take on board his comments, but for years we were promised what was essentially on the never-never—the redevelopment of the QEH. It was our government that committed to not only the first stage but also to stages 2 and 3 of that hospital as part of an overall generational health review that will deliver satisfactory health outcomes to all South Australians. We should be very proud of that and get bipartisan support from the opposition with respect to that matter. I know that the member for Schubert is nodding in agreement, which is a good thing because the generational health review should have been undertaken many years ago, but it has been undertaken by our government in a bold move to ensure we utilise the small amount of resources we have in the most effective way.

We have the priorities of health, education and the environment. I heard the member for Stuart and enjoyed his contribution, but he talked about the River Murray levy. We can talk about people on the West Coast and the quality of water they are getting—and we know we have to improve that quality—but the River Murray is the lifeblood of all South Australians and we all have to contribute to its health and wellbeing because the demise of the River Murray will affect the people on the West Coast just as much as it will affect the people in Adelaide and in the South-East. We have to look more globally at such issues. A priority is the AP lands and I was pleased with the announcements by the Premier today, with more to come, about resolving a situation on the AP lands that should have been resolved many years ago. It is an indictment of previous governments that it was not done, but this government is making it a priority and

making sure that adequate funding will remedy what is clearly a situation that needs to be fixed.

The industrial relations minister is here. Another priority of this government is that we will make sure we restore the balance with respect to industrial relations and address the problems that have occurred in WorkCover over many years. We hear about the lack of investment in infrastructure in South Australia. I feel gainfully employed as the Presiding Member of the Public Works Committee, as does the member for Schubert, an enormous amount of work coming through to that committee that shows that the infrastructure development in South Australia is a priority of this government and ample funds will be put in to ensure infrastructure and development in public projects.

We need to make South Australia a great place to invest and we have seen recent reports which say that Adelaide, South Australia, is one of the best 10 places in the world in which to invest—one of the top three places of cities in this region of the Southern Hemisphere with a population of between 1 million to 1.5 million people. We will make it an even better place in which to invest. The projects that this government wishes to undertake are not projects that can by necessity be undertaken overnight: it is an evolutionary process and we have set the foundations in place on which to build. We will make South Australia an even more attractive place in which people can invest with confidence.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr CAICA: It may help further the ample bank account you have already. I have no problems with that. We have to create niche markets for South Australia because we do not have the manufacturing that the eastern seaboard has nor the mineral resources of Western Australia, and we have to invest in technology, biotechnology and tourism. The work being undertaken by the Minister for Tourism needs the assistance of the federal government because we cannot do it alone. We need a more proactive federal government to ensure that South Australia is not left to waste. That may be remedied in October this year after a federal election, because we can then guarantee more support for South Australia than we have received previously.

Our priority is education. We need to address the decline that has occurred over the past 10 years in the way in which we educate our young people. That is investing in the future. Education is of prime importance and that is why it is a priority of this government. Ample money will go into education to make sure that it is not only a priority but also that it sets the foundation from which we as a community are investing in our future wellbeing.

The member for Hartley previously spoke about the media and I found it quite interesting. The member for Mawson also talked about media reports. Media reports to a great extent are often a nonsense. If the member for Hartley believes that quoting the media provides a balance to the democratic process, it is a nonsense. We know that the reports provided by the media recently in relation to the investment in education in South Australia was a nonsense because it talked about a general per capita contribution and not a per capita contribution in the numbers of children and students who will benefit from it. It was a nonsense figure. We need more federal support and there is not enough money coming into South Australia from the federal government. Given the circumstances I talked about earlier, more money needs to be provided by the federal government. It is not only more money but also more commitment by the federal government in relation to migration and environmental leadership, when

it comes to the River Murray. As I have said, that will most likely be remedied in October this year.

As a government we will not deviate from our priorities of education, health and the environment. The Leader of the Opposition made the comment that there are enormous challenges for this government in what was a very interesting and probably self-indulgent contribution to this debate. We have set up consultative processes. We as a government are building a foundation, and we are securing our state's future and that of my two young boys and all children of their age.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I have pleasure in continuing the debate on this bill. I want to raise several issues, in particular those relating to transport, education facilities in my electorate of Kavel and, if time permits, some economic issues. I trust that the Treasurer, in framing the budget to be introduced into the parliament in the next few weeks, will dedicate some funds to address some of these issues—not only the specific issues to which I will be referring but all the issues raised by opposition members. They are very important for the wellbeing, economic development, prosperity and sustainability of this great state of South Australia.

I have spoken about these issues previously, and I will continue to speak about them because they are very important for the electorate of Kavel, which I have the honour and privilege of representing in this place. I refer to the main street of Hahndorf and the traffic issues that continually confront its infrastructure. Only a week or so ago, I was following a semitrailer along the main street of Hahndorf. The street was hardly wide enough, with vehicles parked either side, to allow this one semitrailer to travel along that thoroughfare, let alone allowing another truck, bus, or whatever coming from the other way to pass. The Hahndorf main street has been an issue for quite a long time—probably not long after the freeway was constructed.

The freeway was constructed in the 1970s, or thereabouts. At the time, the residents of Hahndorf did not want an interchange that took traffic from Hahndorf onto the freeway to travel east. However, as time has gone by, some residents have probably seen the error of the initial decisions and are looking for and need a second interchange at Hahndorf to take the traffic from Hahndorf onto the freeway to travel east to Mount Barker and then onto Callington and Murray Bridge, as well as enabling traffic travelling west to exit the freeway and enter the township of Hahndorf.

At the moment, the only way motorists can get onto the freeway to travel east is to drive through the main street of Hahndorf, up what is known locally as Windmill Hill, down through the industrial area of Littlehampton and then onto the freeway at the Mount Barker interchange. Similarly, motorists coming from Murray Bridge and travelling west wanting to exit the freeway and enter Hahndorf have to get off at Mount Barker and travel in the opposite direction to those who want to enter the freeway and travel east. It is a big issue and, in the time I have in this place, I will be working tirelessly to see that come to fruition. I know there is every likelihood that we will need some federal funding assistance, and I am more than prepared to speak to the local federal member, Hon. Alexander Downer (the Minister for Foreign Affairs), concerning this matter, in conjunction with the

relevant minister for transport, whomever that might be at the time, to see that this project comes to fruition.

That brings me to another issue concerning the freeway interchanges. I have also spoken previously about the second exchange that is needed at Mount Barker. Significant residential development continues to take place in the townships of Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne. You have only to drive around those townships to see the quite expansive development going on in the housing market in those three towns. The time will come when the current road infrastructure will not support the number of people living in that tri-town district, and I implore the government to consider a second interchange that will run onto what is known as Bald Hills Road. I know the lie of the land around that area fairly well; I have travelled around that part of my electorate regularly.

It would not take a lot of earthworks or work as such to see a second interchange put in at the Bald Hills Road area. At the moment, Bald Hills Road runs underneath the freeway. Many people would not be aware that a tunnel is built under the freeway for Bald Hills Road and it would be relatively easy to build a second interchange there. However, all these significant infrastructure works take the will and the preparedness of the government to commit funds to see the works completed.

Another issue concerning transport that needs to be addressed sooner rather than later is that of B-double access running along the major vehicular routes in the Adelaide Hills. At the moment, B-doubles come up from the Southern Vales, travel along Adelaide Road through the middle of Mount Barker township and then they have to get onto the freeway and travel either east or west. If they want to travel further north through the Adelaide Hills, they have to break down their combination, which obviously means they must uncouple their trailers and hook them up to other prime movers. Industry is still growing and expanding in the Hills, the wine industry is coming into full production in the Adelaide Hills and there will be a time when B-doubles will need to run along the Onkaparinga Valley Road. Some obvious work will need to be done on that road, including the widening of some bridges, and so on. With industry expanding at a fairly good rate, I might say that there will be a need for B-doubles to have access along those major corridors.

Only recently a new winery has been built near the township of Woodside. It is quite a significant winery, I might say. I drove in the other day to have a look. From driving along the road, you get an indication of the size of the winery, but on closer inspection you can see that it is a fairly big winery and, no doubt, many hundreds of thousands of tonnes of grapes will be crushed there. Obviously that needs transport infrastructure support. This takes me to another point, that is, that the Adelaide to Mannum Road, which runs from the north-eastern suburbs (from Tea Tree Gully and those suburbs in the metropolitan north-east) around the Millbrook Reservoir to Gumeracha, Birdwood and Mannum. I know that the government has recently committed funds (from memory—I will have to check this figure—\$155 000) to assist in constructing some more turnout lanes, and from travelling along that road I see that work is progressing quite well.

I commend the government for committing those funds. The previous minister for transport is in the chamber and I commend him and TSA for the commitment of those moneys for that upgrade work. That is only the start of what is required. That road has many bends and curves in it. Obvi-

ously, it has to follow the geography of the region, but with modern earth-moving machinery and modern engineering techniques many of those corners could certainly be straightened out. I wrote to the Minister for Transport some weeks ago and I did receive a response, which is quite good in view of what we have all experienced previously, when, at times, it has taken 18 months to receive a response from that office. I wrote to the minister trying to encourage him and Transport SA to commit additional moneys to look to improve that road but, unfortunately, I received a response saying that they have no plans for any further work on that road.

That is all right: I received an answer. I suppose one must accept the answer, but that road is a major carrier of vehicles and heavy freight from the northern Adelaide Hills region and the southern Barossa Valley region, taking all sorts of freight and the like to the metropolitan area and obviously to Port Adelaide for the export market. These are only a few examples of what is required from this government in the electorate of Kavel to see transport infrastructure improvement.

I will also comment on some educational needs in my electorate. I have highlighted these previously and, as I have spoken about transport infrastructure needs, I will keep on highlighting these educational needs. One that is of paramount importance is the work required at Birdwood High School. Last year, the government committed to a feasibility study—

The SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members may wish either to join in conversation on the benches or in the gallery, but not across the barriers. It is a bad example to members of the public, none of whom are present at the moment.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: As I was saying, last year the government committed to undertake a feasibility study on the upgrade of the Birdwood High School, and we certainly appreciated that commitment. However, the next big step has to be taken; that is, the commitment of funds so that the upgrade of that school can be undertaken to a satisfactory level. At the moment, when you drive along the main street, you see nice buildings along the front facing the main street, but really it is like a Hollywood set; that is, when you go behind what I would describe as that facade, some of the classrooms are shocking. They are the old weatherboard, timber clad buildings that have been there since the 1960s and are really in a shocking, dilapidated state. I have had quite a lot to do with the Birdwood High School community, and every effort is being made to ensure that the government does commit sufficient funds for a significant revamp.

I know that plans have been drawn up, and so on, and that is all part of this feasibility study, but we need this government and the education minister to commit a considerable amount of money so that improvements can be made to this big high school. The primary school site is right next to it, and they are looking to share some of the facilities, which is good. Obviously that is a worthy issue for which to strive. That school community has been very patient, and it is time that this government definitely committed sufficient funds to see those works completed.

I also refer to Mount Barker Primary School, which has been campaigning, raising funds and discussing the issue of constructing a new multipurpose hall for a long time. Those facilities used to be called a gym. Now the department regards them as a multipurpose hall and, really, every school in the Adelaide Hills should have one of these facilities. We experience cold, wet winters and we cannot expect children to go out in the cold weather to take their PE lessons, and the

like. The government should look to build a multipurpose hall in every school site in the Adelaide Hills. Mount Barker Primary School is certainly campaigning for one, and I think they are reasonably close to raising the required deposit for the government then to commit to the building of this multipurpose hall.

I congratulate the Mount Barker Primary School on their endeavours. It has been a long struggle for them. They have fought a long, hard campaign. They have worked to overcome the obstacles that have been put in front of them, and I congratulate the school's governing council, the staff, the principal and the general school community for the effort they have put into that. It has been a hard-fought battle and I think they are about to win it.

I want to talk about some broader issues regarding the economic state of South Australia, and I listened intently to the Leader of the Opposition's contribution earlier this evening, and I believe he has got to the nub of the issues that face us as a state. The Treasurer would not answer a question I put to him today on the actual dollar amount of the GST that the state is about to receive. For whatever reason, he does not want to publicly declare the amount of the GST, but we all know it is no huge secret. I do not know why he just does not come out—

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The member for MacKillop raises a very good point. This government heralds itself as open, honest and transparent but, in reality, we could not get more of a clandestine, sneaky, secretive government if we wanted. We understand that the GST is going to bring about \$268 million into the coffers over a five-year period. There are also huge gains in stamp duty on property transfers, land tax and the list goes on.

Mrs HALL (Morialta): Mr Speaker, I am delighted to join the number of our colleagues who have participated in this supply debate over the last 24 hours. Many of the speakers have covered a range of subjects, particularly on our side of the house, when we have concentrated very specifically on the economics, the economy, the unemployment issues, and many particular sectors. This evening I want to touch on a couple of areas and they include the judicial system and, specifically, tourism, along with, time permitting, a number of the issues of importance to my constituents in Morialta.

The government's intervention in forcing the former DPP, Paul Rofe, out of office is simply to make him a scapegoat, in my view, for their own failings. It does nothing to restore confidence in our judicial system, and television viewers across the state have watched, many greatly concerned, night after night, week after week, the public execution of its former public prosecutor by the Premier and the Attorney-General, while at the same time, the pair of them have failed to address the deep-seated issues in the administration of our justice system.

Paul Rofe QC has had an impressive legal career and he does not deserve to be remembered in the manner that has been reported today and in recent times. He should not be the political scalp or scapegoat of this government for the recognised problems, including the resource problems of the criminal justice system and, in particular, the legal system of which the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is just a part. To simply get rid of Paul Rofe is to ignore the impact and the role of our judges. To simply get rid of Paul Rofe is to ignore the role and effect on other prosecutors. All this government has achieved is the prospect of the Attorney-

General looking over the shoulder of every judge, prosecutor and police officer.

Nothing has been said by the government that would cause us to have greater confidence in the future conduct of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, particularly when it goes to the heart of the integrity of this government, and I refer specifically to the Ashbourne case. We have witnessed, since Labor took office in March 2002, considerable political interference and a promise by the Premier of future political interference, and one can only say in disgust that there is a real smell about this place.

From the issue of our judicial system, I would like to touch on issues of the economy and particularly the tourism sector which I believe is so absolutely important to the future development and growth of our state. We all know, because we figured it out very early, that this is a government motivated by its desire for a headline. It is a government with a very keen media focus that is fuelled by rhetoric and spin but without the substance and action to back up the rhetoric and spin. In my view, this has been outlined in detail by a number of the previous speakers on this side of the house covering the economic windfall that the Treasurer is so coy about and the dollars that he is receiving from the land tax; issues of transport have been discussed and the conditions of many of our outback roads; the need for increased infrastructure spend; and, particularly, the areas that affect employment and employment prospects in the future.

As I said earlier, I want to concentrate on one of the state's most important industry sectors, and members of this parliament have heard me speak on tourism before. I believe that it is our very public and economic interface with the other states of Australia and indeed the international community. Just how important the tourism industry is to South Australia is highlighted by the very strong support from the federal government and its minister Joe Hockey. That support was tempered recently where Minister Hockey berated state Labor governments for reducing their expenditure while the federal government has increased its financial support by something like 50 per cent. In *The Australian* last week, the federal minister—in relation to the state Labor government's tourism cuts—warned the state and territory ministers that it would be very costly for their governments to trim tourism promotion budgets after last year's \$235 million increase in federal grants to the industry. He stated:

If one state starts to reduce cooperative funding, if one state starts to reduce their budget, we will reduce the promotion of that state accordingly.

He went on to say that he believed that it was cowardly and inept to do so and he would have the profound impact of the confidence of the tourism industry which employs more than 500 000 people Australia-wide.

I believe that in this state our minister has joined this spending retreat by Labor governments around the country by reducing our state's expenditure in tourism by more than \$20 million in just over two years. That is not just a tricky manipulation of figures: it is there for people to see in our budget papers. It undermines the cooperative approach that the commonwealth is talking about and, obviously, has caused them to be very angry at the thought it being treated as a mug by Labor states. By turning off the money tap by millions of dollars over the past two years, this government is eroding South Australian tourism numbers and crippling our regional tourism industries. The upcoming budget is this government's third. This one is all its own work and it will not be able to blame anyone else for its shortcomings. The

opposition will know and I hope that the industry will soon know and acknowledge whether the minister has enough clout in cabinet to get the money to back up and support the South Australian tourism industry sector.

Over many decades, the tourism industry has been quite an extraordinary growth industry. The activity that the tourism industry has experienced shows across the international community, because from 1950, with 25 million travellers, it has grown to 693 million in 2001. The predictions are that those figures are going to double again by 2020. I do not think that there would be a member in this house who would not agree that we have to be part of that growth and the economic opportunities that will be provided by these predictions.

The tourism industry is an industry of the future. It already underpins significant economic activity in our state. It provides vast employment. It stimulates growth, not just in our capital cities but importantly right across our very important state regions. It provides, in my view, another important factor for us all as South Australians—enormous pride in our state. The comparison of the wider tourism industry as an economic generator shows that it is one of our top three industry sectors. Interestingly, the benchmark that the South Australian Tourism Commission itself uses is the year 2001, with the following figures: it is a \$3.4 billion economic generator for the state, containing 10 per cent of the state's growth and employing nearly 37 000 full-time equivalents and involving nearly 45 000 part-time jobs. When we make the comparison with a number of our other important industries, including the mining industry, the wine industry, aquaculture and manufacturing, I am sure we all understand the important contribution that tourism makes to our future, our development, our growth and our economic prosperity.

The opposition and the tourism operators are absolutely sick and tired of the excuses given by this minister. The excuses range from September 11, the Ansett collapse, SARS, the drought and the Australian dollar. But the reality is that the other states and territories have had to cope with those same issues. They have increased their spend especially in their marketing budgets, but we have not. Other states and territories also have to share the challenge of the 30 per cent of working Australians who do not bother to take their annual leave for a good holiday. There has to be a reason for the decline in our numbers and, sadly, they continue to decline, as does our market share. South Australian tourism figures clearly demonstrate that stark reality in their own published material and on their own website. International tourism, which is one area that I am particularly concerned about, and the various source indicators show a decrease in visitor numbers and they are continuing to slide down the graph. Domestic tourism numbers are down and, again, despite the minister's capacity to cherry-pick a good figure here or there from one specific source indicator, the overall picture is appalling.

There are numerous examples and I can quote a couple. The South Australian Tourism Index indicates that tourism sector performance in the December 2003 quarter was down by 4 per cent from the previous quarter. Another example indicates that for the next three months it is going to be down by 9 per cent, while a minimal increase is expected over the next 12 months.

In a general sense, the elements that constitute tourism in South Australia are either in constant decline or experiencing extremely slow and stuttered redevelopment. Why is this so?

It is very easy to say that it is because of the dramatic shift of more than \$20 million out of the tourism budget over two years—and I urge the minister to look at his own budget papers, where he will see it very clearly. As a former shadow tourism minister, he does know how to read tourism budgets. It is appalling. But I could always ask the question: is the load that the minister has in education and tourism too big to handle and therefore she has failed to manage this important sector by itself; has the minister deliberately let it run down; or has she been deserted by her colleagues in cabinet refusing to give her extra funds to invest in the portfolio?

In my view, in this very special and unique state we do not have a challenge that says we have to build our attractions, because they are already here. The examples of excellent products and innovative entrepreneurs cover our entire state. We can talk about the extraordinary success of our houseboat industry; the unique attractions in the Outback; the wonders of the whales; the sea lions at Baird Bay; and Tracey Warland's wonderful seahorses at Port Lincoln. We have the activities in the Fleurieu Peninsula. We also have the indigenous opportunities that abound; the camping and caravan opportunities across our state; we have award-winning locations from the city to the country; we have the unique destination of Coober Pedy; and we have the Limestone Coast, the River Murray, Kangaroo Island, Yorke Peninsula and all the wonderful things that are happening in that section of our state.

We have the very important food and wine sectors, and our award-winning wines are acknowledged internationally. We have the activities again this year at William Creek while we have Lake Eyre in flood. We have a range of events, although I am very disappointed that the minister does not have the passion for events that I believe a tourism minister should. We have the growth of the B&B industry and the issues that it is facing at the moment with the extra imposts of land tax. In my view, the challenge is to get enough visitor numbers across our borders and into our airports and then to get them into our regions.

The international tourism numbers are an absolute disgrace. From 2001, when they were sitting at 359 000, they have already dropped to 296 700, and that should be ringing every alarm bell that there is. It is not good enough for the minister to tell us about visitor nights and the Linger Longer campaign because, whether or not she likes to acknowledge it, the tourism industry (and, I suspect, every member of this chamber) knows that we must increase our numbers. In Australia, in all states and the territories, the domestic market will always provide the largest percentage and the greatest number. It is the bread and butter of the state and territory commissions.

However, the international visitors are our vital ingredient. They provide the extra growth factor. They provide the enormous value add and they give us our export dollars. I can talk about our international offices (and a couple that have been closed), but I really believe that those internationals that we need to target mean that we must have increased resources, and that in particular has to be put into marketing dollars.

That should not be money that is taken out of the domestic marketing budget: it should be and must be new dollars. As I said earlier, the decreases over the last two years are a disgrace and, unfortunately, they are already showing results. Those results are showing up in the sliding graph lines all the way down. I am terribly concerned about the message that that is sending out to the tourism industry and that very

rugged mix of individuals who have backed their experience with their money. They have invested their time, their dollars and their energy to provide memorable holidays that are unique to South Australia. And the fact that the federal minister has already said that he is going to watch our budget sends us the warning signals.

As I said earlier, other states have thus far had to cope with September 11, SARS, the dollar, the Ansett collapse and the drought. But the difference is that they have invested more in their marketing budgets and their figures are going up. So, why have Australia's numbers increased and not South Australia's? All states and territories are showing amazing increases. My concern, and for those students of political history, is that it is obvious that our minister is playing follow the leader. You might say that that could be expected in a political party and in a government. However, with that expectation, the results will be disastrous. I must say that I hope the minister does not aspire to reach the Premier's dismal figure of 213 000. That figure has relevance because that was the figure that, when he was the tourism minister, South Australia had in terms of international visitors. I think that figure must now be compared to the figure that we are currently sitting on at 296 700 against the bench mark figure used by the SATC, which is 359 000.

Similarities between the Premier in his past role as tourism minister and the current tourism minister should be sending a shiver down the spine of the tourism industry, but I guess that, sadly, they are now becoming very obvious. When you look at what we have to offer in this state, particularly to the international market, I have no doubt that the other states can only be quite envious.

I think that one of the areas into which we must put a lot more effort and which should be of serious concern to all of us is what is happening to our backpacker market segment. The minister inherited a wonderful number of backpackers spending their time and their money in South Australia. The steadily rising graph line stood at 189 300 in 2000. Did she keep that graph line on an upward path? The answer to that question is clearly no, because the figure is now sitting at 91 000—just two years later. We all understand, I am quite sure, about the export equivalents that backpackers contribute to our state. For those who do not have their calculators out at the moment, that sad story of the backpacker crash is a 40 per cent drop. I think that is something that the government is going to have to look at seriously, because it is such an important market, not just to the capital cities but to our most important regions of this state. They stay for a long time, they spend a lot of money and they are great ambassadors for us when they go back to their home countries.

In the future, our competition will not be just Melbourne, Sydney and the Gold Coast in terms of rock, reef and bridge: it is places like Morocco, the African game parks, Alaska and any number of locations throughout Europe and the United States. We do need to increase our funding for marketing, particularly in the international sphere. We need to increase our infrastructure spend, plus the investment we make in major events.

Time expired.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): It is with some seriousness that I enter the debate here tonight. I came to this place, like most of the members of this parliament present and past (and I hope those in the future), because of my concern about the future of this state. My concern is even more heightened

at the moment, because today my wife and I were presented with our first grandchild.

Ms Bedford: Boy or girl?

Mr WILLIAMS: A boy. So, I am particularly concerned at this time for the future of this state and particularly concerned with where this state is going under the direction of the current government. There are a number of issues that I hope to have time to address.

I am delighted that the Minister for Education has come into the house, because I want to talk for a while about education. Last week I had cause to meet with several school groups and students and parents in my electorate. I will talk a little about that and about where I think this government has gone wrong and where it is missing the key ideals which we would have it follow so that it provides what it should for the children of our state. In particular, I refer to rural children because they are the ones I represent.

There is a group of young families in an area called Western Flat, which is between Bordertown and Naracoorte. Recently my office received a call because a number of families were sending their children to school on the school bus, but they were also utilising the school bus service to have their preschool children taken to the local kindergarten which is just up the road from the local primary school, which is next door to the high school, in Bordertown. Because the number of children has grown so dramatically in the Bordertown region—I will come back to the school in a moment—the capacity of the bus has been exceeded. Parents have been told that their kindergarten children can no longer go by bus to school. This is in conflict with the policies espoused by the Premier prior to the last election when he said things about providing equity to all students, including kindergarten students. It is on the Labor Party web site for everybody to read. They were quite clear and unequivocal that they wanted to provide kindergarten education to all students on an equitable basis across South Australia. I can tell the minister that that is not happening in my electorate.

I can tell the minister something further. The person who has the contract for that bus is being gyped because there are more eligible students on the bus (quite a number more) than the contract provides for. So, the contractor is being gyped. Worse than that, my understanding is that, as from this week, the bus is overloaded with eligible students, and it will only get worse because, of the six kindergarten students who have been told that they can no longer access that bus, by the beginning of next term three of them will become eligible, and there will still be no seats for them on the bus, and by the end of the year another two will be eligible, the last one becoming eligible at the beginning of next year.

The point is that we are not providing adequate school buses for country children. That is the most recent example that has happened in my electorate. One of the parents complained that, for her to deliver her two children to kindergarten two days a week, she has the costs of travelling 400 kilometres per week. If the government thinks that it is providing equitable service to people across the state, I suggest that the Minister for Education and her cabinet ministers look at what is happening at Western Flat.

I take it a step further by referring to the primary school at Bordertown, which has had a significant increase in student population over the last five or six years. Since I have been a member, it has gone from a little over 400 students, and it hovers today at 589 students. It will get to something like 617 students by the end of the year. There are 22 classes in

the school with 50 teachers. The school is literally bursting at the seams. I was told a story about a new PE teacher who arrived at school at the start of term 2. On her first day at the school, which was Wednesday of last week, the teacher came in and was told, 'Here are your children; there is your classroom.' It happens to be the school oval and, unfortunately, it was raining. There was no room in the school for her to take that class because every other room in the school was occupied.

I am told that, as at the end of last year, on departmental figures the school is short of floor space by some 1 250 square metres. It is worked out on the number of students in the school. The school is growing all the time. That equates to about 10 classrooms of 11 x 11 metres, in round figures. That gives you an idea of how that school is being treated by the department. However, putting 10 more classrooms in the school will not solve the problem. The areas that are constantly used by students—the resource centre, the computer room, the library, the art room and the drama room—are not big enough for the number of classes and for the class sizes. I am told that the year 5 classes have 30 students per class; year 6 has about 28 per class; and year 7 has 33 per class. This government talks about lowering class sizes; it is not doing it in my electorate. I am glad that the minister is present to hear this, because I hope she takes it on board.

While on the subject of education, I want to put some facts on the table about this ridiculous ongoing debate about education funding from the commonwealth government and whether it goes to private or public schools. The minister has an opportunity to contribute to the debate if she wishes. I am certain that she has not taken that opportunity, and I invite her to justify the garbage that comes out of her office. On Saturday 13 March in *The Advertiser* the minister stated:

There are major problems with the way the Federal Government funds schools in South Australia and the kids will miss out.

That is what this minister said. She continued:

The Federal Government has a responsibility for all of South Australia, not just those in the non-government sector.

That same article contained some artwork which made some comparisons of the amount of funding to private and public schools. It is a very interesting piece of artwork, and I wonder where it came from. The column that deals with private school funding adds the sum of \$273 that is paid by parents as their contribution to private schools, making a total of \$734 million. It arrives at a figure showing that private schools are better funded than public schools. That is one of the biggest lies told to the South Australian public for a long time.

At the end of that piece of artwork it is suggested that each student in a private school is funded to the tune of \$9 061, whereas the public school system is funded to the tune of \$8 254 per student. They are a couple of points that I make. If we take out the contribution that parents make to the private school sector, students in private schools are funded to the tune of \$5 691 compared with \$8 254 paid—

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: It is their choice.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am not suggesting that it is not their choice. The minister says it is their choice; I am not saying that parents do not want to make that choice, but the minister would say that they should not be allowed to make that choice. That is the minister's argument. The minister says that the federal government's \$332 million contribution to the private schools in South Australia should be taken away from the private schools and given to the public sector. Let me say

that the state government pays \$1 592 per student in the private sector in South Australia, but \$6 730 per student in the public sector. Remember that 47¢ in every dollar that the state government puts into education comes from the federal GST; a tax that the South Australian Labor Party opposed at every turn. I do not think that that point should be lost.

A few days following that outrageous article in *The Advertiser*, which misrepresents the situation in regard to school funding, not just in this state but, right across the nation, Dean Jaensch, in his weekly article on Thursday 18 March, made a couple of points. I do not usually quote Dean Jaensch, but this time I will because he hit it fairly and squarely on the head. He stated:

The second point is that every parent with school-age children is, has been, or will be a taxpayer. Hence there is a strong argument that all parents have an equal right to government funding for the education of their children. Regardless of the type of school chosen, this right seems to be a solid one.

The minister obviously disagrees with that. He continued:

The education union and the public school lobby have targeted the amounts provided by the Howard Government as showing an unacceptable bias to the private sector. But this is where the spin has been introduced.

He said, amongst other things, the following:

Any fair assessment has to consider both sources of money.

That is the state and commonwealth funding. He continued:

A table published in *The Advertiser* (13/3/04) did just that.

That is the one I have just referred to. He continued:

But it also included the funding provided by parents. It seems to me that any discussion about government funding, and that is what the argument is about, should exclude the parents' contribution.

It is very interesting that in his concluding paragraph he makes this comment:

So far, the wider debate is dominated by photo opportunities such as political leaders sitting on floors reading to young children.

That is what this debate has been about and that is what this government has been about. It has been about photo opportunities, image and rhetoric but it has been very short on action. I urge the minister to look at the situation in a number of schools—particularly country schools—and the situation of isolated parents, because they are getting a raw deal from her government. Isolated country people are disadvantaged enough without getting a further kick from the government.

I would like to quote from the document that was prepared and launched by the Premier in Rundle Mall about a month ago in conjunction with the South Australian Farmers Federation—Rural South Australia Policy for the Future: A Triple Bottom Line for the Bush. I am not too sure that I agree with what they are asking for in this document. It is interesting to note that there has been no response from the government (and I am waiting for a response from the government) but some very interesting figures have been published. I urge all members, particularly members of the government, to read this document.

Page 30 mentions the population of rural South Australia relative to the population of metropolitan South Australia and the relative amounts of government spending in rural South Australia and metropolitan South Australia. This was prepared by Richard Blandy, who admits that it is very hard to get definite figures because governments—not just this government, but governments historically—have not separated the figures. But, on the best case scenario, regional South Australia is being given a raw deal to the tune of about \$300 million a year: the worst case scenario suggests that that

figure could be as high as \$700 million a year. With that sort of money spent in rural South Australia we would have school buses for all children, we would have school buses for all kindergarten children and we would not have isolated parents driving hundreds of kilometres a week over poor and deteriorated roads, which are getting very little funding, to deliver their children to schools and preschools. Again, just on the education budget, the figures pulled out by Richard Blandy and his researchers suggest that we have a sum of probably \$84 million a year of underspend in regional South Australia.

The other thing I would like to canvass in the time left to me is the South Australian Strategic Plan—Creating Opportunity. The economic summit was held when the government first came to power and it said that it would do all these things, and again, true to its form of creating spin and photo opportunities, we had a series of summits. But the ‘you beaut’ was the economic summit which was going to solve all of South Australia’s problems and build a road map to the future. What came out of the first economic summit was a Framework for Economic Development. That is what they talked about. The government was going to go away and work on the framework and develop a strategy for South Australia’s future, and this is the document that has come out 12 months later—the South Australian Strategic Plan.

I suggest that the Premier and his senior economic ministers go to the shelf in the corner of the chamber and pull out the dictionary and look up the word ‘strategy’ and work out in their mind’s eye what ‘strategic development’ and ‘strategic planning’ mean, because this document misses the point when it comes to strategic planning. It has no strategies in it whatsoever. I have read the document and am yet to find any understanding or pointer as to what we will do to move ahead in South Australia over the next period. It is very long on goals, but most of the goals have been around for many years and were established well before the last election by the previous government and the agencies across government in working out where they were heading into the future. The government has merely pulled together very achievable goals from right across government and put them into this document and said that this is where we want to be in 10 years’ time, 15 years’ time, or some time. In relation to population, it says, ‘In 2050 we want a population of 2 million people in South Australia.’

The first thing I say is that these are all achievable goals if we get things right. None of these goals is achievable if we do not get things right, and the serious problem we have is that this so-called strategic document goes no way towards getting anything right because it is not strategic; it just sets a few benchmarks well out into the future and there will be no judgment on any of these for 10 years or 15 years. So the government has very cleverly set the benchmarks so that it will never be judged on them.

With regard to population, if we want the population of South Australia to be 2 million by the year 2050, I believe a large proportion of that population will need to be situated outside metropolitan Adelaide. The cost of building for the population of metropolitan Adelaide is far too high and this state cannot afford it. The cost of building for the population, in the first instance, in our regional centres (Mount Gambier, the Riverland, the Iron Triangle, Port Lincoln and Murray Bridge) is significantly less. The wonderful thing is that in those centres we have jobs. Right across my electorate the biggest problem is a lack of population because we have jobs.

In metropolitan Adelaide the biggest problem we have is a lack of jobs to attract population.

This government is introspective in so far as the way it looks at the state. It does not look outside of Adelaide. It is not strategic about putting housing into country areas and all those areas I have spoken about, and there are plenty more that are crying out for population. They need infrastructure—largely housing but also other infrastructure. If there were a strategic plan to do that and a strategy to build infrastructure, we would find that the population goals would be automatically achievable. I see my time is very quickly coming to a close which disappoints me greatly because there are a number of other issues that I would like to address. I understand I will have a further opportunity, so I will finish my contribution there, but I urge the government to get away from the lens of the camera and get on to some real strategic planning for South Australia’s future.

Time expired.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I am delighted to contribute to this debate, and I want to do so on three different subjects. The first relates to a mission that the government has set out on to sell South Australia to interstate and overseas business people as a place in which to invest. It is a very important role because it is all about looking at the future of jobs, investment and industry within this state. In many ways I think it is one of the most important roles a state government can take on because it underpins the economic future of the state and, therefore, the future of the state as far as people and future generations are concerned; and, if the jobs are here, young people will not leave our state. Of course, it is also important in terms of the underlying wealth of the state and, therefore, being able to pay for the health, education and police services that our community needs.

The Premier has indicated that he will send out 5 000 letters highlighting the very competitive position South Australia has. We have always had a very competitive position. Next week, I understand, he is to embark on an overseas mission to sell South Australia to overseas companies. I have just returned from overseas myself and was horrified to find an article in the Tuesday 27 April edition of *The International Herald Tribune*. *The International Herald Tribune* is published by *The New York Times*, is a highly reputable paper, and is widely read and highly respected by international business people. In fact, as one moves around one sees that it is the business people who tend to pick up *The International Herald Tribune* and use it as their source of information. It is a world-wide news service and is invariably free as you step onto aircraft. It contains a great deal of business information. It is the sort of newspaper potential investors for South Australia will be reading.

I was horrified to find last Tuesday, 27 April, a major headline right across the top of the page that read, ‘Australian officials warn Mitsubishi about closing local factory’. I read the story with some interest, having been away and having missed some of the local news. Certainly, I was aware of what Daimler Chrysler had decided and that the CEO of Mitsubishi had stepped down. However, I do not wish to deal with this issue on a Mitsubishi basis but on the basis of what message that article sent to the business community around the world, as the Premier embarks on an intensive program over some months—and I know that you, Mr Speaker, recently embarked on a project overseas to sell South

Australia as a place in which to invest. I was horrified to see key sentences and paragraphs as follows:

The Metal Workers Union said it would cost Mitsubishi as much as \$2 billion in severance settlements for its 3 500 employees if it shuts the Australian operation.

It went on to say that the union state secretary said that they would pursue as much money as they possibly could from Mitsubishi. I am not denying in any way the workers of Mitsubishi their due entitlement, but the message that they 'will be seeking more than \$2 billion Australian dollars if Mitsubishi closed down in Australia' is the issue. It was the tone in which it was done. Is it appropriate to make statements such as that about any company that is considering whether to continue investing in our state? It is not about Mitsubishi or about denying workers their full entitlements: it is about what message is sent to international business people.

I read further and noted that the minister from South Australia, our Deputy Premier, said that the exit strategy for Mitsubishi out of Australia is an expensive, costly one. He stated that the government would make it as expensive and costly as it possibly could. I read a great deal in terms of general business stories and anything I could about Mitsubishi, and the very negative message that that would send to any international business person who may be considering investing in Australia and in South Australia concerns me. It would send a message that the unions will cost you as much as possible if you invest here and it fails. It would send a message that the South Australian government will do the same in terms of trying to get every dollar out of you if your investment fails.

We know that as people invest around the world in various businesses a percentage do fail. Even if we pursue our full legal entitlements (and I am not saying the state should not do so), we should not be out there broadcasting that so that the international business community will read that as the one message from South Australia. The only statement I saw in an international magazine or newspaper while I was away was this one extremely negative, damning article, and I could hardly believe my eyes to see that sort of article in an international newspaper. It was the worst message that could possibly be sent. It dumbfounded me that it was from a state that wants to attract international investment. I make my point at that.

All of us have to be more mature in the way we sell our state and the message we are trying to get through to business people and potential investors. The one message they will be very fearful of indeed is the threat of government or union action against them if they should fail. All business people realise that there are legal entitlements they have to comply with, but it is the tone as to how those legal entitlements will be secured that has a big impact on them. I am sure that you, sir, appreciate the point I am making and I urge the South Australian government to rethink it. It has used similar tones in relation to other international companies here.

It may be good for local consumption and it may be even stating the obvious, but it sends an appalling message to potential investors, and they pick up these messages. Here is a classic example of a point which I understand was made on local ABC radio and the international press picked it up and put it in a headline across the top of the page. It had more prominence than the story of the CEO of Mitsubishi stepping down or some of the other stories that I saw about Mitsubishi in the same newspaper on different days.

The second issue I wish to raise relates to concessions for self-funded retirees. Figures were given to the parliament today in question time. The Treasurer has been asked to verify additional money raised—over \$300 million—from GST and property taxes. This government is awash with money in terms of un-budgeted revenue that has come in via a windfall gain through GST—which, incidentally, it opposed—and a huge windfall gain through additional property taxes. It includes stamp duty, land tax and a whole range of other areas. It involves not only taxes but also the rates that go with them. There has been additional money in terms of land tax, stamp duty on property transactions, and water and sewerage rates as property values have escalated.

My concern is for self-funded retirees and pensioners. Pensioners get a concession, although with the sudden and dramatic increase in costs, particularly through land tax and council rates, there has been inadequate compensation and adjustment of those concessions to take account of the significant increase in costs they are having to pay. Here is a group of people, pensioners, who are locked into an index based partly on CPI and partly on wage increases and they have no room in terms of being able to expect a windfall gain from their income simply because property taxes have gone up. They are locked in and are paying the price. They are probably paying the price more than any other group within our community through the rise in property values. I cite as an example a pensioner in my area who, with her husband, purchased her home about 30 years ago. She is now in her eighties and is a widow. She has suddenly ended up with a very modest home on a piece of land which happens to be close to the beach in the Southern Fleurieu area and which is valued at about three-quarters of a million dollars. She does not want to sell the old family home, but she is being literally crucified because of the huge costs—

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: Not literally crucified.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: She has been metaphorically crucified, but she is certainly feeling it literally. She is paying very dearly indeed through extra council rates, water and sewerage rates, and other costs. The other group comprises the self-funded retirees. An agreement was reached between the former Liberal state government and the federal government whereby, as at 1 July 2002, all concessions currently applying to pensioners would also apply to self-funded retirees. This government reneged on that agreement. This has disgusted self-funded retirees considerably, because they have found that, during this period, their income has been down because of extremely low interest rates and because the return on many of their investments, such as shares, has also been extremely low. However, they have seen their costs escalate dramatically, particularly council rates, water and sewerage rates, and motor vehicle costs—the areas where they should be getting a concession.

Once again, I make the plea that, with a budget coming up, appropriate concessions, which are equal to the concessions given to pensioners, be applied to all self-funded retirees. They were absolutely duded by the Labor Party prior to the last election. The Labor Party inferred that it was going to hand on these concessions to self-funded retirees. However, shortly after the election, self-funded retirees found that the reality was that the Labor Party could not be trusted and, in fact, they had been absolutely duded. Almost two years later, they still do not have those concessions. So, there is a clear case that the government must provide those concessions.

The third area I wish to briefly touch on relates to a copy of a letter I have just received which was sent out by the member for West Torrens to people in the western suburbs and which sets out what the state Labor government claims it has done in a number of different areas, one of which is our hospitals. The letter states:

We have begun to rebuild our hospitals, employ more nurses, open hundreds of new beds and rebuild old hospital wards.

I raise this matter because, once again, we see a case of a lack of honesty in the material being distributed by the Labor Party in relation to health, particularly in the western suburbs. I have copies of a number of letters sent to me from across the western suburbs. People have written to me expressing absolute disgust about a letter sent out by the Premier—which I have previously referred to in this place—which is very carefully crafted but which infers that, in fact, stage 1 of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was the result of the good work of the Labor government.

I point out that I was the minister who put that project through cabinet in January/February 2000; I was the minister who arranged for it to go before the Public Works Committee; and I was the minister who, together with other ministers in the former government, oversaw the public tender process. Under the former Liberal government, we had two years, firstly, of demolition and then construction work. The facility was due to open by about April/May 2003, but it was delayed considerably until the beginning of this year—a delay of 12 months. Within three months of the election, it was delayed. I understand that it was delayed partly by the contractor but it was also delayed by the new government in terms of holding the opening ceremony and the opening of the facility. Why? Clearly, it was because the government thought that, if it put it off long enough, it would be able to infer that it was their government that had done the work. I know the extent to which the people of the western suburbs realise that propaganda is sent out in the form of these letters from the Premier and a pamphlet, which, I might add, were all paid for by the taxpayers. The pamphlet was a coloured brochure on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

I am delighted that stage 1 is finished; it is a marvellous facility. I am delighted that the government has made the financial commitment for stages 2 and 3. In fact, the former government put forward stages 2 and 3 as well. I am not criticising the government for undertaking stages 2 and 3, but I think there needs to be some honesty and understanding that stage 1 was not initiated by the Labor government. Stage 1 and the marvellous 200 bed facility, which is open now, which is a credit to the western suburbs and which will provide much improved health services, is, in fact, due to the planning, work and commitment of the previous Liberal government. The Labor government did nothing but go down there for the opening ceremony and pay the final accounts. I support the bill, and I look forward to contributing during the 10 minute grievances.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): The third Labor budget is being considered, yet the first and second budgets have not yet been fully delivered on, nor have original promises been kept. The Labor government said: there will be no new or increased taxes; we will keep the acute care hospitals and increase spending on health; we will increase spending on schools; we will deliver the schools promised under the Liberal government; we will reduce electricity prices; we will build new police stations; we will look after the environment;

and we will support small businesses and increase the number of jobs.

Let us examine the 'no new or increased taxes' promise. What about the introduction of the Save the River Murray levy? It is ironic that the people living along the river who use the water direct from the river do not have SA Water water meters and do not pay the levy, yet it is paid by the people of Eyre Peninsula who do not use the water. These people have survived for years on inadequate and often very poor quality water and have paid for the privilege. Many of them have also personally paid for water tanks, dams and, in many cases, innovative reuse systems. These people are also paying up to a \$5 500 additional augmentation fee per new block if they live in certain towns in the state, such as Coffin Bay, Streaky Bay or Tumby Bay.

What about the impending natural resource management (NRM) levy, which will replace what is currently called the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Levy in my electorate and goes under various other names in other locations? How much is this levy going to increase to cover the running costs of the amalgamated soil boards, animal and plant boards, water boards and natural resource management groups and fund their essential projects? Then, of course, there are the increased land taxes, stamp duties and licences, etc.

The Labor government promised it would keep the acute care hospitals and increase spending on health. However, across regional South Australia, hospitals are being starved of funds to the extent that they cannot balance their budgets without reducing services and not replacing staff. It is not so much that the health professionals will not go to the country: it is more to do with the fact that the money is not there to pay them, or that the contracts provided are short term and insecure, which discourages professionals who know they might have to shift after six months. Many of the 10 hospitals on Eyre Peninsula can no longer provide obstetrics services or even minor surgery. What modern young family will go to live where basic health services are no longer provided?

'We will increase spending on schools and we will deliver the schools promised under the Liberal government,' said the new Labor government. In 1978, the then Labor government put a large number of so-called temporary asbestos contaminated classrooms at Ceduna. In 2001, \$5 million was budgeted by the state and federal Liberal governments to remove these antiquated and unhygienic buildings and provide a new school for these remote disadvantaged students. In this government's first budget, this funding was promptly cut to \$3.9 million, including the \$1 million from the federal Liberal government. But here we are in the year 2004 and this school's reduced upgrading has still not begun, yet I understand that more than \$6 million is being spent for the 70 students who now attend Sturt Street Community Central City School, where the children have come from other existing nearby perfectly adequate schools.

The remote Elliston school had a classroom burnt down, and the seemingly compassionate Labor minister promised that a new one would be built. In fact it was going to be a special trial site for a new concept, but what have they got to date? Two of the same asbestos filled demac classrooms that we are trying to get rid of from Ceduna, and promises. Elliston did not need to have an asbestos register before, but they do now. Thanks, minister!

Last year I was delighted that 25 young people from my electorate received scholarships to become school teachers, and when only 11 gained scholarships this year I had it

investigated, fearing discrimination. That may be the case; I do not know. However, I do know that the Labor government has reduced the available number of scholarships by 17. Why do this when we need teachers to come to the country, and some country kids and their parents cannot afford the cost of further educating their children in the city without help? I know because I was a bonded teacher who received an opportunity to have a tertiary education because of a similar scheme.

The Labor government promised, 'We will reduce electricity prices.' Even the original electricity subsidy for pensioners and self-funded retirees promised by the Liberal government was dropped. I believe that this was done in order to ensure that the price increases forced by competition policy were blamed on the former Liberal government. However, \$64 million has recently been given to the big businesses that provide gas via the pipeline to Adelaide to ensure that the gas price for city people does not go up under the Labor government as the same competition policy starts to affect the gas prices. Other people already pay about double for their bottled gas, but guess where most of these people live?

The new Labor government said, 'We will build new police stations.' Public-private partnerships were the big announcement in the last budget, with a court and a police station proposed for Port Lincoln, among a number of others, but where are they? I guess we will see them promised again in this budget, or will the unions put the pressure on to delay them for yet another year?

Now that the Labor government has reaped the benefits of an unexpected GST payment and windfall land tax payments, perhaps the AAA rating will be received and the Labor government will be able to give into the union and PPPs will not be seen as necessary. Even the proposed PPP for the proposed police stations has been set up to fail by being packaged together for savings supposedly produced by the scale. However, this huge PPP will not take into account all the individual requirements of the different locations, nor allow the local builders to put in a tailor-made tender that will be more appropriate, much cheaper and better built because of local knowledge and pride, but probably not built with union labour that has the fee to the Labor Party built in.

The Labor government said, 'We will look after the environment.' The major environmental issue in my electorate is the drawing down of the underground water on which the region has come to rely. If this is not stopped, the sea water will start seeping in and what is already poor quality water will become too salty to use at all. Then a region which is producing \$1 billion of income will not have potable water. However, the last budget was supposed to have promised to provide a \$32 million desalination plant to save the underground water resource on Eyre Peninsula. The minister stated on ABC radio that he would write it in blood. Where is it, minister? No tender has been advertised yet of which I am aware.

Then there is the need to remove 21 ponies from the huge Coffin Bay National Park to save the environment, but nothing is being done about the introduced koalas that are ruining the environment for the native species on Kangaroo Island. What a farce!

The Labor government said that it would support small business and increase jobs. The Premier has great hopes for the fishing and aquaculture industries in helping the state to triple its exports. However, the proposed Marine Innovation South Australia (MISA) project at Port Lincoln, which could

bring hundreds of jobs and put South Australia on the world map as a centre of excellence for temperate marine education, research, innovation and development, seems to have disappeared off the Labor government's radar. Most of this work is still being done in Tasmania, despite its centres being in coldwater locations.

The proposed Lukin development for fishing infrastructure and housing has run into native vegetation issues, despite its being in a location designated as deferred development for the rapidly growing city of Port Lincoln—the location of the biggest fishing fleet and the region from which 65 per cent of the state's seafood exports are sourced.

Similar stories of regional development and jobs being constrained by a government being held to ransom by a dark green element within it can be found all around the state. How can the environment, health and education be looked after if there are not profitable businesses paying taxes and employing people so that there are funds to do so?

All we are being given are projects the main purpose of which is populist publicity. One of these projects was the announcement of solar panels on some government buildings, and then yesterday, \$1.25 million for solar panels on 25 state schools. In isolation, this may seem a good project, but let us look at the bigger picture. These buildings and schools already have plentiful and much cheaper power available 24 hours a day and, for the same \$1.25 million, a desalination plant at Port Kenny and Venus Bay could save the lives of those who live there, or those of visitors, who currently are drinking water that is sometimes less than palatable. Such a sum would also enable the further development of jobs in these two small towns, which jobs would help to keep the very small local school that is currently under threat of closure.

Despite a huge increase in stamp duty income from the price rise in properties, there is a 30-year waiting list for septic tank effluent disposal schemes for small communities. This is of particular concern for coastal and riverside communities. The government has decreased the amount being provided to this necessary service to help keep our environment clean, despite owners and local governments assisting with what in most towns is expected to be provided by the government.

The \$6 million spent on STED schemes instead of the Sturt Street school would triple the amount that I understand was to be spent this year for STED schemes in the whole of South Australia. Where is the real need, Premier Rann, and where is the return on our investment as taxpayers? A recent letter from the Premier stated:

I encourage businesses and industries to look to the future by developing their own plans for growth, taking on the challenges and seizing the opportunities. The government will attempt to support those that have positive plans for growth with strong facilitation, the development of skills and education, and targeted investment in infrastructure that lowers the cost of doing business and improves export competitiveness.

Fine words, Premier! We are not a city state, Mr Premier. About a third of the people live in the country—and they are a very profitable one-third, too. As already mentioned, those living on Eyre Peninsula produce about \$1 billion of export income. They could triple that—and more—but they need help for water, power and housing infrastructure in particular, but they are not receiving it from your government.

I believe that Eyre Peninsula is indicative of what is happening around the state. The people and businesses cannot take on the challenges and seize the opportunities, because

their plans are being thwarted at every turn by departments under the control of a government which has no idea of what it is to run a successful business and which has lost touch with ordinary working people.

As stated in a recent article by Senator Mitch Fifield, 'The Labor Party is increasingly returning tertiary educated union officials and political staff as parliamentarians.' They 'swapped the cloth cap and the shop floor for the mortar board and the ergonomic chair some time ago.' The Labor state government does not comprise practical, hands-on people. It left the state with \$9 billion in debts in 1993, and I fear that history is doomed to repeat itself. This government is again pulling down the state and its people so that we will no longer be able to afford the good things we all want, and then a Liberal government will be brought in once again to clean up the mess. Standard & Poor's is waiting to see the state moving ahead with jobs, exports and tourism before giving us a AAA rating. It will not give it to us just on money in the bank.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on the Supply Bill. I refer at the outset to a matter to which I referred earlier today in my grievance debate. I am talking about the government's expenditure—or, perhaps I should say, lack of expenditure—in the area of health, that is, the critical situation that faces the Wallaroo Hospital, which is the main part of Northern Yorke Peninsula Health Services. I have highlighted to this house that joint replacement surgery was stopped earlier this year. Elective surgery at Wallaroo Hospital was stopped for some four weeks over Easter, and the same occurred over Christmas.

In real terms, funding to Wallaroo Hospital has increased by less than 1 per cent in the past financial year. It is understandable that the hospital does not know which way to turn. It is the major hospital for Yorke Peninsula and, as a result, people who had been on the waiting list at Wallaroo have had to go on to the waiting list in Adelaide. They already have been waiting some time, but now they have to wait an indeterminate amount of extra time to see when they can have their operation done in Adelaide. It is totally unsatisfactory.

What makes it even more unsatisfactory is that, when members of the community cabinet visited northern Yorke Peninsula either last year or the year before, they gave a commitment to the hospital to undertake a further investigation. They said that they would meet with the hospital community—or, certainly, the board—and see what could be done. Unfortunately, those meetings have not occurred. I just hope that the government will take some real action in the coming budget. It has reached the situation where a significant funding increase for Wallaroo is needed. It is no good if the minister says, 'I will give it to the Wakefield region', because the Wakefield region obviously has many other hospitals that also need extra funding. The minister is aware that Wallaroo is in a critical situation.

It is even more critical because we have had a significant increase in population, and it is continuing to increase. In fact, I have said in this house before—and I have certainly said it outside—that I believe the northern Yorke Peninsula area will surpass the Victor Harbor area as the most preferred location for people to come and retire and to come and enjoy their holidays. It is well on the way to doing that. I said a few years ago that it would take about 20 years. We might be able to do it in less time than that. Whatever the case, health

services are an absolutely essential part of such a community, and it is a critical situation.

I would like to particularly note that, for the first time, I think, in my 21 years in this house I was approached by representatives of the Wallaroo Lions Club who said they wanted to get up a petition to urge the government to immediately make additional funding available to the Wallaroo Hospital—namely, the Northern Yorke Peninsula Health Service—to allow joint replacement surgery and other essential health services to continue. The Lions Club did that and, in fact, I had the privilege of presenting some 2 286 signatures from concerned people, some of which were presented in March and some on, I think, 1 April. So, one can understand the real concerns of people in my area. I would like to thank John Sullivan, the President of the Lions Club of Wallaroo and also Graham Varney who, basically, coordinated the distribution of the petitions. It has reached a pretty serious situation when a voluntary service organisation such as Lions decides that it has to take up the challenge of ensuring that the government makes additional moneys available. I note with interest that education is another area that is lacking with this government; in fact, an article recently in *The Advertiser* indicated that South Australia's education spending has increased at a lower rate than that of any other state during the past five years.

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith interjecting:

Mr MEIER: No; I will quote exactly from *The Advertiser* of 29 April. The article states:

South Australia's education spending has increased at a lower rate than that of any other state during the past five years, figures revealed.

I am just quoting the figures. The latest official figures show that the state government spent \$1 142 in education for every South Australian last financial year compared with \$1 011 in 1998-99. That was an increase of 13 per cent, but the federal government has responded to the revelation by calling on the state to lift funding to its schools and to end the blame game with Canberra.

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: Per capita, not per student.

Mr MEIER: I see that the minister is acknowledging what I am saying and, certainly, I hope that she will do everything she can to seek additional funds for schools because it is so essential to have appropriate funding.

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: No schools for pensioners.

Mr MEIER: Did you say no schools for pensioners?

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith interjecting:

Mr MEIER: Well, the minister has a chance to respond in due course and I am happy for her to do that. All I would say is that I am hearing increasingly from schools that they are getting fed up with the lack of response from the government in so many areas—certainly maintenance is one of those areas. I know that our government went out of its way to try to start catching up the years of neglect that we inherited, and we were well underway. I simply say to the minister and to the government: please do not let things start going back to the disastrous situation that we inherited 10 years ago. We worked darn hard.

As the minister knows, we had no money to do it in our first two years because we inherited the worst debt that any government has ever inherited, but in the latter few years we were starting to make real progress. It is starting to slip back again. The minister has come into the portfolio recently. I trust that she will make sure that is another key element that she pursues and that she does not let the Treasurer roll her when she seeks extra funds, because we know the reputation

that he has. He has a fair war chest there. He can afford to put more money in education without any question at all.

The other area I would like to touch on briefly relates to policing. I asked a question in this house back in March of the Minister for Police in respect of what he was going to do about seeing that the lack of police at Mallala was addressed. The police officer there had not been there for some weeks, no replacement had come and, as a result, vandalism and crime in the area has increased significantly. The minister was not terribly responsive towards my question; in fact, I felt he was very offhand with the way he handled it.

The minister said, 'If the member for Goyder would like to detail his concerns about policing in Mallala, I encourage him to write to me'. I mean, fair dinkum, what is parliament for if you cannot ask the question directly to the minister? So, I took up the minister's challenge and I have written to him. That was many weeks ago now. Do you think a police officer has arrived at Mallala since? No. I keep getting the criticism and the absolute frustration from constituents in that area about vandalism and crime that is continuing to increase in the area and it seems that nothing is being done. It has been since January, so that means that Mallala has been without a police officer for three months.

What really adds insult to injury is that last year, after a visit to Thompsons Beach to look at some of the problems that they were facing (that is within about 25 kilometres of Mallala, maybe less), they pleaded with me to make representations for an additional police officer at Mallala, or failing that for additional police officers in the Two Wells area. So, I took up that matter with the minister, and I received a negative response which said, 'No. There will not be any more police officers in the Mallala area.' At least, I did not expect it to go down to zero, which has been the case for so long now. Just to highlight what is going on, in the last week or so, there was a major article in *The Plains Producer*, the Balaklava newspaper. Headed, 'Bikers lead destruction on Thompsons Beach walking trail', a little bit from that article states:

After months of backbreaking volunteer work, the new Thompson beach shore bird walking trail has been vandalised by motor bike riders. Thompson beach ratepayers association secretary, Lionel Miller, said sections of trails had been deliberately destroyed over Easter by invasive motorbikes. A number of specially placed markers at Third Creek have also been stolen, along with bollard posts restricting access to the foreshore. Even more disturbing, Lionel said, four-wheel-drives had been speeding up and down the beach, frightening flocks of pelicans and shore birds.

What can you do when the bikers come, when the four-wheel-drives come and there are no police to control it? So, I plead with the Minister for Police that he at least takes some action: that he instructs the Commissioner of Police and gets some action. People in Mallala are fed up with it. I am getting an increasing number of complaints, and why should we have to suffer just because we live in a country area?

I noted a very interesting article talking about country areas in *The Advertiser* headed, 'Pay insurance as you drive'. It has been suggested by the insurance giant IAG that car registration fees and compulsory third party insurance costs should be linked to the number of kilometres motorists drive each year.

We have really hit the bottom now in South Australia's history. Where is most of the population concentrated? I think over 85 per cent is concentrated in the metropolitan area—just about everyone. So, the poor 15 per cent who are outside the metropolitan area and who travel, like I, 40 000 to 50 000 kilometres a year, will be hit really hard, and we will pay not

double, but probably triple or four times as much as those in the metropolitan area.

I would say to the gentleman who has floated this idea, 'Please think next time, before you float such an idea, because Australia is a huge country and, while most of our population is concentrated in the metropolitan area, we in the country suffer enough as it is. We pay enough for our fuel, we have roads that have deteriorated significantly, and we need help, not further hindrances.' I am most unimpressed with the suggestion, and I hope that it will be shelved immediately. I would hope, too, that—

Mrs GERAGHTY: I rise on a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the member for Goyder, but he just seems to be implying that that IAG policy he was talking about was a government policy. I think we need to put on the record that that is not a government policy.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. That is a specious remark.

Mr MEIER: Certainly, I did not think there was any inference in my contribution that it was a government policy, but you can have a look in *Hansard* and I am happy to correct it tomorrow if you think so. But I would say to the government that I hope it will squash it instantly if the suggestion is put to it.

The other matter that I would like briefly to touch on is the River Murray levy. I have a situation in my electorate where so many people do not have River Murray water. In many cases they rely on sub-artesian water, but they must pay the River Murray levy. It is \$35 if you are a householder, \$135 if you are a business. My colleague the member for Flinders is affected much more than I am, and I know that she has presented many petitions to the parliament. If I have not made the presentations, they were in my office earlier this week and I think they would have gone through for presentation this week, too, from many of my aggrieved residents. I would like to thank the member for Flinders for seeing that something can be done about this in the first instance. So much of Yorke Peninsula is right behind her, and we hope that in the coming budget that unfair levy for people who do not have River Murray water will be taken off. But we will have to wait and see how successful we are.

Land tax continues to bite hard, particularly on some of my pensioners. It is a great concern. I think I asked a question of the Treasurer some months ago, but he had no sympathy for a reduction in land tax. I would simply say: look at the total situation. We want to encourage people into South Australia: we do not want to encourage them to leave the state. Surely, that is an obvious area to tackle. Another issue that many of my colleagues have also highlighted in this debate is that of stamp duty and the very high cost because of the inflationary effect that high prices have had. Again, it is quite clear that the Treasurer needs to take action. Other states have already led the way in this, and let us hope that the budget reflects that likewise.

I have highlighted two or three points that I hope the Treasurer will address in the budget. There are so many other areas I could touch on, such as the B doubles and access to the routes there; such as the condition of the roads in so much of my electorate and the need for additional funding, let alone the funding that has already been promised to be given; and it goes right across the board in the areas of health, education and policing. I support the bill.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I move:

That the house note grievances.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): The *Sunday Mail* on 25 April this year had an article entitled 'Bowling for SA'. It is an article that I feel brought the *Sunday Mail* to a new low. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.55 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 5 May at 2 p.m.